

*Parent-Student
Handbook*

2017-2018

PARENT AND STUDENT HANDBOOK

Mission and Purposes

Wiregrass Christian Academy is a happy place where children are encouraged to explore their world and learn through play and educational activities taught by a dedicated teaching staff.

The primary reasons Wiregrass Christian Academy exists are to provide a quality educational program and to teach the principles of Christian conduct as they are contained in the Bible. If we fail to accomplish either of these goals, we cease at that point to have any real justification for existing. Your cooperation with us in these endeavors is sincerely requested and vitally needed. Without your cooperation, it is highly unlikely that your child can receive the training that is possible with your help.

At Wiregrass Christian Academy we realize the impact of a child's learning experience on his/her life, and we take a positive approach toward learning in the childhood years. Chapel is conducted weekly by the preaching staff of the church. Bible stories and values are further discussed in class. Our goal is to teach the children that God loves them, Jesus is their lifelong friend, and that God created our world. We also strive to help them acquire the skills they will need to succeed academically. Children are taught to play and work with others; to feel secure, wanted, and happy; to be helpful and kind. The A Beka curriculum is utilized as the basic text for reading, phonics, and math skills; it is supplemented by other published materials as needed.

The teacher will:

- Encourage the child's independence through routines and activities.
- Help the child develop a desire to share with others and take turns.
- Help the child feel secure at school with friends and teachers.
- Help the child have respect for teachers and classmates.

The school day begins at 8:00 a.m. The preschool children will have alternate periods of vigorous activity and opportunity for quiet play. As the child grows in the program, he/she will learn to follow oral directions, to use and care for materials properly, and recognize his/her name in print. There are periods of indoor work/playtime when the children are permitted to proceed as they choose from one activity to another, alone or in small groups. The classrooms have learning centers designed for this purpose. There will be periods of supervised outdoor play provided each day, weather permitting, and large motor activities provided indoors on days of inclement weather. Elementary students have daily Bible classes as well as the usual academic subjects and outdoor time.

Tuition and Extended Care Statements

You will receive a statement on the **last school Friday of each month** as a reminder that tuition and extended care payments are due. Extended care charges will be on the statement following the month the extended care is used. Regular daycare charges are \$4.20/hour. However, we also offer full-time toddler and preschool rates for those who need three or more hours of extended care per day. This rate includes tuition. Records are kept to be sure that charges are accurate. There will be no reduction in charges due to trips or illness. **Tuition is due by the 10th of each month.** If it is not paid by the 15th, a \$25 late fee will be added. There will be a \$25 returned check fee. Extended care charges are in effect from 6:45-7:45 a.m. and begin 15 minutes after dismissal time from your child's class. Late pickup after 5:30 p.m. will result in a \$1/minute charge for the first 4 minutes. For 5 – 9 minutes late pickup, you will be charged at \$5 per minute. For 10-14 minutes late, the charge will be \$10 per minute. Extended care staff are paid to work until 5:30. They have families and responsibilities, too. Continued abuse of extended care will result in your child's being banned from extended care. Please call or come by the office if you have any questions concerning your bill.

In your February statement, you will see a \$25 testing fee (K – 6th only).

If a monthly payment is missed and payment of the account in full has not been made by the 10th of the following month, dismissal from W.C.A. will follow. No records will be transferred to another school until the account is paid in full.

Elementary Attendance Policy

Tardiness:

1. School hours are from 8 a.m. until 3:00 p.m.
2. A student is considered tardy if he is not in his seat at 8:05 a.m.
3. A student who is tardy five (5) times will be subject to a ½-hour in-school suspension to be served at the discretion of the administrator.
4. Excessive tardiness can be reflected in the conduct grade.
5. Any student who is tardy must report to the office. K – 6th graders will have to have a tardy slip in order to enter the classroom.

Absence:

The State of Alabama has a compulsory attendance law through age 17. Furthermore, the Attorney General has issued an opinion that local school boards may determine the number of absences that constitute a failure of the grade level or subject. WCA has determined that any student K – 6th missing more than twenty (20) days in one year can fail the grade level.

Regular attendance is essential to the progress of learning. Realizing that absence is sometimes necessary, it will be excused upon verification by the student's parents. **Students returning from an absence must bring a note from a parent and /or a doctor's excuse.** All previously announced quizzes and exams will be taken on the day of the return. The student will be given the number of days missed to make up the work. Work not made up in a timely manner will be given a grade of 0. Work missed for unexcused absences cannot be made up and will receive a grade of 0.

