



**Elementary  
Parent and Student  
Handbook  
2018-2019**



**PALM BEACH CHRISTIAN ACADEMY**

1101 South Flagler Drive ■ West Palm Beach, FL 33401 ■ 561-671-5795 ■ [pbchristianacademy.com](http://pbchristianacademy.com)

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## **Administration**

Christina Sosnicki    Principal  
Sandra Boyd        Administrative Assistant  
Scott Crawford     Superintendent

[csosnicki@pbchristianacademy.org](mailto:csosnicki@pbchristianacademy.org)  
[sboyd@pbchristianacademy.org](mailto:sboyd@pbchristianacademy.org)  
[scrawford@gofamilychurch.org](mailto:scrawford@gofamilychurch.org)

## **Contact Information**

Palm Beach Christian Academy  
1101 South Flagler Drive  
West Palm Beach, FL 33401

Phone (561) 671-5795

Fax (561) 671-5792

## **School Color and Mascot**

Colors: Navy blue, white and grey

Mascot: Cavalier

## **Mission Statement**

We exist to form a partnership with parents to provide a strong, spiritual and educational foundation in a loving, nurturing, Christ-centered environment.

## **Administrative Prerogative**

The intent of this handbook is to outline policies and guidelines that apply to students and parents. Parents, students, teachers, and administration must work together for the student to reach their fullest potential. These are the conditions of agreement between the Parent/Guardian and the school written for the purpose of clarifying policies of the school and the responsibilities of both the Parent/Guardian and the school. The signature of both parties in the appropriate spaces on the registration form indicate that the following conditions involved in the education of your child are understood and agreed upon between the school and Parent/Guardian of the child. Administration reserves the right to exercise its administrative prerogative in responding to any situation. These responses may include, but are not limited to, parent conferences, suspension and/or expulsion, and required counseling. Administration reserves the right to make adjustments to these policies at any time in order to improve the quality of PBCA's programs.

## **Philosophy**

Palm Beach Christian Academy (PBCA) is a ministry of the First Baptist Church of West Palm Beach. We share a common philosophy based upon an understanding of the needs of children. We believe it is our responsibility to plan experiences that will nurture and facilitate maximum growth. These experiences are designated to meet the needs of the total child thoroughly promoting intellectual, social, emotionally, physically, and spiritual growth.

## **Statement of Faith**

- ❖ We believe in the unity and equality of the Trinity: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.
- ❖ We believe that salvation is by grace through faith, not of works (good deeds, baptism, giving money, etc.).
- ❖ We believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and in His personal return.
- ❖ We believe that the Bible, both the Old and New Testaments, was inspired by God, is inerrant and is our only rule in matters of faith and practice.

## **Values**

1. To teach that the Bible is the inspired and the only infallible authoritative Word of God, thus developing attitudes of love and respect toward it (II Timothy 3:15-17, II Peter 1:20-21).
2. To encourage the student to develop self-discipline and responsibility from God's perspective (I Timothy 4:7, I Corinthians 9:24-27).
3. To teach the student to treat everyone with love and respect as unique individuals created in God's image (Philippians 2:1-4, Ephesians 5:21).
4. To teach the student how to become a contributing member of his society by realizing his need to serve others (Galatians 5:13, Romans 2:10).
5. To teach the student to understand and use fundamental processes in communicating and dealing with others (such as reading, writing, speaking, listening, and mathematics) (II Corinthians 5:20).

6. To teach and encourage the student to use good study skills and habits (II Timothy 2:3-7).
7. To teach the students creative and critical thinking based upon the proper use of biblical criteria for evaluation (II Timothy 3:14-17).
8. To teach the student biblical skills for personal and social relationships (Psalm 119:9, Ephesians 4:12).
9. To teach each student to develop a personal relationship with God (Philippians 3:10, 4:7).
10. To teach the student an understanding of and an appreciation for God's world, developing an awareness of man's role in his environment and his God given responsibility to subdue, use and preserve it properly (Psalm 8:6, Hebrew 2:6-8).

## **History**

Palm Beach Christian Academy is a ministry of the First Baptist Church of West Palm Beach. Over 30 years ago, our church had the desire to minister to children in a way that impacted their spiritual and educational development at a young age. This was accomplished when we launched what was then known as the Christian Child Development Center. As we continued to grow and expand both our vision and capabilities we officially became the Palm Beach Christian Academy. We have since added Kindergarten through 5th grade and are adding new school campuses.

## **Accident Insurance**

Each child in our school is covered by our Excess Coverage Insurance; this does not replace a primary insurance. If a student is injured, a claim should be made with the parents insurance first, then with the school's.

## **Achievement Tests**

Each spring, a standardized achievement test is administered to all elementary students. In order for students to be prepared for this test, students are requested to get plenty of rest, arrive to school on-time, and bring two sharpened #2 pencils. Please do not schedule any medical appointments during the testing time. Students who miss the achievement test and/or subsections of the test are unable to retake them.

## **Admission Policy**

PBCA considers all applicants for admission based upon their academic program needs and admits students accordingly based on availability. We have year round registration and place students based on their age as of September 1<sup>st</sup> of each calendar year. The Admissions process begins with submission of the completed application packet. Administration will evaluate the completed application, academic history and supporting documentation. Students entering Kindergarten-5<sup>th</sup> grade may be asked to participate in a one-on-one, teacher-student evaluation and a more formal, age appropriate, admissions test. Testing, interview dates, and/or conferences will be scheduled once the completed application and all supporting materials are received and reviewed by the Administration. PBCA reserves the right to refuse admission to or dismiss any student at any time for any reason it deems appropriate.

