



Parent and Student Handbook

(Kindergarten – 12th Grade)

2024-2025

I (we) have read and understand all policies mentioned in the VHA Parent and Student Handbook and agree to abide by them to the best of our ability.

Signature: _____(Father)

Signature: _____(Mother)

Date signed: _____

Student name(s): _____

This signature page must be returned to VHA no later than August 31.

A copy of the Handbook may be found on our website: www.vidaliaheritageacademy.com



Parent and Student
Handbook

(Kindergarten – 12th Grade)

2024-2025

Dear Parents,

We are happy to welcome you to the family of Vidalia Heritage Academy. Our Faculty and Staff are dedicated to serving God and helping you as a parent to educate your children.

There is nothing more precious to a parent than the children God has given them. You and your child's needs are important to us and we look forward to the opportunity to be of service to you. Our commitment is to provide the finest Christian Education possible.

The best education is that which points our children closer to the source of all wisdom—God Himself. Each child is a precious handiwork. Each has potential, gifts and abilities placed there by God. Each deserves the type of education that will leave him/her free to develop into the individual that God intended. Christian education should treat each child as an individual, not as a cog in a social wheel.

The world of tomorrow demands leaders, and those leaders are in schools today. Therefore, with that fact in mind as well as God's commands to "train up (our children) in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," we again thank you for allowing us the privilege to join with you in raising a generation that will bring glory and honor to God.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jeff McCormick". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and "M".

Jeff McCormick, Headmaster
Board of Directors and Staff of Vidalia Heritage Academy

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OUR MISSION

It is the mission of Vidalia Heritage Academy to equip students spiritually, intellectually, and physically to love God and serve Him as Christ's ambassadors in the world.

OUR PURPOSE

To provide for young people the development of character and academic excellence from a Christian perspective in a Christian environment.

OUR HISTORY

Vidalia Heritage Academy began in 1997 as a vision of some to have a Christ-centered school that provided high quality Christian education as well as developing well-rounded students who would impact this world for Jesus Christ.

The VHA motto is "Soli Deo Gloria", a Latin phrase meaning: "TO GOD ALONE BE THE GLORY". The motto comes from Romans 11:33-36: "*Oh, the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable are His ways! For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who became His counselor? Or who has first given to Him that it might be paid back to Him again? From Him and through Him and to Him are all things. TO HIM BE THE GLORY FOREVER. Amen.*"

DOCTRINAL STATEMENT OF FAITH

We believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are inspired by God and inerrant in the original writing, and that they are the supreme and final authority in faith and life (II Timothy 3:16-17).

We believe in one God, eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Romans 1:7).

We believe that Jesus Christ was begotten by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, and is true God and true man (Matthew 1:18-20).

We believe that man was created in the image of God, that he sinned, and thereby incurred, not only physical death, but also that spiritual death which is separation from God; and that all people are born with a sinful nature (Genesis 1:7).

We believe in the Biblical teachings that man was created by a direct act of God and not from previously existing forms of life and that all men are descended from the historical Adam and Eve, first parents of the entire human race (Genesis 2:7).

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures, as a representative and substitutionary sacrifice and that all who believe in Him are justified on the grounds of his shed blood (Luke 24:1-6).

We believe in the resurrection of the crucified body of our Lord, in His ascension into heaven, and His present life there for us, as High Priest and Advocate (Luke 24:1-6).

We believe in that blessed hope, the personal and imminent return of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ (Titus 2:11-13).

We believe that all who receive the Lord Jesus Christ by faith are born again of the Holy Spirit and thereby become children of God and are eternally secure in Him (John 3:5-8).

We believe in the bodily resurrection of the just and the unjust, the everlasting blessedness of the saved, and the everlasting punishment of the lost (1 Corinthians 15:22-23).

ACCREDITATION

Vidalia Heritage Academy holds a dual accreditation for Early Education – 12th grade that sets it apart from other schools within a 50-mile radius of the area. The school is accredited through the regional accrediting agency, Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) a division of AdvancED (now known as Cognia), as well as through the global Christian accrediting agency, Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI).

NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATORY POLICY

Vidalia Heritage Academy admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights and privileges, programs, activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national, or ethnic origin in admission of its educational policies, scholarship and loan programs, athletic and other school administered programs.

Vidalia Heritage Academy believes that in order to provide the best academic and spiritual training, we must make certain exclusions. We, therefore, choose not to accept for enrollment students who are not in good standing with the institution in which they are presently and/or previously enrolled or who manifest a disruptive behavior that impedes this school's philosophies or policies. We believe that the standards of Vidalia Heritage Academy are easier to maintain when the students' and parents' attitudes are in agreement with school philosophies and policies. This cooperation helps to support the stands we strive to enforce.

VHA is not equipped, nor teachers trained, to facilitate children with learning disabilities or with ADD/ADHD. If such students are accepted in our school, it is up to the parents to provide extra services other than what the classroom teachers would do in the confines of the classroom.

POLICY CONCERNING ALTERNATIVE LIFESTYLE

The biblical and philosophical goal of Vidalia Heritage Academy is to develop students into mature, Christ-like individuals who will be able to exhibit a Christ-like lifestyle. Of necessity, this involves the school's understanding and belief of what qualities or characteristics exemplify a Christ like lifestyle.

Although parents may personally believe differently, while enrolled at Vidalia Heritage Academy, all students are expected to exhibit the qualities of a Christ-like lifestyle espoused and taught by the school and to refrain from certain activities or behavior. Vidalia Heritage Academy retains the right to refuse admission to, or to expel any student who engages in, condones, supports or otherwise promotes sexual immorality, including any student who professes to be homosexual/bisexual or is a practicing homosexual/bisexual (Leviticus 20:13, Romans 1:27).

REFUSAL OF ADMISSION OR DISCONTINUATION OF ENROLLMENT

VHA'S biblical role is to work in conjunction with the home to encourage and enable students to mature as Christ-like individuals. On occasion, the atmosphere or conduct within a particular home may be counter or in opposition to the biblical lifestyle the school teaches. This includes but is not necessarily limited to sexual immorality, homosexual orientation, or inability to support the mission, values, or biblical principles of the school. In such cases, the school reserves the right, within its sole discretion, to refuse admission of an applicant or to discontinue enrollment of a student.

WAITING LIST POLICY AND PROCEDURE

When new applications are received, determination is made regarding the available openings in the grade level desired. If there are no available openings in the grade level desired, a letter will be sent to the parent/legal guardian indicating the inclusion of the student(s) on a waiting list. In the event that a parent/legal guardian chooses to withdraw their student(s) from the waiting list, the application fee will be refunded. Parents choosing to remain on the waiting list will receive pertinent information from the school. On the first day of school, the parent/legal guardian of the student(s) on the waiting list will be contacted to confirm the decision to remain on the waiting list or have the application fee refunded. After the first week of school, the application fee becomes nonrefundable.

When an opening occurs in a grade level, the parent/legal guardian of the waiting list student will be called and placement will be offered. A decision to accept the placement must be made within three business days. If a decision is not reached or if placement has been declined by the parent/legal guardian; the parent/legal guardian of the next student on the waiting list will be called. In this case, the application fee is not refundable. Any student remaining on the waiting list throughout the year will have the opportunity to re-enroll the following school year and will not be required to submit an application fee for that year.

ADMISSION AND FINANCIAL INFORMATION POLICY

Vidalia Heritage Academy admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights and privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate since race, color, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school administered programs.

Vidalia Heritage Academy believes that in order to provide the best academic and spiritual training, we must make certain exclusions. We, therefore, choose not to accept, for enrollment, students who are not in good standing with the institution in which they are presently and/or previously enrolled or who manifest a disruptive behavior that impedes this school's philosophies or policies. We believe that the standards of Vidalia Heritage Academy are easier to maintain when the students' and parents' attitudes are in agreement with the school's philosophies and policies. This cooperation helps to support the standards we strive to enforce.

PROCEDURES

The admissions process begins by a parent or guardian of a prospective student acquiring and completing the application for admissions forms. Once these forms have been reviewed by the Headmaster and/or Principal, an interview may be set up with the parents or guardians of the prospective student. The admission of a student to Vidalia Heritage Academy will be determined based upon the application forms, testing results and the application interview. In all cases, a student must take a placement test to determine acceptance or placement in a certain grade level.



Vidalia Heritage Academy Fee Schedule

Registration: (Per student, non-refundable)	<u>January – May 31</u>	<u>After June 1</u>
K3 – 12th Grade:	\$225	\$300
K2 Program:	\$85	\$100
<p>For newly enrolling students: Due in full at time of registration. For returning students: Will be split into monthly payments or can be paid in full.</p>		

Tuition + Fees

	Annual	10-Month Plan	12-Month Plan
Tuition – K2	\$1,860	\$186	\$155
Tuition – K3 Half Day (includes \$100 activity fee)	\$3,700	\$370	\$308
Tuition – K3 Full Day + K4 (includes \$100 activity fee)	\$5,100	\$510	\$425
Tuition – Kindergarten - 12th (includes \$240 activity fee)	\$5,740	\$574	\$478

Please note: Any available discounts are taken off tuition only (not fees).

Building/Maintenance Fee:	\$300 per family at VHA (K3 – 12th Grade)
Can be paid annually or split into monthly payments.	

Other costs associated with school that you should be aware of:		
<u>REQUIRED</u>	<u>OPTIONAL</u>	
Uniforms (K-12 th)	Hot lunch (Boonli)	School pictures
School supplies	After-school care	Dress up days / Book Fair / etc.
Fundraising*	Sports/club fees	
<p><i>*Mandatory school-wide fundraisers will be limited to two per school year and will be invoiced. Participation in other fundraisers is optional. Does not apply to K2.</i></p>		

TUITION, BILLING, AND FINANCIAL AID

TUITION AND FEES

Tuition – Can be paid annually or monthly. Cost is per student and depends on the grade/program your student is enrolled in.

Registration Fee – Registration fees are per student and non-refundable. For newly enrolling students, the registration fee is due in full at the time of registration. For returning students, the registration fee can be split into monthly payments or can be paid in full.

Activity Fee – Per student and covers the normal costs of things such as field trips (excluding meals), Chapel and programs, program t-shirts, special assemblies, yearbook, parent/teacher communicators (red folders), technology in the classrooms, Gradelink, and standardized testing.

Building/Maintenance Fee – Per *family* at VHA. These funds go directly toward the funding necessary for maintaining our facilities.

BILLING AND PAYMENT OPTIONS/INFORMATION

Billing information:

- Annually and is due on June 5 of the attending school year.
- On the 12-month plan, billing begins May 25 with the first payment due June 5. (Full Day Programs only).
- On the 10-month plan, billing begins July 25 with the first payment due August 5.
- Tuition is billed the 25th of each month and is late after the 5th of the following month.
- There is no charge for ACH payments - automatic bank withdrawal.

Late payments:

- If payment is not received by the 5th of the month, a late fee of \$50 per family will automatically be charged to the tuition account.
- All accounts past 30 days will be notified by the school.
- If payment is not received within 60 days of the due date, your account will be in arrears and will be under review by the Board of Directors Finance Committee.

