



STUDENT AND PARENT HANDBOOK

211 W Greenwich Street
Reading, Pa 19601

arrowschristianacademy.org

Arrows Christian Academy

Arrows Christian Academy is a vision and ministry effort of four Mennonite churches in Reading, Pa. Our goal is to provide a Christian school alternative for families living in the City of Reading. We aim to assist parents by giving their children both academic instruction and eternal values.

Statement of Faith

We believe:

- ⇒ That the Bible is the holy, inspired Word of GOD and is without error in its origin.
- ⇒ That there is one GOD, manifesting Himself as a godhead consisting of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.
- ⇒ That Jesus Christ as Emmanuel is “God come in the flesh”. We believe that He lived a sinless life, died on the cross to take away the sins of all who call out to Him for forgiveness, and is coming again to take all who live a godly life “unto the end” to be with Him forever in heaven.
- ⇒ That no man is good enough to go to heaven, and must, through faith, call upon the name of the Lord Jesus Christ to receive the free gift of eternal life.
- ⇒ That all who receive the gift of eternal life become “new creatures” in Christ and will live a life separated from the world, bringing forth good works to the glory of GOD.
- ⇒ That without holiness, no man shall see God.

School Goals and Objectives

Our goals include:

- ◆ Teaching families to worship the one true GOD.
- ◆ Leading students to a personal relationship with Christ
- ◆ Teaching Christ-like character.
- ◆ Teaching stewardship of life.
- ◆ Becoming dedicated to excellence.

School Mission Statement

To provide a Christian school alternative for families living in the City of Reading.

Our Vision

Every member of our team will model joyful and vibrant Christianity to our students, their families, and the broader community, through:

- ◆ Prayer – Recognizing my need and seeking God’s help to succeed in life.
- ◆ Encouragement– Praising each individual’s God-given talents.
- ◆ Academics – Excelling in understanding God and His creation
- ◆ Character– Allowing the mind of Christ to transform my heart and actions.
- ◆ Eternity– Living out a never-ending relationship with God.

Enrollment

Enrollment at this school is a privilege and not a right. While we expect God’s Holy Spirit to reform all of us day by day, we are not a reform school, and no parent should enroll their child hoping we will miraculously change an unruly child into an angel.

Every child is enrolled on a 30-day probationary basis. At the end of the 30 days, the staff may elect to have a parent-teacher conference to discuss behavior, and jointly decide if this school is the best option for the child. Parents wishing to enroll their child shall follow these steps:

1. Visit the school for a tour and receive an application and handbook.
2. Parents and children must read through the entire Parent and Student Handbook.
3. Parents shall return the application.
4. After the administrator has reviewed the application, he will request an additional interview with parents and if the child is 12 or older, with the child as well.
5. If the child is accepted, at least one parent will attend a 1-hour Parent Orientation.
6. New students are accepted during the 1st and 2nd marking periods.
7. If the school is full, parents may opt to have their child placed on a waiting list for possible consideration in the future.
8. An enrollment fee of \$100 is required with acceptance.

Please note:

- ◆ A child must be five years old by September 30, and pass a kindergarten readiness test in order to be enrolled in kindergarten.
- ◆ A child must be six years old by September 30 in order to be eligible for enrollment in first grade. Exceptions may be given if there is evidence that a child is ready for school by passing an entrance test.
- ◆ No student is accepted as a student of this school until the parents receive written notice of the same.
- ◆ Students are accepted by the administrator.
- ◆ A student is expelled only by action of the board.

Church Affiliation and Admissions Policy

While we don’t discriminate on the basis of age, gender, and national origin, we are a Christian school in the city of Reading and we give preferential consideration in admission as follows:

- 1) Current Families enrolled
- 2) Families in Reading connected to the Mennonite Churches of Reading.
- 3) Families living near the school.
- 4) Church-attending, Christian families in the city

PARENT SECTION

Parents' Examples

We believe that parents are the biggest influence in a child's life, and while we can teach godliness, we believe that children will learn it best from parents who set a good example by:

- ◆ Attending church regularly.
- ◆ Ridding their home of destructive media content
- ◆ Reading God's Word, the Bible.
- ◆ Gaining victory over destructive drug, cigarette, and alcohol addictions in their personal lives.

We will regularly do our part in educating parents in the value of achieving the above items.

Financial Involvement

Each summer the school board will publish the "cost of education". It is currently \$450 per month. Obviously, it is helpful for each family to contribute that amount if they are financially able to do so.

