

# Preschool & Early Learning PARENT HANDBOOK 2026- 2027



## HOME OF THE STALLIONS!

"I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True." Revelation 19:11a

[www.sugarhillchristian.org](http://www.sugarhillchristian.org)

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Dear Academy Parents,

It is an honor and a privilege to partner with your family for the 2026-2027 school year. Thank you for entrusting your child's education to Sugar Hill Christian Academy. Our mission is to offer an excellent academic and Christian education while developing a lifelong relationship with Jesus Christ. We believe SHCA meets all these criteria with our ongoing character development, Bible application, rigorous academic standards, and our outstanding faculty.

Please take a few moments to familiarize yourself with the policies and procedures included in this handbook. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Again, thank you for your support of the Academy and I am looking forward to a great year together!

Blessings,  
Kristi Burlison  
Principal

## **Academy Vision Statement**

The Vision of Sugar Hill Christian Academy is to enable children to grow in character and faith and to be successful in the modern world while living as Disciples of Christ.

## **Mission Statement**

The mission of SHCA is to offer excellent academic and Christian education while developing a lifelong relationship with Jesus Christ.

## **Academy Philosophy**

Sugar Hill Christian Academy assists parents in educating children so that the child can reach full potential spiritually, physically, mentally, emotionally, and socially. Students will understand the importance of making good choices for God and be encouraged to seek His guidance through prayer, worship and study. "Teach me knowledge and good judgment for I believe in your commandments." Psalm 119:66

Sugar Hill Christian Academy is an outreach ministry of COTH. The Academy, hand in hand with parents, lays a foundation for a life long relationship with Jesus Christ. The Academy provides a nurturing foundation for children to experience God through a Christ centered and Bible based educational environment upheld through academic excellence. "But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere." James 3:17

## **Academy and COTH Core Values**

### **WORSHIP** (Father) - Inspiring worship

- Worship is a lifestyle  
Practical, biblical teaching
- Transformation is > information

### **GROW** (Family) - Following Jesus

- More of Him; less of me  
Real Friendships
- We're better together

### **SERVE** (Forgotten) - Genuine hospitality

- Love makes room  
Serving together
- Service, not serve us

## **Academy and COTH Statement of Faith**

This statement of faith does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God contains all things necessary for salvation and is our rule for life and faith. Thus, Scripture is the dominant source for all that we believe. For purposes of COTH's and SHCA's faith, doctrine, practice, policy, and discipline, our Leadership Board is the COTH's and SHCA's final interpretive authority on the Bible's meaning and application.

## **Academy and COTH Statement on Human Sexuality**

As a ministry of COTH, SHCA adheres to the principles and beliefs of the Global Methodist Church, which affirms, "that sexuality is God's good gift to all persons. We call everyone to responsible stewardship of this sacred gift." While "all persons are sexual beings whether or not they are married, sexual relations are affirmed only with the covenant of monogamous, heterosexual marriage."

"We affirm the sanctity of the marriage covenant that is expressed in love, mutual support, personal commitment, and shared fidelity between a man and a woman. We believe that God's blessing rests upon such marriage, whether or not there are children of the union. We reject social norms that assume different standards for women than for men in marriage. We support laws in civil society that define marriage as the union of one man and one woman

We affirm with Scripture the common humanity of male and female, both having equal worth in the eyes of God. We reject the erroneous notion that one gender is superior to another, that one gender must strive against another, and that members of one gender may receive love, power, and esteem only at the expense of another.

Scripture teaches that humans are created in God's image and that we are accountable to God through right relationship. We oppose all forms of pornography and consider its use a form of sexual misconduct. Pornography is sexually explicit material that portrays violence, abuse, coercion, domination, humiliation, or degradation for the purpose of sexual arousal. Pornography sexually exploits and objectifies both women and men. Any sexually explicit material that depicts children is abhorrent and victimizes children. Pornography can ruin lives, careers, and relationships."

While COTH/SHCA affirms that God's grace is available to all people, we fully accept the teachings of the traditional Bible and do not condone the practice of homosexuality, and consider this practice incompatible with Christian teaching. In order to ensure the function and integrity of COTH/SHCA as the local body of Christ, and to provide a biblical role model to both the organization members and the community, it is imperative that all persons, i.e. faculty, staff, and Academy students and their parents/guardians, agree to and abide by this statement.

