

2023-2024
PARENT/STUDENT
HANDBOOK



Faith First
ACADEMY

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FAITH FIRST ACADEMY STAFF

OFFICE TEAM

Kristen Fazio..... Principal

Tricia Ross Administrator

Julie Mahoney Head Secretary

WELCOME FROM OUR PRINCIPAL

Faith First family,

We are so excited to welcome you to a new year at Faith First Academy.

Throughout the school year, students will be afforded the opportunity to learn and grow in the way that we, here at Faith First, believe God called them to. We are humbled and honored that you have chosen to commit to our school for the academic development of your child.

Here at Faith First Academy, we understand the vital role that education plays in a child's development, particularly in the social climate in which we are living today. This is why our mission is to provide an excellent, Christian education that is wholly rooted in the Word of God.

In a fallen society that places more emphasis on things of this world than on God, our school recognizes God's Word – the absolute, unequivocal truth – as our firm foundation.

At Faith First Academy, we have an incredible staff that is fully committed to Christ and fully committed to the ministry of helping your child grow in a Godly manner. Throughout the school year and beyond, we pray that your child reaches his or her full potential through Christ.

As we pray for you and your family through this journey, we ask for your prayers for the ministry that is Faith First Academy. We are incredibly grateful that you have chosen Faith First, and we look forward to the great work that will be done, in Jesus' name, here at our school.

Kindest regards,

Kristen Fazio
Principal
Faith First Academy

STATEMENT OF FAITH

We believe in the Bible in its entirety from the Old to the New Testament and that it is inspired by God and inerrant in the original writings, and that it is of supreme and final authority in faith and conduct.

Accordingly, based on Scripture:

We believe the Bible is the inspired Word of God. We believe there is one God who reveals Himself in three separate and distinct personalities: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

- We believe mankind was created good and upright but, by voluntary transgression, fell and is now separated from God, lost, and without hope. We believe Jesus Christ is God in the flesh, fully divine and fully human. We believe that through the shedding of His blood at the crucifixion, Jesus made salvation and His righteousness available to all who will believe, thus bridging the gap between God and mankind.
- We believe Jesus died, was buried, and rose bodily from the dead (The Resurrection). We believe that after The Resurrection, Jesus ascended to the Father and is presently engaged in building Heaven and interceding for people.
- We believe Jesus will return to this earth to take His Church (those who believe in Him) to Heaven and will judge the world. (It is not necessary that we all believe alike concerning whether He is coming before, during, or after the Great Tribulation.)
- We believe salvation comes by repentance for sin and a heartfelt faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, resulting in regeneration of the person. This salvation is entirely by the grace of our Lord, not of works. Works are excluded except as evidence of salvation.

- We believe Water Baptism and the Lord's Supper are the two Ordinances of the Church. We believe Baptism by immersion in water in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is a symbol of identification with Jesus Christ in His death, His burial, and His resurrection. We believe the Lord's Supper is a memorial to the death, resurrection, and Second Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- We believe that all believers should seek, as the early disciples did, to live a life separated from the evils of the world and unto Christ. Their standards of conduct should honor our Lord and His Church.
- We believe the Bible clearly teaches eternal separation from God for the unsaved and eternal glory and service for the saved.

FAITH FIRST ACADEMY PHILOSOPHY

1. Parenting – Faith First Academy will take no role in parenting your child. That is the God given responsibility of the parent, this includes the education and training of that child. Your child's success at Faith First Academy is directly related to your own faith in Jesus Christ as your personal savior and whether you have separated your family from the worldly lifestyles and sins as a result of an unsaved world.
2. Church role – Belonging to a church that believes in the contents of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation is strongly recommended and encouraged. Membership and serving in a local church are important fundamentals in Christian faith.
3. School –As previously mentioned, Faith First Academy, will never take on the role of parenting your child, that is the sole responsibility that God has placed upon you as a parent. Faith First Academy will never take the place of the family's church or parents.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

To provide an excellent education in a joy-filled atmosphere.

OUR CORE VALUES

We Serve

We Respect

We Give

We Forgive

We Choose Friends Wisely

We Fulfill our Destiny

KINGDOM EDUCATION DEFINITION

FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

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1. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (Public Law 9-380) is applicable to any school which is the direct recipient of federal funds. This law provides for limited accessibility to the student's records by the person who has legal responsibility for the student, for the right to challenge any misleading or inaccurate information contained in the student's records, for the necessity of obtaining a written permission from the "eligible student" - one who is 18 years of age or older, or from the person who has legal responsibility for the student prior to revealing the contents of the student's records to other parties, and for the right of "eligible students" and/or those legally responsible for the student to be notified of their rights under the prescriptions of this law. In order to comply with the prescriptions of

this law, Faith First Academy employs the following policies:

2. To secure the student's and the family's right of privacy within the school, only the administration and designated school personnel, in the fulfillment of their respective functions, may have access to the student records.
3. Outside of the school community, only the person(s), usually the parent(s), who has legal responsibility for the student may have access to the student records. Any parent or adult student desiring to inspect their records shall address the request to the Administration in writing. Such a request must be honored within fifteen days. All tests and evaluations will be translated into meaningful terms and emphasis is to be placed upon the relationship of all known factors influencing the educational development of the student. When actual inspection of a child's file is made, this will be recorded on a log sheet kept at the front of each child's cumulative folders. On this log sheet the following information is to be recorded: date of visit, name of person examining records, name of student's record folder that was examined, initials of personnel handling conference.
4. The school will not release the information contained in the student's records to other parties without the prior written consent of the person legally responsible for the student. This written consent is accorded by the school's record release form.
5. According to the law, the school is authorized to release the information contained in the student's records without permission to certain federal, state, and local authorities in the performance of their functions and to the court or law enforcement officials, upon the issuance of a subpoena or court order.
6. NON-DISCRIMINATORY POLICY

Faith First Academy admits students of any race, color, national, and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does

not discriminate based on race, color, national, and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, tuition assistance programs, or extra-curricular and other school-administered programs.