If an account is in arrears, it is the parent's responsibility to contact the billing department (billing@vidaliaheritage.com) and make arrangements for payment as soon as possible. After 60 days in arrears, the student will be sent home until the account is paid in full or approved arrangements are made with the Financial Committee. If an account is not brought up to date by May 5, all records and report cards are held by VHA until financial obligations are met. These policies are necessary to ensure VHA is able to meet their financial obligations.

Returned Checks (including electronic checks):

- There will be a \$50 charge on all returned checks (including electronic checks or bank drafts).
- After the first returned check, the family will be required to pay with cash, money order, or credit card.

FINANCIAL AID

Vidalia Heritage Academy provides financial aid to families based on need and availability of funds. Eligibility does not guarantee you will be rewarded financial aid.

The funding for Financial Aid is a combination of resources taken from the school's operating budget and the Georgia Education Tax Credit Program (a reallocation of state tax dollars awarded through the Alyn Scholarship Fund to VHA by families/friends that contribute to the program.)

NOTE: All Financial Aid funds are limited and granted on a first come/first serve basis.

HOW TO APPLY FOR FINANCIAL AID

The desire of Vidalia Heritage Academy is to offer a Christian Education to as many families as possible regardless of their social or financial status. Families who want to request any of VHA's Financial Aid resources must apply annually to the VHA Scholarship Committee. With the goals of excellence and affordability in mind, each family will complete a one-page application that will accurately, thoroughly, and confidentially allow the Scholarship Committee to evaluate the financial status of any family seeking aid, and award tuition assistance accordingly. Supporting documents such as the front page of the family's most recent Federal Tax Return, disclosure of the family's Adjusted Gross Income, or other income sources may be required to complete the application.

FINANCIAL AID DEADLINES AND NOTIFICATIONS

Financial aid requests should be submitted before May 15th each year to ensure an aid award is granted prior to the first tuition payment date. Incomplete applications or applications for those not meeting the state criteria will not be considered. Aid applications received after this date will be considered as they are received.

FUNDRAISING

FUNDRAISING

Vidalia Heritage Academy is a tuition-based school and exists on the basis of tuition/fees, donations, and fundraisers. Tuition alone does not fully cover the basic annual costs of education. In addition, the qualities we value most about a VHA education are very expensive:

- a dedicated, well-trained faculty
- quality academic standards
- excellent up-to-date curriculum
- small class sizes with individual attention
- a variety of extracurricular activities
- and appropriate and accessible equipment.

Therefore, tax-deductible contributions and fundraising are vital to the mission of the school in order to close the gap between tuition income and the actual cost of operation. Fundraisers sponsored by the school are of necessity but will be kept to a minimum number. **However, participation in fundraising activities is required. Mandatory school-wide fundraisers will be limited to two per school year and will be invoiced to each family. Participation in other fundraisers is optional.**

PERFORMANCES

Elementary students (K-5th grade) will be part of at least one major performance during the school year. This will be a ticketed event and each family will receive tickets based on availability. This is a mandatory fundraiser and will be invoiced to families.

ATHLETICS / ATHLETIC FUNDRAISERS / BOOSTER CLUB

Please see the Athletic Manual.

ACADEMIC POLICIES AND INFORMATION

ACADEMIC PHILOSOPHY

We live in a world where people have difficulty thinking that God is ultimately in control of all things. Since we believe that there is only one Truth and only one Standard by which everything should be measured, a biblical worldview is central to every subject we teach, every problem we face, and every decision we make.

CURRICULUM

The course of study at Vidalia Heritage Academy is designed for the scholastic preparation of students by the acquisition of Biblical Truth and academic excellence. The following subjects constitute the **Core Curriculum**:

Bible/Theology, Language Arts (Reading, Phonics, Spelling, Vocabulary, English, Penmanship), Mathematics, Science, History, Physical Education, Ancient Language (Latin and Greek), and Modern Language.

Our **Performing Arts Curriculum** will provide studies in *Music, Art, and Drama*, all of which will be used to prepare our students to present **at least one major performance** for the community each year. We believe this experience prepares students to serve more effectively in the student ministries in their respective churches, and in their communities at large.

Christianity cannot be compartmentalized and taken out for church on Sundays. It must be central to our every thought and action. Every class at Vidalia Heritage Academy is taught from a distinctively Christian perspective by teachers committed to both the Lord and academic success. As our students learn to view everything from a coherent, biblically grounded system of thought, they are able to grow both spiritually and academically.

We live in a world where people have difficulty thinking that God is ultimately in control of all things. Since we believe that there is only one Truth and only one Standard by which everything should be measured, a biblical worldview is central to every subject we teach, every problem we face, and every decision we make. Therefore, the selection of curriculum for use at Vidalia Heritage Academy falls within the following seven criteria:

1. Theological Presuppositions - How does this material address a Biblical world/life view?
2. Moral Tone - How is this material measured by the Ten Commandments?
3. Aesthetic Qualities- What Characteristics contribute to this material's artistic value?
4. Developmental Propriety - Where is the appropriate grade level for this material?
5. Public Reputation - What place in the tradition of western civilization does this material have?
6. Private Conviction - To what extent do concerns of individual and collective Conscience apply to the use of the material?
7. Personal Taste - Preferences of genre, style, etc.

CURRICULUM REVIEW SCHEDULE

Teachers are to use the texts and curriculum as provided through the school. Curriculum will be reviewed and updated as follows:

Bible (years ending in 0 or 5)
Science & Health (years ending in 1 or 6)
History/Geography (years ending in 2 or 7)

Language Arts (years ending in 3 or 8)
Math (years ending in 4 or 9)

ELEMENTARY COURSE OF STUDY

Bible/Theology, Language Arts (Reading, Phonics, Spelling, Classical Vocabulary, English Grammar, Penmanship), Mathematics, Science, History, Physical Education, Music, Art, Drama, and Ancient Language (Latin and Greek—for 4th – 5th).

The Elementary School curriculum is designed to foster the development of the whole child. Learning is a total process where children are prepared for life. Beginning with concrete development activities, your child manipulates real objects, learns through all five senses, and gains understanding necessary for future mastery of academic skills.

MIDDLE SCHOOL COURSE OF STUDY

Bible/Theology, Language Arts (Literature, Spelling, Composition, English Grammar, Penmanship), Mathematics, Science, History, Geography, Physical Education, Music, Art, Drama, and Modern Language (Spanish or French).

The Middle School program emphasizes the development of skills through a variety of teaching techniques including lectures, hands-on experiences, projects, field trips, and guided practice. Weekly chapels teach and reinforce scriptural principles and values necessary for the development of good character.

HIGH SCHOOL COURSE OF STUDY

The High School course of study at VHA concentrates on a core curriculum in the traditional liberal arts, yet it has sufficient flexibility to allow students to work in subjects and at levels appropriate to their interests and abilities. The information here is designed for use by students and their families in making choices for the current year and for developing a 4-year academic plan. Students are encouraged to work closely with the guidance office in selecting courses. Based upon their understanding of a student's performance and ability, the guidance office will be able to provide sound guidance for making decisions. Student schedules are developed on this same basis, with reliance on the professional judgment and concern of our teachers and administrators. Consequently, while we approach this process from the perspective of building a strong overall program which meets the academic needs and individual style of each student, we do not have a policy of placing students based on personal requests. Occasionally, the number of students requesting a course is insufficient to justify formation of the course. Therefore, it is important to choose alternative courses when considering elective programs.

Course Load Requirements

- The High School at VHA will typically operate on a 4x4 block schedule. No student may attempt more than 4 courses in any semester. Where special circumstances exist, the Headmaster may make an exception for this.
- All seniors must earn 3 credits which satisfy graduation requirements during the senior year to receive a VHA diploma.
- A senior who does not qualify for a VHA diploma but who wishes to participate in commencement exercises must be no more than 1½ credits short of meeting requirements for graduation.
- Students who fail 2 or more courses in the first semester may not receive re-enrollment material until satisfactorily completing the second semester.

Course Distribution Requirements (these meet the current state of Georgia Graduation Rule)

- **English:** All students take 4 credits in English.
- **Mathematics:** All students take 4 credits in Mathematics.
- **Social Studies:** All students take 3-4 credits in Social Studies based on the Diploma Program.
- **Science:** All students take 4 credits in Science.
- **Foreign Language:** All students take 2-3 credits.
- **Health and Physical Education:** All students take 1 credit of Health/PE.
- **Bible:** All students take 3 credits in Bible.
- **Public Speaking:** All students take 1 credit in Public Speaking.
- **Electives:** Varies by Diploma Program.

CHAPEL ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENT/POLICY FOR GRADES 9-11

We are an unapologetically Christ-centered school and as chapel services are integral to the education experience here, chapel attendance is required. Not only does VHA pursue growth in the truth of God; we worship the God of truth. If a student has more than three unexcused absences in chapel per semester (including absences for tardies), his/her final grade will be **lowered five points for EACH** course taken that semester.

Transfer Students

Students transferring to VHA from other high schools must meet the minimum graduation requirements as outlined above.

Grade Weighting

1.0 added to each Advanced Placement (AP) Course GPA along with 5 numerical points on the final course grade.

.5 added to each Honors Course GPA along with 5 numerical points on the final course grade.

.5 added to each Dual Enrollment Course GPA.

NOTE: CTAE courses are not eligible for additional grade weighting.

High School Graduation Requirements

Vidalia Heritage Academy offers three tracks toward High School Graduation.

COURSE OF STUDY	*College Prep with Distinction **Denotes Core Credits	*College Prep **Denotes Core Credits	General **Denotes Core Credits
Minimum Number of Credits	28	27	24
Level of Study Required	All Core Credits must be obtained through Honors, AP, or Dual Enrollment courses.	All Core Credits must be obtained through Honors, AP, or Dual Enrollment courses.	A combination of Honors and General Curriculum.
**ENGLISH	4 credits including 2 Honors courses, AP English Language and Composition, and 1 Dual Enrollment course.	4 credits including 3 Honors courses and either AP English Language and Composition course, or 1 Dual Enrollment course.	4 credits including 2 Honors courses.

**SCIENCE	4 credits including 3 Honors courses and AP Biology.	4 credits all of which must be Honors courses.	4 credits including 2 Honors courses.
**MATHEMATICS	4 credits including Honors courses in Algebra I, II, Geometry, and Dual Enrollment Pre-Calculus.	4 credits including Honors courses in Algebra I, II, Geometry, and Dual Enrollment College Algebra.	4 credits including 2 Honors courses.
**SOCIAL STUDIES	4 credits, 3 of which must be Cultural Geography, Dual Enrollment World History, and Dual Enrollment US History. The 4 th credit may be earned in an additional Dual Enrollment History, Government, Psychology, or Economics course.	4 credits, 3 of which must be Cultural Geography, Dual Enrollment World History, and Dual Enrollment US History. The 4 th credit may be earned in an additional Dual Enrollment History, Psychology, and Economics course; or a high school social studies course.	3 credits including a Cultural Geography, World History and US History course.
**FOREIGN LANGUAGE	2 credits of the same foreign language	2 credits of the same foreign language.	2 credits of the same foreign language.
HEALTH/PE	1 credit	1 credit	1 credit
BIBLE	3 credits including Christian Apologetics and Dual Enrollment Comparative Religions	3 credits including Christian Apologetics.	3 credits including Christian Apologetics

PUBLIC SPEAKING (school administration may give credit for this through various courses and/or activities)	1 credit	½ credit	½ credit
SAT PREP	½ credit	½ credit	N/A
SENIOR SEMINAR/CHAPEL	1 credit	1 credit	1 credit
ELECTIVES	3.5 credits	4 credits	1.5 credits

***Honor Graduate Track**

Students and parents should know that those who enroll in an Honor Graduate Track are more capable and will be expected not only to perform at that capability level but also to accept the responsibilities inherent with advanced studies. Many of the Honor Graduate Track classes are taught on the college level, and students will be expected to complete an average of one or two hours a night of homework in addition to other classroom assignments before or after school. Many of the Honor Graduate Track classes require summer work which is graded and counts toward the grade for the first nine weeks. Therefore, students should carefully consider the number of advanced classes they can take and still be successful.