A student's biological sex must be affirmed and no attempts should be made to physical change, alter, or disagree with one's biological gender. We believe that God created mankind in His image: male (man) and female (woman), sexually different but with equal dignity. As a result, students are referenced by the gender on their birth certificate, and are expected to dress accordingly and use appropriate facilities. This policy includes participation in all extra-curricular activities, including athletics.

SHCA affirms the biblical teaching of not condoning the practice of homosexuality and considers this practice incompatible with Christian teaching. In support of this teaching, extra-curricular activities do not allow same-sex couples to attend school-sponsored events, including but not limited to, homecoming dances and prom.

## **COTH Vision Statement**

Love God; Love People

<sup>30</sup>” Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. <sup>31</sup> The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.” – Mark 12: 30-31

## **COTH Mission Statement**

Make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

## **History of Sugar Hill Christian Academy**

Sugar Hill Christian Academy was formed in 1999 by a group of COTH members when the COTH Council approved the business plan. The 2000-2001 school year was SHCA’s charter year.

## **Nondiscrimination Statement**

Sugar Hill Christian Academy admits students of any race, color, or national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, or national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, athletic programs or other school-administrated programs.

All programs offered by Sugar Hill Christian Academy have an exemption from Bright from the Start. If you have questions about this exemption, please contact Bright from the Start at 404-657-5562.

The Academy is currently accredited by the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) and the Southern Association of Colleges and School (SACS).

SHCA will occasionally send out alerts via text message to the cell phone numbers provided. If you do not wish to receive these alerts please contact the school to be removed from the list.

### Staff Extensions and Email Addresses

| Name             | Title                                  | Email                                                                                                | Ext |
|------------------|----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Kristi Burlison  | Principal                              | <a href="mailto:kristi.burlison@sugarhillchristian.org">kristi.burlison@sugarhillchristian.org</a>   | 237 |
| Courtney Simmons | Dean of Students                       | <a href="mailto:courtney.simmons@sugarhillchristian.org">courtney.simmons@sugarhillchristian.org</a> | 278 |
| Angel Richards   | Preschool Director                     | <a href="mailto:angel.richards@sugarhillchristian.org">angel.richards@sugarhillchristian.org</a>     | 294 |
| Bill Wilson      | Finance Manager                        | <a href="mailto:bill.wilson@sugarhillchristian.org">bill.wilson@sugarhillchristian.org</a>           | 293 |
| Lindsay Abram    | Preschool Receptionist                 | <a href="mailto:lindsay.abram@sugarhillchristian.org">lindsay.abram@sugarhillchristian.org</a>       | 247 |
| Susan Hodges     | Academy Receptionist                   | <a href="mailto:susan.hodges@sugarhillchristian.org">susan.hodges@sugarhillchristian.org</a>         | 276 |
| Kathy Ellison    | Academy Admissions Director            | <a href="mailto:kathy.ellison@sugarhillchristian.org">kathy.ellison@sugarhillchristian.org</a>       | 263 |
| Jennifer DeVaney | Director of Student Services<br>RenWeb | <a href="mailto:jenn.devaney@sugarhillchristian.org">jenn.devaney@sugarhillchristian.org</a>         | 236 |

To email teachers and assistants: [firstname.lastname@sugarhillchristian.org](mailto:firstname.lastname@sugarhillchristian.org)

## Academy Council

Sugar Hill Christian Academy is an outreach ministry of COTH (COTH). The Academy Council is a recommendation council for SHCA. As with all COTH committees, the Academy Council is subject to the final authority of the COTH church council.

The Council's members are professing members of the COTH congregation, parents, church staff, and/or community representatives. Each member must be a Christian and attend church on a regular basis. They are expected to be Christian role models who live out the faith they profess in the school, church and community.

### Nomination and membership procedures for the Academy Council

- Parents of students or other interested individuals may recommend candidates for the Academy Council by submitting the name to the Academy Principal. This name will be presented to the Academy administrative staff and COTH pastoral staff for approval. The Principal will notify the person of the decision of the staffs.
- Once this person is cleared for candidacy they will be given an "Academy Council Member Application" to complete. Once the completed application is received by the Principal, an interview with the Academy Council will be scheduled.
- The interview will be a 10-minute meeting with the Council in which the candidate will explain why they want to serve on the Academy Council, what benefits they can bring to the Council, and other statements they would like to make.
- After listening to the presentation, the Council will vote to determine a candidate's suitability and the Council Chair will relay the Academy Council's decision to the candidate.

