



## ***DISCIPLINE POLICY AND PROCEDURE MANUAL***

### **Mission Statement**

*Veritas Christian Academy seeks to train the minds, develop the Christian character, and enrich the spiritual lives of its students through quality academic programs. Its purpose is to glorify God by teaching a Biblical worldview of life in a Christ-centered environment. 2 Corinthians 10:5*

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# Purpose

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My son (daughter), preserve sound judgement and discernment, do not let them out of your sight; they will be life for you. – Proverbs 3:21,22

## **Philosophy of Discipline**

Veritas Christian Academy, as a Christian academic community, strives to uphold a unity based on the lordship of Jesus Christ, guided by Biblical principles and certain prudent rules which we believe are beneficial in establishing an atmosphere conducive to Christian growth and order. Members of this community are expected to live according to the Word of God, responding to one another in love. Those who join this community are asked to accept the responsibilities of membership by respecting and supporting its Christian distinctive and its standards of conduct.

A SUMMARY OF GOOD SCHOOL BEHAVIOR – Be at the right place, at the right time, with the right materials, in a quiet manner, with an expectant and submissive attitude.

AN ACCURATE, BIBLICAL DEFINITION – “Obedience is doing exactly what you’re told to do, when you’re told to do it, with a right heart attitude.”

## **Discipline Policy Overview**

The purpose of discipline in a Christian school is two-fold, to bring the student to maturity in Christ, and, second, to develop qualities of good citizenship. To help attain these goals, certain standards of conduct are established. Students are asked to discipline themselves in relation to this code because the best form of discipline is self-discipline under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Indeed, the goal of all outward discipline is self-discipline within the framework of positive relationships between them.

Positively, the school seeks to cooperate with the home in forming good habits in the student such as cheerful obedience to authority, courtesy and respect for others, responsibility, cleanliness and orderliness, truthfulness and honesty, morally correct conduct, and wise use of time, talents and material possessions. VCA seeks, in other words, to build Godly character traits into the lives of its students and pursues an active program in doing so, both through instruction and example. A rebellious spirit or negative attitude, which is unchanged after much effort by the faculty, can be a poor influence on other students. Continued deliberate disobedience to a teacher or to school rules has an adverse effect upon the school’s testimony.

As an expression of Veritas Christian Academy’s mission, the high school discipline policy is intended to support the discipleship process for students, and to serve as a reflection of Jesus Christ and as an extension of the home. As such, the primary purpose of the discipline process is to produce growth in students while maintaining an environment of learning and order, providing a support to parents, and reflecting scriptural principles of conduct and influence. In keeping with this purpose, the scriptural principles that provide the foundation for the discipline policy are as follows:

- The responsibility of parents for the education of their children (Deuteronomy 6:6-9)
- Submission to authority (I Peter 2:13-17)
- The principle of reaping and sowing (Galatians 6:7-8)
- Confrontation, restoration, and separation (Matthew 18:15-17)

Under the guidelines of these scriptural principles, the goal of Veritas Christian Academy through the disciplinary process is to:

- Work alongside of parents within the process of discipline
- When appropriate, involve the spiritual authority and influence of a family’s church affiliation

- Provide an environment of order and respect that promotes an atmosphere conducive to learning
- Apply necessary and appropriate consequences for choices
- Guide in the restoration of relationships with Jesus Christ and with Veritas Christian Academy, its employees and its students
- Use relational influence to produce spiritual growth, correction, and right choices
- Do so in a context that seeks the best interest of both the involved parties and the student body as a whole

As a general rule, classroom actions which evidence disrespect, lack of courtesy, general disturbance, abuse of permission, incomplete homework, lateness and other offenses shall be handled by the teacher. Situations that the teacher evaluates as chronic, flagrant, or otherwise worthy of special handling will be referred to the Administrator. These situations will be dealt with as seems most helpful to the individual and the student body as outlined under the guidelines as outlined within this document.

## Code of Conduct

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In order to best fulfill the goals of the discipline process, Veritas Christian Academy has established a Code of Conduct that defines expected student behavior, and establishes the procedure and process for addressing disciplinary matters. Please be aware that student conduct and behavior outside of Veritas Christian Academy can affect a student's standing at VCA as well as the reputation of VCA, therefore it is the expectation of the administration that students adhere to the Code of Conduct at all times. It is therefore also understood that violations of the Code of Conduct both inside and outside of school, including breaks from school, may be addressed as a disciplinary concern by the administration. Students are specifically considered to be under school jurisdiction at any time at which they are under the direct supervision of Veritas Christian Academy and its employees, including when riding a school bus or attending a school function or activity.