## **Animals**

Animals are not allowed on campus, except for service animals that are individually trained to work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability.

## **Attendance/Tardiness/Absences/Make-Up Work**

PBCA elementary school day begins at 8:30AM and ends at 3PM. Students must be in class ready to learn at 8:30AM. Any student arriving after 8:35AM is considered tardy and needs to be signed in through the school office. Students who are tardy will be taken to class by Administration.

It is important that all students have regular attendance and avoid excessive absences and/or tardiness. Excessive absences or tardiness (15 or more per school year for full time students) could affect promotion. Please note that three (3) unexcused tardies will equal one (1) absence. Any student with an unexcused tardy that is 25 minutes past the start of the school day, 8:30am, will receive one (1) absence.

Excused absences will be allowed for the following:

- Illness or injury (a doctor's note will need to be sent in for any consecutive absences exceeding 3 days)
- Death in immediate family
- Medical or dental appointment (these should be made after school hours whenever possible)
- Court or administrative proceedings
- Religious Observances
- Inclement weather- We will notify parents of closings or reopening of school if it differs from the Palm Beach County School System's inclement weather safety procedures through an automated call out system. If radio and television broadcasts announce that Palm Beach County Schools are closing due to severe weather, then this announcement also applies to PBCA. PBCA reserve the right

to make scheduling decisions for the school regarding reasonable safety boundaries with local authority approval.

PBCA will not release students to any person under the age of **18**. Only authorized adults will be permitted to pick up. All authorized adults must have photo ID with them at pick up time.

If a parent knows their child will be absent ahead of time, the parent should request in writing classwork that will be missed during their absence. The request should be made within 48 hours but no later than 24 hours prior to the absence. Any child absent for an excused absence will be given at least one day per day missed, plus one additional day, to turn in make-up work.

### **Baby-Sitting Services**

PBCA does not allow PBCA employees to baby-sit PBCA students. At no time may a PBCA employee sign out and/or remove a PBCA student other than their own child from the school. PBCA employees may not bring and/or sign in another PBCA student other than their own child.

### **Backpack Policy**

For the safety of all students, rolling backpacks are not permitted at the elementary level.

### **Biblical Worldview Integration**

PBCA is a Christ-centered school. It is vital that there be focus and implementation of Biblical Worldview Integration in all areas of academic accomplishment. The primary means to accomplishing Biblical Integration at PBCA encompasses the provision of a Christ-centered atmosphere for school personnel, students, and families. This atmosphere will be realized through prayer, devotions, training, nurturing, and the shepherding of students and their families. A second path to attaining Biblical Integration at PBCA is through the deliberate merging of the Biblical Worldview Integration into all areas of curriculum content as the instructional staff consistently strives to inform and influence student learning. This will be achieved by intersecting the truths of Scripture with the teachings of the various curricula. Biblical Integration includes immersion, demonstration, and influence of Biblical doctrine and truth as it relates to all aspects of learning.

### **Birthday Parties**



PBCA will allow a treat that has been store bought along with party themed plates to be brought in to celebrate a student's birthday as long as arrangements have been made with the teacher at least 24 hours in advance.

## Box Tops for Education

PBCA proudly participates in the Box Tops for Education program which gives us 10 cents per label. Labels are found on a variety of products ranging from baking items to toilet tissue. Visit [www.btfe.com](http://www.btfe.com) for a list of products. Please collect these labels and send them to school in a bag or envelope with your child's name, teacher's name, and grade.

## **Bullying and Harassment Policy and Major School Violations**

The following constitute major violations that will result in disciplinary action as determined by the Administration. This list is representative and should not be construed a complete list.

- Violence or threats of violence against a student or school employee, whether actual or implied.
- Violence or threats of violence against school property, whether actual or implied.
- **Threats of Violence:** The disciplinary consequences for a student whose verbal or written comments, including email and/or other social media messages, that threaten serious bodily harm to another student or member of the faculty or staff or destruction of property, may include, but not be limited to:
  - Immediate suspension from the school;
  - Treatment or consultation by a psychologist or psychiatrist at the parents' expense and/or by the school counselor, both of whom may be asked to submit a written evaluation. If it is determined that the child was serious about the threat and has the capacity to carry it out, the child may be expelled from the school. If it is determined that the child did not seriously intend to do harm to others, the child may be allowed to return to the school, at the discretion of the school principal.
  - If allowed to return to school, the child may be placed on probation with an indication that, should be a similar threat occur, the child will be expelled from school.
  - The school may submit an informational report to the police.
- **Vandalism:** Misuse/abuse of school property, including graffiti, carving breakage, etc. Students will be charged for the removal, repair or replacement of damaged school property.
- Psychological/sexual/physical/verbal harassment or intimidation.
- **Bullying and/or Harassment:** The school is committed to promoting a safe, healthy, caring, and respectful learning environment for all of its students. As such, bullying is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated. Therefore, this policy prohibits any unwelcome verbal or written conduct or gestures directed at a student by another student that has the effect of:

- physically, emotionally or mentally harming a student;
- damaging, extorting or taking a student's personal property;
- placing a student in a reasonable fear of emotional or mental harm;
- placing a student in reasonable fear of damage to or loss of personal property; or
- creating an intimidating or hostile environment that substantially interferes with a student's educational opportunities of the mission of the school.

