

**Preschool Handbook**  
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### **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of Cornerstone Christian Academy is to provide for each student a comprehensive education, which is based on God’s truth, while building stronger relationships among parents, staff, and students.

### **VISION STATEMENT**

The vision of Cornerstone Christian Academy is to raise up effective leaders of godly character who will blend academic achievement and biblical truth to influence society for the glory of God.

### **STATEMENT OF FAITH**

There is only one God eternally existing in three persons—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The Holy Scriptures are inspired by God and are our only infallible rule of faith and practice. Jesus Christ died, shedding His blood for our sins, and was bodily raised from the dead for our justification. He will return visibly and bodily with power in accordance with prophetic Scripture. Man is by nature and practice a sinner separated from God and can become God’s child only by faith in Jesus Christ as personal Lord and Savior. Those who are thus born into God’s family have eternal life in the presence of God, and those who are not remain eternally separated from God in spiritual death. The Holy Spirit lives in the believer and enables him to walk in purity of life and submission to the will of God. All believers are united in the body of Christ.

### **CORE VALUES**

#### ▪ **Absolute Truth**

The Creator of the universe is also the author of absolute truth, revealed through His handiwork, the Holy Spirit, and the inerrant Word of God. (Romans 1:20; 2 Timothy 3:15-16; John 15:26, 17:17) All subjects, such as literature, history, mathematics, science, music, art, and philosophy are manifestations of God’s truth, goodness, and holiness. We desire that our students develop a strong Christian worldview that will allow them to possess the firm foundation of His wisdom and knowledge (John 8:32, 36; Proverbs 2:1-7; Colossians 2:2-3). This foundation can only be built on Jesus Christ and a personal relationship with Him (John 14:6, Colossians 1:13-15).

#### ▪ **Excellence**

As God’s creatures, we are admonished to work with all our heart, “working for the Lord, not for men” (Colossians 3:17, 23). CCA believes this should be the standard for

our students in whatever they undertake, both in the classroom and in all areas of life. They are challenged by the faculty, staff, and curriculum to pursue their absolute best, for God’s glory, in academics, in respect for authority, in relationships, and in their spiritual growth to find out what pleases the Lord (1Thessalonians 4:1). Also accountable to this godly standard of excellence is our leadership—board, administration, staff, and faculty—for the best use of our resources, our curriculums, and how we are meeting God’s purposes for CCA (Ephesians 5:1, Psalm 90:17).

- **Love and Service**

As members of one body, we desire to exemplify and teach Christ’s example to serve one another in love (Galatians 5:13, Philippians 2:3-4). Students are given ample opportunities to develop servant heartedness in the classroom and through CCA work days and work projects, fund raisers, community outreach, Christian service, missions trips, hosting sporting events, concerts, programs, summer camps, and more. Our ministries also convey that the greatest love and service is to share God’s truth with the lost (Romans 6:23, John 6:35, 1Peter 3:15). As administration, faculty, and staff, we humbly desire to model Christ’s compassionate, selfless love (Matthew 20:26-28, Ephesians 2:10, John 15:12-13).

- **Bearing Fruit**

CCA is committed to academic and spiritual excellence. Just as hard work will reflect on report cards, so will living faith in action bear good fruit (John 15:5, 8). Regular devotions, weekly chapels, and Christian teachers and staff help direct students to grow in grace, character, integrity, and uprightness (Titus 2:11-12, 2Corinthians 4:5-7, 1Thessalonians 4:7). Morning faculty devotions give our teachers and staff the opportunity to be united in prayer and focus for the spiritual health of our student body (Colossians 1:9-12, 3:16). Manageable class sizes allow teachers to personally know and shepherd their students. Parental involvement, monthly board meetings, and a weekly Parents for Cornerstone prayer group also assure that CCA and its students are constantly uplifted before the Lord (Colossians 4:2, 2Thessalonians 1:11-12). “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law” (Galatians 5:22-23).

- **Equipping to Send**

Our Vision Statement reflects our purpose at CCA: “To raise up effective leaders of godly character who will blend academic achievement and biblical truth to influence society for the glory of God.” We want to equip the next generation to merge their faith and knowledge into their daily lives in order to be leaders and ambassadors for Christ throughout the world. We seek to help them identify their God-given abilities and talents and to make them useful to the Master (Psalm 139:14). By graduation, each student has had many opportunities to discover and maximize these unique gifts for His glory (1Corinthians 12:7-11; Matthew 25:23, 29; 2Corinthians 9:8).