ADMISSION

Faith First Academy believes in the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. Our academy does not have an open enrollment policy as we strive for an environment that does not follow the worldly beliefs that are inconsistent to Gods Word. The students are interviewed and must all be approved by our Board. We strive to provide an atmosphere that is joy-filled and not inclusive of the worldly beliefs that directly contradict the Bible. Our Academy is not only open to Solid Rock attendees and members, but also to outside students that are willing to maintain its standards and beliefs in both word and action.

GENERAL ADMISSIONS PROCEDURE

If you are considering enrolling your child(ren) in Faith First Academy, the following steps must be completed;

- Take a tour of the school, obtain a parent/student handbook,
- Complete our Faith First Academy application,
- All students must undergo an interview with our principal. Contact our school Head Secretary for a scheduled date.
- The principal will discuss and review Faith First's handbook and policies with the parent, and student applicant.
- Once the parties have met with the principal, our Administrative Board will meet with the principal and discuss the principal's recommendation regarding the enrollment of said student.
- A final decision will be made by the Administrative Board as to the acceptance of enrollment of the student.

- The Head Secretary of the school will send correspondence to the family with a final decision. If the child(ren) is accepted, additional information will be provided to the family to finish enrollment. All decisions are final.
- All tuition and fees will be due at that time. The family will then be required to provide the students social security card, birth certificates, Certificate of Immunization (South Carolina), an exemption (if applicable), and the official transcript of any previously school (if applicable).

ATTENDANCE PROCEDURES

SCHOOL HOURS

Doors open: 8:15am

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, & Thursday.

1st grade through 9th grade

8:30am-3:00pm

Fridays

Fridays are classified exploratory day (required attendance).

8:30am-3:00pm

At 3:15pm parents will be charged for NOW after school care at the rate of \$50 per week (during NOW camp regular hours). All payments must be on time to NOW Camp.

SCHOOL CALENDAR & HOLIDAYS

We will follow the current Horry County Public Schools calendar.

ABSENCE POLICY

Attendance at FFA is based on the premise that children will grow most effectively if they faithfully participate in the school program. The teacher, the students, and the class are penalized by the absence of any student. Therefore, absences are permitted from school only in case of illness, or personal emergency. The school reserves the right to judge the validity of an excuse as given by the parent or guardian. The family of each absentee should contact the school as soon as possible to indicate the reason for the absence. **Elective** classes usually scheduled for Fridays are mandatory attendance of students, it is not a choice whether to attend or not.

To keep accurate records and to emphasize the importance of school attendance, FFA has adopted the following guidelines:

- a) Students should bring a written excuse from a parent or physician upon returning to school after an absence.
- b) Attending a school-sponsored trip is credited as a regular school day, and absence from a field trip will be counted as a missed school day.
- c) Students arriving after 11:30 a.m. or departing prior to 12 p.m. will be counted absent for the day.

A student who exceeds **ten absences** per year for any reason, excused or unexcused, may be required to either receive summer tutoring by an FFA approved tutor for a specific number of hours or repeat the grade. Parents should contact the principal if unusual circumstances occur and should also provide a written excuse from a doctor.

Tardiness

The school desires to instill in all students the character trait of punctuality, and parents are consequently encouraged to assist FFA with this by making certain their children are prompt in arriving and departing from school. Any individual tardiness to a class disrupts both teacher and students and diminishes a student's opportunity to participate in the full range of activities planned for that class.

Leaving School

If students have plans to leave before the end of the school day, they are required to bring a note written by a parent or a guardian to their respective classroom teacher at the beginning of that school day. A parent arriving during the school day to pick up a student for an appointment or another excused absence is to sign out and pick up their child from the reception desk.

Sick Policy

Attendance is kept by the classroom teacher. If your child is out of school due to an illness for more than two days, please email the teacher.

Only well children may attend school. A child who displays any of the following symptoms may not be brought to school:

- fever
- diarrhea
- vomiting
- nasal secretions that are thick and not clear (colored) and accompanied by a fever
- cough accompanied with a fever
- eye drainage of any type which should be checked by a doctor to rule out infection. Because FFA is required to notify all parents of communicable diseases, please let your child's teacher know as soon as possible if your child is absent due to illness with such a disease.
A child may return to school after illness when: Fever-free for 24 hours (without medication)
- antibiotic has been given for 24 hours
- no diarrhea or vomiting for 24 hours

Students may not stay at school when they are sick. If a student becomes ill at school, the parent or guardian will be contacted by the school nurse with expectation that the student will be picked up as soon as possible.

Parent initiated absences are requested by the parent for such things as family trips and non-school sponsored events and are considered unexcused. Parent initiated absences are allowed when properly approved in advance by the respective principal. These absences should be requested by the parents, in writing, directly to the principal at least one (1) week in advance. The only exceptions to this policy will be in cases of death or family emergencies. In such cases, parents should call the principal as soon as possible. Parent initiated absences are not recommended for students with low grades. Makeup work is due within two school days except for long range project.