Parents or other interested partners may address the Council with the stipulation they provide the Council Chair one-week prior notice in writing and submit a summary of their topic for discussion. No more than four parents will be allowed to address the Council at one meeting. Each parent will be given a ten-minute maximum with no further discussion or questions at that time. Issues with staff or Academy policies must have been addressed through the proper channels before being brought before the Council.

The Academy Council expects the Matthew 18 Principle to be followed before a person contacts the Council Chair with regards to addressing the Council. Matthew 18: 15-17 states "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 to them, tell it to the church: and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector."

The proper chain for reporting concerns: party with issues>staff person or parent>Director>Principal>Executive Director> Senior Pastor>Academy Council

## **Parent Association**

All parents and guardians of currently enrolled Academy students are automatically enrolled in our Christian Academy Parent Association (CAPA). Each representing board member must be a Christian and attend church on a regular basis. They are expected to be Christian role models who live out the faith they profess in the school, church and community. CAPA acts in support of the Academy in the following ways:

- To assist the Academy with volunteer efforts
- To assist the Academy with fundraising efforts
- To assist the Academy with advertising special events
- To support special activities with the Academy Nomination and membership procedures for CAPA Board
- The staff of SHCA may recommend candidates for the CAPA Officers Board by submitting the name on the appropriate form to the Academy Principal. This name will be presented to the Academy administrative staff.
- Once this person is cleared for candidacy they will be given a CAPA Board Member application to complete. Once the completed application is received the applicant will then meet with the Principal and Vice Principal.
- The Vice Principal will notify the person of the decision of the staff.

## **CAPA Requirements**

CAPA board members are selected for a two –three-year term only.

Members may serve again on CAPA Board however they must first roll off for two years before being eligible for nomination again.

CAPA board terms run from June to May.

The CAPA President will also serve on the SHCA Academy Council for three years.

CAPA sells SHCA spirit wear, sponsors the Gently Used Uniform sale, and operates the Stallion Store and Frozen Treat Friday. Be sure to read the CAPA section in The Horseman as well as the Quarterly Round-Up to see how CAPA is serving the staff and students at SHCA.

CAPA will hold family nights throughout the year. See the school calendar for dates.

## Financial Policies & Procedures

- The non refundable enrollment fee secures class placement.
  - Enrollment is not complete until the entire non-refundable enrollment fee has been received.
  - Tuition is due on the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month and considered late on the 6<sup>th</sup>.
  - Tuition is computed on an **annual basis** (August 1- May 1) and is prorated by month for a student enrolling after the school year has begun. Any portion of a month will be considered as a full month of enrollment.
  - For your convenience, we offer three payment options for tuition.
1. Option 1 – FACTS Online payments – Electronic Check or Credit Card. An electronic check deducts tuition from your checking account just like a handwritten check. FACTS Financial accepts Visa, MasterCard, Discover, and AMEX. There is a service fee of 3.05% for each credit card transaction. To make an online payment, please go to [www.sugarhillchristian.org](http://www.sugarhillchristian.org), and make a payment through FACTS Family Online. When you choose a payment plan for the school year, you will be enrolled in Auto Pay.
  2. Option 2 – Write a check payable to SHCA. Check payments for tuition will only be accepted for customers paying in full prior to attendance. A 3% Pay in Full discount will be applied if you choose a one-payment plan. You can mail it or send it in with your child **in an envelope marked SHCA tuition.** We do not accept post-dated checks. If the student's last name differs from the person making the payment, please write the student's name in the memo section.
  3. Option 3 – Cash Payments must be paid in person to the school. Please do not send cash in your student's book bag. It must be paid in the exact amount as we do not have change available.

### Returned Check Fee \$50

This fee will be charged for each returned check. If your check is returned for insufficient or uncollected funds, your check will be electronically re-presented for payment. FACTS Financial will make three attempts to withdraw tuition.

### Withdrawal Policy

It is assumed you are enrolling your student for the entire year and budgets are set accordingly.

- If you withdraw your child before the end of the school year, a 30-day advanced written notice is required. The reason for withdrawal and the last date the child will attend school must be given.
- If after enrollment your child is voluntarily withdrawn, suspended, or dismissed, no part of the enrollment fees or tuition paid for students on the 10 payment plan shall be refunded. For students on the 1 payment plan, tuition would be refunded on a 10 month prorated basis.

