

# PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK



***“Technology, Math, and Science Focus”***

*“Train up a child in the way he should go (and in keeping with his individual gift and bent) and when he is old he will not depart from it.” Proverb 22:6*



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## LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Bethlehem Christian Academy welcomes you! We are looking forward to spending many rewarding days with your child. We value you and your child as members of our school family, a learning community with multi-faceted instructional programs that address diverse needs. Our school has solid academic offerings and a nurturing school climate. Our school is focused on technology, math and science, the absolute way to become a “Beacon of Excellence.”

Keeping parents informed is very important to all of us at Bethlehem Christian Academy (BCA), and many communication methods are available for us to use including this parent handbook. Please read our parent handbook carefully and let us know if you have any questions.

Choosing the best school to educate your child is no easy task. For the past four years we have planned and organized to serve the children of this community, and now we are looking forward to new opportunities and new challenges as we open the doors to Bethlehem Christian Academy.

As we open our doors, please know that the primary purpose of our school is to train the student in the knowledge of God, encourage a personal relationship with Jesus Christ, promote Christian values, and give the student an excellent education in a safe Christ-centered environment.

The information provided in this handbook will give you an overview of the opportunities your child will be given to grow spiritually, mentally, socially, physically, and emotionally. Should you have any questions, or would like to schedule a visit to our school, please call the school office at 864-688-0410.

Again, welcome! We will have a fantastic year in our quest to strive and become:



**“Beacons of Excellence”**

## **The Baldwin Vision: History & Mission of Academy**

***Behold the DREAM...Rev. Baldwin, A Man of Vision...***

### **The Vision of the Bethlehem Christian Academy**

The Bethlehem Christian Academy exists to educate our children in a spiritual environment. Bethlehem wants our children to receive the highest intellectual development of any children in any school in the country.

This vision began in 1996 when I was walking the halls of Mt. Zion Christian School with my daughter, LaJasmine. As we went to her class, I paused and looked around and it felt like the Spirit of God saying to me “we can do this!” That was the beginning of the vision for the Bethlehem Christian Academy. The Academy’s vision is based upon a belief that an African American Church could not only reach African American children, but just like any other church; an African American church can reach all children. The current paradigm of African American children scoring at the bottom in standardized test scores must be shattered. If African American children can learn the words to a rap song with words adults cannot even understand, then our children can learn Algebra, Science, and Literature also. African American children need to know their American legacy and their history from the continent of Africa. Knowledge of the achievements of people of African descent will break the yoke of oppression that has infected our community that high academic standards are for people of other races. Our community as a whole benefits when anyone excels academically. Even though we are focusing on the need to lift the African American community, the Academy is and always will be for all children. We live in a world where the economy and everything else is global. Therefore, we must learn to live together in our community. To live together, we must learn together. When we learn together we can appreciate and celebrate our differences rather than be fearful and untrusting of them.

In order to be successful, our students simply need someone who believes in them and expects the best from them. When the students receive these expectations from the parents and staff, our students will believe in themselves and will deliver their best. The Bethlehem Christian Academy will have parents who are involved in the education of their children. Bethlehem will have parents who visit our classrooms and interact with our teachers in a positive way. Bethlehem has parents who understand that an education is an investment in their child’s future. Bethlehem parents realize investing in their child’s education will pay dividends for a lifetime.

The Bethlehem Christian Academy has the best administration and staff of any school in the land. Our staff is competent and confident. Our staff knows that education is not only a profession, but education is a calling. The staff and administration knows that they are shaping the lives of our future. This is our vision that God gave us, and if the Lord said it, you can count on it for God will do just what He said.

## *Philosophy*

Bethlehem Christian Academy strives to help students discover the joy of learning so they will become lifelong learners, confident decision-makers and strong team leaders. Bethlehem Christian Academy is anchored in Biblical truth. Our Academy provides a comprehensive program of educational excellence which is founded on the absolutes of God's Word. We acknowledge the pre-eminence of Jesus Christ in all things in our quest to illuminate children as "Beacons of Excellence."

We believe in providing an enriched multi-level approach to educating the whole child: combining spiritual, emotional and intellectual involvement through the incorporation of basic Christian principles and values.