Makeup Work

When a student is absent, assignments for the day may be requested by calling the office by noon. Makeup work may be picked up from the receptionist's desk.

A student who misses five consecutive days or fewer per semester for illness or family emergency will have twice the number of school days, not counting weekends, to make up the work (for example: missing three days of school will allow six actual school days for makeup work). Making up schoolwork is the responsibility of the student, not the teacher. The student will receive full credit for the work unless it is turned in after the deadline. This does not apply to long-term major assignments or projects that were previously assigned; therefore, these assignments are still due on the date specified at the time the assignment was issued. When more than five days are missed for illness per semester, the teacher, student and parents will arrange a schedule to give the student appropriate time to make up the work. This particular make-up time applies only to absences related to an extended illness. School initiated class absences may require work to be due the day the student returns.

Tardiness

The school desires to instill in all students the character trait of punctuality, and parents are consequently encouraged to assist FFA by making sure their

children promptly arrive and depart from school. An individual tardiness to a class disrupts both teacher and students and diminishes a student's opportunity to participate in the full range of activities planned for that class.

Late arrival, acknowledged as arrival after school begins at 8:30 a.m., will be excused only in emergency situations such as illness or car trouble, and a note written for any other reason will usually result in an unexcused tardy. Any note of excuse brought in the second day after the tardiness occurs will usually not be accepted. Tardiness is recorded on the students report card.

Unexcused late arrival to school may result in the following:

- For first through fourth occurrences per quarter, the unexcused late arrival a parent email will be sent.
- For every four occurrences, the student will be assigned one absence from school.

Regular Dismissal

Students leaving campus at the regular dismissal time will be escorted outside to the waiting area for their rides or to the NOW after school camp. Students should be alert for their rides and prepared to move quickly and cautiously to load safely without delays. Please refrain from cellphone use while in the pickup/drop-off line!

The pick-up/drop off line is not a time for parent conferences.

Designated Drivers

All students not going home with their parents or usual driver must bring a note to their classroom teacher. The note must show the date of the pick-up and the name of the person who is authorized to pick-up the student.

Permission to Walk Home

In order to walk home from school, students must bring a note to the school office prior to leaving for home after dismissal. The note should state the length of time the permission covers.

DROP OFF / PICK-UP / TRAFFIC PATTERNS

Instructional time begins at 8:30 a.m. Therefore, students should be dropped off at least 10 minutes before 8:30 a.m. to allow time for them to get organized and into their seats so that learning can begin at the appointed time. We can also accept drop offs from 7:30am-8:30pm.

Parents are asked to pick-up students no later than 10 minutes after dismissal unless the student is participating in the Extension Program or an approved extra-curricular activity. **If an approved extra-curricular activity does not begin immediately after dismissal, it is the responsibility of the parents to make arrangements for adult supervision.** Students left unsupervised will be placed in Extension and the parents will be charged accordingly (\$10 per hour). Faith First Academy is not responsible for students at the end of the school day unless they are enrolled in the Extension Services Program.

Car rider ID signs will be provided for each student. The sign needs to be visible in the windshield of the vehicle during pick-up time. Students will be released only to those authorized by the parent. Such authorization must be in writing.

Parents must wait in their cars for the children. Leaving vehicles unattended causes unnecessary congestion. The inside of the school buildings needs to be clear for orderly dismissal.

TRAFFIC PATTERNS

Drop-off/pick-up zones are designated. Please park in the designated areas only and do not leave cars unattended in the drop-off/pick-up line. For the safety of our campus, please follow the published traffic flow pattern. Law enforcement may be called if safety is in question.

Map of traffic pattern can be obtained at office.

DRESS CODE REGULATIONS

PHILOSOPHY

There are two primary reasons for a dress code. The first is to ensure modesty which the Bible encourages (I Tim. 2:9). The second is to encourage a dignity that is appropriate for the Academy. The dress code of Faith First Academy impacts our Academy environment every day. The appearance of our students communicates the Christ-centered focus of our Academy and should be a valuable testimony in establishing our reputation as an outstanding Academy with superior students. The dress code is established to provide guidelines for parents and students on appropriate school dress. A well-groomed, attractive student should come to the Academy with an attitude that prepares him for neat, conscientious work. His attire should convey respect for himself, his fellow students, and his teachers.

DAILY MANDATORY DRESS POLICIES

BOYS

Pants Boys are to wear pants, in either khaki or black or modest (2 above the knee) shorts in khaki or black. Pants cannot sag below their waist.

Shirts Must wear the school shirts that contain the Faith First Academy logo and the shirt must be white or black in color, purchased through our Lands End website. Frayed or torn shirts are not permitted. The first shirt will be provided to each student (free of charge), all subsequent shirts the parents will be responsible for.

Undergarments Appropriate undergarments are to be always worn and are not to be visible.

Shoes LS: Closed-toed or open-toed shoes with a heel strap or athletic shoes are to be worn at all times. US: Open-toed or closed-toed shoes; no athletic slides are permitted. Absolutely NO shoes with wheels.

Jewelry Necklaces may be worn within the shirt collar. Visible body piercing is not permitted.

Makeup is not permitted.

Hair that is dyed in an extreme manner or styled in an extreme manner such as, but not limited to spiked, mohawk, line-cut or shaved-clean, too long is not permitted (should be out of eyes, off neck, above the ears, etc). Eyebrows may not be cut or altered in an unnatural manner. Facial hair must be neat and trimmed.

Tattoos temporary or permanent, should not be visible at any time while at school, during an athletic event or any extracurricular activity.