## **PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION**

Cornerstone Christian Academy (CCA), serving students in preschool through 12<sup>th</sup> grade, is founded on the following principles:

1. God can be known properly only as He reveals Himself through the Word, His creation, and the Holy Spirit (Psalm 119:130, Romans 1:19-20, 1 Corinthians 2:10). Therefore, regular time is devoted to prayer (Colossians 4:2), worship (Psalm 95:6), and Bible study (2 Peter 3:18). Important goals of Christian education are designed to help the student know Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and develop Christian values and thought patterns.
2. Since all truth is God's truth (Isaiah 45:19), all subjects are taught in conformity to the Word of God (2 Timothy 3:16-17, Colossians 3:17).
3. Christian moral training is needed in order to build godly character in our students. Through discipline and counseling, the school helps the students see themselves as God sees them, submit to God-ordained authority, do God's will, and bring glory to Him.
4. Children are unique and loved by God. The value of each student is expressed in an atmosphere of loving concern. Children are also encouraged to show respect, kindness, and love in their relationships with others.
5. CCA is committed to an academic standard that necessitates the students' mastery of the skills and knowledge needed for life and work. Manageable class sizes allow teachers to give individual attention and to praise students, with the goal of helping them spiritually as well as intellectually and emotionally. Traditional teaching methods are utilized. CCA desires that the students receive the best of western tradition, learn it, and preserve it for future generations.
6. Teachers bring the educational philosophy of the school to life at CCA. Each one is personally committed to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, dedicated to the Christian view of life and education, and aware of his influence upon the students.
7. Parents and teachers form a team that educates the child in mind and heart. The Bible teaches that parents are ultimately held responsible for their child's education (Deuteronomy 6:20, Ephesians 6:1-4). CCA continues the biblical training that the parents already have begun. CCA's traditional approach, having our roots in the Midwest culture, supports and teaches respect for authority, family, and parental authority.

### **STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

The primary goal of Cornerstone Christian Academy is to provide a Bible-centered and academically sound education. Cornerstone, preschool thru 12<sup>th</sup> grade, is governed by an independent board and is affiliated with the Association of Christian Schools International. CCA is registered with the State of Illinois and complies with more than adequate days and/or hours of instruction per year.

CCA is not sponsored by any particular church or denomination. The school believes the Bible is inspired by God. We are conservative and biblical in our outlook and standards. CCA is built upon a solid Christian foundation, with faith in Jesus Christ as the chief Cornerstone, the Bible as the only authority, and dedicated Christian teachers as "living curriculum." CCA offers an atmosphere of loving concern, structured discipline, small classes with individual attention, and an excellent curriculum. Our goal is to help each child lead a joyful Christian life, develop a healthy self-image, and acquire the academic skills fundamental to future success.

## **NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT**

Cornerstone Christian Academy of DeKalb County Inc. (CCA) admits students of any race, sex, national, and ethnic origin. Each student is given all possible rights, privileges, programs, and available activities. CCA does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national, and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

## **REVISION POLICY**

CCA reserves the right to change any policy or procedure in the family handbook when, at the discretion of the administration, deems it necessary for the best interest of the school.

## **ORGANIZATION**

### ***SCHOOL BOARD***

The CCA School Board is the chief policy-making body of the school, consisting of no fewer than four and no more than nine members. The board members are elected for a three-year term of office. The members of the school board are given the responsibility for the establishment, guidance, and spiritual headship in the operation of the school. They are the leaders responsible to seek God's will and direction for the school and for the preservation and restoration of right relations, primarily our relations with God. Board members are nominated on the basis of their prior interest and service to CCA. The board also includes a chaplain who serves for one year.

In order to effectively govern CCA, the board is organized into standing committees. Board members and parents outside of the board serve on these committees to provide leadership and direction for our school. Committees include: education, policy, finance, facilities, development, and volunteer.

Cornerstone Christian Academy School Board:

Mr. Victor Graff, President/Director

Mrs. Mary Johansen, Vice President/Secretary/Director

Mr. Brian Gavin, Treasurer/Director

### ***ADMINISTRATION, FACULTY, AND STAFF***

The board appoints the administrators and teachers at CCA after careful consideration of their spiritual, academic, and physical qualifications. The administrators and teachers are committed to serving our Lord and the families of CCA.

- Each member of the preschool staff is personally committed to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, dedicated to the Christian view of life and education, and aware of their influence upon the children.
- The Preschool teachers have 6 hours or more of Early Childhood Classes.
- All staff members are trained in CPR and Basic First Aid.
- Staff devotions are held every morning before school begins. Teachers pray together for our school, our students and their families, and our faculty and staff.
- All staff members have demonstrated dedication, warmth, sensitivity, maturity, and patience and will provide loving and understanding care for each child.