We believe in teaching each student to honor God by striving for excellence daily, and making good use of the amazing resources God has provided.

We believe that students are our first priority! Bethlehem Christian Academy is committed in the pursuit of educational excellence.

We believe that cultural diversity promotes the full development of each individual, and that learning is a life-long process.



## *Mission Statement*

Bethlehem Christian Academy will provide a quality  
Christian-based education  
in a challenging academic environment.  
Through the partnerships with families, school and communities,  
we will create in our students  
a passion for life long learning,  
a commitment of caring for others, and  
habits of healthy living.



# **BETHLEHEM CHRISTIAN ACADEMY**

## ***"BEACON OF EXCELLENCE"***

### **ARTICLES OF FAITH**

Bethlehem Christian Academy accepts the following Baptist doctrine:

1. We believe that the Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired, and is a perfect treasure of heavenly instruction.
2. We believe the Scriptures teach that there is one, and only one, living and true God, an infinite, intelligent Spirit, whose name is Jehovah, the Maker and Supreme Ruler of heaven and earth.
3. We believe the Scriptures teach that Man was created in holiness, under the law of his Maker; but by voluntary transgressions fell from that holy and happy state; in consequence of which all mankind are now sinners, not by constraint but choice.
4. We believe that the Scriptures teach that the salvation of sinners is wholly of grace.
5. We believe the Scriptures teach that the great Gospel blessing which Christ secures to such as believe in him is justification; that justification includes the pardon of sin, and the promise of eternal life on principles of righteousness.
6. We believe that the Scriptures teach that the blessings of salvation are made free to all by the Gospel.
7. We believe that the Scriptures teach that in order to be saved; sinners must be regenerated, or born again.
8. We believe the Scriptures teach that repentance and faith are sacred duties, and also inseparable graces, wrought in our souls by the regenerating Spirit of God.
9. We believe the Scriptures teach that election is the eternal purpose of God, according to which he graciously regenerates, sanctifies and saves sinners.
10. We believe the Scriptures teach that Sanctification is the process by which, according to the will of God, we are made partakers of his holiness.
11. We believe the Scriptures teach that such only are real believers as endure to the end.
12. We believe the Scriptures teach that the Law of God is the eternal and unchangeable rule of his moral government.
13. We believe the Scriptures teach that a visible church of Christ is a congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the Gospel.
14. We believe the Scriptures teach that Christian baptism is the immersion in water of a believer, into the name of the Father, and Son, and Holy Ghost.
15. We believe the Scriptures teach that the first day of the week is the Lord's Day, or Christian Sabbath.
16. We believe the Scriptures teach that civil government is of divine appointment, for the interest and good order of human society.
17. We believe the Scriptures teach that there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked.
18. We believe the Scriptures teach that the end of the world is approaching; that at the last day, Christ will descend from heaven, and raise the dead from the grave for final retribution.

# ***Policies, Procedures & Responsibilities***

## **Admissions Policy**

Bethlehem Christian Academy admits students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin to the rights and privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. All new entrants will take an admissions test and/or provide their most recent standardized test scores as part of their admissions procedure. This test is used for placement, as well as to determine if the needs of the prospective student can be met at the school. Students entering the Pre-Kindergarten class must be four years of age by November 1. Bethlehem Christian Academy reserves the right to dismiss any student requiring Special Services or any student who displays constant disciplinary behavior.

## **Non-Discriminatory Policy**

Bethlehem Christian Academy will not discriminate against any family based on race, affiliation, ethnic origin, or gender.

## **Enrollment Procedures**

The following items are required to complete the enrollment process.

- General Admission Information
- Enrollment Agreement
- Child Release Authorizations
- Internet & Computer Use Contract
- Articles of Faith
- Birth Certificate
- Social Security Card
- Standardized Testing Records (if applicable)

Medical forms:

- Documentation of current immunizations
- Medical Report
- First week installment of tuition in advance

## **Immunizations**

According to South Carolina Department of Health Immunization requirements, each child enrolled in Bethlehem Christian Academy must meet applicable immunization requirements. All immunizations required for the child's age must be completed by the date of admission.