GIRLS

Pants Girls may wear khaki or black pants, or modest shorts in khaki or black (2 above the knee) or capris that are appropriate in size and fit. Girls are not to wear camouflage, nylon or spandex pants, yoga pants, or overalls. Fabrics to be avoided include stretch, knit, jersey, flannel, parachute fabric, and leather. Waist bands must rest above the hips. NO excessively tight or form fitting pants and/or torn/holey pants.

Shirts Must wear the school shirts that contain the Faith First Academy logo and the shirt must be white or black in color, purchased through our Lands End website. Frayed or torn shirts are not permitted. The first shirt will be provided to each student (free of charge), all subsequent shirts the parents will be responsible for.

Skirts and shorts Skirts and shorts must be modest (2 fingers above the knee) only in khaki or black.

Undergarments Appropriate, adequate undergarments must always be worn and not visible.

Shoes LS: Closed-toed or open-toed shoes with a heel strap or athletic shoes are to be always worn. US: Open-toed or closed-toed shoes; no athletic slides are permitted. Absolutely NO shoes with wheels.

Hair that is dyed in an extreme manner or styled in an extreme manner such

as, but not limited to spiked, mohawk, line-cut, or shaved-clean, etc. is not permitted. Eyebrows may not be cut or altered in an unnatural manner.

Makeup If makeup and nail polish is worn, it should be minimal, in good taste and should not be a distraction. Students may be required to remove makeup or nail polish if requested to do so by Faith First Academy administration.

Jewelry should be modest and tasteful. Pierced ears are allowed (if not to excess, or more than 3 per ear). Other visible body piercing is not permitted.

Tattoos , temporary or permanent, should not be visible at any time while at school, during an athletic event or any extracurricular activity.

SPIRIT DAY DRESS

Spirit Dress Days will be held often throughout the school year to promote school spirit. The administration will notify students and families about these special days. All of the modesty guidelines set forth in the school dress policy are in effect during Spirit Dress Days. Spirit Wear purchased through the Spirit Store may be worn at any time.

CONSEQUENCES FOR DRESS CODE VIOLATION:

1. The first violation the teacher will talk with the student and send the parent an email.
2. The second violation parents will be notified to bring the student appropriate clothing.
3. The third violation will require a conference with a school administrator and will result in Saturday School (fine for Saturday School \$20).

CELL PHONES, ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICES POLICY AND ENFORCEMENT

An electronic communications device is defined as a device that emits an audible signal, vibrates, displays a message, or otherwise operates to summon

or deliver communication to the possessor (e.g., cellular phones, laser pointers, smart watches or any other communication device).

No electronic devices that connect to the internet or take pictures are allowed in school. No school students may have cell phones out during school hours or in car line. All cell phones will be collected upon arrival to school, and returned to student at the end of the day!

Administrators and staff members, along with law enforcement authorities have the right to confiscate electronic communication devices possessed by students in violation of this policy.

1. For the **first violation** of the electronic communications device policy, the staff member observing the violation will confiscate the device and the student will surrender the device to the office during school hours for the remainder of that day. Parents/guardians will be notified.
Devices confiscated will need to be picked up from the office at the end of the day and will be returned to a parent or guardian only.
2. On the **second violation** of the electronic communications device policy, the staff member observing the violation will confiscate the device and the student will surrender the device to the office during school hours for 5 consecutive school days and parents/guardians will be notified.
3. For the **third violation** of the electronic communications device policy, the staff member observing the violation will confiscate the device and the student will surrender the device to the office during school hours for 10 consecutive school days and parents/guardians will be notified.
4. For the **fourth offense** and beyond, the electronic communications device will be surrendered to the office during school hours until the end of the semester but not less than 20 consecutive days, and suspension from school is possible. Parents/guardians will be notified.

5. INCLEMENT WEATHER AND EMERGENCY PROCEDURE DRILLS

Students are informed about fire, tornado safety, and other emergency procedures at the beginning of the school year. Drills are conducted throughout the year.

EMERGENCY CLOSING OF SCHOOL

Please listen to the radio or watch television to be notified when school is closed. Announcements are also placed on the school Website, emailed to families and a message sent to cell phones through Textedly app.

Announcements will be made on local television and radio stations including:

In the event inclement weather necessitates the closing of the school before the end of the regular school day, the following procedure will be followed:

1. The decision will be made by the Administration.
2. Faculty will be notified. Student drivers will be dismissed, if appropriate under the circumstances.
3. Local radio and TV stations will be notified.
4. Students will be dismissed to their designated driver or individuals indicated on the Authorization for Pickup Form.
5. Alternate arrangements for pickup of students may be arranged by parents. Please call the office.

In the event of a school closure all activities, extension and sporting events will be cancelled.

SCHEDULED EVENTS

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are regarded as an extension of the classroom. To participate in a

field trip, students must have a signed *Parental Consent Form*. Students are expected to behave in a manner appropriate for the occasion. Students are to remain with their group at all times. Teachers supervise field trips with assistance from parents. Parent sponsors may be asked to help provide transportation.