Excused Absences:

1. Personal illness
2. Severe illness or death in the family
3. Emergency medical or dental attention. Medical and dental appointments are included; however, you are requested to make appointments after school as much as possible.
4. Absentees approved in advance by the administrator.

Release of Children

Your children will be released at the end of the school day only to you or to a person specified on your release form. A person listed on your form will be asked for proper identification if the school staff is unfamiliar with the individual. A note is required if the child is to be picked up by someone who is not listed on the release form. A note is required if your child is going home with a classmate.

Remember that we are a school, not a daycare facility. The preschool classes are in session until noon and elementary classes until 3:00. Early pick-ups disrupt classes. Please do not pick up your child early unless it is absolutely necessary. Please use the drive-through to pick up your child at 12:00 or at 3:00. The drive-through is safer and more efficient and prevents needless noise and congestion in the hallways.

Sickness

If your child becomes sick, you will be called. Please make plans to pick up your child immediately. Children should not be brought to school if they have severe colds, fever, undetermined rash or spots, vomiting, diarrhea, or other symptoms of illness. **A child must be free of fever, vomiting, and diarrhea for 24 hours before returning to school.** A written note of instructions must accompany any medication which is to be given during school hours. Such medication needs to be turned in to the office, not given to the teacher. WCA will no longer purchase medication to give to students for headaches or stomach aches, allergies, or coughs. If a child is diagnosed with a communicable disease such as chickenpox, you will be notified to watch for symptoms in your child.

Parking Lot Safety

When arriving or departing, please follow the traffic flow pattern. **Children should be delivered and picked up under the overhang in the center of the building.** Please have children exit your vehicle on the side closest to the sidewalk. Under no circumstance should any child be allowed to wander unsupervised in the parking lot. **If you need to come into the office, please park in designated parking spaces. Do not drive up near the office door at any time of day and leave your car while you go inside. All children entering the building between 7:45 and 8:00 a.m. should enter through the middle doors.**

Classroom Visitation

Any parents wishing to visit the classroom to observe classes should make an appointment through the office. **Drop-in visits or lingering in the classrooms in the morning distract a teacher from her classroom duties** and make it harder for children to settle down. Our teachers have found that the best way to resolve separation anxieties of some preschool children (and their parents) is to **drop the children off at the drive-through** instead of bringing them to the classroom.

Discipline

Teachers will use isolation, “time-out,” redirection, or positive reinforcement method of discipline in their classroom. Any student involved in a fight is subject to a one-day or longer suspension. If the undesirable behavior continues over a period of time, a conference will be scheduled with the parents. **Should a problem arise, parents should talk with the teacher first, and then, if necessary, with the administrator.**

Students are not allowed to have **cell phones** or other electronic devices at school. “Fidget Spinners” are not permitted at school. Any such items brought to school will be confiscated and may be picked up at the office by a parent.

Disenrollment

Wiregrass Christian Academy has a **no-tolerance policy regarding threats, violence, bullying, and harassment**. All students are expected to abide by classroom rules for behavior. Problems can usually be resolved through the cooperative efforts of the parents, the teacher, and the administrator. However, in the event of continuing disruptive behavior, disrespect, belligerence, or other behavior counterproductive to classroom learning, the student in question will be disenrolled and the parents billed for 2 weeks’ tuition.

Preschool Notes

Each child should bring a snack from home every day. Lunches must be brought from home if your child stays after 12:00 p.m. Lunches should not require long heating time and should not need to be cooked at school. Each Wednesday we will have pizza, and each Monday we will have Chick-Fil-A.

You will have the opportunity to order either or both meals each week. Please do not send candy or soda for snack or lunch.

Preschool students entering the 3-year-old program must be potty trained. If a child is enrolled and we see that he/she is not potty trained, we will disenroll that child until he/she is fully potty trained. **Three- and four-year-olds are not to come to school in pull-ups.** If necessary, they may wear pull-ups at naptime.

Birthdays and Special Holidays

The children enjoy celebrating birthdays with their classmates. You may bring or send simple refreshments on your child's special day. We celebrate the following special holidays: Thanksgiving, Christmas, Valentine's Day, and Easter. Parents will be asked to help furnish refreshments for these parties.