Bullying may involve but is not limited to: teasing, name-calling, slurs, rumors, jokes, false accusations, intimidation, stalking, innuendos, demeaning comments, pranks, social isolation, gestures, cyber-bullying or other verbal or written conduct. Cyber-bullying includes the following misuses of digital technology: teasing, intimidation, or making false accusations about another student by way of any technological tool, such as sending or posting inappropriate email messages, instant messages, text messages, digital images or website postings (including blogs and social network sites). This definition includes students who either directly engages in an act of bullying or who, by their behavior, support another student's act of bullying.

This policy prohibits bullying that occurs either on school premises before, during or after school hours, any school related activity, and school function.

Each parent and student has a duty to report any bullying to the school immediately. If a student experiences (or a parent witnesses or learns of) any incident of bullying, the incident must be promptly reported to the school principal. Any student found to have violated this policy may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action which may include: temporary removal from the classroom, loss of privileges, detention, counseling, parent conference, suspension, expulsion, and/or notification to appropriate authorities. The disciplinary action may be unique to the individual incident and may vary in method and severity based on the principal's discretion.

False reports or accusations of bullying also constitute a violation of this policy and may subject the offending party to appropriate disciplinary action.

## **Cell Phone Use**

Students are permitted to bring cell phones to school. However, they must be turned off during all school hours and put away in their backpacks. Cell phone use during school hours will result in the removal of the phone and a parent will need to retrieve the cell phone from the front office at the end of the school day.

## **Change of Address, Phone or Email**

In order to maintain accurate communication between home and school, it is vitally important that parents notify PBCA immediately of any changes in address, phone, custody, email address, etc.

## **Character Building & Discipline Policy**

PBCA encourages positive behavior in class, at school, and with classmates. We believe that the home is the first institution God established and it is there that the child first learns set patterns of behavior. In the home the child learns a value system of right and wrong. When a child is taught proper discipline and respect in the early years at home, he/she is then ready to be educated and to develop the skills necessary to face life successfully. Academically, discipline is important and necessary when operating a classroom so that students receive the maximum impact from the teacher. The school has an obligation to provide an environment and a curriculum conducive to effective learning. Also, as a Christian school, it is our responsibility to build Christian character in our students. Without discipline, PBCA would not be the type of school that students would want to attend, nor would a parent want their students to attend. The purpose of our discipline program is to create an atmosphere where students can learn and feel safe; explore the concepts of Biblical obedience, respect for authority and responsibility, and honesty. (Romans 13). We are instructed in God's Word, The Holy Bible, that we show love by administering correct discipline (Pr. 13:24). We discipline in order to help students learn to choose desirable behaviors instead of unacceptable ones. When students make wrong choices we seek to help redirect, guide, heal, and restore.

We are engaged in the spiritual growth and character development of our students, how they behave, both on and off campus, is important to PBCA. A Christian has only one standard for living, The Holy Bible. Those standards apply on or off campus. The Bible declares that while God does forgive, there are consequences to sin, and He disciplines us because He loves us (Heb. 12: 5-11, Pr. 3:11-12, Phil. 1:27).

The staff does not use corporal punishment. Parents are contacted when unacceptable behavior so warrants. In some cases the parent may be asked to participate in a parent/teacher/principal conference to develop a plan of action, and/or take the child home for the day.

We differentiate between forgiveness (both God's and others) and consequences. We believe it is important that students learn that their choices do bring consequences. Consequences can or may include loss of privileges as well as expulsion from school. While not used often, expulsion is a necessary choice when dealing with infractions of a more serious nature (Pr. 23:13-14). We believe in setting high standards for our students and in some cases the protection of our school community requires the expulsion of a student.

The PBCA Administration reserves the right of dismissing any child if after entering into a plan of action he/she seems unable to cooperate in the classroom routines.

## **Child Abuse or Neglect Reporting Policy**

Section 39.201 of the Florida Statutes requires that all school employees including but not limited to teachers, and administrators are mandated to report any reasonable suspicion of child abuse to Department of Children & Family's Central Abuse Hotline immediately at 1-800-962-2873. Failure to report Child abuse may lead to the school employee to be charged with a 3rd degree felony per Florida Statute Section 39.205. PBCA teachers are required to report any knowledge, reasonable suspicion to the Principal, Business Administrator and/or Lead Pastor.

In order to comply with the appropriate Florida law which makes it mandatory to report child abuse and/or neglect, any teacher or other school employee who knows, or has reasonable cause to suspect, that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect, shall immediately report such knowledge or suspicion to the Principal, Business Administrator and/or Lead Pastor so that they are fully informed and are responsible for what happens at the school. If it is deemed necessary, the discussion will be followed up by the Principal and the teacher contacting the Department of Children and Family.

## **Child Custody**

Families who are in legal dispute over child custody or who are divorced are required to submit to the PBCA office a copy of any legal documents which detail custody agreements. Both parents are responsible for the all financial obligations to PBCA unless otherwise stated in court documents. These documents will be placed in the student's personal file and specifications from those documents will be followed.

## **Computer and Technology Use Policy**

PBCA offers computers and various other types of technology to our students to serve as a resource for enriching curriculum and learning objectives. Computers will be used for legitimate assignments or activities as prescribed by administrators, faculty, or staff.

Students may not:

- use computers without permission,
- share passwords,
- use obscene or inappropriate language,
- threaten our network or its integrity,
- download, install, or copy program files to the network without the network administrator's permission,
- search for, send, or receive messages that are deemed offensive by PBCA Administration,
- unlawfully copy, save, or redistribute copyrighted material (users should assume material is copyrighted unless noted),
- subscribe to any services or order any goods or services,
- share their home address, phone number or other information over the internet,

- visit social network sites; and/or maintain a social network site,
- be careless or wasteful with computer resources such as paper, ink, etc.
- conduct audio and video recordings on campus (including the recording of classes and classroom activities) without teacher approval. Furthermore, students may not use their device to listen to music while on campus.