- If space is available, parents who have not been asked to sponsor are welcome to accompany students on field trips.
- There may be a charge for field trips to cover expenses.
- Students and parents should follow the school dress code, unless otherwise notified.
- It is the parent's responsibility to make alternate off-campus arrangements for their child if permission to attend the field trip is not granted or the proper forms are not signed.
- For chaperones to give full attention to the class, we ask that younger siblings not accompany a parent chaperone.
- All drivers must submit copies of proof of vehicle insurance and their driver's license.
- A **DMV Drivers Record** must be submitted to be eligible to drive students, other than your own children, on field trips or for athletic events.
- **FUNDRAISING**
Parents are expected to be involved in the fundraising efforts at Faith First Academy at least one time per year. The funds raised through this means help to enhance the day-to-day life of every student and faculty member by supporting a variety of programs, including academics, faculty development, the arts, athletics, technology, and the library, as well as trying to maintain lower tuition costs. All fundraising must be approved through the Head of School/Principal.

- **PROMOTE**

Once a year, the student shall attend Solid Rock at Market Common, to promote school for recitals, etc.

- **STUDENT LUNCHESES**

Faith First Academy does not provide lunches for students. Students are required to bring their lunch every day. **In the event they forget their lunch, a phone call will be made to the parent to bring their lunch.** It is important to have your child bring their lunch. We do not offer microwave services at this time.

- **OUTSIDE SOLICITATION**

Outside solicitation is prohibited at Faith First Academy. This policy includes the selling of any item, distribution of political or religious materials, offering a service or the circulation of petitions.

- **LIBRARY**

Faith First Academy has a library located adjacent to our fellowship hall. Books may be checked out and the library is open during all school hours. Faith First Academy also has a virtual library it uses, and students are able to access the library online in our campus library.

MAGAZINES

Magazines may be referenced in the library.

LOST LIBRARY BOOKS AND MATERIALS

Replacement costs will be assessed for lost library books and materials.

LIBRARY DEBTS

All outstanding library debts, including lost books, and materials, must be paid before the school year ends. Final report cards/transcripts will be held until book fees are paid.

ADMITTANCE

A student must have a pass or be with the teacher to visit the library during the school day. Students will not be allowed to leave the library, except to return to class.

OFFICE PROCEDURES

STUDENT VISITORS

- For safety reasons, **ANY** student from another school will not be allowed to visit campus unless visiting as a prospective FFA student.
- Permission for such is to be granted in advance from the Administration.
- The Prospective Student Visitors must fill out the first page of the information sheet from the Student Application.
- Student Visitors must always check in at the office and receive a visitors badge to be worn on the outermost shirt or coat and be visible while on campus.
- All permitted Student Visitors must observe the rules and procedures of the school, including the dress regulations, as though they were a student.

VISITORS AND VOLUNTEERS

All visitors including parents, volunteers, and family of staff members must report to the school office to sign-in and sign-out .

Staff members who wish to have relatives visit FFA for any extended length of time should clear such with the Head of Schools ahead of time.

All visitor regulations will apply including the dress code regulations and teacher code of conduct.

LOST AND FOUND

Lost and found items are retained in the school foyer. Unclaimed items are sent to charity at the end of the following months: October, December, March, and May. To avoid lost and found- please label all of the

students belongs (lunch boxes, clothes, ...)

MEDICAL INFORMATION COMMUNICABLE AND INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Faith First Academy wants to maintain a healthy school environment by taking steps to prevent the spread of communicable diseases. The term Communicable Disease means an illness which arises as a result of a specific infectious agent, which may be transmitted either directly or indirectly by a susceptible host or infected person or animal to other persons.

Any student with a communicable disease for which immunization is required or is available, will be temporarily excluded from school while ill and during recognizable periods of communicability. Students with communicable diseases for which immunization is not available will be excluded from school while ill. If the nature of the disease and circumstances warrant, Academy may require an independent physician's examination of the student to verify the diagnosis of communicable disease. Academy reserves the right to make all final decisions necessary to enforce its communicable disease policy and to take all necessary action to control the spread of communicable disease within the school.

Any child who is diagnosed as carrying a disease classified as communicable is not allowed to become or remain a student at Faith First Academy as long as the disease is present. Once the school has written verification from a physician that such a child has become disease free, he may be considered for enrollment or re-enrollment at Faith First Academy. This policy applies to, but is not limited to, all diseases that may be sexually transmitted, including acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS). For school purposes, any student testing positive for antibodies to the AIDS virus is considered to be infected with the virus. Faith First Academy believes that these measures serve to minimize the further spread of diseases.

COMMUNICABLE CHILDHOOD DISEASES

When diagnosed with any of the following diseases, a child must have written consent from either a physician or the Health Department to return to school, or be subject to school office approval for re- admittance:

Chicken Pox
Measles
Mumps
Pneumonia
Whooping Cough
Pinworms Scabies
Ringworm Impetigo
Pink Eye
Strep Throat
Lice
Mononucleosis
Fifths Disease
Meningitis

FIRST AID PROCEDURE

1. First aid treatment will be administered to stop bleeding, restore breathing, infection, up to, and including, CPR.
2. Parents will be notified immediately. If they cannot be reached, efforts will be made to find out which physician is to be secured or where the child should be taken. This information must be completed on the ***Emergency Information Card*** and will be on file in the school office for each student in case the parents cannot be reached.
3. A representative of the school faculty will stay with the child until the parent assumes responsibility.
4. Internal medication will be given only by or on the order of a physician.