Students are expected to demonstrate the following behaviors and characteristics:

- Integrity in the keeping of one's word, speaking the truth, doing one's own work, carrying out responsibility (doing assignments adequately and on time) and respecting authority
- Respect for self, Veritas Christian Academy and its employees and students, and the property of others
- Courtesy extended in all relationships – student to student or student to teacher/staff
- Stewardship of the property, supplies, and equipment of Veritas Christian Academy, as well as wise stewardship of personal items
- Preparation for class and readiness to learn
- Reconciliation through Biblical and appropriate repentance and forgiveness when offenses have been committed or received

### **Prohibited Activities**

In order to inform our VCA family the following prohibited in-school activities (including time spent on buses or in transport to activities), for which disciplinary penalties will be assessed, are provided. Items marked with an asterisk (\*) relate to out-of-state situations as well. While the actions described below represent a cross section of activities, no compilation can be all inclusive and students are expected to refrain from behavior that would be characteristic of the areas mentioned below.

### Attendance Parameters

- Unexcused tardiness to school or class
- Leaving school campus without permission

- Being in halls during class time without permission
- Being in locations where students are not normally allowed
- Excessive time out of class
- Failure to sign out when leaving early
- Unexcused absences
- Skipping class
- Skipping detention
- Skipping school

#### Dress Code

- Failure to conform to the expected dress code

#### Careless Behavior

- Running in the halls or in the classroom
- Purposely holding door to classroom closed, or slamming doors
- Horseplay
- Throwing or shooting objects in the building
- Improper behavior on the bus\*
- Reckless driving on school property or at any school event\*

#### Classroom/School Etiquette

- Disruptive behavior that impedes the educational process
- The use of cellular phones and other electronic devices during school hours
- Eating food or candy during class other than when approved by teacher
- Other items: Any item that disrupts a class (such as a wristwatch alarm or cell phone) will be taken to the office. Usually for the first offense, the student will be allowed to pick up the object at the office at the end of the school day. For subsequent offenses, parents will be required to pick up a confiscated item. They must pick it up within one month or the item will be discarded.
- Unauthorized possession of electronic equipment
- Misbehaving in class (including talking out of turn) or disturbing the class

#### Physical/Sexual Behavior

- Inappropriate public displays of romantic affection (i.e., holding hands, kissing, excessive hugging)
- The possession and/or distribution of pornographic materials and information, including the distribution of sexually suggestive material via cell phones, computers, or any other electronic devices
- Possession of impure or suggestive literature, writing, symbols, drawings, or recordings (audio or video). Distribution of such will result in a more severe penalty
- Sexually harassing another individual (see Antiharassment Policy)
- Immoral sexual conduct (including, but not limited to, homosexual or extramarital sex activity)\*

#### Harassment/Intimidation

- Sexual harassment including all acts of a sexual nature, whether verbal or physical, which are unsolicited, unwelcome, inappropriate, and/or demeaning, which interfere with an individual's performance or which create an intimidating, hostile or offensive atmosphere
- Physical harassment, including threats or intimidation of any nature, or inappropriate verbal or physical conduct which creates a hostile, offensive or fearful environment. Examples of threats or

intimidation include, but are not limited to, provoking a fight, fighting, bullying, acts that inflict injury or damage, and/or acts intended to control by fear and/or intimidation.

#### Verbal Behavior

- Language and/or gestures that are vulgar, obscene, offensive, derogatory or disrespectful will result in disciplinary action. The believer's talk should build up, not put them down.

#### Dishonesty

- Dishonesty in any form, including lying, theft, cheating, and plagiarism (note: indication of cheating on any assignment will result in zero for the assignment and an automatic suspension; this guideline applies to the person copying as well as to the person knowingly supplying the material to be copied)
- Gambling
- Forging signatures or altering documents
- Altering grade reports

#### Disrespectful Behavior

- Rebellious or disrespectful attitude
- Flagrant disrespect and disobedience
- Littering
- Disturbance or rude behavior in Chapel
- Circumventing school procedure, including short-circuiting the school-home communication process
- Defacing of any kind of school, student, or faculty property
- Postering, rallies, sit-ins, sit-outs and other similar forms of protest
- Non-compliance with regulations pertaining to driving to school
- Direct disobedience to any teacher or Administrator
- Deliberate destruction or damage to school, church, student, and/or faculty property
- Disrespect by word or action toward any faculty, staff member, or student
- Display of any advertisements of items in whatever form (e.g., posters/stickers on books, lockers or on any personal possessions brought into the school) that are in conflict with the values of the school as stated in our objectives

#### Prohibited Items and Activities

- Use or possession of weapons and/or dangerous items (i.e., guns, knives (including pocket knives), explosive devices, etc.) A zero-tolerance policy is in place on bringing any type of such weapons or explosives to school.
- The use and/or possession of tobacco, alcoholic beverages, illegal drugs, and the abuse of prescription medication. Violations of this policy may also result in random drug testing, per Veritas! Christian Academy procedures, at the expense of the student's family.

The possession or use of any illicit drugs, alcoholic beverages, tobacco, etc. at school or any school function will be considered grounds for suspension and possible expulsion. Because of the harmful nature of these activities, the continuance in our school of any student involved in such activities in or out of school is in serious question. Students involved in the use, possession, or selling of drugs, alcohol or tobacco may also be turned over to the proper authorities.

