



Handbook

POLICIES and PROCEDURES

Welcome to Light House Academy!

We are a community of believers, families, and supporters committed to delivering a solid academic education in a wholesome atmosphere based on a Biblical worldview. Over the years, we have worked diligently to follow godly principles in our personal lives and apply them to the educational atmosphere of this school. We draw from many backgrounds and encourage involvement at many levels to make this Academy a success.

This Handbook outlines our guiding principles and practices and is complemented by other school resources to provide the working tools we use every day. Many in our community volunteer their time and expertise to help us reach the goals God has placed on our hearts.

We hope you find significant blessing in taking this journey with your children. Proverbs 22:6 teaches us, “Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.” The best legacy anyone can leave is in their children. By impacting the young hearts with Biblical truths and virtues, we continue the Kingdom work for generations to come.

Blessings!

1. INTRODUCTION

All that we do is done for the glory of God and His Son, Jesus Christ. (*1 Cor. 10:31*)

a. Purpose

Light House Academy (LHA) is a private Christian school for students in prekindergarten through eighth grade. LHA builds its educational foundation on principles and teachings with a Biblical worldview while using academic materials sourced from respected educational publishers and suppliers. Students pursue solid academics while also developing their personal character to reflect a Christ-like demeanor. Emphasis is placed upon building strong moral character with focus upon honesty, integrity, hard work, independence, moral purity, and respect for everyone. Light House Academy provides a wholesome, loving, safe environment where students experience multigenerational interaction, volunteerism, and respect for authority and leadership and learn to accept responsibility for their actions and resulting outcomes.

b. Mission

Light House Academy's mission is to provide a solid Christian academic education within a Biblical worldview context and to partner with families to prepare students to become well-disciplined and outstanding citizens who positively reflect Christ to all in their sphere of influence.

c. Vision

Light House Academy students will be challenged to achieve personal academic excellence and learn to use their gifts, knowledge, and abilities to effectively reflect Christ in their lives.

d. Core Values

All aspects of our school are to be conducted in conformance with the Bible to the glory of God and dedicated to the service of Christ. Therefore, unrepentant practices that violate Biblical principles and truths will result in application denial or require separation from the organization.

e. Statement of Faith

Topic	Core Belief
Bible	We believe the entire Bible to be the inspired, authoritative, and infallible Word of God and the standard by which all our policies and practices are governed. (<i>II Tim. 3:15-16, II Peter 1:21</i>)
Trinity	We believe there is one eternal God, the Creator of all things, who exists in three persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. (<i>Gen. 1:1, Matt. 28:19, John 10:30, I Cor. 8:6, II Cor. 3:17, II Cor. 13:14, Eph. 4:4-6, Col. 2:9</i>)
Jesus Christ	We believe that Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God. Begotten of the Holy Spirit, He was born of a virgin, lived a sinless life, and shed His blood for the atonement of man's sins. He was resurrected in body from the dead and ascended to the right hand of the Father. We believe that He will return from heaven in power and glory to judge the living and the dead. (<i>Matt. 1:18, Luke 24:7, I Cor. 15:3-4, I Peter 2:22, I Peter 3:21-22, Rev. 19:11-21</i>)
Holy Spirit	We believe the Holy Spirit resides in the heart of every true believer, enabling the Christian to live a godly life. (<i>I Cor. 3:16, I Cor. 6:19-20, Eph. 4:30</i>)
Man & Sin	We believe mankind was created in God's image but became separated from God because of sin. (<i>Rom. 5:12,19; Gen. 1:26-27</i>)
Salvation	We believe man is saved from the consequences of sin by grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. (<i>Eph. 2:8-9, John 10:28-29</i>)
Heaven/Hell	We believe that both the saved and the lost will be resurrected: the saved unto eternal life and the lost unto eternal damnation. (<i>John 5:28-29</i>)
Other	God is the Creator of all life, including the unborn; all life is precious in His sight. (<i>Ps. 139:13-14</i>) We believe and adhere to the Biblical truths governing: relationships inside and out of marriage, sexual lifestyles, and the dignity of life from conception to natural death. (<i>Matt. 19:4-9, Rom. 1:26-27</i>) We believe that God created marriage to be exclusively the union of one man and one woman, and that intimate sexual activity is to occur exclusively within that union. (<i>Gen. 2:18-25; I Cor. 6:18, 7:2-5; Heb. 13:4</i>)

f. Organizational

Approved applicants (who subsequently enroll in the Academy) become a Member of the Light House Academy Corporation and are encouraged to actively participate in school planning and organization. We are a community of believers working together for the good of the organization, the development of our children, and the glory of God. (*Acts 2:44, I Tim. 4:12*)