ILLNESS

For the well-being and health consideration of all our students and staff, parents are asked to keep home any student with a fever and/or a contagious illness. Upon return to school, students must bring in a signed note from the parent stating the reason for the absence. It is the policy of Faith First Academy that a student must stay home with:

1. fever (24-hours free without medication)
2. vomiting (24-hours free)
3. flu/ COVID symptoms
4. diarrhea
5. colored nasal discharge
6. persistent cough
7. strep throat (24-hours on medication)
8. pinkeye (24-hours on medication)
9. lice (24-hours on medication)
10. mononucleosis (until released by physician to return to school)
11. any other communicable diseases

IMMUNIZATIONS

South Carolina state law requires Faith First Academy to have on file current immunization records recorded on SC DHEC Form 2740 and medical records for each student. It is the responsibility of parents to keep up-to-date records in the school office. If the student does not have an immunization record, the parents must provide an exemption (religious or otherwise).

MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS

If it is necessary for a student to leave early for a medical appointment, a written request must be sent to the student's teacher in advance. No student will be released to anyone other than those authorized by the parent.

MEDICAL EMERGENCY PROCEDURE

Each student's file must include a completed *Emergency Information Card*. If a child becomes ill at school, the parent will be notified as soon as possible. If the parent cannot be reached, the emergency information will be used. If there is a change in this information, the parent is responsible for contacting the school office in writing. An emergency contact person and alternate number to call, if you cannot be reached, are very important. Please make sure your emergency contact has written permission to obtain medical treatment for your child in case of an emergency.

MEDICATION POLICY FOR PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

In order to follow DHEC regulations, we can only accept medication that is in an appropriately labeled prescription bottle. Medications must be brought to the school by the parent in the original containers with original labels intact. (Most pharmacies will divide medications and provide additional containers upon request for this purpose.) Over the counter (OTC) medication, including Tylenol, cannot be administered without a prescription label, and must be administered by a member of the faculty/staff.

1. The parent must furnish the medication
2. The parent must complete a *Medication Release Form* indicating the date, dosage, and time to be administered.
3. Students may not carry prescriptions or OTC medications on their person without expressed written permission from their physician, parents, and the administration. (Example: inhalers and epi-kits.)

4. A form, available in the school office, must be filled out by the Physician before medicine can be administered.

AFTER SCHOOL SUPERVISION/EXTENSION SERVICES

Extension Services (NOW Camp) are provided daily as a recreation and enrichment program after normal school hours. It is an ancillary to the school program and designed only for children currently enrolled at Faith First Academy. Fees are charged for this service and registration is required. Fee schedules and registration forms are available in the school office.

Faith First Academy cannot be responsible for students at the end of the school day unless they are enrolled in the Extension Services Program.

ACADEMIC INFORMATION, GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS, PROMOTION

LATE ASSIGNMENTS

Students must complete **all** assignments that are missed due to excused absences. For each day of excused absence, two days (including weekends and holidays) are allowed for the completion of assignments. Failure to complete any assignment or test within the allotted time will result in a grade of 0 (zero) for that assignment or test.

At the end of a grading period, a student may receive a grade of I indicating that all work has not been completed and turned in to the teacher. All grades of I must be converted to numeric grades by the end of the first week of the next grading period. I grades not converted will automatically be recorded as zero. Exceptions may be granted by the Administration in extenuating circumstances.

Work missed due to an unexcused absence must be made up to the teachers' satisfaction but will receive a grade no higher than a 70. This rule applies if a student has an unexcused absence on the day a term/research paper or project is due.

Students not meeting this standard will be placed on academic probation for the following quarter. Any student remaining on academic probation for 2 consecutive quarters may place enrollment in jeopardy.

ACHIEVEMENT TESTING

Nationally recognized achievement tests are administered to students and the results are used to assess students' strengths and academic needs.

Spring administered achievement testing

HOMEWORK

Homework is designed to be reinforcement for materials taught in class. Teachers use homework to meet essay and project requirements as well as skills practice and enrichment. Homework and class participation are both an important factor in the overall student assessment.

GRADING SCALE

Grades 1st through 9th Subjects

- A Excellent
- B Good
- C Average
- D Below Average
- F Poor

GRADES AVAILABLE AT FAITH FIRST

1st through 9th. Change may be made at a future date as deemed necessary (One grade is added each year, until we are in our new building).

NO BULLYING, VIOLENCE, OR RETALIATION

- A. The Board expressly prohibits any form of bullying behavior or violence on school grounds; at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, function or program whether on or off school grounds; at a school bus stop; on a school bus or other vehicle owned, leased or used by the Board; or through the use of an electronic device or an electronic mobile device owned, leased or used by the Board.
- B. The Board also prohibits any form of bullying behavior outside of the school setting if such bullying:
 - 1. creates a hostile environment at school for the student against whom such bullying was directed;
 - 2. infringes on the rights of the student against whom such bullying was directed at school; or
 - 3. substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.
- C. The Board further prohibits any form of violence outside of the school setting if such violence substantially disrupts the educational process.
- D. In addition to prohibiting student acts which constitute bullying, the Board also prohibits discrimination and/or retaliation against an individual who reports or assists in the investigation of an act of bullying.
- E. Students who engage in bullying behavior or violence in violation of Board Policy shall be subject to school discipline, up to and including immediate expulsion, and consistent with state and federal law.

Definition of Bullying

- A. **“Bullying”** means the repeated use by one or more students of a written, oral or electronic communication, such as cyberbullying, directed at or referring to another student attending school in the same district, or a physical act or gesture by one or more students repeatedly

directed at another student attending school in the same school district that:

1. causes physical or emotional harm to such student or damage to such student's property;
 2. places such student in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself, or of damage to his or her property;
 3. creates a hostile environment at school for such student;
 4. infringes on the rights of such student at school; or
 5. substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.
- B. Bullying shall include, but not be limited to, a written, verbal or electronic communication or physical act or gesture based on any actual or perceived differentiating characteristics, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, socioeconomic status, academic status, physical appearance, or mental, physical, developmental or sensory disability, or by association with an individual or group who has or is perceived to have one or more of such characteristics.