## **Financial Information**

It is necessary that fees and tuition are paid when due. All records and report cards will be withheld until all tuition costs or other school fees are paid. It is the responsibility of the parent to notify the office if a payment cannot be made on time. Accounts not paid on time will prevent the student from returning to class until a financial plan has been agreed upon. Tuition can be paid weekly, monthly, semi-annually, or annually. Tuition payments are due on the first working day of each month. Payments received after the 10th are considered late and will be charged a late fee of \$25.00. Any check returned for insufficient funds will be charged \$35.00.

## ***Policies, Procedures & Responsibilities Continued~~~~***

### **Attendance – Absences - Tardiness**

**Attendance** – It is understood that attendance is a privilege and not a right. This privilege may be forfeited by any student who does not conform to the standards and regulations of this school. It is well known that regular attendance at school is an important factor in helping your child maximize his/her learning.

**Absences** – An absence will be counted as excused for: (1) personal illness, (2) serious illness or death in the immediate family, (3) medical examinations that cannot be made after school, and (4) appearance required in court.

Upon returning to school following any absence or tardiness, students are required to submit a note from their parents which contains the following: (1) the date of absence or tardiness, (2) the specific reason for the absence or tardiness, and (3) the signature of one parent.

Remember that if a family vacation occurs during the school year, the office and the teacher should be notified before the student leaves. School assignments can be given so that the children will not fall behind in their school work.

**Tardiness** - A student who arrives at school late, but after 10:15 a.m., is tardy, but given credit for a half day. Tardiness will be excused for similar reasons as absences. Every four tardies will be counted as an absence.

### **Emergency Closing**

In case of serious weather conditions or emergency situations that necessitate the closing of school, we will adhere to the following procedure; the announcement of our school closing will be broadcasted on Channels 4 and 7 TV. Parents may also watch for our school name on the bottom of the TV screen. Our website will also display closing information. Should it be necessary to close school once it is in session, the parents or an emergency number will be called prior to the closing of school.

### **Release of Children**

Children will be released only to the parent/guardian or an authorized person as designated by the parent Release Authorization form in the enrollment packet. If you need to amend the Release Authorization form, please stop by the office.

With the exception of the 3:00 p.m. pickup procedure all parents are required to check-in and check-out their children. Please make sure that your child is properly signed-in and out so we can properly ensure their safety.

At 3:00 p.m., students not enrolled in Bethlehem Christian Academy's After School Care Program will be escorted to the parent's car. Please refrain from parking in such a way as to block the line of cars waiting to pick up their child. Children enrolled in Bethlehem Christian Academy's After School Program will be escorted to their designated snack room. Any child who needs to leave school early will need to notify the office. Please limit the number of early pick-ups to a minimum since this will interrupt class time and will limit very important instructional time. Please try to schedule appointments after 3:00 p.m.

## *Policies, Procedures & Responsibilities Continued~~~~*

### **Illness**

It is the goal of Bethlehem Christian Academy to provide a safe and healthy environment for your child. In an ideal world we could accomplish this in a germ-free environment. Even though we pride ourselves in adhering to proper hand washing and sanitizing procedures, germs are present in today's society. With the help of parents keeping their sick children at home, we can help prevent the spread of germs and keep our children from common illnesses.

When is your child too sick to attend school? When they are displaying one of the following symptoms:

- Fever
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Undiagnosed rash
- Red eyes with discharge
- Headache that will not respond to ibuprofen or acetaminophen

If your child develops any of these symptoms at school, you will be contacted and asked to pick up your child immediately. If you cannot be reached within one hour, we will call one of your approved contacts.

### **Dispensing Medicine Policy**

Only medicine prescribed by a physician will be dispensed in our school. It must be properly signed in and then locked in the appropriate storage area. All medication must be in its original container with the child's full name and dosage written on it.

A member of the office staff or other designated staff member will dispense the medicine to our students. We encourage you to dispense all medications at home. If this is not possible, all medications must be accompanied by a doctor's note and a parent permission note.

All medicine must be properly signed in on the medication form in order to be dispensed. Failure to properly sign in medicine will force the office staff NOT to dispense medicine to your child. Please write your child's name, prescription name and number, dosage, time to be given, and your signature on the medication form. Medication should be taken home each day.