## Academic Expectations

- Not being prepared for class
- Failure to meet classroom responsibilities
- Failure to employ good study habits after repeated warning (not keeping a notebook, not taking notes, not keeping an assignment notebook, etc.)
- Failure to return documents by due date

## Disciplinary Process

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Disciplinary action will be taken for infractions of school policy and rules. These may include detention, probation, suspension, or as a final resort, expulsion.

Most disciplinary issues are managed by the teacher in the classroom, and the process can involve any of the following, separately or in combination as appropriate.

- Personal conference with the teacher
- Notification of behavior problems to parents
- Detention
- Student conference with the Administrator
- A parent-teacher-student or parent-teacher-administrator conference

More extreme or persistent cases of misconduct will be managed by the administration and treated with one or more of the following measures:

- Detention (6:45 am to 7:45 am)
- Conference with the Administrator and/or teacher
- Probation, combined with appropriate application of consequences relevant to the offense
- In-school suspension
- Out-of-school suspension
- Withdrawal, temporary, until restitution and restoration can be confirmed via visible student behavior and pastoral counsel and recommendation; reinstatement on probation
- Expulsion

A formal report to record all infractions will be retained within the student's school file outlining the nature of the infraction, how the issue was addressed and the action plan to address resolution. Follow up steps will be amended to the initial report.

A detailed grievance procedure for issues which arise pertaining to the implementation of the above process is outlined in the Parent-Student Policy and Procedures Manual.

### **Disciplinary Probation**

Disciplinary probation is designed to alert the student and his or her parents to areas of his or her life that need special attention. Students may be placed on disciplinary probation by the recommendation of the faculty and the approval of the Administrator for a specified period of time for actions which include, but are not limited to, continued deliberate disobedience, continued and persistent rebellious attitude, negative influence on other students, academic progress that is unacceptable because the student is not working up to his or ability, committing a serious breach of conduct inside or outside the school, failure by students and parents to comply with school policies, or failure by the parents to get recommended professional help of students when needed.

A conference with the student and his or her parents is held at the beginning of the probation to discuss the reasons for the probation. Teachers who wish to participate in the conference may do so or they may be requested by the Administrator to attend. A letter stating the results of the conference and the reasons for the probation will follow this conference.

During the probation period the student will be restricted from participating in activities outside the classroom.

In cases where the probation follows a serious breach of conduct, a second major incident of misconduct during the disciplinary probation period will result in the suspension or expulsion of the student. If the offense occurs during the second semester, the student may be admitted the following year only under disciplinary probation.

During the restriction the teachers will periodically review the progress of the student. The Administrator will then decide whether the student shall be returned to the status of a regular student or will recommend expulsion from the school to the Board of Trustees.

Disciplinary probation is sincerely intended as an intermediate step for the student to "get his or her act together." If there is no progress in attitude, behavior, or general academic achievement, the student will be asked to withdraw from the school or he or she will be expelled by action of the VCA Board of Trustees.

### **Suspension and Expulsion**

Suspension is the responsibility of the Administrator and may be used for serious violations or repeated violations of school rules. Examples of such conduct include cheating, smoking, drinking, illegal use of drugs or the possession of drugs, sexually immoral behavior, etc. Students involved in the use, possession, or selling of drugs or alcohol may be turned over to the proper authorities. A student may be suspended for a period of one to ten days at the discretion of the Administrator.

The following violations of the Code of Conduct will result in an immediate suspension from school, pending a more thorough investigation of the matter, and may result in withdrawal or expulsion:

- The use and/or possession of tobacco, alcoholic beverages, or illegal drugs, and the abuse of prescription medication
- Immoral sexual conduct (which includes, but is not limited to, extramarital sex, adultery, and homosexuality)
- Obtaining or facilitating an abortion
- Possession of weapons and/or dangerous items
- Repeated dishonesty
- Flagrant disrespect and disobedience
- Leaving campus without permission
- The possession and/or distribution of pornographic materials and information
- Harassment in any form, both physical and/or sexual in nature
- Vandalism
- Continued willful disobedience, misconduct, disrespect
- Any action taken by a student that disturbs the privacy or invades the private property of a teacher or Administrator at his or her home, or that affects his or her private property at school

During the suspension period the student must keep up with his or her school work. All assignments or tests missed during the period of suspension must be completed.

Students may not practice or participate in athletic events for the duration of the suspension, nor may they be involved in after school activities during that time. In addition, students may not attend school activities on the day(s) of suspension. A parent-student-administrator conference will be held on the day

the student returns to school and the student will be placed on probation for a period of six weeks or more.

Expulsion is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees. Students may be expelled from school when major moral or social offenses have been committed and after other disciplinary procedures have failed. The Administrator will refer students who have been placed on suspension, repeated suspensions or disciplinary probation to the Board. The Board will discuss the continuance in our school of any student recommended for expulsion.