Other Definitions

- A. "**Cyberbullying**" means any act of bullying through the use of the Internet, interactive and digital technologies, cellular mobile telephone or other mobile electronic devices or any electronic communications.
- B. "**Electronic communication**" means any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic, photo electronic or photo-optical system.
- C. "**Hostile environment**" means a situation in which bullying among students is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the school climate;
- D. "**Mobile electronic device**" means any hand-held or other portable electronic equipment capable of providing data communication between two or more individuals, including, but not limited to, a text messaging device, a paging device, a personal digital assistant, a laptop computer, equipment that is capable of playing a video game or a

digital video disk, or equipment on which digital images are taken or transmitted;

- E. "**Outside of the school setting**" means at a location, activity or program that is not school related, or through the use of an electronic device or a mobile electronic device that is not owned, leased or used by the Board;
- F. "**School climate**" means the quality and character of school life with a particular focus on the quality of the relationships within the school community between and among students and adults.
- G. "**School employee**" means (1) a teacher, substitute teacher, school administrator, school superintendent, guidance counselor, psychologist, social worker, nurse, physician, school paraprofessional or coach employed by a local or regional board of education or working in a public elementary, middle or high school; or (2) any other individual who, in the performance of his or her duties, has regular contact with students and who provides services to or on behalf of students enrolled in a public elementary, middle or high school, pursuant to a contract with the Board.
- H. "**School-Sponsored Activity**" shall mean any activity conducted on or off school property (including school buses and other school-related vehicles) that is sponsored, recognized or authorized by the Board.
- I. "**violence**" means any act of physical, emotional or sexual abuse, including stalking, harassing and threatening, that occurs between two students who are currently in or who have recently been in a dating relationship.

DISCIPLINE AND STANDARDS OF CONDUCT

Students at FFA are taught to live above reproach by showing respect for God, country, family, faculty, and fellow students. Students who fail to cooperate behaviorally or scholastically will jeopardize their privilege to attend FFA. FFA uses **restorative** discipline as a catalyst to help students learn to accept responsibility for their own actions and behavior. The ability to accept such responsibility is one of the qualities of mature people and is a steppingstone in their spiritual growth.

The Upper School administration and faculty expect FFA students to give evidence of the following behavior:

- Demonstrate personal honesty and integrity.
- Foster a culture of excellence with an attitude of gratitude.
- Respect differences in others always.
- Respect personal and school property. Any damage thereof, will result in an invoice being sent home for payment by parent.
- Seek to develop positive interpersonal relationships.
- Take responsibility for being in the proper place at the proper time.
- Avoid behavior unbecoming of an FFA student, whether at school or not.
- Avoid excessive accumulation of minor disciplinary infractions.

Students who show disregard for expectations listed above will be assigned referrals, detentions, suspensions, or other disciplinary measures as a reminder of their importance and to lay out clear boundaries and guidelines for correcting the addressed behavior. Consequences will escalate based upon accumulation of referrals and/or repeating offenses. For the school's discipline and standards of conduct to be effective, parent/guardian(s) are expected to support the school rules and work with the faculty and administration to correct a student's unacceptable behavior as necessary. Any action by a student or the parent(s)/guardian(s) which seriously interferes with the school's ability to accomplish its goals may be grounds for the student's immediate dismissal.

Students should understand that they represent FFA at all times, including weekends and school breaks. Although FFA does not supervise or monitor student activity away from the school or their electronic transmissions, it reserves the right to take action (up to and including expulsion) when evidence reveals behavior that violates the school policies, causes disruption to the school day, or is detrimental to the testimony of FFA. Any violations of this sort, 1st offense, we may partner with the parent regarding consequences. A 2nd offense of off campus violations would result in school consequences.

Violations to the standard of conduct at FFA fall into three categories:

- Level I Infractions (Strike 1)
- Level II Infractions (Strike 2)
- Level III Infractions (Strike 3)

Level I Infractions (Strike 1)

Level I infractions are acts of misbehavior in a classroom, on campus, or at school events. Examples of such misbehaviors include, but are not limited to: inappropriate conduct in chapel; being in an unsupervised area without permission (including being in or around cars in parking lots); class disruption; failure to report for an assigned detention; misbehavior in the cafeteria; inappropriate language spoken or written; public display of affection; rudeness or discourteousness; verbal abuse or offensive, hurtful comments; dress code violations; failure to report for lunch duty; having unapproved food or drink in unapproved areas (library);etc.

These **Level I** infractions may result in warnings, referrals, or detention halls. Parents/Guardian(s) will be notified via of any disciplinary action taken, and a parent conference may occur.

Level II Infractions (Strike 2)

Level II infractions are misbehaviors of a more serious nature in a classroom, on or off campus, or at school events. Examples of such misbehaviors include, but are not limited to: plagiarism or collusion; aggressive behavior or horseplay; cutting school; defiance of authority and/or school directives;

spoken or written profanity, use of obscene gestures or words, swearing or use of derogatory racial slurs; disrespect to authority; academic dishonesty; inappropriate behavior of a sexual nature; lying; leaving campus without signing out and/or without obtaining permission; fighting; repeated Level I infractions.

Level II infractions may result in parents/guardians being contacted by the appropriate staff and a parent conference may be requested.