Because we recognize that most families are not in a position to contribute that amount, we seek student sponsors who supplement the cost for a child to attend this school. Any family who is financially able, is encouraged to become a sponsor of their own child. If a family determines they are not able to contribute the entire cost of education, or to sponsor their own child, they may apply for financial assistance through the Faith Builders Educational Scholarship Program.

Any parent applying for assistance will be asked to do two things:

- ◆ Make the minimum weekly contribution of \$40.00/child
- ◆ Serve 15 hours of community service each quarter and record these community hours on a form provided by the school office. Community service is defined as anything you do to serve someone else, that you are not paid for. Any member of the household can serve these hours.

Parents who have not fulfilled their financial and community service responsibility by the end of the quarter will not be permitted to send their child until these responsibilities are met.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-Teacher conferences and fellowships will be held throughout the school year as a way of helping to ensure that the goals of the parents and those of the staff remain in harmony. Parents or an adult family representative are required to attend these meetings. If they do not attend, their child may remain illegally absent until they have attended a private meeting.

School Programs

Throughout the year, there will be several school generated programs where students will display an aspect of school life they have been working on such as Christmas programs, Science Fair, Nationality Day, etc. These should be a priority to attend.

Field Trips

Parents will be informed of field trips. Adult family members are invited to attend such events as space permits, but lunches will not be provided for them. We ask that when parents are present they take responsibility for their children.

Communication Envelope

Parents will be informed of school events by way of the Parent Communication Folder. This folder will be given to the oldest child in each family, and the parent shall sign it for the child to return the next school day. Failure to return the envelope in a timely manner may result in a detention for the oldest child.

Visits

Parents may feel free to visit the school at any time during the day, but must not interfere with the teachers' ability to maintain educational control of the classroom

Early Sign Out of Students

Occasionally, your child may need to leave school early for a doctor or dentist appointment. In such cases, if you will be sending another adult to take your child to the appointment, please send us a written note granting us permission to release your child to that adult's care.

Please help us extend protection to your child by providing the school with names and telephone numbers of the persons who have your permission to take your child from school, and update it as your family situation changes. Student Dismissal Information is kept on file in the office.

Emergency Information for Students

Please keep Emergency Contact Information current in the office. If you move or your telephone number changes, please alert the office so the office staff can make appropriate changes. This way, we have current information on file any time an emergency arises and we need to contact you.

Authorized Pickup

We only allow the people listed on the Authorized Pickup form submitted with the application to pick up your children. If you wish to edit the list or allow them to bring themselves please request an Authorized Pickup form at the office.

STUDENT SECTION

Arrival

Our school starts promptly at 8:30 am. Students should report to the door at the side of the building between 8:20 and 8:30 am. The staff reserves the right to require a tardy student to pick up trash at the rate of 5 pieces of litter for each minute tardy.

Attendance

Daily attendance is vital to success in school. It is very important for students to come to school on time. Students should be in their classrooms to begin instruction PROMPTLY at 8:30 am. Unlawful absences are unacceptable and do not promote continuity of learning. All absences and tardies require a written note from parents/guardians or doctor.

Parents/Guardians are required to write an excuse note for their child each and every time their child is absent or tardy. The excuse note must be given to your child's teacher within 5 school days. If the excuse is not received within 5 days, the absence or tardy will be marked unexcused. Three unexcused tardies will also be counted as an unexcused absence.

We are required by state law to report unexcused absences to the Reading School District for possible legal action, including fines and possible jail time.

Please be advised that if your child has 10 excused absences, your child may be placed on a "doctor's note only" basis. After being placed on "doctor's note only", the appropriate paperwork from the doctor must be supplied in order for the absence to be excused.

Dismissal

All students are dismissed daily at 3:00 pm. Parents must have students picked up by 3:10 pm. Staff may charge a "babysitting" fee for students in our care after 3:10, unless prior arrangements have been made.

Actions and Language

It has been said that actions speak louder than words. Therefore, all students enrolled at this school shall strive to obey 1 Corinthians 1:31, “Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.” We believe that the following does not glorify God and shall be avoided:

- ◆ Kicking, punching, and all forms of fighting
- ◆ Name calling and all prejudicial statements
- ◆ Profanity
- ◆ Disregard for those in authority in the school, home, and community.