SENIOR SEMINAR AND CHAPEL REQUIREMENTS

The purpose of the Senior Seminar is to educate and develop the next generation of leaders for Christ by teaching biblical values that promote godly decision making in the midst of cultural pressure, social responsibility, accountability within a body of believers, and acts of service in the local community. The Seminar also includes a Prayer Retreat, a Senior Mission Project, a mentorship program to our younger students, practical instruction on the study skills necessary for college, as well as practical life skills (how to balance a checkbook, credit card dangers, how to change a tire, etc.). This is a 1 credit hour high school course that will be **required for graduation**. This course will be held each Friday at 8:00 am and all Seniors will be required to attend both the class and Chapel which follows with only 3 unexcused absences allowed each semester. After 3 unexcused absences, credit will not be given, and the student will not be awarded a VHA High School Diploma.

GRADE SYSTEM AND REPORT CARDS

Students in **standard or honors classes** are graded on the following scale:

98.0 – up	A
	+
93.0 – 97.9	A
90.0 – 92.9	A-
88.0 – 89.9	B+
83.0 – 87.9	B
80.0 – 82.9	B-
78.0 – 79.9	C+
73.0 – 77.9	C
70.0 – 72.9	C-
Below 70	F

Advanced Placement (AP) Classes will use the following:

96.0 – up	A
	+
91.0 – 95.9	A
88.0 – 90.9	A-
86.0 – 87.9	B+
81.0 – 85.9	B
78.0 – 80.9	B-
76.0 – 77.9	C+
75.0 – 75.9	C
70.0 – 74.9	C-
Below 70	F

Final Report Cards (fourth grading period) will not be distributed until all fees are reconciled through the school office and bookkeeper.

Student records and cumulative files will be kept in the office in a locked file cabinet. All a student's records are open to his/her parents, and parents may retrieve copies of the files at the cost of duplication ***PROVIDED THERE IS NOT AN OUTSTANDING BALANCE ON THE STUDENT'S BILL.***

READING LOGS (Elementary)

Reading Logs are due on the date specified by the classroom teacher. If it is turned in late each teacher will follow this standard policy:

- 1 Day Late, -15 points.
- 2 Days Late, -25 points
- More than 2 days late, the student will receive a 0

HOMEWORK

Elementary School:

Our overall goal is that in kindergarten – 5th Grade NO HOMEWORK should be given with the exception of reading, studying for a test, or researching and working on projects. However, incomplete class work may be sent home daily (do not let this accumulate) with a note to the parents in red folders, that this needs to be completed at home that evening.

In addition, **at the teacher's discretion**, some homework may be assigned provided it meets the following criteria:

- It is ten minutes times the grade of the student, but not over 60 minutes for any student. This includes the time to study for a test.
- It is not given over the holidays.
- It is not given on Wednesday unless it is to study for a test that has been on record all week.
- It is to reinforce learning and help students master specific skills.
- It introduces skills that a student will need for future skills.
- It applies skills that a student has already learned.

Homework should be complete, on time, and properly written. The only acceptable excuse for not completing homework is a sudden illness or family emergency. However, the teacher is to maintain a distinction between homework attempted, but not understood, and homework never attempted. The first is to be handled with discretion by the teacher. The latter is unacceptable. In cases of illness, emergency, or attempted but not understood, a note from the parent is required. When homework is incomplete without proper excuse, these guidelines are to be followed:

- The student should be talked with concerning the importance of homework and of his own diligence and responsibility.
- The appropriate grade should be recorded in the teacher grade book. If it is an assignment that is not being recorded, the teacher should make a notation concerning the incident.
- Teachers are expected to have a method of keeping up with a student's homework assignments. Be careful not to teach irresponsibility by letting students get by without doing their homework.
- Unfinished work should be completed at recess, after school, or it may be reassigned as homework.
- If a pattern of regularly neglecting homework becomes apparent, these steps are to be taken:
 1. Parents should be made aware of the problems.
 2. The principal should be notified.
 3. If the problem persists, the parents will be asked to meet with the teacher and principal.
 4. During this time, the student is to receive zero for all incomplete work. At the teacher's discretion, privileges may be revoked.

Upper School General Guidelines:

1. Homework is to be meaningful and an integral part of classroom instruction.
2. The homework amounts, appropriate expectations, and time allotted are to be reasonable for each grade level. Please note that students who do not use their time wisely or work slowly may require more time to complete their homework.
3. Teachers are asked to coordinate project timelines and major assignments in all grades.
4. Homework is to be turned in the day it is due which is usually the next class period.
5. All homework assignments must be completed. A student cannot decide not to complete an assignment and take a “0” for the assignment.

Late Homework/Assignments:

Homework policies will differ per class and will be outlined by the teacher of the class. However, late homework/assignments (if accepted by the teacher) will follow this standard policy:

*Middle School: 1 Day Late, a reduction no less than 5 but no more than 15 points.
2 Days Late, the student receives a zero.

*High School: 1 Day Late, a reduction of no less than 10 but no more than 25 points.
2 Days Late, the student receives a zero.

Dual Enrollment: Students will follow the guidelines as set by the college in the course syllabus.

*8th Grade students taking high school courses will fall under the guidelines for High School Students.

BOOKS AND EQUIPMENT

The safekeeping of books is the responsibility of the student to whom they are assigned. Lost or damaged books will be charged to the student responsible for the books and billed to their tuition account.

SUPPLY LIST

Supply lists for general classroom supplies for each grade/class can be found on the school website (www.vidaliaheritage.com). The supply lists will be updated during the summer months for each school year.

PERSONAL PROPERTY AT SCHOOL

No personal property may be brought to school other than items needed to function on a normal day. No toys, tape recorders, radios, knives, or anything considered to be a weapon are allowed at school. If any valuable personal property is lost, the school will not be responsible. Teachers will inform you of any opportunities which students may bring certain items to school out of the ordinary.

LOST AND FOUND

Lost and found articles that are turned into the school office will be placed in the Lost and Found Closet. All students' clothing items that are plainly marked with names written inside will be returned to the owner (no initials please).

LOCKERS

1. No tape, stickers, or anything NON-magnetic allowed as decoration in the locker. Magnets ONLY!
2. No horse playing while at lockers. Falling books can injure others.
3. If someone is in your way, please wait your turn. Everyone will have a chance to get to their locker.
4. Nothing should be on the OUTSIDE of your locker.
5. Be responsible! Make sure you get ALL of your needed materials.
6. Do not go to your locker during a class without permission.

LOCKER CONSEQUENCES:

1st offense: warning

2nd offense: receive classroom consequence

3rd offense: No use of locker for the week

LUNCHES/SNACKS

Students must provide or purchase his/her own lunch each day, a snack for recess, and a snack for after-school care (if applicable). Please note: If your student brings his or her own lunch, microwave times are limited to one minute for elementary school. If a parent delivers lunch to the school, the parent should clearly mark their child's name on the lunch and leave it with the front office.

As an option to students bringing lunch, "hot lunch" is offered Monday – Friday each week and can be purchased through our online ordering system (Boonli). If purchasing, you will need to access our online Boonli to set up an account. Detailed instructions for ordering lunches can be found on the school website.

Please note:

- Lunches are ordered for one month at a time.
- Boonli opens during the second full week each month and is open for a few days.
- Reminder emails will be sent to parents when Boonli opens/closes.
- If a Boonli "hot lunch" day has been paid for, but is missed due to absence, the money/lunch order will not be carried over to another week.

STANDARDIZED TESTING

Standardized achievement tests are administered annually to all students in Kindergarten – 10th Grade. During testing weeks, class homework will be kept to a minimum. Students who are taking AP classes and agree to take the standardized test for the class must pay for the test even if s/he is unable to take the test on the test date.

Achievement test data is placed in each student's file and is used to determine appropriate placement and educational programming. A copy of the test result will be given to parents with the year-end report card. Standardized achievement tests are administered 2-4 days of the designated test week. (See school calendar for dates).

GRADELINK

All parents/guardians will be given login information within the first week of school to access *Gradelink*. VHA will use *Gradelink* as a form of communication between parents and the student(s) current grades. VHA urges you to familiarize yourself with this website/app. Any questions or concerns logging on, please call the front office.

TUTORING

Private tutoring (after the school day has been completed) can be arranged. Please contact the school office for more information.

ELIGIBILITY FOR EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

PARTICIPATION POLICY

VHA takes seriously the commitments of our student-athletes. We believe honoring commitments is essential throughout life, in marriage, family, church, career, and other areas. We believe athletics helps foster a spirit of genuine commitment. Quitting a team for reasons other than medical or family matters contradicts all we teach about what a Kingdom Athlete should be. A student should never quit a sport in the middle of the season regardless of how justified he/she may feel their reasons to be. We encourage all students and parents to “stick it out”. It is our desire to work with parents in teaching student’s perseverance, commitment, loyalty and fortitude. You never know what God has in store for your family. Any student who quits a sport after the try-out period (five days) will still be billed the athletic fee, be ineligible to begin the next sport, join another in-season team, or participate in off-season training with another sport until the season of the sport he/she quit is over.

ACADEMIC WORK

Athletes are responsible for all of their academic work. Athletic teams will sometimes have to leave school early. It is the athlete’s responsibility to turn in any academic work and get assignments for that day before departing the school for a game. Athletic events can never be used as an excuse for unfinished academic work.

ABSENCES AND EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

No student will be allowed to participate in any after-school, extracurricular activity on a day that he/she has been absent from school. Students must be present a half-day (3 1 / 2 hours) in order to participate in a game that day. Any exception to this policy will be made expressly by the Headmaster.

FAILING A CLASS

The following actions may be taken when a student has failed a class for the quarter (Grades 1st and up):

1. Any indication of significantly decreasing or failing quarter grades will result in teacher-initiated contact with parents before the end of the quarter.
2. Students failing a class may be put on a contract.
3. When a student fails a course(s) in the first and/or third quarter, the teacher will further discuss the situation with parents at conferences if necessary. At the end of the second quarter the parents/legal guardian will be contacted by phone. The phone call will be made prior to the report card being sent home.
4. Parents/legal guardians may use *Gradelink* for access to regular grade and homework updates. Additionally, teachers will be available by phone or email throughout the quarter to provide grade updates and progress reports.

RETENTION POLICY

The general policy of the school is to retain (fail) students based on the following criteria. Should there be an academic concern, a conference will be set with the principal and teacher at the semester to pray, plan, and discuss possible retention.

