



Lion's Gate Christian School Family Handbook (Updated 2018)

For the Lord gives wisdom,
And from His mouth come
Knowledge and understanding.
Proverbs 2:6

Welcome to Lion's Gate Christian School (established in July, 2008). Lion's Gate Christian School is an independent ministry located at Grace United Methodist Church. We are a co-op that offers home school families services such as classes, field trips, social events, and testing. As a co-op, we expect all members to share the workload and contribute by serving in various ways.

Although we offer many services to home school families, Lion's Gate Christian School is **NOT** a legal covering or umbrella school.

This handbook serves as a general overview of all policies and procedures. It is not exhaustive.

VISION AND MISSION STATEMENT

Our vision at Lion's Gate Christian School is to bring home school families together so that we can encourage one another and share our unique gifts and talents with each other for the glory of God.

It is our goal to assist home school families by providing:

- A safe Christian environment in which families and children may learn, grow and develop friendships, and provide encouragement.
- A place where the Gospel will be shared and Christ's love will be demonstrated to all.
- Supplemental classes for K-12th grade taught by Christians from a Biblical perspective.
- Social activities, field trips, competitions, testing, and book clubs, etc. (activities vary).
- Opportunities for sharing knowledge and experiences with one another on topics such as learning disabilities, curriculum, or high school and college preparation.

ORGANIZATION

Steering Committee

Holly Cecil
Anita Powell
LaDona Manire
Jamie Sanders

Administrator: Holly Cecil
Secretary: Anita Powell
Treasurer: Tammy Coulter
Registrar/Website: LaDona Manire
Service Coordinators: Jamie Sanders/Kristin Farnsworth
Lunch Coordinator: Mandy Nelms

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STATEMENT OF FAITH

What We Believe:

- About God: God is the Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer of the Universe. God has eternally existed, expressed in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The three are at once co-equal and yet one God.
- About Eternity: God's majesty and mystery hold the keys to eternity and the "end times." Every person has the opportunity to enjoy the blessings of God for eternity through forgiveness and salvation--not earned on our own merits, but received as a gift from God.
- About Jesus Christ: Jesus Christ is the Son of God, co-equal with the Father, both human and divine. Jesus was born of the Virgin Mary, lived a sinless human life and offered himself as the perfect sacrifice for the sins of all by dying on a cross. He arose from the dead, demonstrating God's power over both sin and death. He ascended to Heaven where he is the mediator between God and people. He will come to reign in the Kingdom of God.
- About Salvation: Salvation is a gift from God to all people. Men and women can never make up for their sin by self-improvement or good works. Only by trusting in Jesus Christ as God's propitiatory gift, bringing creation into right relationship with God, can a person be saved from sin's penalty. When God has begun a saving work in the heart of any person, assurance can be received that he will continue his saving work until the day of its full consummation.
- About the Holy Spirit: The Holy Spirit is equal with the Father and the Son as God. The Holy Spirit is present in the world, adjuring people to follow Jesus' Way. The Holy Spirit provides the Christian with power for righteous living, understanding spiritual truth and guidance in doing what is right.
- About the Bible: The Bible, both Old Testaments and New Testament, is God's Word to creation. Human authors, through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, wrote it. The Holy Scriptures are inspired by God, and provide the unique and fundamental authority on matters of faith and practice.
- About Faith and Practice: Scripture provides the primary resource and authority in all matters of faith and practice. Each believer is to be led in those areas by the Lord, to whom he or she alone is ultimately responsible.

ADMISSION AND REGISTRATION

Our classes follow the age guidelines of public/private schools. Students must be the appropriate age for the grade by September 1.

Grade	Age by September 1	Grade	Age by September 1
Kindergarten	5 years old	Seventh	12 years old
First	6 years old	Eighth	13 years old
Second	7 years old	Ninth	14 years old
Third	8 years old	Tenth	15 years old
Fourth	9 years old	Eleventh	16 years old
Fifth	10 years old	Twelfth	17 years old
Sixth	11 years old		

You may bump your child down a grade, but they may not be bumped up for co-op classes. The youth is now based on age and grade. Students must be 12 years old and in the 7th grade by September 1.