2. ADMISSIONS

a. Qualifications

In order to maintain a high level of moral conduct and educational excellence, Light House Academy is open to students whose parents:

- i. Daily provide a loving, wholesome home environment for their child's soul and mind, reinforcing and exemplifying godly values. (*Prov. 22:6; Prov. 29:15,17; Eph. 6:4*)

- ii. Monitor their student's homework habits, encourage them, and spend time helping them learn to their fullest potential.
 - iii. Support the Handbook, the School Board decisions, and the teacher(s).
 - iv. Provide volunteer assistance to the school as requested. (*I Cor. 15:58, I Cor. 4:1-2*)
 - v. Actively participate in their Christian church and profess to have a born-again relationship with Jesus Christ. The Board will consider each application for admission on a case-by-case basis using the school's Purpose and Mission as guidelines. (*II Tim. 2:6-7*)
- b. Compatibility Period
- Every new student is accepted for a 90-day compatibility period, which begins the first day of school and ends 90 calendar days later.
- b. Non-Discriminatory Policy
- Light House Academy admits students of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national or ethnic origin in the administration of educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.
- c. Application/Enrollment Procedures
- i. Obtain a copy of the Handbook and carefully review policies and procedures.
 - ii. Complete and submit the General Application according to the deadline schedule to be considered for the coming year.
 - iii. Participate in an interview with a Light House committee. Besides the parents/guardians, the child may also be asked to be present. Previous school records may also be requested for review. All applications will be considered by the School Board and be determined on an individual basis.
 - iv. Upon acceptance, applicants need to complete an Enrollment Form for each student, which identifies necessary health records and includes permissions, waivers, and emergency-contact information.
 - v. Light House may require placement tests for any new student to assure proper grade placement.
 - vi. All returning students must re-enroll according to the deadline schedules and include the enrollment deposit.

3. SCHOOL BOARD

- a. Responsibilities
- i. Provide and maintain school property, hire all teachers and employees, supervise the finances, approve selection of curriculum materials and texts, establish school calendar, and have general supervision of the school.
 - ii. Provide assistance to teacher(s) in maintaining respectful discipline and a good classroom environment for learning.
 - iii. Schedule and hold regular, special, and annual business meetings.
 - iv. Appoint committees as needed to study specific issues and provide recommendations.
 - v. Update this Handbook as necessary.

4. ACADEMICS

a. Courses of Study

- i. Language Arts, including spelling, grammar, literature, and composition
- ii. Mathematics
- iii. Social Studies, including history, government, and current events
- iv. Science, including health
- v. Physical Education
- vi. Art and Music
- vii. Computer
- viii. Bible
- ix. Foreign Language may be offered at various times

b. Curriculum Description *(II Tim. 2:15)*

- i. The curriculum is chosen carefully to emphasize a Biblical belief system and life-style consistent with Biblical teachings and has well-balanced academics.
- ii. Parents are invited to review the curriculum and provide their comments to the School Board.

c. Grades Offered

Prekindergarten through 8th grade is offered. (Not all grades may be in session due to enrollment.)

- i. To be eligible for prekindergarten, children must be 4 years old on or before Sept. 1st and be able to use the restroom independently.
- ii. To be eligible for kindergarten, children must be 5 years old on or before Sept. 1st.
- iii. To be eligible for any other grade, the student must have successfully completed all previous grades. That may be demonstrated by documentation from previous schools or by completing a placement assessment administered by an outside resource, paid for by the student’s family.

d. Grade Reports & Progress Assessment

- iv. The school year is divided into three grading periods. Grade reports will be available approximately one week after the end of each session.
- v. The grading scale is as follows:

<u>Kindergarten</u>	
S+ = Mastered	100-90%
S = Satisfactory	89-80%
S- = Struggling	79-70%
NI = Needs Improvement	69-0%

<u>First Grade & Above</u>	
A	100 – 92
B	91 – 84
C	83 – 74
D	73 – 68
F	below 68

- vii. Students/Parents can access grades online via ThinkWave.com. LHA uses accepted assessment tools to annually and periodically measure student progress.

e. Attendance

- i. For unplanned absences, parents need to call the school before 8:30 a.m. on the day of the absence. Parents may also inform the teacher in person when they drop other children off in the morning. If a student is absent and no notification is received from parents, someone from the school will call the student’s home.