Kindergarten – 1st Grade

Teacher recommendation based upon two or more of the following:

1. Personal observation
2. Below grade level performance in academic subjects
3. Below grade level on standardized testing
4. Lack of sufficient mastery on basic skills as outlined on the skills mastery form for the student's grade level. The student may be required to pass an end of year skills assessment.
5. Social/emotional maturity

Grades 2-8

1. Failure of two or more core academic subjects based on yearly average (math, science, history, reading, language, Bible)
2. Grade levels of 1.5 below norm in standardized testing in total reading and math
3. Social/emotional maturity
4. Failure to follow through on tutoring
5. Lack of sufficient mastery on basic skills as outlined on the skills mastery form for the student's grade level.

High School

Students must score a 70 average or better in each semester in each subject to be considered as passing. Anything below 70 will result in an F and the student receives no academic credit for the class.

ACADEMIC AWARDS

GENERAL ACADEMIC AWARDS

HONOR ROLL

Heritage Honor Roll: 95.5 and above

Honor Roll: 89.5 – 95.4

1st – 2nd Grade—Math and Language Arts Only

3rd – 8th Grade—All subjects excluding PE and Electives

9th – 12th Grade—All subjects

For either Honor Roll a student must have no “C” or lower on any single report card throughout the year.

PRINCIPAL’S AWARD FOR HIGHEST OVERALL GPA

1st – 2nd Grade—Math and Language Arts Only

3rd – 8th Grade—All subjects excluding PE and

Electives 9th – 12th Grade—All subjects

STAR AWARDS FOR OUTSTANDING ACHIEVEMENT (grades 3-8)

Writing Star

Science Star

Mathematics

History Star

*Students may only win one of these awards

SUBJECT AREA AWARDS

Awarded to High School Students with the highest GPA in individual subjects or subject areas taught by VHA staff on the VHA Campus. Awards will not be given for Dual Enrollment Courses.

READING ROCKS AWARD

Awarded to each student in the 1st – 5th grade with the greatest total number of reading minutes (the student must have turned in his/her Reading Log on time each month in order to win this award).

BIBLE SCHOLAR AWARD

Awarded to each student in the 3rd – 11th grade with the highest GPA in Biblical Studies.

CHARACTER AWARDS

Kindergarten – Happy Heart Award

Awarded to the student who always displays a Philippians 2:14 attitude.

1st Grade - Cheerful Heart Award

Awarded to the student who under all circumstances keeps a cheerful attitude.

2nd Grade - Servants Heart Award

Awarded to the student who seeks opportunities to help and serve whether or not they have been asked.

3rd Grade - Caleb Award

Awarded to the student who has demonstrated diligence and persistent effort in all subjects.

4th Grade - Barnabas Award

Awarded to the student who demonstrates the ability to encourage their fellow students.

5th Grade - Timothy Award

Awarded to the student who exhibits a teachable spirit in all areas of academics and character qualities.

Middle School - The Great Commandment Award

Awarded to one student in the 6th, 7th, and 8th grade who has demonstrated a deep love for God with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength, and who loves others as themselves.

High School - Daniel Award

Awarded to one student in the 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grade who strives to exhibit godly character in all things.

HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION AWARDS

VALEDICTORIAN, SALUTATORIAN, HISTORIAN and THEOLOGIAN CRITERIA

While each of these awards are traditionally based on academics, the stated mission of VHA goes beyond that to equip students “spiritually, intellectually, and physically to love God and serve Him as Christ’s ambassadors in the world.” Therefore, the School Board reserves the right to evaluate the spiritual, intellectual, and physical contribution to the school and the larger community by each of these students. Factors such as church ministry, missions involvement, attitude, citizenship, teamwork, cooperation, school spirit, and level of course work will be considered before an award is granted.

In addition, no student will be considered for any of these awards if:

- S/He has been suspended during their high school career.
- S/He has had a failing grade in any subject throughout their high school career.
- S/He is graduating early (this is determined by the 4-year graduation date set when the student enters the 9th grade).
- S/he is a homeschool student taking courses online through VHA.

At the end of the first semester of their senior year the weighted GPA of the top four seniors (as outlined in the criteria below) will be calculated and the awards determined. The announcement of these awards will be made during the last chapel of January. These four students will then be invited to speak at the graduation ceremony.

SPECIAL NOTE: While the awards will have been announced this does not negate the responsibility of the student to attend the required weekly Chapel services or the weekly Senior Seminar. Failure to attend and/or complete assignments could result in the student’s award being rescinded.

VALEDICTORIAN:

- Awarded to the high school graduate with the highest overall weighted GPA (figured to the third place to the right of the decimal point) in the College Prep with Distinction Track for their high school career.
- The student must have attended VHA High School for their sophomore, junior, and senior year.
- The student must have completed a minimum of 8 AP or Dual Enrollment courses.
- In the case of a tie in weighted GPA, the award will be granted to the student with the highest overall numerical average in head-to-head competition in the Core Credit areas of English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and World Languages and Cultures, Humanities, and the Arts. The other student will be named Salutatorian.

SALUTATORIAN:

- Awarded to the high school graduate with the second highest overall weighted GPA (figured to the third place to the right of the decimal point) in the College Prep with Distinction Track for their high school career.
- The student must have attended VHA High School for their sophomore, junior, and senior year.

- The student must have completed a minimum of 8 AP or Dual Enrollment courses.
- In the case of a tie in weighted GPA, the award will be granted to the student with the highest overall numerical average in head-to-head competition in the Core Credit areas of English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, and World Languages and Cultures, Humanities, and the Arts. The other student will be named Historian.

HISTORIAN:

- Awarded to the high school graduate with the third highest overall weighted GPA (figured to the third place to the right of the decimal point) in the College Prep or College Prep with Distinction Track for their high school career.
- The student must have attended VHA High School for their junior and senior year.
- The student must have completed a minimum of 7 AP or Dual Enrollment courses.
- In the case of a tie in weighted GPA, the award will be granted to both students.

THEOLOGIAN:

- Awarded to the high school graduate with the highest overall weighted GPA (figured to the third place to the right of the decimal point) in Biblical Studies, or the fourth highest overall GPA in the College Prep with Distinction Track for their high school career.
- The student must have attended VHA High School for their junior and senior year.
- The student must have completed a minimum of 2 Bible courses during their High School career at VHA.
- In the case of a tie in weighted GPA, the award will be granted to the student with the highest overall GPA.

HONOR GRADUATES

VHA recognizes both Honor Graduates and Honor Graduates with Distinction.

Honor Graduates:

Must have attended VHA High School for at least two years, have at least a 4.0 weighted GPA with a minimum of 6 AP or Dual Enrollment courses, and/or have made a significant contribution to the overall mission of VHA.

Honor Graduates with Distinction:

Must have attended VHA High School for at least two-and-a-half years, have at least a 4.1 weighted GPA with a minimum of 8 AP or Dual Enrollment courses.

LIBRARY POLICIES

The library provides a variety of resources to support instruction and student interest. Students gain literacy skills and skills necessary to become effective users of information while having the opportunity to develop a desire to become independent, lifelong learners. Students learn to become discerning readers, viewers, and listeners.

Books selected for the library may not all be Christian and may not be acceptable to every family. Because it is the school's desire to teach students to critically evaluate what they read, some non-Christian materials will be included. It is important for parents to know that they should be actively involved in helping their children evaluate what they read and further censor where they feel it is necessary.

While the library staff and administration make every effort to acquire appropriate material for the library, books containing inappropriate language or themes may occasionally find their way to our library shelves. A parent who becomes aware of a book he/she feels contains objectionable material should make a verbal or written complaint to the librarian detailing his/her concern. The librarian will respond in writing to the complaint. If the issue remains unresolved, the parent may request a meeting with the principal and/or the School Board.

Item Limits

The following are the item limits that may be checked out at each grade level.

Pre-kindergarten	1 item
Kindergarten – 5 th Grade	1 item
Upper School	3 items

Time Limits

Students may keep library items for two weeks. Students may take their books home.

Item Renewal

Items may be renewed for an additional checkout period unless the item has been placed on reserve by another student.

Item Reserve

An unavailable item that has been checked out by another student may be placed on reserve. Items on reserve are not eligible for renewal by the original borrower.

Damaged/Lost Items

Damaged or lost items must be reported immediately to the librarian. It is the borrower's responsibility to care for items borrowed from the library. If an item is damaged or lost, a replacement fee will be charged to the parent/legal guardian account. Replacement costs for damaged or lost materials will be assessed by the librarian based on current pricing.

Suspension of Privileges

Circulation privileges may be discontinued until all overdue materials are returned. Overdue items should be returned to the library. Fines are to be paid before the end of each quarter to maintain privileges.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

While we make every effort to accommodate all requests for conferences, “drop-in” conferences after school do not allow adequate time for our teachers to prepare to share with you all that is happening with your child. Parents who desire a conference with teachers, school administration, or the Headmaster should telephone the school office or write a note to arrange a convenient appointment. Any situation involving a teacher and student which causes parental concern should first be discussed with the respective teacher. If a satisfactory solution cannot be achieved, an appointment for a conference with that teacher and the administrator should be made. For safety and security reasons, under no circumstances should a parent seek to re-enter a classroom after 3:20 p.m. unless you have set up an appointment with the teacher.

VISITING YOUR CHILD’S CLASSROOM

Parents are always welcome at Vidalia Heritage Academy because you are an integral part of the education of your child. However, for safety and security reasons, parents are **NOT** allowed to enter the classrooms without first making an appointment with the teacher or the school office.

COMMUNICATION WITH STUDENTS

Lunches, homework, books, and other items that may need to be delivered to your child should be left in the office. If you need to send a message to your child during school, please call the office, and the message will be delivered to your child. We **DO NOT** call students to the phone except in the case of an emergency. A message may be given to a student to call a parent during a convenient break (i.e., lunch).

RE-ENTERING THE BUILDING AFTER SCHOOL IS DISMISSED

For safety and security reasons students and parents are **NOT** allowed to re-enter the school building after 3:20 p.m. to retrieve forgotten textbooks or personal items from classrooms. Each classroom will be locked at 3:20 p.m. daily. This also includes those students and/or parents who participate in the after-school program. After 3:20 p.m. no after-school student or parent will be allowed to re-enter a classroom.

Exceptions: After-school students who are working on a project with a supervising teacher are allowed classroom access after 3:20 p.m. Additional exceptions may be made provided a teacher or administrator accompanies the student (unless it’s during carpool when staff cannot leave their post).

CUSTODIAL PARENTS/NON-CUSTODIAL PARENTS

All parents, (both Father and Mother) who have students attending Vidalia Heritage Academy are considered custodial parents unless legal documentation stating otherwise is presented to the Administration. The relationship that VHA has will be with the parent/parents who have signed the contract with the school. If a dual-custody situation arises, VHA will send all correspondence to the primary parent who then will be responsible to communicate or furnish information to the secondary parent. VHA is not equipped to send duplicate information mailings, due to the large quantity of information, which goes home from various sources. Only the parent with whom we have a contractual relationship with can request such information.

FIELD TRIPS

Field Trips are an extension of the academics at VHA and there is much to be learned by sharing these experiences with classmates. Therefore, all students will **RIDE TOGETHER** in VHA approved vehicles on any VHA sponsored Field Trip. As with any other academic day, students may be checked out from the field trip by a parent or guardian and return home in a private vehicle. However, travel **TO and FOR** the duration of the instructional time of the designated Field Trip is limited to VHA approved vehicles **ONLY**.