General Information:

1. Current families have priority registration.
2. Classes are held on Tuesdays and Fridays at Grace United Methodist Church.
3. We require a \$40 non-refundable per semester fee payable to “Lion’s Gate Christian School.”
4. We require a 20% non-refundable deposit (\$150 maximum deposit) which secures the student’s spot in class(es). The fee will be applied to July invoices.
5. All fees and paperwork must be submitted within 10 days of registering to guarantee a spot in class(es).
 - a. Medical Release (per student)
 - b. Release of Liability (per family)
 - c. Copy of Insurance card front and back.
6. Families must be in good standing in order to be eligible for re-enrollment. This includes but is not limited to: up to date on service hours and fees to teachers.
7. Registration will occur through our website.
8. All new families must attend one orientation meeting. See website for exact date. Administration reserves the right to require all families attend a yearly meeting.
9. Registration will close in May. We will reopen for a limited time in July for add/drop.

New Families: Go to website and click on the “Request membership” tab. Follow directions to complete registration process.

Returning Families: Register by logging into the website and follow instructions under “Registration” tab. You must update your profile each year to change grades, cover school info, contact info, etc.

FEES AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Lion’s Gate Christian School is financially independent from Grace United Methodist Church. School year runs from June 1st to May 31st. All families will be asked to pay a non-refundable semester fee of \$40 twice a year to Lion’s Gate Christian School – Fall and Spring. Checks should be made out to “Lion’s Gate Christian School.” Fee uses include but are not limited to: church usage fee, paper products, printing, special events (Progressive Dinner, Parties, Fairs, Donations to Grace, etc.)

Classes are an additional cost. Fees are set by the teacher and are paid directly to the teacher.

- a. Fees are paid in two installments (minus 20% non-refundable deposit to secure classes for fall semester). All other fees go directly to the teacher. No deposit is required for Spring.
Fall Semester: July 15/September 15; Spring Semester: January 15/February 15
- b. Once a parent has paid for a class, no refunds will be given.
- c. If fees are not paid on time, the teacher has the right to drop the family from the roster. Teachers will contact the parent to let him/her know about payment and date payment is due. Failure to pay could result in removal from class and/or co-op and affect future registration.
- d. Other possible fees (optional): yearbooks, field trips, social events or testing.

***** All accounts to Lion’s Gate and teachers must be paid in full by the end of each semester. If accounts are outstanding, the family will not be allowed to participate in classes/activities the next semester until the accounts are current (unless special arrangements have been made) and service hours have been fulfilled.**

Returned (Bounced) Checks/Non-payment:

- Checks to Lion’s Gate: \$30 charge. Family is obligated to reimburse Lion’s Gate for any other fees the bank may charge in connection with returned check.
- Checks to teachers: \$30 charge. Family is obligated to reimburse teacher for any other fees the bank may charge in connection with that returned check.

Financial Assistance:

If your family is in a true financial situation, please contact Administration.

COMMUNICATION

Website: Our website www.lionsgatechristian.com is our **primary means** of communication.

- If you have any questions, please check the website first before contacting steering committee members.
- It is imperative that you keep your member profile up to date as well as select forum updates. Notify the Secretary of any changes to your profile throughout the year.
- Weekly Update: A weekly email that sends out co-op wide events, news, etc. Request on your profile page. Click “Edit my profile” and check box.

Email: **Please read all emails**. They contain vital information concerning events, registration, pictures, requests, etc. We understand that your time is limited, but in order to stay informed, it is to your benefit if you read them.

Mailboxes: Each family and teacher has a mailbox at the hall monitor station. Tuition checks may be placed in these boxes as well as any correspondence between teachers, families, and Lion’s Gate Administration

ADD/DROP

We ask parents to consider carefully with their children their class selections when registering. Dropping and adding classes is permitted but should be limited to necessary situations. Most of our teachers require a minimum number of students. If students drop a class, it may create a hardship for the teacher or lead to a class cancellation. Please prayerfully consider your selections.

- Decision to drop before first day to September 15/January 15: Forfeit non-refundable deposit and July/January payment.
- Decision to drop after September 15/February 15: Class must be paid in full unless teacher waives fee and/or reimburses.
- Class additions must be approved by the Registrar ONLY.

ATTENDANCE

- If you know in advance you will miss a class, please contact the teacher to let them know.
- It is the student/family’s responsibility to contact the teacher concerning make-up work. Each teacher will provide you with his/her own attendance and make-up work policy; you are obligated to follow it.
- Excesses absences may result in removal from class.

STUDENT ACCOMMODATIONS

Students with learning disabilities will be accommodated as best we can, but it must not affect the pace of the class and what the other students are doing. The parent is responsible for working with the teacher to make sure the student’s and the class’ needs are met.