Students of PBCA may not be involved in any way with cyber bullying, hacking, harassment, misrepresentation, plagiarism, or indecent material while using any computers on campus. Violation of this policy may result in the loss of computer privileges, failure in the appropriate class, or possible suspension or expulsion from school.

Faculty members have the right to interrupt computer usage at any time. Administration has the right to interrupt and take appropriate action regarding inappropriate computer use on campus.

## **Communicable Diseases**

PBCA desires to maintain a healthy school environment by instituting controls designed to prevent the spread of major communicable diseases. The term “communicable disease” means an illness that arises as a result of a specific infectious agent, which may be transmitted either directly or indirectly by a susceptible host, infected person or animal to other persons.

We depend on the parent’s assessment of their child’s health before sending him/her to school. Germs are spread quickly in school environments. Parents are requested to contact the school if their child acquires a contagious condition so we can notify staff and other families who are directly affected. Parents are asked to keep their child home if there has been a fever, vomiting or diarrhea within 24 hours (this is a very contagious time for these conditions). A teacher or Administration that reasonably suspects that a student or employee has a major communicable disease shall immediately notify the school Principal.

Any student with a communicable disease for which immunization is required by law or is available, shall be temporarily excluded from school while ill and during recognized periods of communicability. Students with a communicable disease for which immunization is not available shall be excluded from school and all school related activities while ill. If the nature of the disease and circumstances warrant, PBCA may require an independent physician’s examination of the student to verify the diagnosis of communicable disease. PBCA reserves the right to request to make all final decisions necessary to enforce its communicable disease policy and to take all necessary action to control the spread of communicable diseases within the school. PBCA reserves the right to request a letter from the physician after an illness before the student can return to school.

## **Conduct Expectation**

Each Elementary student is expected to demonstrate respect, self-control, and to learn the importance of personal responsibility throughout his/her Elementary years at PBCA.

Each student will be held accountable both in and out of school, but not limited to, the expectations listed below:

1. We expect our students to seek to honor the Lord Jesus Christ in all they learn, say and do.
2. We expect our students to display a respectful attitude toward God, His Word, the Bible, and any spiritual-related activities.
3. We expect our students to show respect and seek to maintain a positive relationship with all adults within the school community.
4. We expect our students to obey to the best of his/her ability the rules and procedures of the school.
5. We expect our students to demonstrate self-control in his/her behavior and to maintain a cooperative attitude.
6. We expect our students to achieve his/her optimal effort concerning the preparation of any assigned class work, projects, or tests.
7. We expect our students to treat his/her peers in a caring, kind manner with dignity and respect.
8. We expect our students to be responsible concerning his/her own supplies or school-owned property.
9. We expect our students to demonstrate proper manners and to show courtesy at all times.
10. We expect our students to encourage his/her peers in the process of learning responsibility and showing respect.

This list of rules is not intended to be all-inclusive. Enrollment at PBCA constitutes a social contract to uphold and comply with the expectations of the school at all times. A student whose behavior is considered to be injurious to the life of the school may be dismissed at any time. For behavior that violates school rules and/or reflects in any negative way on the school, the school reserves the right to discipline and hold accountable any student. After verification of any infractions the student should expect to be disciplined according to the standards and rules of the school.

## Curriculum

In selecting classroom resources and materials both Christian and secular publishers are considered. Each will be reviewed to determine how closely they align with PBCA's philosophy and values. It is recognized that Christian publishers provide a distinctive Christian perspective with an emphasis on Christian values and thinking. On the other hand, secular publishers often provide excellent teacher resources for skill building. PBCA uses a combination of ABeka, ACSI, BJU Press, Pearson, Houghton Mifflin Harcourt and McGraw Hill Balanced Literacy program as the curriculum foundation for: Bible, Science, Social Studies, Mathematics, Reading, Phonics, and Writing. Students are offered Physical Education, Science, Music, Spanish, Art, Media, Library and Chapel weekly. Each year of Elementary at PBCA builds upon previous years in all aspects of study.

## Dismissal of Students

Palm Beach Christian Academy (PBCA) wants to ensure that no child is allowed to leave the care of our school in the custody of a person who is in a physical condition which may prevent him/her assuring the child's welfare. PBCA will only release students to authorized parents or approved authorized representatives stated by the parents. All authorized representatives must have a photo identification to pick up a child.

PBCA will not permit parents or authorized representatives who are in an impaired condition to pick up children from school. We will expect, therefore, our staff to be alert to the possibility of parental/authorized representative's impairment, and if there is suspicion of such impairment the staff member will call a second staff member and administration to corroborate. If all involved staff members agree that the parent/authorized representative's faculties appear to be impaired, the school will not permit transportation by the impaired person.

PBCA will attempt to contact another person on the Authorized Child Pick-up List to come and pick up the child. In the event that we are unable to reach any other authorized person, the West Palm Beach Police Department will be contacted to assist PBCA in determining an appropriate course of action to be taken. If the situation continues to occur, at the Principal's discretion the student's participation in the program may be terminated.