CHAPERONES/DRIVERS FOR FIELD TRIPS: Only parents, grandparents, step-parents, and court appointed guardians are allowed to serve as Chaperones and Volunteer Drivers for VHA Field Trips and must submit themselves to a criminal background check and complete the necessary driver and insurance information questionnaire. Chaperones/Drivers **MAY NOT** stop at restaurants, convenience stores, etc., without prior consent of the supervising teacher.

There are a limited number of chaperones/drivers needed for each trip and VHA will make every effort to include you throughout the year. If you are not needed in one of these capacities, you may still attend the field trip in your own vehicle, but you will not be assigned as a chaperone.

PLEASE NOTE: Due to our trips being academic in nature, pre-school (K-3 & younger) children are **NOT ALLOWED** on any VHA Field Trip. This is for the benefit of all students and teachers. Please make other arrangements for the younger children if you desire to go.

GENERAL HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDELINES

ILLNESS

Students who become ill during the day will be referred to the school office. The office personnel will determine whether the student is well enough to remain in school until the end of the day. Students are not to call home before checking in with the office for evaluation.

The following guidelines will be followed in this determination:

1. Elevated temperature greater than 100.0 degrees
2. Vomiting, nausea, diarrhea, sore throat
3. Discharge from any body opening
4. Sore indicating impetigo or ringworm
5. Rashes from unknown causes or of a contagious nature
6. Paleness or listlessness
7. Head lice

When one or more of the above symptoms are present, a parent/guardian will be contacted. Adequate contact information must be on file at the school at all times.

Students must remain at home for a minimum of 24 hours after the last episode in the following cases:

1. Elevated temperature 100.0 degrees or higher
2. Vomiting
3. Diarrhea

COVID-19 POLICY

- Parents and employees agree they will neither send a student nor enter the campus themselves if they are exhibiting any of the symptoms as listed by the CDC. (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>)
- Any child that exhibits a fever of 100+ will be removed from the classroom and parents will be notified to pick up their child to be transported home.
- We encourage all our parents, students, staff members, and employees to follow the CDC guidelines for COVID-19. (<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>)

MEDICATION

No medication will be given without permission from the parents. If medication (including Tylenol and cough drops) is to be given at school, clear and precise written instructions must accompany the medicine given. If a student requires regular medication, prior arrangements must be made with a doctor's prescription. No medication will be administered by faculty or staff without doctor's orders. All prescription drugs must be kept in the office. Our school staff cannot administer medication unless there is written permission from the parent with the following information:

1. Name of medication
2. Date
3. Exact dosage
4. Time to be administered
5. Duration of time medication is to be given
6. Doctor's name

IMMUNIZATIONS

It is the requirement of the school and the State of Georgia that the school must have on file updated shot records indicating the current status of immunization. It is the responsibility of the parent(s) to keep these files updated. All students entering sixth grade are now required to have a second Measles, Mumps, and Rubella (MMR) immunization. An updated Certificate of Immunization needs to be submitted to the school office at this time. The administration has the option not to allow any student (regardless of age) to begin classes until the appropriate records are on file.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

Any staff member and/or student who contracts any communicable disease will not be allowed to attend school during the duration of the illness. This action is taken in the best interests of the non- infected students and staff.

Such communicable diseases include, but are not limited to the following: Influenza, COVID-19, Pneumonia, Strep, Whooping Cough (Pertussis), Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS), Mumps, Measles, Chicken Pox, Diphtheria, Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye).

If a child becomes ill during the day, he/she will be excused to go home. A parent or authorized person will be notified.

LICE

If it is determined that a student has lice, the parents will be notified immediately. After treatment, the student may return to school, but will be checked for five school days following his/her return. We have a "no-nit" policy, meaning that any signs of nits in the child's hair, dead or alive, will prevent us from allowing the child to return to school for at least 24 hours. Hair must be free of ALL evidence of lice and nits.

SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

If a teacher or staff member suspects a child is being abused (mentally or physically) or neglected, the concern will be brought to the attention of the Headmaster immediately. The suspicion of abuse is enough to warrant the notification of the Department of Family and Children's Services. The Headmaster, in conjunction with the teacher or staff member, will determine the need to contact the Department of Family and Children Services. The Headmaster makes final decisions and initial contact. Both the Headmaster and the teacher/staff member will document the incident.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL

STUDENT ARRIVAL

School doors are open with supervision at 7:35 a.m. Students are to go directly to their assigned waiting area for their teacher to get them at approximately 7:55 a.m. **At 8:00 am the tardy bell will ring.**

STUDENT EARLY DISMISSAL

If your child must leave early from school, you or the person picking the student up must come by the office and sign the student out. PLEASE NOTE: The academic day at VHA, in every grade level, is extremely structured and our students work right up until the time of dismissal. Therefore, we cannot accommodate early check-outs after 2:30 pm unless it is an extreme emergency.

STUDENT DISMISSAL

The bell for dismissal rings at 3:00 p.m. on full days and noon on half-days. Parents are **NOT** allowed to enter the school building after 2:30 pm to pick up their students and must either come through the carpool line or stand at the front door of the school where your child will be sent to you. Please note that there are 4+ lanes available in which you may position your car at the Elementary School off Jackson Street and you should form two lanes off of Third Street at the Upper School. **The carpool line is open until 3:20 pm on full days and 12:20 pm on half days.**

AFTER SCHOOL CARE

Except for participating in official practices, rehearsals, and meetings, or help with classes, students are expected to leave the campus no later than 15 minutes following the end of the school day. Each family should make arrangements for students to be picked up.

After-school care for students in kindergarten – 12th grade is available for the convenience of our parents. After-school care is located in the elementary building and begins each day at 3:20 p.m. immediately after carpool ends.

Upper school students who participate in the after-school care program will be escorted to the elementary building by a school staff member immediately after carpool at the upper school ends.

The cost is \$8.00 per day. Please note that after-school care is billed monthly and is paid separately from tuition.

Only in emergency situations should a student be left in the after-school program after 5:30 p.m. If such an occasion arises, please make every effort to call ahead to let the teacher and student know when he/she can expect to be picked up. **There is an additional \$25 per day late fee for late pickups past 5:30 p.m.**

Please make sure all persons who you wish to allow to pick up your child from the after-school care program are on the authorization list. If someone else comes to pick up your child the child will not be released to him or her without your written or verbal consent. We will ask for a Driver's License I.D. to verify their identity. Also, the person will be asked for the student's unique ID number which will be assigned to them at Open House/Orientation.

SUBSTITUTE RIDES HOME

Please make sure all persons who you wish to allow to pick up your child are on the authorization list. If someone else comes to pick up your child, the child will not be released to him or her without your written or verbal consent. If your child is to ride home with someone that is not on the authorized pick-up list, notification needs to be sent to the teacher and/or school office. We will ask for a photo ID to verify their identity.

CARPOOL LINE SAFETY AND ETIQUETTE

When picking up and dropping off your child(ren):

- Be patient, careful, and watchful
- Drive slowly
- Take turns
- Face forward when moving
- Stop at least six feet from the car in front of you
- No cell phone use at the pick-up/drop-off location as this can be a *significant* distraction
- Stay in your car and allow school personnel or their designee to assist your child in or out of the vehicle
- Please do not try to have a conversation about your child(ren) with school staff as they are working in carpool.

STUDENT DRIVING GUIDELINES

Being allowed to drive to and park at school is a privilege that comes with important responsibilities. Student drivers must always use great caution. As our school grows, so does the number of drivers and cars on campus. Our school serves students of all ages, and young children are often not aware of the potential danger around them from traffic. It is, therefore, incumbent upon drivers to pay extra attention to people walking through the driving and parking areas.

Guidelines for student drivers include:

1. Each student driver must purchase a parking pass from the office and display it on their car while parked in the school parking lot. The parking pass is \$5.
2. Students may park in designated areas only, as assigned by the administration.
3. The speed limit on campus is 10 mph.
4. Loud music may not be blaring from vehicles on campus.
5. Students, 10th grade and below, are not allowed to drive off campus for lunch.
6. Students may not drive off campus during school hours for any reason without written parental and administrative permission.
7. Students may not go to their vehicle during school hours without administrative permission and must be escorted by a school staff member.
8. Driving and parking is at the student's own risk. VHA will not be held responsible for any damage incurred because of another person's recklessness.

At any time that a student's driving, parking, or misuse of a vehicle puts the safety of others at risk, driving privileges will be suspended. Students who choose to disregard these guidelines will receive disciplinary action.

ATTENDANCE POLICIES AND INFORMATION

ATTENDANCE POLICY

In order to obtain the maximum benefit from our academic program, students should be in class every day. The following rules are designed to help the student maintain good attendance, help parents fulfill their responsibility, and allow the student to receive all the educational benefits to which they are entitled.

EXCUSED ABSENCES

The following shall constitute a valid excused absence for non-attendance of part or all of a day/class for a student at school, provided satisfactory evidence is provided to the school office in writing on the day the student returns to school:

- Personal illness or injury (a doctor's note may be required, see attendance policy below)
- Death, illness or injury within the immediate family
- Instances where attendance by the student would be hazardous
- Prior approval or special absences (see below)
- School-related activities
- Validated doctor appointment*
- Validated appointment for driver's license test date*
- AP Test Dates
- Dual Enrollment Tests that are off campus
- **College Days – (High School Only) Requires prior approval, with 4 school day written advance notice** (If your 4-school day deadline falls on a school holiday, an administrative decision will be made.) College visits must be documented by signature/date verification by college/university officials. These verifications may be by admissions officials or personnel from the various departments that are visited. Failure to provide acceptable documentation will result in an unexcused absence being assessed for the day(s). Each high school junior and senior is allotted up to a maximum of five (5) days per year for college visitation. The request to miss school to visit any college campus must be valid. Any abuse of this privilege will result in its revocation. College days should not be taken later than April 15, unless required for scholarship considerations (determined by Administration).
Any violation of these College Days provisions will result in the absence(s) declared as unexcused and all appropriate penalties invoked.

*We strongly encourage appointments to be made outside of normal class time.

PRE-ARRANGED ABSENCES

***ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOL**

During the course of a school year, if it becomes necessary or if families desire to take an extended trip out of town, for the student and teacher's sake, we ask for the following considerations:

- In the case of extended planned trips (1 week or more), please give a minimum two (2) week notice in writing to your student's teacher. This allows the teacher adequate time to plan and collect student's assignments for the period to be missed. For trips of less than a week, one (1) week notice will be appreciated.
- Assignments are due back to the teacher on the student's day of return to classes.
- Any tests missed during the student's absence will be made up at the teacher's discretion within one week of student's return to classes.

***HIGH SCHOOL**

While we understand that there are times when non-emergency family trips are taken they do cause students to lose valuable instructional time, put undue pressures on teachers, and can cause serious problems with the pace and continuity of high school courses. We would therefore encourage that such extended absences be avoided. If it becomes necessary that these trips be taken the following policies must be followed:

- The Headmaster must be informed a minimum of three weeks in advance of a trip lasting 5 school days or more. The Headmaster must be informed a minimum of two weeks in advance of a trip lasting less than 5 school days.
- Upon the Headmaster's approval the teacher's will be informed and begin to plan and collect the student's assignments for the period to be missed.
- Assignments are due back to the teacher on the student's FIRST day of return to classes.
- Any tests missed during the student's absence will be made up at the teacher's discretion within one week of student's return to classes.