PICK-UP/DROP-OFF/BREAKS

- All parents must sign students in and out at the hall monitor’s table (7-12 students may check themselves in and out). This means parents are to walk K-6th students into the building and out.
- Students should not be dropped off earlier than ten minutes before class starts.
- If a student has a break between classes, parents must pick up their student, stay on campus to monitor them or parent must register for study hall and pay the fee. **Any student in study hall must bring work.**
- When entering, students go directly to class. If the previous class has not yet dismissed, the student should stand quietly in the hall until the prior class dismisses.

- Parents are to sign out their K-4th grade before picking them up from their classrooms. Teachers will not allow K-4th grade students to leave until the parent is there to pick them up. Failure to pick up child and abuse teacher time may incur a babysitting fee.
- For the safety of our students, if a parent needs to take their child out of class early, the parent must stop by the hall monitor station before getting child from class.
- Pick up by someone other than parent or approved adult (as stated when requesting membership):
 - Administration must be notified.
 - Adult picking up student must check in with the Hall Monitor. Hall Monitor will check for notations, call parent if necessary, and ask for I.D.
 - Adult must sign student out before picking him/her up from the classroom.

LUNCH

- Tuesday lunch will be in the Youth Room. Friday lunch is held in the Fellowship Halls.
- Lunch Visitor Policy: an occasional visitor is okay, but administration needs to be notified. If the visitor would like to attend classes, that is also permissible with administration approval. Once you have been approved, you must then contact teachers to gain their permission. We reserve the right to revoke these privileges if they are abused in any way.
- For students to attend lunch, they MUST be enrolled in classes. This is NOT a social opportunity but a service to families whose students attend classes.
- **Due to moderate to severe nut allergies, Lion’s Gate is completely nut free. No nut products will be allowed. If you see nut products, promptly discard them, clean area if necessary, and give student an alternate lunch (located in kitchen). Notify Administrator, and she will contact the family to ensure adherence to policy.**

SERVICE HOURS

Lion’s Gate is a co-operative effort, and the success of this endeavor depends on the input and cooperation of all families. We rely on parents to volunteer and contribute their time, energy, creative, ideas, and skills. As such, all families are expected to perform service hours. We will track service hours to ensure compliance. Future registration in classes and participation in functions may be affected by non-compliance.

*** The number of hours may fluctuate yearly depending on the number of families enrolled and the number of activities/events/etc. the school may have.

Every family, including teachers, is expected and required to serve in some capacity. Parent is responsible for reviewing responsibilities for each assignment.

Possible areas of service are but not limited to:

- | | | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| • Lunch Duty | • On Call Substitute | • Field Trips |
| • Hall Monitor | • Academic Substitute | • Socials, Parties, etc. |
| • Study Hall Monitor | • Cleaning Crews | |

HIGH SCHOOL

Teachers will assign grades and report the grades to the student and parents. Parents must follow the rules set by their legal coverings regarding grades, transcripts, and any other policies. Lion’s Gate recommends the following guidelines for awarding high school credit.

- One credit: 2.5-5.0 hrs of coursework per week for 2 semesters (~90-180 total hrs; 120-180 hrs more acceptable). A semester is ~18 weeks.

- Half credit: 2.5-5.0 hrs of coursework per week for 1 semester (~45-90 total hrs) or 1-3 hrs of coursework per week for 2 semesters (~36-90 total hrs) 60-90 hrs is more acceptable.
- Standards and credits may vary according to student's needs and abilities.
- A credit may also be earned by completing a formal unit of study in a high school level book. (Examples: completing a Saxon Algebra II book or an Apologia Chemistry book.)

*** High School Senior Recognition: Lion's Gate parents organize a senior recognition to honor graduates.

TESTING

If we have a volunteer to coordinate testing, standardized testing will be offered in the Spring after classes have completed for the year.

TEEN DRIVING POLICY

****** PARENTS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR KNOWING THE ALABAMA GRADUATED DRIVING LAW AND ENSURING THAT STUDENTS ADHERE TO IT ******

Driving themselves or siblings: Does not need approval. Parents have given implied permission for teens to drive siblings to and from co-op.

Driving other teens/students:

- Must submit approval (email) to the Steering Committee from BOTH parents, driver and passenger.
- For long-standing arrangements, you will only have to do this one time (please be as specific as possible as to what is approved and duration) to let us know that parents are in agreement.
- For example,
 Passenger: Jacob Cecil has permission to ride with Kayleigh Cantrell for the 2016-2017 school year.
 Driver: Kayleigh Cantrell has permission to drive Jacob Cecil for the 2016-2017 school year.

