



2023-2024 Handbook

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This school is classified by the Tennessee Department of Education as a “Category IV Church-Related School” and is exempt from accreditation requirements per TCA 49-50-801. As such, students transferring to public or accredited private schools may be subject to testing for grade level placement [or to determine what credits will be accepted in the case of high school students]. Students graduating from Category IV schools, although often accepted at colleges and universities may also be subject to additional testing requirements in order to be accepted.

Word of Life Christian Academy (WOLCA) is a member of Tennessee Association of Church Related Schools. We are dedicated to providing non-denominational, Christ-centered education to grades K-12. The mission of WOLCA is to glorify God through training students academically, spiritually, emotionally, and socially to develop into successful adults who exhibit Christ’s character through love, knowledge, wisdom, and compassion.

Hours of Operation

WOLCA hours of operation are between 8:00 AM CST and 3:00 PM CST. A calendar of operation days will be distributed to each family registered. If your child is entering late or leaving early due to doctor visits, family emergencies, etc., please ensure your child enters and exits quietly so to not disturb other children receiving assistance. **We ask that you please be sure to pick-up your child by 3:15 PM. If parents arrive after that time, a \$5 per child late pick-up fee will be charged for each 15 minute segment they are late in picking up their child. (Example: pick-up at 3:16 will be \$5; pick-up at 3:31 will be \$10) This fee is payable upon pick-up and is not subject to be paid at a later date. Please note that it applies per child if you have more than one child attending.** Only people approved by you on the registration form will be allowed to pick up your child (no exceptions). Child will be dismissed from the classroom as parents (or approved designated person) come to the door to pick them up. **Home Education students may use the on-campus facility on a non-regular basis for emergency drop-off at the designated rate per tuition sheet. Please ensure your student follows this handbook for such drop-off days.**

Attendance and Hours

By statute, Tennessee requires that “Church-related schools shall be conducted for the same length of term as public schools.” (TCA 49-50-801(c)) Therefore, WOLCA will schedule at least 180 days a year



for classroom attendance. Students are required to be in class (either on campus or at home) for the minimum of 180 days a school year and 4 hours a day.

Dress Codes and Grooming

Parents and children are expected to apply Biblical decent and modest dress principles. Therefore, no mid rifts showing (raise arms to ensure no shirt ride up), no shorts shorter than half thigh (measured in sitting position), no muscle shirts, no skirts shorter than 1 inch above the knee, shorts or leggings worn under dresses and skirts, no distasteful/vulgar shirt logos or prints, and no distracting/disrupting clothing. Students are required to dress appropriately for their gender as given by God. When in doubt, err on the side of caution. Please ensure your child has bathed and is groomed appropriately to not disturb any other children. We reserve the right to address any dress and grooming issues as deemed necessary. Ensure your child is properly dressed for the weather because some breaks and activities will be conducted outdoors. Closed toes shoes are recommended due to outdoor activities but not required.

Conduct

If our children are to develop into good citizens, they must be taught to respect authority and exhibit common courtesies towards staff and other children in the academy. Those who refuse to obey the rules will be asked to leave and not return. We will issue disciplinary actions (non corporal punishment), but a failure to adhere beyond these corrections will be cause for immediate dismissal.

Students will abide by the following policies:

1. For the safety of all children and staff, fighting, rough play, jumping on others, pushing, poking, tackling, and running inside the facility will not be tolerated.
2. Items which may prove distracting to the other children and the school, such as toys, playthings, matches, gambling devices, fireworks, caps guns, improper magazines/books, radios, electronic devices/game(for cell phones see cell phone policy #3 below), MP3 players, and animals will not be permitted on the premises.
3. Cell phones will be placed in a secure location as each child enters the building. Cell phone ringer/tone volumes are to be muted before the phone is placed in the classroom designated storage area. Children are not allowed to keep cell phones in the classroom/desk area due to distraction. If you, the parent, have an emergency and need to contact your child, please contact Harriett at 423-987-5360. She will return all messages as soon as possible. We will then give permission for your child to get their cell phone and contact you. Cell phones will be allowed during lunch break and given back at the end of the day. We reserve the right to



disallow or allow children personal phone call rights as deemed necessary. Any cell phone that becomes a continual disruption during school hours will not be allowed back on school property, this includes times it is being used during breaks and causes a child distress where school work cannot be completed. Cell phones are not to be shared between students as some families do not allow cell/internet usage.