Children not enrolled in aftercare are to be picked up no later than **3:00 p.m in the east car loop**. Please wait in your car and your child will be brought to you. Parents picking up children after **3:05 p.m.** will be required to pay an over-time charge of **\$3.00** per minute. This is strictly enforced. These same rules apply to parents of children participating in our aftercare program. Aftercare ends promptly at **6:00 p.m.** Parents picking up children after **6:00 p.m.** will be required to pay an over-time charge of **\$3.00** per minute. This is also strictly enforced. Continued **violation** of this agreement could lead to **expulsion** from the program. Parents need to immediately notify PBCA in the event of late pick-up. If PBCA is not notified within 15 minutes after the child's



scheduled pick up time, PBCA will begin attempting to contact parents/emergency contacts. PBCA will make extensive efforts to reach an authorized person to pick up the child until 7pm at which time the proper authorities will be notified for assistance.

## **Early Pick Up Policy**

PBCA understands that the rare occasion will arise where a student needs to leave school early. On these occasions the parent must send in a note, email, or call the PBCA office making them aware that the student needs to leave early. PBCA office must be notified by 12pm that a student needs to leave early. There will be no early dismissal after 2pm without prior approval from the office. Students who are dismissed early are responsible for making up missed work as homework which must be returned the next morning. Any early pickup will be dismissed through the PBCA office as to minimize classroom disruptions.

## **Electronic Policy**

Student use of cell phones and other electronic devices is strictly prohibited during the school day. Violation of this policy will result in confiscation of the device and return to the parent through the office at the end of the school day. Electronic devices are not permitted in Early Care or After Care as well.

## **Emergency, Safety and Security Procedures**

PBCA provides one main doorway for entrance and exit from the school. All other doors will remain locked and are not for use except in the case of emergency. Parents are asked not to park in the lanes designated as “Fire Lanes” in front of the school. Parking spaces are clearly marked and should be used only when dropping off or picking up your child. No overnight parking is permitted. The safety and security of all our students and staff is our main priority. We have procedures for visitors as they come to our campus and plans in place for emergencies (fires, evacuations, lockdowns). The school will conduct monthly fire drills. All visitors must sign in and out at the PBCA Security Desk just inside the main school entry door. If the school should need to implement emergency safety procedures, then no one will be permitted to enter or exit the campus until PBCA is cleared by the proper authorities or administration. Our school has established a notification system to parents via text in case of such emergencies. Please ensure that we always have your most current information.

- **Lockdown**
  - **A “lock down” is implemented when there is a crisis/danger on the school campus that warrants staff and students to lock all doors and wait quietly in their classrooms until the danger is removed.**

- If there is a crisis/danger which warrants a lock-down, (for example, an intruder enters the building) staff will be made aware. All doors will be locked preventing any visitor or parent to enter the building or classrooms.
- The lockdown will remain in effect for as long as it takes law enforcement to bring the situation under control. If the crisis/danger warrants an evacuation after the lock-down ceases, procedures for evacuation will take effect immediately. If there is no need for an evacuation and the crisis is over, school will resume as normal and parents will receive a letter or email from the principal notifying them of the lock down that took place that day. Lockdown drills will be performed multiple times throughout the year.
- **Evacuation:**
  - **An “evacuation” takes place when staff and students leave the school campus to go to an off-site safe location to avoid the impact of a crisis/danger that is present on the campus.**
  - In the event of an evacuation, the school’s office will notify all parents by Bright Arrow/RenWeb of the evacuation. The phone call will give parents specific directions as to where, when and how to pick up their child from the evacuation off-site location. For example, the parent may be asked to refrain from coming to or calling the school, and go instead to the off-site evacuation location.
  - The parent and/or anyone designated by the parent to pick up the child will need to provide proof of identification, and also be listed on the registration form in order for the student to be released. Parents must be patient and remain calm during this time. Your child and our staff’s safety is our main priority.

Please pray God’s continued protection of the PBCA students, parents, faculty, staff and campus.

## **Family Educational Rights and Privacy**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

- Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for

parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.

- Parents or eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.
- Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):
  - School officials with legitimate educational interest;
  - Other schools to which a student is transferring;
  - Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
  - Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
  - Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
  - Accrediting organizations;
  - To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
  - Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
  - State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

Schools may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. However, schools must tell parents and eligible students about directory information and allow parents and eligible students a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them. Schools must notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA. The actual means of notification (special letter, inclusion in a PTA bulletin, student handbook, or newspaper article) is left to the discretion of each school.

## **Fundraising**

All fundraising activities for PBCA are to be approved by the Administration. No fundraising projects should be undertaken without prior approval by the Administration.

## **Field Trip Policy**

PBCA offers several educational and fun field trips throughout the school year. Parents will be given the information and permission forms to sign and return to school. Every effort will be made to assure both the suitability of any trip away from school and the reasonableness of any cost involved in the trip. Before a student can go on a field trip, a signed permission slip from the parent must be on file. Verbal permission is not accepted.

**Remember, field trip money is non-refundable.**

If privately-owned vehicles are to be used for transporting students, parents of the students are to be notified and the owner of the vehicle as well as the parents must acknowledge in writing that they have received notice that the school's liability insurance does not cover the use of the private vehicles to transport students for school activities. Parents who transport students for school-sponsored activities or field trips certify that his/her vehicle is covered by insurance as required by Florida state law. PBCA follows and strictly enforces the Florida Child Car Seat Laws that states it is the responsibility of the supervising adult to ensure that any child **under 5 years old** is seated in a federally-approved child car seat. No child under 5 years old will be allowed to ride in a vehicle without the appropriate child car seat.