*8th Grade students taking high school courses will fall under the guidelines for High School Students.

ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS FOR PARTICIPATION IN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

In order for a student to participate in extracurricular activities (i.e., a school performance), he/she must be in school on the day before the activity for rehearsal/practice, in school by 8:30 am on the day of the activity, and arrive no more than 10 minutes later than the posted time for student arrival. Exceptions may be granted by the administration for doctor's appointments, pre-arranged absences, or justifiable emergencies.

ABSENCE POLICY – ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Because of the level of study and the challenging pace of our courses, K – 5th grade students of Vidalia Heritage Academy are allowed ***ten absences for the year*** for general purposes (i.e. sickness or family trips).

A note from the parent must be received for every absence the student incurs. Any tests missed during the student's absence will be made up at the teacher's discretion within one week of the student's return to classes. If a student is absent on the day any assigned work (this includes Reading Logs, projects, book reports, or homework) is due, the policy is as follows:

- If the work was assigned and published on Gradelink or in a newsletter 3 or more days before the student's absence, the work is due on the day of the student's return to school.
- If the work was assigned and published on Gradelink or in a newsletter less than 3 days before the student's absence, the work is due on the day following the student's return to school.

After ten absences (including absences received for excessive tardies):

- Each absence because of illness or personal injury will require a note from the student's doctor indicating the student was too ill to attend school. Any absence not excused will result in a zero for all work missed.
- Satisfactory evidence as defined above will be required in order for an additional absence to be considered excused. Any absence not excused will result in a zero for all work missed.

If a student is absent more than 15 days (including absences received for excessive tardies) excused or unexcused, the student may not be considered for promotion. Parents may be required to provide additional information for these absences.

TARDY POLICY – ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Teachers will begin taking their students to the classrooms at 7:55 am. **At 8:00 am the tardy bell will ring.** Any student not in his or her classroom by the time this bell rings will be required to be signed in by their parent in the administrative office. The student must receive a tardy slip from the administrative office in order to be admitted to class.

Please note that each student must be in school until noon to be counted present for the entire day. Students who are late but arrive by 11:30 am are counted present for the whole day.

Tardy consequences (per grading period):

First tardy - student receives a Verbal Warning

Second tardy - student receives a Written Warning.

Third tardy - student is documented as having **one absence** for the nine weeks

We believe this policy will help ensure the prompt arrival of students, facilitate better use of the classroom time, and avoid disruptions to the learning of your child and others in his or her class.

ABSENCE POLICY – MIDDLE SCHOOL

The level of study and the challenging pace of our upper school courses are rigorous and attendance, therefore, is determined by the individual class period. A NOTE FROM THE PARENT MUST BE RECEIVED FOR EVERY ABSENCE THE STUDENT INCURS AND MUST BE TURNED IN THE DAY THE STUDENT RETURNS TO SCHOOL. Any tests missed during the student's excused absence will be made up at the teacher's discretion within one week of the student's return to classes.

If a student is absent on the day any assigned work is due, the policy is as follows:

- If the work was assigned and published on Gradelink or in a newsletter 3 or more days before the student's absence, the work is due on the day of the student's return to school.
- If the work was assigned and published on Gradelink or in a newsletter less than 3 days before the student's absence, the work is due on the day following the student's return to school.

After 5 absences in a class per semester (including absences for tardies):

- Each absence because of illness or personal injury will require a note from the student's doctor indicating the student was too ill to attend school. This note must be turned in the day the student returns to school. Any absence not excused will result in a zero for all work missed.
- Satisfactory evidence as defined above will be required in order for an additional absence to be considered excused. Any absence not excused will result in a zero for all work missed.

(Students may have to come in early, stay after school or miss club time to make up missed work).

If a student has more than 5 unexcused absences in a class per semester (including absences for tardies), his/her final semester grade will be lowered two points for each class session missed after the 5th unexcused absence.

DENIAL OF CREDIT/PROMOTION

Any middle school student who is absent from a class more than 15 times throughout the school year will not be given credit for the course and may not be considered for promotion. Students may appeal to the Board of Directors Academic Review Committee if extenuating circumstances exist.

**8th Grade students taking high school courses will fall under the guidelines for High School Student

ABSENCE POLICY – HIGH SCHOOL

The level of study and the challenging pace of our upper school courses are rigorous and attendance, therefore, is determined by the individual class period. A NOTE FROM THE PARENT MUST BE RECEIVED FOR EVERY ABSENCE THE STUDENT INCURS AND MUST BE TURNED IN THE DAY THE STUDENT RETURNS TO SCHOOL. Any tests missed during the student's excused absence will be made up at the teacher's discretion within one week of the student's return to classes.

After 3 absences in a class per semester (including absences for tardies):

- Each absence because of illness or personal injury will require a note from the student's doctor indicating the student was too ill to attend school. This note must be turned in the day the student returns to school. Any absence not excused will result in a zero for all work missed.
- Satisfactory evidence as defined above will be required in order for an additional absence to be considered excused. Any absence not excused will result in a zero for all work missed.

(Students may have to come in early, stay after school or miss club time to make up missed work).

If a student has more than 3 unexcused absences in a class per semester (including absences for tardies), his/her final semester grade will be lowered two points for each class session missed after the 3rd unexcused absence.

DENIAL OF CREDIT/PROMOTION

Any high school student who is absent from a class more than 10 times in any semester will not be given credit for the course. Students may appeal to the Board of Directors Academic Review Committee if extenuating circumstances exist.

*Dual Enrollment Students will follow the attendance guidelines as set by the college in the course syllabus.

TARDY POLICY – MIDDLE AND HIGH SCHOOL

If a student arrives at school after 8:00 am they must come through the front door and receive a tardy slip from the front office. Any student not in his or her classroom by the published time of the beginning of any class is subject to the following consequences per semester:

First tardy - student receives a verbal warning from the teacher.

Second tardy - student receives a written notification from the teacher and is documented in Gradelink.

Third tardy - student is documented as having **one absence** for the semester and must serve a 30 minute after school detention on the next school day, provided 24-hours notice is given in writing via email to the parents and student. **A \$10 fee will be assessed to cover supervision time by a teacher.**

With each subsequent three tardies, the student will receive not only an **additional absence**,

but will also receive detentions compounded in thirty-minute intervals (i.e., the 6th Tardy = 1 hour of after school detention, etc.). Supervision fees will be charged at \$10 per half hour.

PLEASE NOTE: Any student who is absent or leaves a class for more than 20 minutes will receive an unexcused absence for that class unless satisfactory evidence as described above merits it as excused.

We believe this policy will help ensure the prompt arrival of students, facilitate better use of the classroom time, and avoid disruptions to the learning of your child and others in his or her class.

HOSPITAL/HOMEBOUND POLICY

PURPOSE

The Hospital/Homebound Program is a service for students who are physically unable to attend school for a period of ten (10) days or more consecutive days.

QUALIFICATION

Any VHA student who has a physical condition medically diagnosed by a licensed physician, which restricts them to their home or hospital is qualified for this program.

PROCEDURE

The hospital/homebound request form must be completed in its entirety and returned to an administrator. This includes the medical certification section of the form, which is completed by the physician. Once completed, VHA administration will determine if the student is eligible for the program. If eligible, the student will begin the program immediately.

INSTRUCTIONAL PROCESS

Elementary

Student assignments will be provided weekly by the classroom teacher. Some deviations may be required. For example, physical limitations may increase the time needed to complete assignments or may require that all or part of the work be done orally with the school liaison. The student will be counted present each day if he/she is receiving instruction. Grades are determined by the classroom teachers, school liaison, and parent records. Grades are posted on Gradelink by the classroom teacher.

Upper School

Students who request homebound instruction must be passing all classes and be on target to graduate. An adult must be present in the home during the instructional period. Regular instructional personnel and parents should be made aware that full credit is given for work completed during the hospital/homebound instruction. The school liaison works closely with the student's regular classroom teachers and the parent to provide continuity of the educational

program for the student. Parents should follow lesson plans emailed to them by the classroom teacher as well as due dates for assignments posted on Gradelink to ensure that the student is moving at a proper pace. Unit tests or chapter tests should be taken either at school by appointment or in the presence of the school liaison.

GOVERNING POLICY

The primary objective of hospital/homebound instruction is to enable students with medically diagnosed conditions to continue a planned educational program during the time when regular school attendance is not possible. A physician should reasonably be able to project that the student will be absent a minimum of ten (10) school days and is physically able to profit from educational instruction. Students are not eligible if the absences are due to expulsion or suspension.

Any student on homebound status who is not making adequate progress or not completing the assigned work will lose his/her homebound status, and his/her absences will be counted as unexcused. The student will have ten (10) days after each semester to complete his/her work including final exams or an amount of time reasonable to complete assignments (approved by an administrator). Otherwise, the grade will be changed permanently to an F.

As soon as the student is physically able to return to his/her normal routine and functioning, regular school attendance must resume. In some cases, dual instruction through regular attendance and hospital/homebound may be used in returning the student to full day instruction.

All forms are available through the school office.

APPEARANCE POLICES AND INFORMATION

PHILOSOPHY

Vidalia Heritage Academy believes that the use of school uniforms projects an atmosphere of uniformity, pride, loyalty, and equality among students. Uniforms help in removing some of the distractions normally confronted when children face the dilemma of possessing the latest designer fashions or the latest fad sweeping the nation at any given time. School uniforms also tend to involve students more and to make them part of a "team" at the school. This is not so much to erase their individuality, but to include everyone at the same level as far as image and dress is concerned.

UNIFORMS

We have a uniform dress code that should be followed by all students. PLEASE NOTE: All students, including juniors, seniors, and homeschool students attending any on-campus class or chapel will follow the dress code as outlined below. All students not abiding by the dress code will lose their day of FREE DRESS. This is on the last Friday of each month and is a reward for those students who are exhibiting responsible uniform dress on a daily basis.

Please note the following as it relates to all articles of clothing, uniform, or free dress attire (including masks, face coverings, pants, shorts, shirts, socks, belts, jackets, shoes, hoodies, hair accessories):

- If there is writing on any attire worn on the VHA Campus, all words should honor and glorify the Lord. Any words or images that promote rebellion, unsafe activities, anti-Christian values, or belittle others will not be allowed. Political slogans or political organization logos are NOT allowed.
- The only flag allowed to be displayed on any attire worn on the VHA Campus is the United States of America Flag or the Christian Flag.

Dress Code Infractions:

1st Offense – verbally warned by teacher or administration

2nd Offense – Written up in Gradelink and copy of referral sent home to parents requiring signature.

3rd Offense – Written up in Gradelink and a loss of free dress day privileges for that month.

The following list is not exhaustive. We reserve the right to interpret it as we see fit. If you have concerns, please contact the office during regular business hours.

SENIOR STUDENTS

Monday – Thursday: All seniors may wear a spirit t-shirt along with approved slacks, shorts, skorts, or blue jeans. If the senior does not wish to wear a spirit t-shirt on those days, they are required to wear a uniform collared shirt.

Friday: All seniors must wear a uniform collared shirt to their Senior Seminar class and Chapel along with approved slacks, shorts, skorts, or blue jeans.

Free Dress Days will continue to be the last Friday of the month.