Teen/Student Drivers:

- Must maintain a safe speed, avoid reckless driving, and be aware of others in the parking lot.
- May not loiter in parking lot or in their cars.
- May not leave campus during lunch without written permission from a parent.
- May not leave campus with fellow students in their car unless all students offer written permission from their parents.

SPECIAL EVENTS/FIELD TRIPS

Special projects, activities and field trips intended as a school wide functions should be added to the school calendar and approved by the Administration. Our Secretary must be notified of all events, and she will add them to the school calendar. To attend functions, a student MUST be enrolled in classes, attend class regularly, and family must be current on service hours.

Lion's Gate expects all students to exhibit Christ-like conduct while attending school functions. If a student does not conduct himself or herself in such a manner, the parent and student will be asked to leave the function. It is the responsibility of the parent to make sure their student knows and follows the rules set.

If a field trip is scheduled to leave from the school (Grace property), a field trip permission form must be filled out and returned to the field trip coordinator. The student will not be allowed to leave school without a signed

form by parent or guardian. If a field trip is scheduled but attendees are meeting at a designated location, a field trip form is not required. By escorting child to a location, the parent has given permission for student to attend.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

Maps showing safe zones are posted on the church walls throughout Grace. In case of tornadoes, please understand that we value safety. If we are under a watch or warning and we deem the situation unsafe, we will not let teen drivers leave the premises until the danger has passed.

School Closings/Delays:

- If Madison City or Madison County Schools close, Lion's Gate will close and all activities will be canceled. If Madison city is open and Madison County is closed (or vice-versa), Lion's Gate will be closed (We go with the most extreme cancellation).
- Delays follow Madison City or County (extreme case). For example, if there is a two hour delay, we will start at 10:00 a.m.
- Administrator reserves the right to have only graded academic classes meet depending on length of delay. This will be communicated via website and email.

ILLNESS

Children/Participants should not attend if they are sick or experiencing any of the following;

- Fever within the last 24 hours (not medicated). They must be free of a fever for a full 24 hours before being allowed to participate in classes or other school sponsored events.
- Diarrhea, vomiting, or nausea within the last 24 hours.
- Contagious virus or infection (i.e. conjunctivitis, chicken pox, unidentified rashes, etc.)
- Runny nose, colored mucus, or uncontrolled coughing.
- If you student has been exposed to a virus or is starting to exhibit symptoms of illness, DO NOT bring them to school or a school event.

If a child becomes sick during the day, parents will be notified and asked to pick the child up.

DRESS CODE

We expect all students, teachers and parents to follow our dress code while on school campus or at any activities or field trips sponsored by the school. Dress modestly and in a manner that does not call undue attention to oneself. Our desire is to set a Godly example not be legalistic.

DO:

- Wear clothes that fit you properly. (Not too tight; not too baggy – no undergarments should be seen)
- Wear clothes that are appropriate for the weather and class activities you may be doing.
- All clothing should be in good shape (not full of holes or dirty) and clean.
- If any water activities are involved and bathing suits must be worn, girls must wear modest one-piece suits or tankinis and boys must modest swimsuit.
- Maintain a clean-cut hairstyle. Mustaches and beards are allowed if they are kept neat and trimmed short.
- Short dresses or shorts with leggings are permitted.
- Camis, tank tops, and spaghetti straps are allowed under other shirts or jackets as long as the top shirt or jacket stays on all day.

DON'T

- Tattoos or body piercing must be covered and not shown to others.
- Tight shirts, shorts or pants – undergarments should not be seen. No bra outlines/straps or underwear outlines.

- Overly baggy shirts, shorts, or pants.
- Undergarments should remain undetectable and covered at all times.
- Plunging necklines that reveal cleavage (one or two inches below the collar bone is OK).
- Clothing with offensive logos or pictures (shirts showing alcoholic beverages, tobacco, or drugs, skeletons, secular rock bands, or any shirt that appears evil or scary.)
- Short shorts, skirts, or skorts. Index card rule: five inches above the top of the kneecap.
- No stomachs showing (make sure your child can lift their arms straight up and still have the shirt cover their stomachs).
- If a hat is worn, teachers have the right to request that the hat be put away during class.
- Shear fabrics unless they are worn over an appropriate garment – must have a one inch width and/or no undergarments showing.
- Gothic style dress, makeup, black fingernail polish, or hairstyles.