4. Swearing, abusive, obscene, and slang language are not permitted. This also includes suggestive behaviors. Disciplinary actions will be used to correct this offense. Repeated offenses may warrant dismissal.
5. The use of tobacco, alcohol, or illegal drugs on or off the church grounds, will be sufficient reason for immediate dismissal.
6. Rude, crude, or vulgar behaviors when compared to the pattern of conduct left to us by the example of Jesus will not be permitted.
7. Disrespectful behaviors towards adults or children will not be tolerated. This includes mocking, mimicking, laughing at mistakes, sassing, facial or non-verbal expression of disrespect, griping, complaining and not obeying verbal and/or written instructions.
8. Dishonesty, including theft, lying or willful deception will be dealt with by disciplinary actions. This includes scoring books. Failure to score books correctly will result in writing off for the first 3 offenses followed by a principal visit on the 4th offense. Continued failure to score correctly may result in suspension.
9. Bullying, shunning, and harassment will not be tolerated. All accusations of such offenses will be taken seriously. These actions will be considered as an offense to this policy: bullying, sexual harassment, willful shunning, violence, threats, undue teasing, derogatory remarks (regarding ethnicity, sex, disability, etc.)
10. Movies, videos, and TV programs will not be discussed in the classroom area unless lead by the staff for discussion. Inappropriate movies, videos, and TV programs will not be discussed anywhere on the church grounds. This includes but is not limited to horror, violence, and sexual content.
11. Children who damage or deface the school or church facility, grounds, or equipment are liable for the cost of repair and/or replacement. Willful damage may result in dismissal or suspension of the child.
12. Children will not possess firearms, weapons, knives, or dangerous instruments of any kind on the church grounds or in the church building. Any instrument used for the purpose of inflicting harm or injury, or any explosive device is considered a weapon. The appropriate law enforcement officials will be notified in the case of weapons violation.



13. We reserve the right to confiscate any items which are brought to the facility in violation of policies. Such items will be returned to the parent of the child when the child is picked up.
14. Chewing gum is not permitted.
15. In the classroom, water in clear closable containers will be allowed at the child's workstation. All other food and drinks will not be allowed at the student's desk or in the classroom.
16. Children will not be allowed to leave the facility unless the appropriate, designated person comes to the door to pick-up the child. Pictures and names of appropriate, designated persons will remain on file in the classroom office area.
17. Public displays of affection as couples are out of order and will be considered inappropriate behavior.
18. Group involvement is expected during activity and free times while at the academy.
19. All facility computers will be used for learning purposes only or by prior approval of staff. Access to the internet is a privilege not a requirement. Use of said equipment is intended for education and research, not personal use. No personal information is to be transmitted over the internet (phone number, address, facility address, etc.). No chat rooms, social media, video via internet, and/or emails are allowed during the academy hours. Users will not attempt to engage in any illegal activity over the internet. No external computer or phone equipment will be allowed to be hooked to facility computers/internet.
20. Children should not bring valuables to the school unless prior approval by the staff has been given. WOLCA, the staff, or church facility accepts no responsibility for the care or safety of personal property left in the school or church building or on the premises.
21. We will be unable to give children non-prescription medications for headaches, colds, or sinus problems unless a staff member is advised by parent. If your child requires such medications or a prescription medication that is scheduled during school hours, we will only be able to assist your child if the proper Administration of Medication Form has been filled out and signed by the parent or legal guardian. Medications must also be in the original bottle with the prescription. Children may self medicate without the form and parents accepts responsibility.
22. Driving age students will be allowed to drive themselves. WOLCA, the staff, and the facility assume no responsibility to the safety of any driver coming or leaving facility. Teen drivers are asked to drive into parking area with a slow speed and using caution. Teen drivers will not be allowed to leave the premises before 2:30 PM CST without written approval of the parent. Teen drivers are expected to remain on premises during all breaks and lunch times. If your child must leave prior to 2:30 PM CST, please send a written, signed note for the time of leaving and reason. Emergency cases must be called in to 423-987-5360 during school hours at which point dismissal of teen will be approved.