Share Day

The children may bring items to school to share on a "Share Day" specified by individual teachers. Items brought should be of educational value such as books, records, leaves, rocks, pictures, etc. **PLEASE DO NOT LET YOUR CHILDREN BRING TOYS TO SCHOOL** unless the teacher gives permission for a toy sharing day. The school is not responsible for lost or broken toys. **Toy guns and knives are not allowed.**

Field Trips

We will have numerous field trips during the school year. We will notify you in advance of each event. We encourage parents of preschool students to chaperone these trips. Children in the toddler class **must** be accompanied by an adult on all field trips. A limited number of parents may accompany elementary students on field trips. We must ask that any parent who accompanies our students on a field trip refrain from smoking. Field trips are part of the education program. Any child who does not go on a field trip **may not** come to school that day.

Special Programs

There will be two evening programs during the school year. The fall program will be held on **Thursday, October 26**, in conjunction with our Fall Festival. The end-of-year awards program will be held on **Tuesday, May 22**. It is important that your child be at both programs.

Communication with Parents

A school calendar is sent home at the beginning of each month. This calendar explains our activities during the month. Please post the calendar in a prominent place at home. Conferences will be scheduled as needed by teachers or at the request of the parents. Each teacher also sends home folders on Friday. **Please check your child's folder each week for communications from the school.** Be sure to return the folder on the following Monday. Remember to check our Facebook page regularly for announcements and information.

Please remember to update your child's school records whenever you move, change jobs, or change telephone or cell phone numbers.

Dress Code

All children will need a complete change of clothes, which should be changed as the weather changes. Please send clothes in a zip-lock bag labeled with the child's name. Label all sweaters, jackets, etc., with the child's name. The children may wear appropriate shorts. It would be helpful to the teachers for the preschool children to wear play clothes they can manage as far as buttons, zippers, etc. Tennis shoes are the recommended footwear for school, since sandals and slick soles lend themselves to injuries during vigorous play. Kindergarten through 6th grade students are required to have tennis shoes on their P.E. days. **A dress code is in effect for grades K – 6th.** These children should wear khaki or navy slacks, "walking" shorts, or skirts, with red, white, or blue (navy or light blue) shirts. Girls may also wear navy, khaki, or navy plaid jumpers with a white blouse. Elementary students are not required to wear uniforms on Fridays, however. **Students who come to school out of uniform will be asked to change clothes.** If necessary, a parent will be asked to bring the proper clothes to school.

Miscellaneous Items Needed

The children will need a book bag or backpack. Preschool students in extended care will need a "bed roll" or a nap mat for rest time. Remember to label all personal items.

Elementary Snacks and Lunches

K-6th grade students may bring a healthy snack (milk, juice, fruit) from home to eat during a designated morning break in their classrooms. **No soft drinks or candy will be allowed for snacks or for lunch.** All lunch boxes should be labeled. "Heat-ups" should be labeled on the tubs and lids in order to prevent mix-up of lunches.

Unexpected Severe Weather Conditions Procedures

Though most severe weather conditions may result in the closure of school prior to the onset of the severe weather, there is always the possibility that unexpected severe weather may occur. **Wiregrass Christian Academy uses an all-call system to notify parents in case of school closure or early dismissal.** Be sure that the office has the 1 best number to reach you at any time. If circumstances beyond your control should prohibit you from picking up your child, your child will be cared for by a staff member until you, or someone designated on your emergency list, can pick up your child. The school will try to reach you by phone; but if we are unsuccessful, please know that we will take care of your child until you can safely arrive. Contact the office, if possible, to advise us of your circumstances.

Fire, Lockdown, and Tornado Drills

We will have fire, lockdown, and tornado drills during the school year so that the children will become familiar with the procedure and, should an actual fire, tornado, or other emergency situation occur, so that children will be less likely to panic. Our building is well equipped with smoke detectors and fire extinguishers that are checked periodically to insure proper function. We have deadbolt locks on all classroom doors, and we have "safe rooms" as designated by the Coffee County EMA director.

Photographs and Videos

Photographs will be made of the children during the school year. The photos will be used in a slide show at the spring program to give parents the opportunity to see some of the activities the children have been involved in. Photos may also be used in short cable TV ads, on our Facebook page, or on our website. School pictures will be made twice during the year (October and March) and will be made available to parents for purchase. Purchase of these photographs is optional.

School Withdrawal

A two weeks notice is required if withdrawal becomes necessary. Tuition will be charged during this time period.

Policy Awareness Form

Upon reading the handbook, please sign and return to your child's teacher or to the office.

I, parent of _____, have read the Parent-Student Handbook for Wiregrass Christian Academy, and I understand, and will abide by, the policies contained in the handbook.

Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian

Date