Parents/guardians are allowed to go with a child on a field trip as long as they have completed the driver verification form. This form must be completed and the status of the parent/guardian must be approved before the date of the field trip. On some field trips, only a certain number of parents will be allowed to go as volunteers or chaperones. Field trips are a privilege and students are expected to follow all PBCA's rules and behavior expectations when they are on our campus or out on a field trip. Any student who cannot abide by PBCA's conduct expectations will not be permitted to participate and/or may be left at PBCA on the next scheduled field trip to do class assignments. PBCA Administration reserves the right to call a parent to pick up a student directly from a field trip location.

Siblings of students are not permitted to attend any school sponsored field trips.

## **Grading**

PBCA uses the following grading scale for its elementary students. The scale is as follows:

A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	59-Below

## **Homework**

We believe that homework is vital to the student's academic development. It stimulates independence and self-direction. It reinforces school learning through practice and provides opportunity to spend extra time on worthwhile activities or projects. Homework acquaints parents with what the child is learning and affords them an opportunity to help their child.

Homework assignments must be completed and handed in on the day designated by the teacher. Parents should check to see that all homework is completed and all books returned to the classroom. Often the effectiveness of class work is impaired by forgotten books. Homework guidelines are provided by teacher in the first week of school.

Assignments turned in late will receive a 10% penalty for each day it is not turned in.

## **Hours of Operation**

PBCA's elementary school day is Monday-Friday 8:30AM-3PM with extended hours of 7:30AM-3PM or 7:30AM-6PM upon availability. Our calendar usually adopts the Palm Beach County Public School Systems Major Holiday, Christmas, and Spring Break closings. Any child not enrolled in extended care may not enter the school before 8:20AM or remain after 3:05PM. There will be a late fee of \$3.00 per minute assessed to any child not enrolled in our extended day that is picked up after 3:05pm. If a child is continuously picked up late, they will automatically be enrolled in our After Care program. All additional expenses will be assessed to the parent's account.

Preschool children who have older siblings enrolled in our elementary program may be dropped off in their class starting at 8:30am at no additional cost.

## **Inclement Weather**

PBCA follows Palm Beach County School System's inclement weather safety procedures. If radio and television broadcasts announce that Palm Beach County Schools are closing due to severe weather, then this announcement also applies to PBCA. PBCA reserves the right to make its own reopening scheduling decision within reasonable safety boundaries and local authority approval. Such instances may include but are not limited to Palm Beach County Schools delay the reopening of their schools due to the aftermath of a hurricane or storm but PBCA is able to reopen sooner, In such a case, PBCA will send an automated call out with the date and time of the reopening of the school.

## **Lost/Damaged Book Policy**

PBCA allows its students to check out books from its school and classroom library as well as take textbooks/workbooks. Lost or damaged books must be paid for and replaced before final report cards are released. Payment for these must be made in the main office.

## **Membership**

Christian Schools of Palm Beach County  
Association of Christian Schools International

## **Non-Discrimination Statement**

Palm Beach Christian Academy at First Baptist does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, nationality or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admission policies, or any other school-administered programs.

## **Parent Conferences**

Conferences may be requested by either parents or teachers. All conferences are scheduled through the teacher or administration. Parents are to check-in with security before going to the classroom for the conference.

## **Parent Participation and Communication**

Parents are encouraged to attend Open House with their child prior to the first day of school. Newsletters will be sent home weekly to keep parents up to date on what is going on in the classroom. Homework folders should be checked nightly. Parents wishing to conference with a teacher or administration should do so by appointment.

Parents may receive flyers, announcements, call outs, emails, and periodical mail-outs from the PBCA/FBC, to better keep you informed of programs, events, and happenings in and around our campus. All personal information submitted by you to PBCA/FBC will be used for conducting PBCA business only. We do not share this information with outside parties.

In light of the recent nationwide events our school has heightened its safety and security procedures. We value greatly the safety of our children and staff and therefore, have implemented a crisis response plan that includes the notification of parents via text in case of an emergency. Please ensure that we always have your most current information.

## **Philanthropy and Gift Support**

Gift support is crucial to the future of PBCA. Tuition supports the budgeted yearly needs of educational programming. However, the philanthropy of friends, grandparents and parents provides for the growth, expansion, and school improvements. Please direct all questions regarding your support to our main office.

## **Playground**

Safety is one of the greatest concerns on the playground. Students are permitted to play in designated areas. No roughhousing or contact sports are permitted. Good sportsmanship is the key to a healthy playground. Students are not permitted on the playground without adult supervision.

## Promotion Policies

A student will be promoted to the next grade level upon satisfactory completion of grade level expectations and standards as well as fulfilling the attendance requirements. If a student does not meet the academic expectations of one or more core subjects, the student may be asked to repeat the grade upon the teacher's recommendation and administrative approval.

## Report Cards

Report cards will be sent home three times during the school year. Parents are urged to study the student's report card with care and upon review, sign its corresponding envelope and return back to the teacher the next school day. When questions arise, please arrange to speak with the teacher.

## Reporting Concerns

During the course of the year, occasional misunderstandings or problems may arise between a teacher and student, a teacher and a parent, or a parent and the school. The school's policy for dealing with these situations is mentioned below. This is consistent with the teachings found in Matthew 18. *"If your brother sins against you go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector. I tell you the truth, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven. For where two or three come together in my name, there I am with them."* Matthew 18:15-20

All questions, problems, or complaints should first be brought directly to the teacher prior to involving other individuals. If the situation cannot be corrected through this level of direct contact with the teacher, it should then be brought to the Principal. The teacher will be included in this meeting. If the problem is still not resolved after obtaining the principal's involvement, it should then be presented to the school's senior authority, the Business Administrator. Please note that the principal and/or teacher will be included in this meeting.