The purpose of these policies is to encourage self-discipline and to help your child to consider his/her actions and how they affect others. Discipline is redemptive rather than punitive. When addressing a disciplinary incident, your child will be encouraged to evaluate the situation that led up to the incident and decide upon a course of action to avert such behavior in the future. He/she will also be required to accept the logical consequences of his/her actions. Some disciplinary actions to be used:

- running laps
- time out
- loss of privileges
- extra work (writing off, copying scripture, etc.)
- suspension (1-5 days)
- dismissal (no longer allowed to attend)

Application Policy

Parents of children applying must

1. Read and understand this handbook (A signature will be required stating that the handbook has been read.)
2. Complete and sign all application forms
3. Provide photos and/or names of all appropriate designated persons who are allowed to pick-up your child (Emergency pick-ups by someone not on the list must be phoned in prior to child being picked up. The person providing the pick-up will be required to show id.)
4. Provide high school transcript
5. Present the latest report card available
6. Follow all guidelines and testing procedures required by WOLCA.
7. Follow interview process for acceptance.
8. Provide a letter of recommendation from the senior pastor at the church you attend.

Fees

Complete yearly tuition is due regardless of payment plan option. At any point you decide to remove your child from WOLCA, the current year's tuition is still due and no refunds will be made. The school board or administrator reserve the right to alter this policy at anytime. If your child starts attending midyear, prorated tuition rates may apply.



For the payment plan option, tuition fees are due by the first day of each month in the months of August through May of each year. Curriculum fees (\$35 for K4-K5, \$30 for 1th-6th, and \$35 for 7th-12th) are also due by the first day each month of August through May. Payments may be mailed to: Word of Life AG, PO Box 2078, Dunlap, TN 37327 or hand delivered to staff.

If you do not pay all fees by the first Monday of each month, your child will not be allowed to attend and/or late fees will apply. If fees are not paid by the 15th day of the month, your child will not be allowed to attend class until the late fee and tuition are paid in full (no exceptions). On the 5th of each month, an 8% late fee will apply to the tuition portion of unpaid fees. On the 10th day of the month, an additional 8% late fee will be applied again to the unpaid tuition portion. See current year's Tuition Fee Schedule for more details.

Attendance and Sickness

Any work done at home or on campus must total the minimum of 720 hours per school year (180 X 4).

If your child is sick and running a fever, do not send them to school. All children attending must be fever free for 24 hours and feeling well. This is to help other children from getting sick. Any child running a fever during the school day must leave; therefore, the parent will be contacted and must pick the child up. One hour pick up time is allotted. **Failure to pick up child within 1 hour will result in an additional fee of \$10 per 15 minutes past pick-up time.**

If your child has been exposed to Covid-19, please quarantine him/her for the CDC recommended time before sending him/her to class. An alternate may be to have a negative Covid test and three day quarantine before returning. Classroom work can be sent home for student to complete during quarantine.

Word of Life Christian Academy must follow the state guidelines for attendance. Excessive absenteeism (without completing work at home) will result in your child having to be turned in for truancy.

To assist your child in attendance, we recommend you schedule doctor and dentist appointments on Mondays or after 12:00 PM CST when possible. Please be courteous and notify the staff at least a week in advance if your child will not be attending due to appointments, vacations, etc. Please be courteous and notify us at least one day in advance for absentees resulting from sickness and deaths in



the family. This will assist in planning activities for the week. Notifications may be called or texted to 423-987-5360 (With text, if you do not get a reply, do not assume it has been received.).