### **Medical Emergencies**

In the event a medical emergency occurs at school the following steps will be taken to ensure the safety of the child. We will administer first aid as necessary, contact the child's physician or 911 as appropriate, and contact the child's parents immediately. If parent contacts are not available students may be transferred to Hillcrest Hospital for medical care at the parent's expense.

### **Procedures for Parental Notifications**

Bethlehem Christian Academy has a centralized location for posting all notices for parental notification. This includes schedules, announcements, warnings, changes in policies, and other pertinent information for parent awareness. Also, if the administrator or teacher needs to notify you immediately, we will call your daytime numbers from your child's enrollment form. We may also leave a note in your child's daily journal.

## *Policies, Procedures & Responsibilities Continued~~~~*

### **Meals and Food Services**

Bethlehem Christian Academy (BCA) provides a healthy lunch for \$2.20 per day. Breakfast is \$1.50 per day. An additional snack is served during the after school program. BCA requests that parents provide a nutritious sack lunch daily for their child if they are not purchasing the school lunch.

Food service practices: Bethlehem Christian Academy must ensure meals and snacks provided by the parent are not shared with other children. Children with food allergies are at risk when consuming food prepared by someone other than their own parents.

Children are encouraged but never forced to eat new foods during snack and meal times. We use this time to model good table manners and to reinforce children taking responsibility for the mealtime in setting the table, serving themselves, using good manners, and clean up after the meal or snack.

### **Transportation**

No student should arrive prior to 7:00 a.m. since staff will not be available prior to this time. The early arrivals should report directly to the designated area.

### **Field Trips**

As part of the academic program, field trips are often taken to enhance our curriculum. All students are required to attend scheduled trips. Each student must bring a signed permission slip from his/her parents, which is given to the teacher. Students without permission slips will be assigned work to do at the school. Dress for field trips will be school uniforms unless the director grants an exception. Each trip will be scheduled in advance and will incur a small additional fee to cover admission fees, etc.

#### ***Field Trip Procedures:***

All children will be transported in bus or vans operated by the academy.

You will be given at least 48 hours advance notice of planned field trips with full details.

You must sign a permission form for each field trip off-site.

First aid kits are carried in each van and with the staff on the field trips.

Staff also carries notebooks containing emergency contact information on field trips.

For emergency purposes, a cell phone will be carried by one of our staff members.

### **Parents Visitation**



All parents are welcome to visit! When a visit is planned, the parent should first check with the school. Parents and volunteers helping in the classroom must follow the school dress code.

### **Parent – Teacher Conferences**



Parents that request a conference with a particular teacher should call the office indicating their desire for a conference, stating time and date available. The office will set up the conference. Likewise, a teacher may request a conference with a parent. Parent conferences will be scheduled at the end of each nine week term.

## *Policies, Procedures & Responsibilities Continued~~~~*

### **Parent – Teacher Association**

The parent-teacher organization is designed to improve the relationship between parents and the school, to enhance the fellowship between parents and teachers at Bethlehem Christian Academy. The parents are required to give ten hours of volunteer service during the year and to help the school in its many programs.

### **Parent Participation in Operation and Activities (Volunteers)**

All volunteers and contractors, whether paid or unpaid, who are regularly or frequently present at the Bethlehem Christian Academy facilities will be properly screened and meet all minimum standards as required by South Carolina Department of Social Services. Note that at no time will any volunteer or contractor be left alone with children unless all the background check requirements same as required by all Bethlehem Christian Academy employees are met. We put our students' safety first.

### **Before & After School Program**

#### ***Bethlehem Christian Academy Offers:***

- Great hours: 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. daily, Monday-Friday
- Healthy snack, relax, and visit unwind time
- Homework and quiet activity time- tutoring available by certified teachers
- Supervised outside play time on new bright fenced playground and play yard
- Inside fun activity time: computers, puzzles, reading club, chess club, arts & crafts, science activities and experiments, etc.
- Failure to pick up a child by 6:00 p.m., will result in an additional \$1.00 charge for each minute thereafter.
- Before and After School Care charges are billed on a monthly basis.
- Bethlehem Christian Academy *Does NOT* offer TV time, movies (on a regular basis) video games (except on the computers, educational in content).