- The children will learn about the Lord Jesus Christ through the love they experience from their teachers.

Cornerstone Christian Academy Administration:

Mr. Tom Olmstead, Administrator/Primary School Principal  
 Mr. Drew Whitfield, Secondary School Principal  
 Mrs. Debbie Dwyer, Preschool Director  
 Mrs. Kim Rasmussen, Office Manager  
 Mrs. Linda Wilkin, Secondary School Administrative Assistant  
 Mr. John Matheson, Financial and Human Resources Manager  
 Mrs. JoAnn Mathes, Development Director/Publicist

### ***PARENT-SCHOOL COMMUNICATION***

As a school family, we must utilize effective communications to best achieve the goals and objectives we have established for our school. If you have questions or concerns about a specific area of our school's curriculum or program, please contact the teachers and/or administrators who can help you. Essential to the success of a child in school is the communication between the teacher and parents. Parents are urged to confer regularly with their child's teachers. Calls to the teachers will be returned as soon as possible. In urgent situations you may contact them at home.

When a parent has a concern related to the school, the following steps should be taken in resolving the issue:

1. Parents should call either the office and have the secretary set up an appointment with the teacher or set one up directly with the teacher.
2. If the problem is still unresolved, the parents should contact the head teacher, then the principal, and finally the administrator, if necessary.
3. As a final recourse, the board will mediate disputes. (Matthew 18:15-20).

### ***PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT***

The role of educating your child is a very important one. It is not, however, an exclusive endeavor. The faculty recognizes the importance of parental involvement and expects parents to support the authority of the faculty and staff members. We want you to be involved in Cornerstone Christian Academy and encourage your attendance in activities.

Listed below are some important elements for parents of CCA students to understand:

1. Children need a strong, Bible-centered home (Deuteronomy 6:7). Families should be involved in a church that preaches and teaches the Bible (Jeremiah 3:15).
2. Parents are responsible for the education of their children and should faithfully pray for the success of the school (Ephesians 6:4).
3. Families are expected to pay tuition on time, and when possible, cheerfully give to the expansion of the school and its programs (1 Corinthians 9:7).
4. Parents should ensure that their children are well rested and well fed. Nutrition and rest play a key role in the ability of children to learn.

### ***PARENTS FOR CORNERSTONE (PFC)***

Parents for Cornerstone is a parent volunteer organization, which has several goals:

- To provide parents with an opportunity for fellowship with others who share their level of commitment to their children's education.
- To enhance communication efforts already in place among the variety of volunteer projects throughout the year.
- To ensure adequate leadership for those volunteer efforts.
- To sponsor activities and programs for students and provide additional equipment and materials for classrooms and athletics.
- To assist in efforts to increase the building fund.

Parent involvement provides a greater understanding of the blessings received at our school each day and the chance to directly impact the quality of their children's education. Please prayerfully consider where your God-given talents might best be utilized to enhance our school's environment and future opportunities.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### ***ABSENCES***

If your child will not be coming to school on a day when he is expected, please call the school office by 8:00 a.m. to let us know.

### ***ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL***

Parents are required to escort their child to their classroom and sign them in on the class sign in sheet. Parents are also required to pick up their child from the classroom and sign them out on the class sign in sheet. Parent picking up at 11:30 a.m. have the option of using the pick up service. Please see drive thru pick up service.

### ***AUTHORIZATION FOR PICK UP***

An authorization for pick up form must be turned in at the time of enrollment. CCA will not release your child to a person not on the list. The parent may call and speak to the preschool administrator in an emergency. A parent may add or delete names at any time during the school year. Cornerstone Christian Academy will not release a child to any person other than those who have been designated in writing by the parent or legal guardian. In the event of an order of protection or court procedure regarding custody of your child, CCA must be notified of all changes and a current copy of the court order must be kept on file. Only the court may change this.

### ***BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL CARE***

Before school care is available from 6:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. After school care is available from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. The cost of before and after school care is \$4.00 per hour. Parents do not need to pre-register. You will be billed the following month. There is a \$5.00 charge for every fifteen minutes after 6:00 p.m.

### ***BIRTHDAYS AND SPECIAL DAYS***

A birthday is a very special time for a child. Let the teacher know before the child's birthday is if you plan to send a special snack for the celebration. The teacher will try to schedule their snack day as close to their birthday as possible. To avoid any hurt feelings,

we ask that party invitations be mailed to the child's home in place of handing them out at school.