Level II infractions may result in detention, up to three days of suspension, and/or community service hours.

Level III Infractions (Strike 3)

Level III infractions are major offenses often involving activity that is illegal or is an inexcusable act of disrespect toward individuals, school property, or personnel. These infractions are violations of school policy during any time the student is enrolled at FFA and are not limited to school or on-campus activities. Examples of such misbehaviors include, but are not limited to: repeated Level II infractions of the same kind; smoking or possession of any tobacco product (including vaping and cigarette alternatives); extreme behavior unbecoming of an FFA student on or off campus; computer hacking; destruction of school property (including vandalism and graffiti); direct or indirect threat of physical harm, use of a weapon or terror threat; harassment, bullying (verbal, sexual, physical, cyber, via computer, phone, etc.); inappropriate use of the Internet or tampering with the school's computer system; possessing or viewing pornography/nude images; sexual promiscuity; any involvement or association with drugs or alcohol; possession of drug paraphernalia; possession of a weapon or explosive; possession of missing or stolen property; profanity and/or obscenity in written or spoken word or gesture directed at faculty or staff members; stealing; tampering with the fire alarm system, extinguishers, or defibrillator; testing positive or refusing to take a school-mandated drug test.

Faith First Academy reserves the right to search bookbags and/or personal belongings of any student at FFA at any time while the student is on the premises of FFA.

Level III infractions may result in parents/guardians being contacted by the appropriate dean, and a conference may be requested.

Level III infractions may result in up to five days of suspension and community service hours or expulsion from FFA.

Infractions involving illegal activities may be reported to the law enforcement authorities and automatic expulsion.

If a student has been charged with any illegal activities, other than driving violations, it is the parents'/guardians' and the student's responsibility to notify the school administration of the offense.

Consequences

Referrals

Referrals are issued by teachers or administrators to students for most Level I infractions and some Level II infractions.

- All teachers have their own discipline plan, which can be found in their syllabi, that best meets the needs of their individual classroom. Teachers may administer warnings and consequences before beginning the referral process.
-
- When a referral is issued, a notification is sent to the student and parent/guardian email.
- The principal, assistant principal or appropriate dean will issue detentions and suspensions. Note that some behaviors may result in immediate detention, suspension, or expulsion.

Detentions

Detentions are given in one-hour increments as consequences. Detentions are issued for Level I and Level II infractions or for the accrual of referrals for like offenses. All disciplinary obligations take

precedence over athletic practices, games, or other extracurricular activities.

Detentions will be served on assigned days and will adhere to the following guidelines:

- Students are expected to be on time for scheduled detentions. Late arrival may result in a rescheduled detention with additional consequences.
- During detentions, students may be required to perform tasks around the school building and/or complete written assignments. Any written assignment must be completed during the detention and will be required to be rewritten if it does not meet the approval of the detention monitor. Students should bring their own paper and pen.
- A skipped detention or multiple detentions may result in a suspension.
- Detentions will jeopardize students from being eligible to run for positions of leadership.

Suspensions

A suspension can be one to five days in length, normally escalating from one to five days depending on the specific infraction or the accumulation of infractions. A specific amount of community service hours may be assigned with the suspension as determined by the administration. Any disciplinary obligation takes precedence over athletic practices, games, or other extracurricular activities. Therefore, any suspended student may not attend or participate in any school activity, either on or off campus, during the day(s) of suspension. A student who is suspended may be removed from extracurricular activities (i.e. athletics, fine arts, class office, student government, clubs, or honor societies, etc.) as determined by the administration. Each day of suspension results in a one-point deduction from each of the student's grades for the quarter in which the suspension takes place.

Academic work missed during a suspension can be made up by the student. Colleges/universities might request a report of any suspensions during the 9th-12th grade years.

Expulsion

The FFA administration considers certain offenses as particularly serious and reserves the right to expel a student, even for the first offense, for the following behaviors:

- Any involvement or association with drugs, vaping, or alcohol on or off campus
- Bullying, threatening, harassment, and intimidation on or off campus
- Involvement in immoral or sexual behavior on or off camps
- Possession of a weapon or explosives on or off campus
- Profanity and/or obscenity directed at a faculty or staff member
- Striking a faculty or staff member
- Testing positive or refusal to take a school-mandated drug test
- Threat of physical harm with or without a weapon on or off campus
- Possession of or sending pornography/nude images on or off campus
- Illegal behavior on or off campus

Expulsion is the most severe penalty that FFA assigns. It is recorded as part of the permanent school record. Once expelled, the student must leave campus immediately, unless an extension has been granted by a principal or dean. All school property must be returned to appropriate parties, and lockers must be emptied. An expelled student may not return to campus without their parent and without approval from the administration.

REFUNDS

All fees, curriculum, and tuition are non-refundable and non-transferable.

NO SURPRISE GUARANTEE

It is our belief that if we truly partner with parents/guardians, our students will benefit from our guidance. Therefore, ALL TEACHERS are expected to

communicate with parents/guardians when a student’s academic performance begins to cause his/her grades to drop. This includes but is not restricted to repeated failure to turn in daily assignments, not participating in class, not turning in major projects, performing poorly on quizzes and major tests, etc. The first time a parent/guardian is made aware of a problem or drop in academic average should come from the teacher as soon as possible. We will use various means to communicate grades to the parent/guardian including posting grades on the online grading program, sending a note home, placing a phone call, or talking directly with the parent(s).

I have read and understand the entire contents of the foregoing 2023-24 handbook.

DATE

Parent/Guardian (printed name)

Signature



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