Bethlehem Christian Academy is a Christian Private School and provides a family safe, friendly, and appropriate Christian environment for growing children and preteens.



### **Fire Drill**

Fire drills will be held monthly during the school year. A fire drill chart is posted in each classroom. Once the signal is given, activities must cease and all students must exit the building. The following procedure is to be followed:

- Walk quickly in single file.
- No running or pushing.
- No talking in or out of the building.
- Windows and doors are closed.
- Attendance will be taken outside.
- When the clear signal is given, students may return to their classroom.



# **ACADEMIC INFORMATION**

## ***Academic Program***

***Homework***

***Make-up Work***

***Student Supplies***

***Report Cards***

***Progress Reports***

***Grading System***

***Principal's Honor Roll***

***Promotion - Retention***

# *Academic Information*

## **Academic Program**

Bethlehem Christian Academy has a carefully chosen an extensive comprehensive program, developmentally appropriate for individual age groups. We offer a diverse educational approach, electing to use the very best aspects of various educational materials and methods available.

Bethlehem Christian Academy includes preschool four-year olds (Kindergarten Development) through third grade. Teachers create enriched learning environments for children. Kindergarten Development emphasizes academic readiness activities and social development in preparation for kindergarten and as a foundation for future learning at Bethlehem Christian Academy.

The Academy focuses on core subjects and academic achievement in accordance with each student's ability. In addition to the key skills taught in the Abeka curriculum which provide direct an indirect instruction in language arts, mathematics, Bible, social studies and science, students participate in art, music, health, physical education, computer lab, and foreign language. All students will meet for chapel every week. Although academics are the core of our mission, we recognize that a school environment offers unique opportunities for a well-rounded social, spiritual and emotional life. Christian service opportunities will be a core component of our daily lives, thus giving students experience in serving others.

***ABeka Curriculum:*** ABeka is an acclaimed Christian educational curriculum and teaching program based on the Scriptures, and has the Christian approach to education and life woven throughout. Biblical teachings and Christian fundamentals are seamlessly interwoven throughout all subjects and lesson plans. Your child receives the finest academic instruction available, with the added bonus of a strong foundation in Christian character development.

## **Homework**

Bethlehem Christian Academy believes that homework is important to the learning process. Therefore, each teacher assigns homework for practice or to ensure a deeper understanding of the subject. Homework must always be complete, accurate and neat to be accepted. Listed below are guidelines for the amount of homework. Time spent will vary from child to child. If a student is spending too much or too little time completing his or her homework assignments, please contact the teacher:

- Pre-Kindergarten      Teacher Discretion 10 minutes
- Kindergarten            Teacher Discretion 10 minutes
- First Grades             20 minutes
- Second Grades          30 minutes
- Third Grade:             45 hour

## *Academic Information continued ~~~*

### **Make-up Work**

If a student is absent from school for less than three days, all work must be made up. The classroom teacher will determine the assignments and the amount of time allotted to do so. In most cases, the amount of time allowed to complete assignments will be equal to the amount of time missed. The time allowed to make up schoolwork is equal to the amount of time absent. A student that is absent for three days will have three days to make-up the work. Absences for 5 or more consecutive days require a doctor's excuse. Assignments may be picked up no later than 24 hours after the request has been made. In case of extended absence, the teacher will give consideration to each case and will adjust accordingly.

### **Report Cards**

The purpose of the reporting system is to give parents and students an indication of the progress, which is being made. Report cards are issued at the end of each nine-week period. Parents are expected to sign and return promptly.

The final report card will be sent home on the last day of school. Report cards are not given or mailed out at the end of the year if all accounts and responsibilities are not met. A report card may be held at the office for outstanding tuition payments or other payments not made.

### **Progress Reports**

Progress reports go out in the middle of the first marking period for all students. Thereafter, any student who is doing unsatisfactory work will receive a progress report to keep the parent informed of their academics.