Bad Weather Policy

In most instances, the school will close in conjunction with the Sequatchie County public schools. However, please check for messages from WOLCA for any changes. There may be times when we will still have class when public schools will be closed or cancellations when other schools will have delays. You may be notified by phone so please make sure to check for messages. You may also check your local TV stations for cancellations.

Lunches and Snacks

Parent and/or child is responsible for bringing their lunch and snacks daily. No food or drinks (other than closable clear container water bottles) will be allowed in the classroom area. **We will not be responsible for fixing any food for your child. If your child brings self-preparing food, he must be able to prepare it himself.** Students will be required to remain on church premises during lunch time unless a designated pre-approved person picks him/her up. Please do not send peanut butter products due to allergy issues. The church facility has microwaves and refrigerators for your child's use if needed, but lunch bags with ice packs are preferred. **Please limit the amount of sugary foods and caffeine brought by your child.**

Volunteers and Visitors

Parents, grandparents, church members, etc. must get prior approval to remain in the classroom for volunteering purposes. Parent's involvement is encouraged but prior approval must be made in order to keep distractions at a minimum. A minimum of 1 day advanced approval is required for any visitor. Permission will be granted at staff discretion.

Parent/Staff Concern Procedure

1. Parent is to meet with the staff/teacher alone or with the family to resolve issue. Under no circumstances is the issue to be discussed with other parties or children. Under no circumstances is the issue to be discussed in front of other parties or children.
2. All issues will be handled according to scripture.
 - a. First search your heart for any wrong doing. (Eph. 4:31-32)
 - b. Go to the person alone with whom the conflict is with. (Matt. 18:15-17)
 - c. If the conflict still remains, a mediator will be called upon to assist. (the pastor of Word of Life AG-Ed Griffith) (Matt. 18:15-17)



- d. Again, search your heart for resolution and wrong doing. (Eph. 4:26, Luke 17:3)
- e. The mediators advice will be followed by both parties involved if no other resolution is found.

Academic Progress

WOLCA is dedicated to successful, high-quality education. Students will be expected to maintain a minimum grade of 80 on all tests. If a student fails to receive 80 on a test, the material being tested will be re-taught and the test re-administered until a satisfactory grade is achieved. Our goal is skill mastery. Parents are responsible for the cost of any repeated curriculum.

If your child is struggling to master the material being taught or maintaining adequate academic progress, you will be notified and called into a parent/teacher evaluation of the situation. You, as the parent, best understand your child's learning abilities. WOLCA understands that you will be a crucial asset in the academic success of your child. Together, a plan for success will be discussed and initiated so your child can excel in his/her education.

Assessment and Testing Procedures

At the beginning of each school year, as deemed necessary, we will recommend assessment testing to assist in curriculum selection and assessment of student comprehension. There is no fee for this initial assessment testing. However, you will be responsible for any fee associated with the spring assessment testing (up to \$50). Spring testing is required for grades 3, 5, 7, 9, and 12 (unless ACT/SAT has been taken). See the administrator for details.

We recommend all high school aged children start taking the ACT or SAT yearly by the 10th grade. You may sign your child up for the said tests as you deem needed. The parent/student is responsible for the registration of the ACT or SAT and not the school. You may register your child online at ACT.org. WOLCA will need a copy of the student's score to qualifying for graduation unless another qualification method has been met. Grades must be submitted to WOLCA by May 5th in order to qualify for the yearly graduation ceremony.

Word of Life CA has three levels for graduation. Our goal is that all students graduate with a regular diploma or higher. Level 1 is an "Alternative Academic Diploma" where the student will not be required to excel in an assessment test or the ACT. Level 2 is the "Regular Diploma" which requires either an appropriate score on an assessment test or an ACT score of 19 or higher. In the 3rd level, "Honors Diploma," the student must have 2 years of foreign language, 1 year of visual/performing arts,



and a score of 21 or higher on the ACT. SAT scores are also accepted for these levels but must be an equivalent of the said ACT scores.