FREE DRESS DAYS

Free Dress Days will be on the last Friday of each month and is a reward for those students who are exhibiting responsible uniform dress daily. Free Dress Day guidelines are as follows:

Pants: any style as long as they do not have holes.

Shorts/Skirts: students can wear shorts as long as they:

- *are no more than 3 inches above the knee
- *have no holes
- *are not too tight

Leggings: any style but they must be covered by a shirt or a skirt that is no more than 3 inches above the knee.

Shirts: shirts need to meet the following:

- *no shear shirts or blouses
- *no spaghetti straps
- *no tank tops
- *no low cut blouses
- *no skin to be showing in midriff area at all.

Shoes: all shoes must have a back on them for safety reasons; FLIP FLOPS are not allowed; baseball/football cleats are not allowed due to safety & housekeeping issues.

Please remember ALL articles of clothing should honor the Lord. If there is writing on clothes in any fashion, all words should glorify Him. Please refrain from any words that promote rebellion, unsafe activities, anti-Christian images, or belittling others.

UPPER SCHOOL DAILY DRESS

Slacks, pants, capris, shorts, or skorts*	<p>*Skorts and capris can only be worn by female students.</p> <p>Khaki or navy slacks/pants/capris/shorts/skorts or blue jeans provided they meet the following 3" rule:</p> <p>Shorts/skorts must not be any shorter than 3" from the bend of the knee. When a student kneels on the floor, it will be measured from the floor up. No jean shorts or skorts.</p> <p>All slacks blue jeans, and shorts must have belt loops.</p> <p>Embellishments/flashy designs on pockets or elsewhere, holes, rips, and tears in slacks, shorts, skorts, or blue jeans are NOT allowed.</p> <p>Leggings under skorts (for females) are allowed, but must be red, white, blue, or a combination of those colors.</p>
Shirts	<p>Navy, red, or white pique golf shirt <u>with school logo</u> (long or short sleeve).</p> <p>Please note that red pique golf shirts with school logos are required for all school field trips. Turtlenecks or t-shirts may be worn under a pique golf shirt if needed for warmth. They must be the same color as school colors (plain navy, red, white) and may not contain writing or logos of any kind on them.</p> <p>Shirts must be tucked in at all times.</p> <p>6th – 11th grade students may wear spirit t-shirts every Wednesday.</p> <p>6th-12th grade students are required to wear a UNIFORM COLLARED SHIRT on Friday for Chapel Day and/or Senior Seminar Class.</p>
Socks	Red, white, blue, black, or khaki
Shoes	<p>Tennis shoes/sneakers, loafers, Hey Dudes (or some other casual shoe), boots.</p> <p>No Heelies, flip flops, or Crocs.</p> <p>Sandals with backs may be worn on free dress days.</p> <p>Tennis shoes MUST be worn for PE.</p> <p>If in doubt, please check with administration prior to wearing or purchasing.</p>
Belts	Cordovan, black, brown, white, khaki, or navy (or any combination of these colors in any pattern). Belts are to be worn at all times
Sweater	Navy, red, white, or black may be worn in the classroom. Optional and may be worn in the classroom.
Sweatshirt or hoodie	Only school sweatshirts or hoodies with the school logos are allowed for indoor warmth. This includes any sweatshirt or hoodie that was purchased for a school sponsored field trip (i.e., Washington, DC, Harvard Model Congress, and Arts, Academic, Athletics sanctioned events). No other sweatshirts will be allowed.
Overcoat or jacket	Overcoats/Jackets of any color may be worn for outdoor warmth as long as the logo is smaller than a credit card. Once inside, the overcoat/jacket must be removed, and a school sweatshirt or hoodie (as mentioned above) must be used for indoor warmth.

LOWER SCHOOL DAILY DRESS	
Slacks, pants, capris, shorts, or skorts*	<p>*Skorts and capris can only be worn by female students. Khaki or navy slacks/pants/capris/shorts/skorts provided they meet the following 3" rule: Shorts/skorts must not be any shorter than 3" from the bend of the knee. When a student kneels on the floor, it will be measured from the floor up. All slacks and shorts must have belt loops. Embellishments/flashy designs on pockets or elsewhere, holes, rips, and tears in slacks or shorts are NOT allowed. Leggings under skorts (for females) are allowed, but must be red, white, blue, or a combination of those colors.</p> <p>Jeans may be worn every Friday.</p>
Shirts	<p>Navy, red, or white pique golf shirt <u>with school logo</u> (long or short sleeve) Please note that red pique golf shirts with school logos are required for all school field trips. Turtlenecks or t-shirts may be worn under a pique golf shirt if needed for warmth. They must be the same color as school colors (plain navy, red, white) and may not contain writing or logos of any kind on them. Shirts must be tucked in at all times (this will not be enforced in kindergarten until the second semester).</p> <p>Spirit wear t-shirts may be worn every Friday. (Includes current or previous school year field day and performance t-shirts.)</p>
Socks	Red, white, blue, black, or khaki.
Shoes	<p>Tennis shoes/sneakers, boat shoes (Sperry's), loafers, Toms/Bobs No boots (applies to elementary students only). No Heelies, flip flops, or Crocs. Sandals with backs may be worn on free dress days. Tennis shoes MUST be worn for PE. If in doubt, please check with administration prior to wearing or purchasing.</p>
Belt	Cordovan, black, brown, white, khaki, or navy (or any combination of these colors in any pattern). Belts are to be worn at all times (this will not be enforced in kindergarten until the second semester.)
Sweater	Navy, red, white, or black may be worn in the classroom. Optional and may be worn in the classroom.
Sweatshirt or hoodie	Only school sweatshirts or hoodies with the school logos are allowed for indoor warmth. This includes any sweatshirt or hoodie that was purchased for a school sponsored field trip (i.e., Washington, DC, Harvard Model Congress, and Arts, Academic, Athletics sanctioned events). No other sweatshirts will be allowed.
Overcoat or jacket	Overcoats/Jackets of any color may be worn for outdoor warmth as long as the logo is smaller than a credit card. Once inside, the overcoat/jacket must be removed, and a school sweatshirt or hoodie (as mentioned above) must be used for indoor warmth.

HAIR

Boys:

Hair is to be neatly trimmed on the sides and back and combed. It is to be gradually tapered in the back and not be more than 2 inches high (this includes any stylish spiking of the hair), or 2 inches below the top of the shirt collar. Hair must also be cut above the eyebrows. Facial hair, i.e., mustaches, beards, goatees, and sideburns should be neatly trimmed.

Girls:

Hair must be neatly combed and brushed with no unnatural color. The hair accessories allowed are barrettes, bows, clips, rubber and elastic bands, headbands, and scrunchies. These must be in one of the following colors or color combinations: red, white, blue, black, beige, or pink. **NOTE: Any exceptions to the above policy on hair on the basis of academic or athletic events will be approved by administration.**

TATTOOS

Any tattoos on a student must be covered at all times and not visible to staff or other students.

VHA HONOR CODE

The VHA Honor Code encompasses six main areas: lying, cheating, stealing, defaming others, intentionally damaging the property of another, and remaining silent when a student has knowledge of these actions. In the VHA community, lying, cheating, stealing, defaming others and intentionally damaging the property of others and remaining silent when a student has knowledge of these actions cannot be tolerated:

- ***Lying:*** A student lying or purposely misrepresenting the truth violates the Honor Code.
- ***Cheating:*** A student giving or receiving unauthorized help on a test or graded assignment, or a student submitting the work of another as his/her own, violates the Honor Code.
- ***Stealing:*** To take (the property of another) without right or permission. To present or use (someone else's words or ideas) as one's own.
- ***Defaming others:*** A student writing or speaking with malicious intent to injure unjustly a person's reputation violates the Honor Code. Malicious intent is the deliberate attempt and plan to do harm.
- ***Intentionally damaging the property of another:*** A student deliberately and intentionally causing damage to property of the school, the property of the faculty and staff and administration, or the property of his/her fellow students violates the Honor Code.
- ***Remaining silent when a student has knowledge of these actions:*** When a student has personal knowledge of the Honor Code being violated, he/she is obligated to inform the proper authority

(teacher, coach, administration, etc.).

“A VHA student will not lie, cheat, steal, defame others or destroy their personal property, nor tolerate those who do.”

THE HONOR CODE COMMITMENT:

I, _____, desire to attend Vidalia Heritage Academy and am willing to be under the authority of my parents in submitting and deferring to their wishes concerning enrollment at VHA. I understand that Christian teachers are in partnership with my parents. I will strive to obey them also as they seek to train me according to God’s Word. Because I believe that honor toward God and man is essential, I promise not to lie, cheat, steal, defame others, intentionally damage the property of another, or remain silent when I have knowledge of these actions. I understand that failure to uphold these principles and guidelines of the Parent-Student Handbook will result in disciplinary action and possible dismissal from VHA.

***Upper School Students will recite and sign the VHA Honor Code on the first day of school.**

DISCIPLINE POLICIES AND INFORMATION

Discipline is a learning process in which an individual learns self-control and recognizes his responsibility to God and man. Discipline includes living by an established standard or set of rules. It is rooted in discipleship and aims at restoration and improvements of character. Bringing glory to Christ through proper conduct is the goal of discipline.

The discipline policy of Vidalia Heritage Academy is rooted in two presuppositions concerning human nature. First, man is created in the image of God, by an act of God's power, for the glory of God. This gives man a high degree of dignity which he would not have if he were merely a more highly developed form of animal life. Second, due to the fall, mankind is born in sin and is by nature at enmity with God, his creator. The belief that man is basically good is demonstrated by Scripture and experience to be false.

In holding to these presuppositions, two commonly held beliefs are forcefully denied:

1) that man, as a result of evolutionary process, is merely an animal and 2) that man is basically good. Therefore, discipline must be taught as an essential part of a person's character building. It is not assumed that an individual will naturally discipline himself, but in time with proper training will become a disciplined person.

SPECIFIC STATEMENT OF DISCIPLINE

Students are taught personal discipline by adhering to the classroom and school policies of Vidalia Heritage Academy. At times corrective discipline is needed in order to correct behavior.

Discipline, as a God ordained method of correcting behavior and developing character, will be enforced at Vidalia Heritage Academy.

DISCIPLINE CATEGORIES AND CONSEQUENCES

Misconduct has been classified and divided into three categories, depending on the severity of the violation. The category and the consequences are at the discretion of the teachers and/or Headmaster.

All teachers' individual classroom policies are posted in their classroom and are explained during Open House.

Category I:

The following list is not to be considered as all-encompassing of Category I offenses:

- Tardiness to school/classes (see consequences listed under the Tardy Policy)
- Dress/Hair code violation (see consequences listed under the Dress Code Policy)
- Violation of Cell Phone Policy (see consequences listed under the Cell Phone Policy)
- Passing notes in class

- Talking or disrupting class
- Running in the hallways
- Chewing gum
- Public display of affection
- Failure to follow directions

Consequences: May result in one or more of the following: a firm rebuke, silent lunch, revoking privileges, student/Headmaster conference.