### **Grading System**

Bethlehem Christian Academy uses the following grading scale:

- A = 100 - 93
- B = 92 - 87
- C = 86 - 77
- D = 76 - 70
- F = 69 or Below

### **PRINCIPAL'S – Honor Roll**

An honor roll for the following two categories is compiled after each grading period:

Principal's Honor = Average 100 – 93

A – B Honor Roll 92 - 87

### **Promotion – Retention**

Students who fail (F average for the year) one or more subjects will not be promoted. Students who are doing work consistently with three or more below average grades in any subjects may also be considered for retention. All promotions and retentions are based on teacher recommendations in concurrence with the school director.



# **STUDENT LIFE**

*Recess*

*Playground Rules*

*Dress Code*

# *Student Life*

## **Recess**

Recess is time for students to play and exercise. Students need to get outside to enjoy fresh air and sunshine. If a child is well enough to come to school, he/she should participate in outdoor play when it is scheduled. Exceptions will be made if the child has a written note excusing him/her from going outside. This exception is made for one day only.

## **Playground Rules**

- Children are not to leave the playground without permission
- Children must share playground equipment
- No games requiring physical contact or running on asphalt.
- Any disobedience to these rules will result in losing recess privileges.

Decision on type of discipline will be made by the staff member on duty.

## **Dress Code**

The Dress Code and Uniform Policy at Bethlehem Christian Academy allows children to come to school without the pressure of being dressed in the latest style or outfit. All clothing should fit and not baggy. A student who does not dress appropriately will be sent to the office where he/she will be detained until a parent arrives with proper clothing. Girls' skirt length should be at least to the middle of the knee.

Students in grades PreK-4 to 3<sup>rd</sup> will wear standard uniforms each day of the week. Exceptions will be given by the staff. Shoes and sneakers must have a non-scuff sole. The best way to determine this is to rub the sole on a hard surface floor to see if they leave scuff marks. If they do, they are not permitted.

Students may not wear tattoos, studded belts, bracelets, rings or chains to school. Boxer shorts or underwear must not be visible. Profane, vulgar language or drawings, or references to alcohol, drugs or weapons are not allowed on any part of students' clothing during regular hours or if attending the after school program.

Bethlehem Christian Academy students should always wear collars. Students should always take pride in being neat and clean. The administration reserves the right to determine when the appearances of individual students is detrimental to the well being of the school and its students.



# **STUDENT CONDUCT**

*General School Rules*

*Care of Property*

*Student Relationships*

*Detention*

# *Student Conduct*

## **General School Rules**

We will work closely with parents to solve any difficulty in behavior. The teacher is in full control of the classroom. All misconduct of a general nature will be handled by the teacher and his/her discipline procedures. Each student is expected to follow the following fundamental rules:

- No student will be out of his/her seat without permission.
- No student will speak out in class without permission.
- Students will always address and reply to adults with the utmost respect.
- Students must refrain from conduct that disrupts or threatens to disrupt the learning of other students.

Violations of the following rules will result in disciplinary actions:

- Inappropriate behavior in the classroom or on school property.
- Dress or appearance which is disruptive to the school program.
- Disrespect to any adult (teacher, substitute, cafeteria/playground aides, secretary, etc.)
- Absence from class without permission or misuse of lavatory privilege.
- Fighting, provoking a fight, harassment, or verbal assault.
- Damage or vandalism to school property.
- Stealing.
- Failure to report to detention.

## **Care of Property**

It is requested that the following guidelines be followed:

- No walking on grass surrounding the buildings.
- No throwing trash or papers on the ground.
- No writing on desks, chairs or walls.
- No sitting on desks or tables.
- No throwing balls or other objects in or near the buildings.

Any damage done to property, whether willful or accidental, must be paid by the student. All students must immediately report to the office any damaged property.

## **Student Relationships**

Students attending Bethlehem Christian Academy are expected to have wholesome relationships with one another. This means that fighting, name-calling, harsh teasing, etc., will not be tolerated and will be dealt with accordingly.

## **Discipline and Guidance Policy**

Bethlehem Christian Academy recognizes discipline and guidance for what it is an opportunity to teach students how to make correct choices regarding their own behavior and in their interactions with others. Discipline at the Academy is individualized and consistent for each child, appropriate to the child's level of understanding, and directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control. We employ positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control and self-direction.

Discipline in the school begins with the efforts of the classroom teacher. Effective discipline in the classroom and the school can be a reality only through the cooperative efforts of all who work with students.