Students, staff, and parents shall only use language that glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ. Anyone doing otherwise may face dismissal from the school.

Because we believe the numerous studies that show that television is a destructive force in the home, students are to refrain from talking about inappropriate television shows, and/or movies.

Additionally, students shall not talk about or engage in:

- ◆ Cheating
- ◆ Swearing
- ◆ Obscene gestures
- ◆ Dancing
- ◆ Secular music
- ◆ Drinking alcohol or using tobacco, vaping, drugs, etc.

Zero Tolerance Policy

Arrows Christian Academy maintains a zero tolerance policy with regards to guns, knives, matches, lighters, drugs, and other dangerous objects being brought into our school. A school is not a place for such items, and students bringing these things to school will have the items confiscated and will be immediately suspended from our school. This policy also applies to toy guns, and knives, which are brought to school by students either on their person,

or in their book bags. Students possessing such items on school property will immediately be suspended from school. Students may also be referred to the school board for an expulsion hearing.

Items Brought to School

If you bring any of the above items to school by accident, or find them in your coat, book bag, or clothing, you should immediately give the item to the teacher or another adult in our school.

Because of their potential for disruptions in the classroom, the following items shall also be left at home:

- ◆ Comics, pornography, and other ungodly material
- ◆ Electronic games and toys
- ◆ Dice and card games
- ◆ Jewelry of all kinds
- ◆ All other items which the staff interprets as disruptive

The staff will confiscate any of the items on the above list that are brought to school. Depending on the nature of the violation, the circumstance of the discovery, and the attitude of the offender, the staff may, at their discretion, keep the item for a week, month, or the whole year. The staff may decide to return the item(s) to the student, his parents, or give the item(s) to the police.

Note: The staff has the right and responsibility to inspect book bags, lockers, desks and other personal areas, with or without the consent or presence of the student.

If you don’t want the staff to see it, LEAVE IT AT HOME.

Bikes, Scooters, Skateboards

Bikes, scooters, and skateboards are allowed on school property if advance permission is granted.

Cell Phones

Many students have cell phones and other electronic communication devices. We recognize that many parents feel safer if their child walks to school with a phone. However, we do not see a need for any child to have these during the school day. Therefore, all such devices shall be turned in to the teacher upon arrival at school each day, and picked up at the conclusion of the school day.

Failure to turn in electronics may result in them being confiscated and returned to the parents. All students who have a cell phone shall give the number to their teacher. Staff may choose to allow cell phones for field trips.

Boy-Girl Relationships

Boyfriend-girlfriend relationships are not allowed at this school. The “hands-off” rule (no physical affection) shall be observed between male and female students. Siblings are encouraged to show their affection at home, not at school.

In keeping with Biblical standards, any student that is involved in immorality will face suspension, and possible dismissal, if there is no repentance.

Student Pledge

Each student shall agree to abide by the standards of conduct and regulations expected of each student enrolled in this school. At no time should any student give the impression to others that they are not in harmony with the goals, aims, and standards of the school.

Each child age 12 and older will annually sign a student pledge agreeing to strive to be of unquestionable character in dress, conduct, and attitude.

Profanity, obscenity in word or action, dishonor to the Trinity and the Word of God, or disrespect to the personnel of the school will not be tolerated.

Discipline

We use verbal reminders of poor behavior. Since this is not a reform school, we strongly request that no child be enrolled that is not able to respond immediately to verbal commands.

Demerits are given to remind students to improve their behavior. After three demerits, a detention is given equal to five minutes per demerit. The staff at their sole discretion will decide if the detention shall be served during or after school. The staff may also choose to hold a child back from breaks for demerits given.

Any child receiving more than three detentions in one marking period may be required to serve subsequent detentions with their parents. If a student does not cease disruptive behavior after verbal commands and demerits/detentions have been given, the staff will call the parents to have them come immediately to remove the child from the school. If the parent is not available to come to school, the staff reserves the right to call the police to remove the disruptive child. Before the child is allowed to return to school, a parent-teacher-student conference will be held to determine next steps and future enrollment for the child.

We use suspension when verbal commands and detentions have not resulted in proper behavior. Any student who leaves the school property without permission and/or against the command of the staff will immediately be suspended, with a writing assignment that must be completed before returning to school. We reserve the right to require a parent-teacher-student conference to be held before allowing the student to return so we can determine the next steps and future enrollment for the child.