### ***CHAPEL***

Chapel occurs once a month. A special speaker will lead the devotion. Each class will take turns in leading in song for worship. Parents are welcome to attend.

### ***CLOTHING***

Children should come to school wearing comfortable, washable play clothing. Girls should wear tights or shorts under their dresses. Clothing which displays slogans or insignia of questionable nature (groups or products that dishonor God or a Christian lifestyle) must not be worn. This rule applies to backpacks as well. During cold, snowy weather, the child should dress for outdoor play with a heavy jacket, hat, gloves, boots, and snow pants. All clothing should be marked with the child's name. Children are encouraged to dress and undress themselves.

### ***COMMUNICATION***

A classroom newsletter is given to each family monthly. This newsletter will keep you updated on upcoming events in your child's classroom. The weekly Lions Line comes home on Wednesdays. This newsletter is an essential part of CCA it often includes schedule changes, announcements, and other vital information.

### ***CONFERENCES***

Parent/Teacher conferences will be held in the fall for all preschool students. There will be a sign up sheet near the classroom for time slots available. The parents and teacher will discuss the child's progress, address any concerns, and pray together for the future. At anytime throughout the school year parents may set up a time to talk to your child's teacher.

### ***CRISIS MANAGEMENT PLAN***

The staff at CCA is familiar with the crisis management plan for the school in the event of an emergency such as tornado, fire, bomb threat or intruder. A copy of the plan is available in the office for review if desired.

### ***DISCIPLINE***

God's love and forgiveness is our foundation to all discipline. A time-out is administered in a respectful way (one minute per year of child's age). The teacher will spend a few minutes reviewing with the child what happened and why. If the child has three time-outs for the day he or she will visit the preschool administrator's office. If the child is being brought to the administrator's office repeatedly, the administrator will request a meeting with the parents and the child's teacher. A "working together" plan will be developed. Parent and teacher will be in constant communication regarding the child's progress.

Cornerstone Christian Academy disciplines:

- With respect and kindness
- Without intimidation and fear
- Without corporal, or physical punishment
- Without anger, including yelling or raising their voice

- Without sarcasm
- Without telling the child he or she is bad
- Without emotional abuse such as ignoring the child
- Without verbally abusive language
- Without comparing the child with other children

Parents should not approach another child regarding an incident that occurred with their child; CCA will take appropriate action. If it becomes necessary to question whether our preschool program is the correct placement for a child, the board reserves the right to make the final decision with regards to the child's continued involvement with the school.

***DRIVE-THRU PICK UP***

Half day students are eligible for drive-thru pick-up service. Parents will sign up daily on the classroom sign in sheet if they would like to use this service. Parents will be given a card with their child's name. Parents will be asked to hold up the sign when they pull through the parking lot to notify the staff member which child to bring out.

***EMERGENCY CARDS***

It is required that each student has a medical emergency information card on file in the school office that is filled out by the parent.

***FEES***

A deposit of \$35.00 is required for application fee, with a maximum \$75.00 fee per family. This will also put your child's name on the class list.

***FIELD TRIPS***

No child may leave for a field trip without a signed written permission slip. Under Illinois law, children under age 8 or under 40 lbs are required to use a car seat. Car seats are provided by the parent. Parents who drive to field trips must leave a copy of their valid driver's license and proof of insurance in the school office on the day of each trip.

***HEALTH CHECKS***

If you suspect your child is having difficulty with their hearing or vision, please notify the office as the DeKalb County Health Department has an annual screening at the school in the fall. Each student may receive a head check for lice from an experienced staff member as deemed necessary through out the school year. Parents will be notified of the checks.

***HOT LUNCH***

Hot lunches are included in the full day charges and are available for all children in the full day program. A lunch menu is given out each month if your child has food allergies please let the teacher know. Children are welcome to bring a sack lunch at anytime.

***ILLNESS***

A child cannot return to school until they are free of fever, vomiting, and diarrhea symptoms for 24 hours. If the child returns the next day, we must have a note signed and dated from the physician stating that the child is not contagious and can return to school.

- After a child has received emergency treatment for any reason (i.e. stitches, respirator, treatments, etc.) or after a planned medical procedure (tubes, tonsillectomy, etc.), a physician's note will be needed for the child to return to school. The physician's note should state the child's name, treatment received, recommendations for care, and the date the child can return to group childcare.
- In case of an emergency, every effort will be made to notify parents or emergency contacts. Appropriate medical care, including paramedics, may be called when deemed necessary. If it is necessary for your child to go to the hospital and we are unable to reach you or the emergency contacts, a Cornerstone Christian Academy employee will accompany your child to the hospital.
- An injury report is completed and signed by the staff any time a child has any type of injury. The parent is notified of this report.