- ii. We ask that medical appointments be scheduled to avoid conflict with school hours.
 - iii. Cumulative absences must be limited as much as possible.
 - iv. If a student is going to have a planned absence (vacation, surgery, etc.), the teacher(s) need to be notified at least two weeks prior to the absence.
 - v. We highly discourage planned vacations on school days. It puts the student at a disadvantage and creates significant additional work for the teacher. Schoolwork normally due during a planned absence needs to be worked out with the teacher ahead of time.
 - vi. Absences are excused if unavoidable (such as illness related or a funeral), but Light House may request written verification. All other absences are considered unexcused (those made by choice).
 - vii. Any student arriving at school after 8:30 a.m. will be marked 'tardy,' unless the late arrival was due to uncontrollable circumstances (e.g., traffic jam, weather related).
- f. Field Trips, Guest Speakers, and Special Days
Field trips, guest speakers, and special days will supplement classroom education. These activities, and any resulting exceptions to the dress code, will be discussed by the teachers and the School Board prior to the activity. Permission slips and medical-release forms filled out at the beginning of the year are to be taken along on field trips.

5. SCHOOL DAY PROCEDURES

- a. School Opening
Parents should have their children at school no earlier than 8:15 a.m. and no later than 8:25 a.m. Students need to be ready for class to begin by 8:30 a.m.
- b. Devotions (*James 1:5*)
The school day will be opened with a prayer that will ask for God's direction and guidance through the day. The opening prayer will include all special requests and include a brother and/or the teacher(s) and the students holding hands in a circle. Prayer is allowed in classrooms. The devotion period will include scripture memorization using approved versions of the Bible, songs of worship, and/or Bible stories.
- c. Pledge of Allegiance
The Pledge of Allegiance will be recited each morning.
- d. Recess
Kindergarten will have a 15-minute recess in the morning. All grades will have a 30-minute recess following lunch, with the exception of middle-school students, who may return to class. Teacher(s) may extend recess length at their discretion.
We follow the suggestion of the National Association of School Nurses and set the minimum outdoor 'RealFeel' temperature to be 24°F. As long as the RealFeel is above 24°F, the students will spend part or all of their noon recess outside. Parents are responsible for providing adequate winter apparel for the chilly conditions.
- e. Lunch
Lunch begins with a student-led prayer. The school does not have a hot lunch but has microwave ovens available for sack lunches to be heated. The children will be placed on rotation for helping with the dishes, garbage, and other kitchen duties.

f. End of Day

School dismisses at 3:00 p.m., and students need to be picked up promptly. Parents are asked to remain outside the building until that time. Every Friday, school will be dismissed at 12:00 noon so that the teacher(s) have time to plan their schedules. If you wish to enter the school, for example to meet with the teacher, please park in areas out of the pick-up/drop-off zone.

6. FINANCIAL

a. Tuition & Registration Fees

- i. Each General Application, whether for new enrollees or returning students, requires a \$250 deposit (per family). Upon acceptance, the deposit will be applied to the total tuition charges for the year ahead.
- ii. The total enrollment cost for Light House Academy is composed of the basic tuition, book fees, and a PE fee. Multiple students from the same household qualify for a tuition break as outlined in the Tuition and Fees schedule.
- iii. Please refer to the current Tuition and Fees schedule for current tuition and registration pricing and details.
- iv. The Board reserves the right to make exceptions to the tuition policy. Any exception made by the Board applies only to the particular instance under review.
- v. Student will be responsible for any additional book fees required if grade or class changes are made after the start of the school year.

b. Tuition Assistance

Tuition assistance is confidential and available through a special fund. Families demonstrating the need for underwriting assistance may apply to the fund administrator.

c. Obligation upon Withdrawal from School (Refunds)

The Light House Academy Board budgets for staffing and expenses based on enrollment each year. If, after enrollment, the student discontinues their studies at LHA, all or part of the expenses are still due.

- Students withdrawing after August 1 but before the first day of school: book fee and tuition billed to date at the point of withdrawal is expected.
- Students withdrawing from school after the first day of class, or any time during the school year: full-year tuition and book fees are expected.
- Students withdrawing during the 90-day compatibility period: the book fee and tuition billed to date at the point of withdrawal is expected.
- The date of withdrawal is established by delivery of written notice to one of the active Board members. The enrollment deposit is non-refundable.

d. Legal Entity/Donations

Light House Academy is a non-profit corporation, which qualifies for tax-exempt 501(c)(3) contributions under IRS code.