Category II:

The following list is not to be considered as all-encompassing of Category II offenses:

- Cheating and plagiarism*
- Leaving school grounds without permission
- Using inappropriate language
- Disrespect of authority
- Destroying school or personal property
- Lying
- Violation of Student Driving Policies
- Violation of the Technology and Social Media Policy
- Three or more Category I offenses

* **Plagiarism:** It is presenting as your own work the words, ideas, opinions, theories, or thoughts of another which are not common knowledge. Students who present others' words or ideas as their own without fair attribution [documentation] are guilty of plagiarizing. Unfair attribution includes, but is not limited to, a direct quotation of all or part of another's words without appropriately identifying the source. It is also unfair attribution to have included a source within a citation page without having carefully cited the source within the text of the document. Plagiarism also includes, but is not limited to the following acts when performed without fair attribution: directly quoting all or part of another person's words without quotation marks, as appropriate to the discipline; paraphrasing all or part of another person's words without documentation; stating an idea, theory, or formula as your own when it actually originated with another person; and purchasing (or receiving in any other manner) a term paper or other assignment, which is the work of another person, and submitting that work as if it were one's own. (This statement on plagiarism comes from Brewton-Parker College and is used in our Dual Enrollment courses on our campus. We are adopting this statement school-wide).

Consequences: May result in one or more of the following: two or more days of silent lunch or In-School Suspension (ISS), corporal punishment, loss of privileges, parent/Headmaster conference, after-school detentions, writing letters of apology to the parties offended, and Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) from 2-3 days with a zero for all missed work. Each teacher will determine their own consequences for plagiarism within the class ranging from reassigning the work with a deduction in grade for the first offense, to a zero for subsequent offenses.

Category III:

The following list is not to be considered as all-encompassing of Category III offenses:

- Violation of U.S., state, or local laws
- Bullying of any kind
- Fighting
- Sexual and/or racial harassment including inappropriate touching of any kind (please see the Sexual Harassment Policy on following page)
- Threats of any kind—physical, verbal, written, or implied.
- Stealing
- Implying or the actual possession of a weapon or other dangerous item at school
- Blatant disrespect for authority
- Blatant Violation of the Technology and Social Media Policy
- Sexual immorality or misconduct (on or off the school property)
- Defacing or destroying school or personal property
- Using or possessing drugs, alcohol, or tobacco (including vaping), on or off the school campus
- Possession of printed or digital pornography
- Use of profane or vulgar language
- Two Category II offenses

Consequences: Offenses will result in Out-of-School Suspension (OSS) or expulsion.

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

When corporal discipline is needed the following model will be used:

- The student will have a clear explanation of the matter.
- The parents will be contacted and informed and invited to witness the punishment.
- An adult witness will always be present.
- Once discipline has been administered, the teacher/headmaster will pray with the child.
- A written record is to be signed by the parent(s) and kept on file in the school office.

SUSPENSION/EXPULSION

When suspension/expulsion from school is the proper course, the following model will be used:

- The parents will meet with the Headmaster and/or Board of Directors member to discuss the offense(s) warranting suspension/expulsion.
- The decision to suspend a student will be made by the headmaster.
- The decision to expel a student will be made upon the recommendation from the Headmaster to the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

VHA is committed to maintaining an academic environment in which all individuals treat each other with honor and dignity. Sexual harassment is a form of sexual discrimination. VHA desires to maintain a learning environment conducive to the spiritual and academic growth and development of students enrolled. VHA prohibits any form of sexual harassment and sexual violence. It is a violation of this policy for any student, employee, or volunteer of VHA to harass a student, employee, or volunteer through conduct or communication of a sexual nature as defined by this policy. It is also a violation of this policy for any student, employee, or volunteer of VHA to be sexually violent to a student, employee, or volunteer. Furthermore, teasing and/or joking will not be accepted as an excuse for sexual harassment or sexual violence.

VHA will investigate all formal and informal complaints that are either verbal or written concerning actions or statements which may constitute sexual harassment or sexual violence. Disciplinary actions will follow for any student, employee, or volunteer who sexually harasses, is sexually violent, or intimidating toward a student, employee, or volunteer of VHA. VHA also reserves the right to discipline any student, employee, or volunteer for sexually related statements or conduct that does not constitute sexual harassment or sexual violence but are still inappropriate in nature.

TECHNOLOGY POLICIES AND INFORMATION

ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

In signing this Handbook, I understand that I am making a pledge of compliance before the Lord and the administration of VHA. I choose to abide by the rules and guidelines of this Acceptable Use Policy when using technology provided by VHA. My choice is based upon my willingness to have a biblical standard of moral conduct which reflects my relationship with Jesus Christ, my Lord and Savior. My willingness to obey is an outworking of the love that I have for Him and the desire I have to please Him. I know this commitment will be accomplished through the help of the Holy Spirit at work in me.

The use of technology at VHA is a privilege and not a right. I understand that these privileges can be revoked at any time should I violate the rules for appropriate use. **I have read the policies and procedures in the handbook and agree that when using VHA technology:**

1. I will use the computers and computer services for school purposes. Any form of misuse will result in my privileges being restricted or revoked.
2. I will use appropriate communication at all times according to the policy guidelines outlined in the student handbook and in the description of “Netiquette.”
3. If assigned a personal profile, I will not share my username, ID, or password with others.
4. I will use the internet for school purposes. I understand that my access will be monitored and data may be retrieved and read because it is considered to be part of the official records of VHA, which is subject to disclosure to law enforcement and/or third parties.
5. If I accidentally access an inappropriate, offensive, or pornographic site, I will notify the principal immediately.
6. If I accidentally receive an “Access Denied” notice, I will notify the teacher immediately. I understand that if I fail to report this, my internet browsing history may be reviewed to determine if there has been other related activity.
7. I will honor and respect all copyright laws regarding software, information, and attributions of authorship.
8. I will not download any software to school equipment.
9. I will not attempt to gain unauthorized access to another organization’s systems and/or information.
10. If assigned a personal profile, I will always log off the computer so another person will not be able to access my account.

I will follow the simple guideline of “If in doubt, don’t!” I understand that VHA is dedicated to the safety and protection of those who are allowed to use the school’s technology. It is my responsibility to use VHA technology in an ethical and lawful manner. I understand that my use of the computer systems may be suspended immediately upon the discovery of a possible violation of the VHA technology policies. A violation of the provisions of this agreement and policy may result in disciplinary action up to, and including, termination.

“Whatever you do, in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.” Colossians 3:17

My use of technology at VHA is a privilege and not a right. I choose to be in agreement with what is asked and expected of me in this Acceptable Use Policy to the honor and glory of God.

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Social networking can be an effective means of communication when used appropriately. Content-sharing sites like YouTube along with Facebook, Twitter, blogs, and podcasts are a few commonly used forms of social media. VHA has established rules and guidelines to protect students, parents, staff, and administration from potential liability as well as slander. Responsible use of social media can be an asset. As a result, it is very important that students, parents, staff, and administration understand network etiquette which is referred to as “Netiquette.”

When using social media, students, parents, staff, and administration must remember they represent VHA, but more importantly they represent Jesus Christ. As a result, careful attention must be given to what is said or written and how it is said or written. Words are very important to our heavenly Father. He created the world with them! We must be careful to frame our world and the world of others with words that please Him.

Ephesians 4:29 states, “Let no foul or polluting language, nor evil word nor unwholesome or worthless talk [ever] come out of your mouth, but only such [speech] as is good and beneficial to the spiritual progress of others, as is fitting to the need and the occasion, that it may be a blessing and give grace (God’s favor) to those who hear it.”

Embracing and applying the principles of “netiquette” is one way to appropriately use social media. Listed below are simple guidelines to follow:

1. Be polite. Be kind. Use appropriate language. Swearing, vulgarities, suggestive, obscene, belligerent or threatening language is prohibited.
2. Avoid communication that may be offensive to others. Do not use, make, distribute, or redistribute jokes, stories, or other material that is based upon stereotypes or slurs relating to race, gender, ethnicity, nationality, religion, or sexual orientation.
3. Guard and protect the identities of others and their reputations. Integrity and honesty are vital. People believe what they read. The Word of God says “love covers a multitude of sin.” People will always make mistakes. As a child of God, we do not need to broadcast others’ faults to the world. The Golden Rule is a great guide to follow when using social media. It states, “Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.”
4. Remember Thumper’s rule from the Disney movie, Bambi, "If you can't say (write) something nice, don't say (write) nothing at all."

Readers who know that you go to a Christian school will connect your personal life to your school life; so, your use of social media should be consistent with your testimony as a child of God and disciple of Jesus Christ. You are to be a reflection of Jesus in words, actions, and deed both in and out of school. The world, to whom we desire to reach for Jesus Christ, knows the standard by which we are to live. They hold us to a higher moral and ethical standard and judge us according to that standard. We want what we say, how we act, and what we do to be pleasing to the Lord and to give Him glory and honor. Therefore, be responsible, careful, polite, and kind when using social media.

VIOLATIONS

VHA will investigate and respond to all reports of violations of the social media policy. Disciplinary action will follow according to the consequences in the Discipline Policy- detentions, suspension, and/or dismissal which will be determined by the content of the blog or post. In addition, students will lose the privileges of using a laptop or cell phone while on the school property.

*And whatever you do [no matter what it is] in **word or deed**, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus and in [dependence upon] His Person, giving praise to God the Father through Him. Colossians 3:17.*

GUIDELINES FOR PERMITTED ELECTRONIC ITEMS

Cell Phones / Smart Watches

These are permitted at school but should be silenced, then **placed in the student's locker, book bag** from the time the student arrives at school until school dismissal (**this includes students who are coming in or going to dual enrollment courses off campus**). Students are not allowed to use these devices during morning or afternoon carpool (we suggest students bring books to read during those times). Failure to follow these guidelines will result in the following disciplinary consequences:

First offense:

The teacher will take the device and give it to Administration, record the violation in Gradelink, and write a discipline referral indicating 1 session of Lunch Detention. The discipline referral will require a parental signature and must be returned the following day. The student may pick up the device at the end of the day the offense occurred.

Second offense:

The teacher will take the device and give it to Administration, record the violation in Gradelink, and write a discipline referral indicating 3 days of Lunch and Break Detention. The discipline referral will require a parental signature and must be returned the following day. The student may pick up the device at the end of the day the offense occurred.

Third offense:

The teacher will take the device and give it to Administration, record the violation in Gradelink, and write a discipline referral indicating 2 days of In-School Suspension (ISS) as well as requiring the student to surrender their device to Administration upon arriving at school for 30 days. The discipline referral will require a parental signature and must be returned the following day.

Parents who need to contact students during the school day should call the school office.

EXCEPTIONS:

1. For those whose health is monitored through their phone and communicated to parents.

Electronic Listening Devices - Includes iPods, MP3 players, etc.

These items are NOT permitted during the school day. These devices will be permissible under specified guidelines during some co-curricular and extra-curricular activities.

Electronic Recording Devices - Includes cameras, tape recorders, etc.

These items are only permitted during the school day if permission has been granted by a teacher for academic purposes. These devices will be permissible under specified guidelines during some co-curricular and extra-curricular activities. Any use of these items for the purpose of cheating, harassment, vulgarity or any other activity deemed inappropriate by the administration will result in serious consequences.

Laptops / Tablets

Only those students taking high school courses are permitted to have these on the school property and they may only be used for academic purposes with authorization from the student's teacher. Headphones or "earbuds" will require the consent of the teacher supervising the student during use. These devices may not be used during classroom, lunch, or break times for games, viewing non-course related websites, or listening to music.