All reasonable efforts are made to resolve concerns and conflicts at the initial level of intervention, and again at each subsequent level of intervention. It is the desire of PBCA to address concerns and resolve disputes in a manner that is consistent with teachings in the Bible, which serves as our final authority. Parents agree to follow these steps and further agree to make every effort to reach a mutually beneficial resolution to all problems and disagreements within the school community. Please avoid at all times any actions that might otherwise injure the reputation of the school, the families of other students, school personnel or the church. Examples of these actions include but are not

limited to gossiping, rumor mongering, and the spreading of hearsay reports. Confidentiality is strictly upheld by the Administration and these matters will not be discussed with persons who are not directly involved in the situation.

As a courtesy, please refrain from using email to address serious concerns and instead schedule a time to meet with the appropriate personnel.

## **Registration and Tuition**

PBCA registration fees are due when completed registration paperwork is returned. Workbook and resource service fees are due by May 1<sup>st</sup>. If a student is registered after July 1<sup>st</sup>, all fees must be paid at time of registration.

Tuition is an annual tuition broken into 10 equal monthly payments. Summer Camp will be a separate registration and take place after Spring Break. Tuition payments are due on the first day of each month. After 5 working days, the student's account is considered in arrears and a 10% late fee will be assessed. Students who have past due accounts will not be accepted into the classroom until their past due balance has been made current. Any days missed will be considered unexcused absences. Tuition credits will not be given to parents for any days missed due to vacations, planned/unplanned absences, natural disasters, etc. In the event of a temporary school closing due to a natural disaster or other event outside of PBCA's control, tuition paid during the school closing will not be reimbursed or prorated. If the school closing becomes excessive in the opinion of PBCA administration, a determination will be made at that time if and how to give tuition credit to each account that is current.

If a parent chooses to pay for the school year in full they will receive a 10% discount as long as the payment is made by the first day of school. For any student who has begun attending class then withdraws, tuition will be charged through the end of the month. (i.e. If a student withdraws on December 10<sup>th</sup>, tuition will be charged through December 31<sup>st</sup>). Parents must notify the office at least 24 hours before withdraw is to occur and sign the appropriate paperwork. School forms/records will not be forwarded to another school until all financial obligations have been satisfied. In the event that tuition has been prepaid for the entire school year, tuition will be charged through the end of the trimester.

Tuition can be paid in the school office with check or cash or online with a credit or debit card. If paid online a 1.5% convenience fee will be assessed. Return checks will be charged a \$15.00 fee plus a 10% late fee. Accounts that have more than 2 returned checks will be required to make future payments with money order, cashier's check, or cash.

All Immunization and Physical Examination records should be submitted with registration paperwork and be kept current.

All students are placed in the beginning of each school year in an age appropriate classroom. Classes are created based on the guidelines provided by the Florida



Department of Education, Palm Beach County Health Department and the Department of Children and Families. PBCA will not accept any request for teachers and/or request to be placed with certain classmates.

## **School Uniforms**

Pre-K and Elementary students will be required to wear our PBCA uniform during school days. Uniforms may be purchased directly from Seacoast Uniforms on their website. Their website is listed <http://vip.seacoastuniforms.com>, and our group password is **pbca**.

### **The following items need to be purchased directly through Seacoast Uniforms:**

- PBCA Polos in Navy, White, Red, Yellow, Dark Green, and Sky Blue
- PBCA PE shirt on PE days only
- Jumpers and knit dresses for girls, fingertip length

### **The following items may be purchased at a uniform store of your choice:**

- Khaki/navy shorts or pants for both girls and boys and skirts for girls, no cargo pants or shorts
- Girls may wear solid black or navy tights/leggings under their skirts or dresses, but no “jeggings” are permitted;
- On PE days ONLY, students may wear fingertip length athletic shorts in solid black or navy or sweat pants, thin pin stripes are allowed;
- Jeans may ONLY be worn on special occasions as determined by the classroom teacher
- Students may wear jackets or sweaters, but must have a PBCA uniform shirt underneath
- Students must wear closed-toed shoes at all times, no boots or shoes with wheels
- No smart watches

### **Boys’ Hair**

- Must not touch the eyebrows
- Be neatly trimmed and should not touch the shoulders
- Coloring of the hair is allowed but not a color that differs greatly from a natural color

### **Girls’ Hair**

- Bangs must not cover eyebrows or eyes
- Must be neatly combed
- Coloring of the hair is allowed but not a color that differs greatly from a natural

color

### **All Students' Hair**

- All hair styles must be in keeping with standards as determined by the School Administration (i.e. no asymmetrical cuts, drastic hair colors, partially shaved portions).

Students, who do not wear their PBCA uniform, unless otherwise designated, will be given a Uniform Infraction Form. After 2 infractions, parents will be notified to immediately bring a PBCA uniform for their student. Failure to comply with PBCA's dress code policy may result in a one day suspension.

### **Sick and Student Injury Policy**

Students who have shown any signs of illness within the previous 24 hour period will not be accepted into class. This includes fever of 99.9 and above, acute cold, heavy nasal discharge, eye discharge, constant cough, unexplained cough, vomiting or diarrhea. If your child is sent home sick during the course of the day with any of the above mentioned symptoms, then the student may not return to school until they are symptom free and fever free without the aid of fever reducing medication for a period of no less than 24 hours. Teachers and administration will not administer medications to any child. No medication may be sent to school in lunch boxes, back packs, etc. In all emergencies, PBCA has permission to take such reasonable measures as are necessary for the welfare and safety of the child.