7. STUDENT STANDARDS

a. Conduct & Behavior Expectations

All standards for our curriculum, student behaviors and community relations are founded on our Statement of Faith and Biblical principles. (*Rom. 12:1-2, Gal. 5:22-23*)

b. Student Expectations (*Eph. 4:12*)

- i. Obey the rules of the school and be respectful to their teachers and others.

- ii. Maintain Biblical standards in courtesy, kindness, language, morality, and honesty.
 - iii. Refrain from disruptive behavior.
 - iv. Respect the property of the school and of others.
- c. Conduct which will not be tolerated (*Eph. 6:1-3*)
- i. Foul or profane language
 - ii. Arguing church differences
 - iii. Deliberate disregard for school policies and standards
 - iv. Jokes which may be injurious either emotionally or physically
 - v. Fighting
 - vi. Theft
 - vii. Deliberate damage to school property, including littering. Cost of repairs are the responsibility of the student.
 - viii. Indecent behavior
 - ix. Carelessness in boy/girl contact
 - x. Bringing to school any of the following, without specific permission:
 - 1. matches
 - 2. guns (including toy guns), knives, swords
 - 3. cell phones, handheld PC's, radios, or electronic games
 - xi. Putting down or belittling other students
 - xii. Defiant attitude toward authority
 - xiii. Abuse of self or substances, including tobacco
 - xiv. Chewing gum is not permitted, unless by special needs or permission.
- d. Discipline (*Prov. 12:1, Heb. 12:10-11*)
- i. Parents need to support and assist in disciplinary action.
 - ii. The school tries to maintain discipline which is firm, fair, consistent, and tempered with love. Disciplinary procedures will be up to the teachers or teachers' aides' discretion.
 - iii. If a situation is severe or chronic, parents will receive written or oral notice. It may be necessary for a parent and/or a School Board member to come to the school to assist the teacher in determining the necessary discipline.
 - iv. The school board reserves the right to dismiss any student for severe behavioral problems.
 - v. Any disciplinary action taken by the Board applies only to that particular case under review.
 - vi. To reaffirm exceptionally-good behavior, reward systems may be used to motivate individuals or the class at the teacher's discretion.
- e. Student Dress Code
- i. General
 - 1. The students' dress at school needs to reflect the biblical principles of godliness and modesty. The manner of dress of a student can enhance their behavior and self-worth in a positive way. There is a correlation between the attitudes students take in their appearance and the attitude they take in their schoolwork and their school. (*1 Cor. 6:19-20*)
 - 2. The variety of the following dress code encourages every student to express their personality and individuality, yet nurtures self-respect, loyalty, and esprit de corps for the principles of Light House Academy and a lifetime of godly order. (*1 Cor. 14:10, 1 Tim. 1:5*)

3. It is the parent's responsibility to insure that the students leave home well-groomed and in compliance with the dress code.
4. The School Board reserves the right to modify or change the uniform and general dress code.
5. Each student needs one short-sleeved, red polo shirt embroidered with the school logo, to be worn whenever the teachers or board deem it necessary (e.g., field trips, group photos, fundraising events, etc.). It is also permissible to wear a solid, white long-sleeved T-shirt underneath if needed.
6. All clothing must be in good condition with no holes, tears, frays, or faded appearance.
7. Students may not draw attention with tattoos or body piercing (*Lev. 19:28*), except girls may have one small stud in each ear. Jewelry and cosmetics may be worn/used minimally, to display God's special creations. Young men must be clean shaven with no facial hair. Hair styling and haircuts must be modest, gender-appropriate, without coloring, encouraging and teaching practical, harmonious lifestyles. (*1 Peter 5:6*)

ii. Standardized Dress Code – All Students

1. Short- or long-sleeved, collared or turtleneck shirt, without writing of any kind on the shirt. However, small numbers or small embroidered insignias are acceptable.
2. Sweaters, cardigans, crewneck sweatshirts, and zippered and hooded sweatshirts and vests of any color may be worn over a collared or turtleneck shirt. No writing of any kind is allowed on these items. However, a small number or small embroidered insignias are acceptable.
3. Fridays will be considered "Casual Day." Jeans, nylon wind pants, and shirts and sweatshirts with appropriate writing may be worn.
4. For safety reasons, no flip-flops, Crocs, or Heelies may be worn. Sandals with an ankle strap may be worn.
5. A pair of tennis shoes and socks must be kept at school for PE.

iii. Standardized Dress Code – Girls

1. Modest skirts, skorts, shorts, capris, or twill/chino pants of any solid color; no jeans, denim material, sweatpants, nylon wind pants/shorts, or form-fitting pants of any kind.
2. Bicycle shorts must be worn under skirts if the skirt is knee length.
3. Solid-colored leggings under skirts are also acceptable.

ii. Standardized Dress Code – Boys

1. Modest pants or shorts of any solid color; no jeans, denim material, sweatpants, or nylon wind pants/shorts; elastic-waist twills are acceptable.

8. TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS

a. Teacher Requirements

- i. Teacher(s) must hold a minimum of a Bachelor's Degree from a recognized college or university. Teacher(s) with a teaching certificate and/or classroom experience are preferred.

- ii. Teacher(s) must profess a Christian faith; support the Purpose, Mission, Vision, Core Values, and Statement of Faith of Light House Academy; and support the Board and policies of the Handbook. (*Rom. 10:9-10, 1 Tim. 4:12*)
 - iii. The teacher(s) will have a modest appearance.
- b. Assistants
- i. A teacher's assistant does not need to hold a teaching degree.
 - ii. Assistants must profess a Christian faith in line with the values and standards of Light House Academy and support the Board and the policies of this Handbook.
- c. Board Approval
- The Board reserves the right to dismiss a teacher/assistant who does not comply with the guidelines in the Handbook.

9. PARENT – SCHOOL RELATIONS

- a. Health Insurance
- Student's health insurance will be the responsibility of the parents.
- b. Parent/Teacher Conferences
- Can be requested by either the teacher or the parents and should be arranged to avoid conflicts with school. Regularly-scheduled conferences occur once each school year or as needed.
- c. Problem-Solving Procedure
- Care should be taken to follow the proper procedure as outlined in Matt. 18:15-17. Parents should discuss problems with the teacher before contacting the Board. School problems should not be discussed outside the school.
- d. Volunteerism
- Parents and/or close extended family or friends of a family are asked to volunteer as part of their commitment to Light House Academy. The school will make every effort to align volunteer opportunities with the abilities of our supporting community. Volunteer options may include:
- i. Transportation for school functions: Using their own vehicles, drivers are occasionally needed to transport students to local activities, on field trips, or to other approved functions. Depending on the driving time and distance, drivers may be reimbursed for gas through fees collected in preparation for the event. All drivers must have a reliable vehicle, have a current license in good standing, be registered with our insurance company, and comply with State of Illinois laws regarding child safety.
 - ii. Specials Instructor: Volunteers may be able to help conduct specific classes or participate as a tutoring aide at Light House Academy. Examples include reading aide, PE coach, or art or music instructor.
 - iii. Daily Aide: Light House needs daily aides to assist in maintaining order and assisting students with their daily work. This also includes overseeing noon lunch and recess.
 - iv. Other Volunteer Opportunities: Each school year, Light House Academy determines where volunteers will be needed and gives the community the opportunity to sign up for assignments that fit into their comfort zones and time availabilities. These other jobs may include fund-raising events, birthday and holiday celebrations, teacher celebrations, librarian, yearbook, housekeeping, and many more.

- v. All volunteers must be registered with the school before being able to participate in student-related activities.
- e. Transportation
Transportation to and from school will be provided or arranged by the parents.

10. MISCELLANEOUS

- a. School Closings
 - i. Any unplanned school closing will be determined by designated members of the School Board, faculty, and community.
 - ii. Emergency closings will be communicated by multiple methods including: notices sent home with students, emails, text messages, and when appropriate, posting on primary local television stations.
- b. Telephone
 - i. Student telephone use at the school is for emergencies only. Use of the school telephone is at the teacher's discretion.
 - ii. Students are not allowed to use their personal phones during the school day, except by special permission from the teacher or aide.
- c. Soliciting
The School Board must approve the sale of any items at school.
- d. School Visits
School visits are encouraged but need to be scheduled with the teacher.
- e. Free-Time Standards
Free-time standards and class-supplement materials including books, magazines, computer software, and computer games must be approved by the teacher.
- f. School Insurance
Light House Academy maintains complete business-insurance coverage. Details may be obtained by request.

11. SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS (Published annually, or as needed)

- a. School-Year Calendar: published each summer, shortly before the start of the school year.
- b. Family Directory: available as needed
- c. LHA Contacts: Board Members, committee chairs, volunteers, etc.
- d. LHA Yearbook: published annually

This Handbook subject to periodic revision.