WE WILL SEE NO CLEAVAGE, BRA STRAPS, BELLIES, BRIEFS, OR BOXERS. Violations of dress code will require changing, adding clothing, or being removed from classes. Parents will be notified by the Administrator. Repeated offenses may result in suspension and/or expulsion.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

- No drugs, alcohol or tobacco of any kind will be allowed on the premises. This includes prescription and over the counter drugs. (Possession of these or being under the influence may result in immediate expulsion.) Children with special medical needs may leave necessary medication with the Hall Monitor.
- **No weapons, including pocketknives. Possession of weapons may result in immediate expulsion.**
- Come to class prepared and with assignments completed. Be prompt.
- Use manners. Show respect and obey all teachers and adults. Display self-control.
- Using inside speaking voices. No yelling, screaming, or loud noises.
- Encourage and support one another. No name calling. Include all students.
- Guard your tongue. No profane, crude language or derogatory comments will be tolerated. No verbal threats or slurs. (This may result in immediate expulsion.)
- Follow dress code. Dress modestly.
- Be respectful of Church property.
 - Clean up after yourself.
 - Do not write on or damage furniture, floors, ceilings, or walls. Parents will be required to pay for any damages to property.
 - No running or horseplay in or around the facilities.
- No food, drinks, or gum is allowed except in the lunchroom. (Possible exceptions: water bottles that can be sealed; food for class activity or party.)
- No aggressive behavior or inappropriate physical contact with others. Fighting or injuring others may result in immediate expulsion.
- Lion's Gate operates on an honor code. Students must maintain the highest level of honesty and integrity. They will not lie, cheat, or steal including plagiarism. Violation of the honor code will result in immediate action by the teacher and Administrator.
- Students are required to be in a class or study hall at all times. **Students may not sit in vehicles without parent supervision or roam the halls.** Measures will be taken to ensure compliance by student and parents.
- **Cell phone use is not allowed on campus (this includes classrooms, hallways, lunch room, break areas, bathrooms, and any other area on campus).** Cell phones may be kept in purses, backpacks, or bags. Any cell phone that is seen or heard will be confiscated until the end of day.
- No electronic devices during school hours unless approved by teacher or Study Hall Monitor.
- **Personal belongings brought to school should remain in a backpack unless a teacher or adult gives permission for the item to be out.** If an item is out without permission, it will be taken and turned into

the hall monitor station. Confiscated items may be picked up at the end of day or class. Any item that does not fit in your backpack may be left at the hall monitor station.

- Students may not leave school property without a parent or guardian and should notify hall monitor when leaving. You must sign out when you leave and return. **You may not leave campus with another teen driver unless parent has submitted approval to Administration.**

DISCIPLINE

Classes are considered a privilege. Students should behave in a manner that allows the instructor to teach and allows others in the class to learn in a safe, positive, Christian environment. In addition to, a student's lack of performance could result in disciplinary action.

Lion's Gate has a three step process:

Strike 1: First offense will be handled by the teacher speaking to student about the behavior/problem.

Strike 2: If the pattern of behavior continues, the student may be removed from the class and the teacher will notify the Administrator. Teacher or the Administrator will schedule a meeting with parent depending on severity of problem. Teacher may or may not allow make up of any missed work. Teacher and/or Administrator will devise a plan for student to correct behavior, improve performance, etc.

Strike 3: Return to class is on a probationary basis. If student is asked to leave due to lack of performance or behavior issues, the class fee will not be refunded.

Some actions are grounds for immediate probation, suspension, and/or expulsion:

- Out of control behavior, extremely disrespectful attitude
- Abuse of illegal substances
- Possession of weapons of any kind
- Aggressive behavior or causing intentional harm to self or others
- Flagrant violation of Honor Code

TEACHERS

Any person wanting to teach at Lion's Gate Christian School must:

- Be approved by the Administrator.
- Profess Christ as their Savior and agree to teach according to the Statement of Faith.
- Teach subjects from a Christian perspective when applicable.
- Agree to follow the rules and procedures listed in the family handbook and teacher manual.
- If teacher's children are enrolled in the program, teacher must agree to fulfill service hours.

LOST AND FOUND

Any objects found should be put in Grace's Lost and Found closet located near the Hall Monitor's station. Please make sure all of your students personal property brought to the school is labeled. Items in lost and found will be donated to a charity of Grace's choosing once a semester.

NUT ALLERGY ALERT

We have several families with moderate to severe nut allergies. Therefore, no nut products are allowed at Lion's Gate. We understand the picky eating preferences of children, but we must insist on a no tolerance policy.