Even with the greatest precautions and the closest supervision, accidents can and do happen at school. Parents need to be aware of this and be prepared for possible medical expenses that may arise should their child be injured at school. PBCA will maintain a First Aid Kit accessible to provide immediate first aid to the injured and assess the seriousness of the injury. Upon pick up, parents are notified of a non-emergency injury and are required to sign an accident report.

At times accidents may require a call for an ambulance to transport a student to the hospital. If a student requires traveling by ambulance a school representative will accompany, when possible, and wait for parent's arrival. The ambulance will be at the parent's expense. Every effort will be made to contact parents/guardians before professional medical attention is obtained. In all emergencies, PBCA has permission to take such reasonable measures as are necessary for the welfare and safety of the child.

### **Snacks and Lunch**

Elementary school parents should provide a healthy snack and lunch for their child daily. Lunches must be brought in a lunchbox with an ice pack. No soda or any glass containers should be sent in the lunchbox. Food cannot be heated, so warmed foods

should be sent in a thermos. Nutritious foods contained in their lunchbox must be eaten before treats.

## **Social Media**

PBCA realizes that part of 21st century learning is adapting to the changing methods of communication. The importance of teachers, students and parents engaging, collaborating, learning, and sharing in these digital environments is a part of 21st century learning. As such, educational standards are now requiring the use of online educational tools to demonstrate proficiency. To address related issues, PBCA has developed guidelines to provide direction for students and the school community when participating in online social media activities.

Social Media refers to the use of web-based and mobile technologies that enable all PBCA internal and external stakeholders to connect, collaborate, and form virtual communities via the computer and/or Internet. For some, social media is used mainly for social purposes, but for others, these sites and technologies are used as tools to teach and to connect with the community. The First Amendment, in general, protects the rights of individuals to participate in social media. However, the laws and courts have ruled that schools can discipline students and staff if their speech, including online postings off campus, materially and substantially disrupts school operations, reasonably likely causes a material and substantial disruption of the school, constitutes a violation of certain relevant federal or state laws or school policies.

Since social media reaches audiences far beyond the community and can leave lasting impressions, students must use social sites responsibly and be accountable for their actions. Students should consider not posting or linking anything to social networking sites that they would not want peers, teachers, college admissions officers, or future employers to access. Students should be sure to utilize privacy settings to control access, never share personal information with parties unknown on unsecure sites and be protective of site passwords.

Misrepresentation of someone else's identity must also be avoided. Students should remember to be respectful to others. When responding to someone during a disagreement, be sure that criticism is constructive and not hurtful. Beware of profane, obscene, or threatening language.

If the use or posting to a social media site creates a substantial and material disruption on a school campus, regardless of time or location while posting to a social media site, students will be subject to disciplinary action at the Principal's discretion.

## **Student Records**

The school maintains a complete record, including a cumulative academic record, for each student. All materials in these files are treated as strictly confidential and is available only according to the following policy:

- No report cards or student records will be released to parents or to another school if the family is delinquent in tuition payments or has a debt of any kind with the school.
- Parents or legal guardians have the right to inspect and review official records, files, and data directly relating to their children. Parental request to inspect and review the official record relating to a child shall be made in writing to the Administration. Such requests will be honored at the school's convenience. All records will be reviewed or inspected in the presence of an administrator so that proper explanation may be given.
- Parents shall have an opportunity for a hearing with the Administration to discuss the content of their student's school records. This is to ensure that the records are accurate and is not otherwise in violation of the privacy or other rights of the student, and to provide an opportunity for the correction or deletion of any such inaccurate or misleading information.

## **Trips and Planned Discretionary Secondary Absences**

PBCA encourages parents and families to plan trips around the PBCA holiday schedule in order to minimize class time being missed, as it is hard to recreate the teaching experience. That being said, PBCA understands that there are rare occasions where trips/absences need to occur while school is in session. Advanced notice is required in order to best accommodate work that is assigned during this absence. A note will be required to account for the days missed. Students are to request assignments from the teachers before leaving. If a major project or paper is due, the teacher may require the assignment be turned in prior to said trip. All daily assignments or homework are turned in the day the student returns. Students will receive a zero on the assignments not given to the teacher. Students are given one day per day, plus one additional day, of absence to make up missed tests. Students will receive a zero on tests not made up within the time limit. When the student returns to school, the student will keep up with current class-work while completing the make-up work.

## **Volunteers**

All volunteers for school events on campus must check in and sign in at the security desk. All volunteers who work directly with children must submit to Level II background screening at the volunteers expense. Individuals must be under direct and constant supervision by a staff member or teacher.

## **Withdrawal**

Parents/guardians of students who are withdrawn from PBCA are required to complete and sign the proper withdrawal forms of the school given by the school administration. These forms must be signed and all financial obligations for the academic year must be met in order for student records to be released to the parent or new school. Please refer to the tuition portion of the handbook for further information.

## **Summary**

We hope that the information contained herein has been helpful to you. If you have any questions or concerns regarding any topics in this handbook, it is your responsibility to seek clarification from administration. Once you sign the acknowledgement form indicating that you understand and agree to comply with the policies and procedures you will be held accountable for carrying them out as outlined. We are here to help your child have a positive learning experience and will gladly clarify information anytime you need it, so when in doubt, please do not hesitate to ask for assistance.