We use expulsion only as a last resort and it must be approved by the board. If the administration team feels a student deserves expulsion, they will notify the parents in writing and by phone. A student will be placed on suspension until either the parents chose to take their child elsewhere or the board has decided to expel them. If a parent wishes to appeal the expulsion they may do so by requesting a hearing at the next board meeting.

Clothing Regulations & Personal Appearance

Dress Code

A student shall be in uniform from the moment they enter the school door in the morning until they exit the school for the final time in the afternoon. A staff member may give special exception for those leaving school and reporting immediately in a different uniform for a job or service opportunity.

The school normally has some used uniforms for sale.

Sweaters, jackets, and hoodies should not have large lettering, pictures, or emblems. If the student wishes to wear it in class, it should be of the colors grey, white, black, or blue.

Students should at all times keep themselves and their hair well-kept, nicely groomed, and neat manner.

Closed toe shoes are required for school.

For Boys

- ◆ School shirt with logo
- ◆ Polo shirt in white, gray, black, or blue
- ◆ Navy, black, or khaki pants
- ◆ Must have a standard nice haircut. Hair should be off the collar, above the ears, and no facial hair.
- ◆ No jewelry should be worn

For Girls

- ◆ Uniforms can be purchased from the school approved stores.
- ◆ A white, grey, blue, or black blouse shall be worn with the uniform. The blouse needs to have a collar, and sleeves that cover half of the upper arm.
- ◆ The uniform shall adequately cover the knees while sitting.
- ◆ Hair should be of natural colors.
- ◆ No jewelry, fake nails, fingernail polish, or cosmetics shall be worn.

- ◆ Slacks are permitted only if worn under the uniform. We encourage the use of leg warmers, tights, nylons, knee highs, etc., in place of slacks.

“Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price.” I Peter 3:3,4

Internet

Students will be assigned some or all of their work on the computers and the Internet. The Internet is a great tool, but can also be very destructive to moral and spiritual health.

Therefore, all students shall observe the following guidelines when using the Internet:

- ◆ Only web sites needed for a given assignment may be accessed.
- ◆ No access to Facebook, YouTube or other entertainment sites using the school computers.
- ◆ A student shall not access the internet after school hours unless a school staff member is present and has given specific permission.
- ◆ No student shall change their own password.
- ◆ No student shall EVER erase their own web history.
- ◆ The staff has the responsibility to keep students safe by reviewing their Internet history at any time.

Medical Guidelines

Immunizations for Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus (DPT), Mumps, Poliomyelitis, Measles (Rubeola), Hepatitis B, Chicken Pox (Varicella), and German Measles (Rubella) are required by the state of PA as a condition of entrance to school. Written proof of all immunizations, or a religious/medical exemption form, is required. Children without complete immunizations will be excluded from school.

No staff member will administer any medicines, tranquilizers, aspirin, Tylenol, or other medicine to any student without parental authorization in writing. All medicines must be kept and administered by the staff.

In cases where a student needs medical attention, the staff will attempt to contact the parents. If the parents/guardians are not available, the staff shall call the doctor or hospital of their choosing at the parents' expense.

Field Trips

If a student has an unpaid tuition balance, book fee, or uniform rental charges, they may not participate in field trips until these obligations are met.

Lost and Found

A "Lost and Found" is maintained in the office that contains items found in the school. Students who have lost personal or school items should first be encouraged to look in the "Lost and Found" for their missing items. After a period of about one month, these items are discarded or donated.

Media

We promote our school ministry via local news media, church newsletters, and our internet website. If, for any reason, you do not wish your child to be viewed on television, or photographed by the media, please write a letter stating this and return it to the office for our files.

Snow Delays and Closures

We **DO NOT** always go by the City of Reading schedule for delays and closures due to inclement weather. Parents are responsible to get their child to school on days when school is delayed. Failure to do so could result in fines from the Reading School District for illegal absences. Delays and closures will be announced by text messaging to the homes or cell phones.

Transportation

We do not provide transportation to or from school. Parents living may request transportation from their local school district.

Use of Telephone

Students will not be permitted to make non-emergency phone calls. In emergency situations, a member of the staff will make any necessary phone calls to parents.

Any calls for after school arrangements such as weather-related issues, tutoring, and other after school activities, forgotten homework, or other items, and after school transportation arrangements, are not considered emergencies. Students will not be permitted to use the school phones for these purposes.

Changes to This Handbook

The school board reserves the right to revise this handbook without prior notice.