### ***INSURANCE***

All injury insurance needs to be covered by the family. The school does not provide this coverage. Each parent is responsible for providing a car seat to a field trip driver on the day of the trip.

### ***MEDICATIONS***

Students requiring prescription medication, cold medication, pain medication, etc. during the school day must submit a written parent request to the office. Students who have asthma are exempt from this policy and may keep their asthma medication with them. Medications must be brought to the school in a container appropriately labeled by the pharmacy or physician. All medications are to be kept in the school front office and only dispensed and consumed in the presence of office personnel or their approved representative.

Parents may give permission for Tylenol/acetaminophen for pain on the student application and/or the emergency card. All medications will remain in a locked cabinet in the office. CCA will follow the guidelines set forth by the Illinois Department of Human Services and the Illinois State Board of Education.

### ***PARKING LOT***

Parents may park in the north lot when dropping or picking up their child. Do not park along the sidewalk.

### ***PAYMENT***

Tuition is paid by monthly installments. The total tuition is required regardless of personal vacation or illness. **If payment is not made by the due date each month, a late payment fee of \$15.00 will be added to your account.** When determining preschool tuition, Cornerstone Christian Academy has taken into account number of weeks in the school year to establish a monthly payment. The school has taken into account Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter breaks.

### ***PETS***

Pets should not be brought into the building unless previously approved by the office and/or teacher.

***PHOTOGRAPHS***

Unless otherwise notified by the parents and/or guardians, permission to use photographs of students (participating in school functions) for Lion’s Line, quarterly newsletters, newspaper articles or advertising is implied.

***PHYSICALS/FORMS***

All preschool students are required to have an updated physical every school year. Physical forms are kept in students file. A record of immunization should be filled out on this form. If a family chooses not to immunize their child due to religious reasons or otherwise, a letter stating this must be on file in the school office.

***RELEASE OF PERSONAL INFORMATION***

No personal information from a child’s record will be released without the written consent of his parents or guardians.

***REQUEST A CHANGE IN SCHEDULE***

Parents wanting a change in daycare or preschool schedule must fill out a change of schedule form. The preschool administrator, upon availability of the classroom, will approve change of days and notify the teacher and the financial manager.

***SCHOOL CLOSING INFORMATION***

When school is closed due to severe weather conditions, the CCA website will be updated and the following stations will be notified:

Radio:	WDKB 94.9 FM	Television:	WIFR 23
	WLBK 1360 AM		
	WSQR 1560 AM		

***SCHOOL SECURITY***

For the safety of all students, all visitors are asked to check in with the office before going to the classrooms. The back doors will be locked everyday at 8:45 a.m. and unlocked for half-day pick up at 11:30 a.m. The door will then be unlocked at the end of the school. Your child will not be released to anyone who is not on the authorized pick up list.

***SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY***

It is the policy of Cornerstone Christian Academy to maintain a learning and working environment free of sexual harassment. All forms of sexual harassment, whether verbal, non-verbal, or physical, are prohibited. All charges of sexual harassment will be taken seriously and will be investigated promptly and in a way that respects the privacy of all parties concerned. A more detailed description of the sexual harassment policy is located in the Human Resources Handbook.

***SMOKE-FREE ENVIRONMENT***

Smoking is prohibited in and around facilities.

***SNACK***

Your child is responsible for providing the snack for the day. Your child’s teacher will let you know how many to plan for. A snack calendar will be given to you at the beginning of

each month. Snacks are to be brought in an unopened package that will be opened at school. The snack may be any combination of the following: crackers, bread, pretzels, fruits, cheese, vegetables, and/or deli meats. Please do not bring popcorn, nuts, or grapes as they create a choking hazard. Check with the teacher if you are in doubt about a particular snack. Cupcakes, cake or cookies are acceptable for birthdays only. If your child has an allergic reaction to any foods or drinks please let the teacher know.

***SURVEILLANCE***

CCA has invested in an electronic surveillance system to provide better protection for our students and employees, a deterrent for future break-ins, and a method for pursuing any perpetrators of vandalism or school policy violation. If a video clip is taken with a serious violation of policy or state or federal law, it can be used by authorities to pursue recompense and justice on behalf of the school.

***TRANSPORTATION***

Parents are responsible for providing transportation for their children to and from school. Car pools are encouraged.