**Past Due Accounts**

All fees and tuition, as set by SHCA, must be made on a timely basis. Should an account not be kept current, the following guidelines will apply:

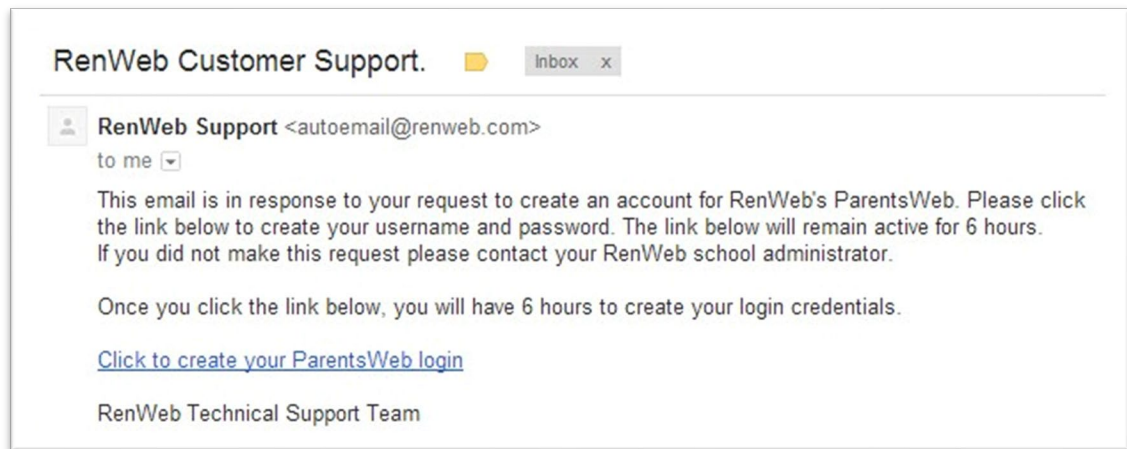
- On the 6<sup>th</sup> of the month, a \$50 late fee will be applied.
- SHCA understands that once an account becomes 45 days delinquent, the family has made a voluntary decision to withdraw the student from classes.
- The student or siblings will not be considered for re-enrollment until the account is brought current.
- No K4 student will participate in graduation exercises until the respective account is brought current. Conferences will not be allowed until the account is current.
- Families that choose the one payment option must make the payment by the due date or the discount will be forfeited. The payment plan will be converted immediately to the monthly payment plan and the late fee will be applied.
- Past due accounts will be referred to the Academy Council.
- No parent or student will have access to RenWeb

The person who signs the tuition contract agrees to the terms of this financial policy and will be held legally responsible for the student/students listed.

**RenWeb's ParentsWeb** is a private and secure parents' portal that will allow parents to view academic information specific to their children, while protecting their children's information from others. You may view your child's grades, attendance, homework and conduct, as well as other useful school information. You can also communicate with teachers and other school staff online whenever necessary. All you need is an Internet- capable computer.

**Here's how to access our easy-to-use RenWeb ParentsWeb:**

- Make sure that the school has your email address in RenWeb.
- In the Google Chrome browser, go to [www.renweb.com](http://www.renweb.com) and click **Logins**.
- Type the school's **District Code SH-GA**
- Click **Create New ParentsWeb Account**.
- Type your email address and click **Create Account**. An email will be sent which includes a link to create your ParentsWeb login. The link is active for 6 hours.



- Select the **Click to Create your ParentsWeb login** link.
- A web browser displays your **Name** and RenWeb **Person ID**.

| Change/Create Password |           |                                        |                                        |                                                               |
|------------------------|-----------|----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| Name                   | Person ID | User Name                              | Password                               | Confirm                                                       |
| Callie Johnston        | 11519     | <input type="text" value="cjohnston"/> | <input type="password" value="*****"/> | <input type="password" value="*****"/>                        |
|                        |           |                                        |                                        | <input type="button" value="Save User Name and/or Password"/> |

- Type a **User Name**, **Password**, and **Confirm** the password.
- Click **Save User Name and/or Password**.  
A message displays at the top of the browser, "User Name/Password successfully updated."

| Change/Create Password |           |                                        |                                        |                                                               |
|------------------------|-----------|----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| Name                   | Person ID | User Name                              | Password                               | Confirm                                                       |
| Callie Johnston        | 11519     | <input type="text" value="cjohnston"/> | <input type="password" value="*****"/> | <input type="password" value=""/>                             |
|                        |           |                                        |                                        | <input type="button" value="Save User Name and/or Password"/> |

- You may now log in to ParentsWeb using your new User Name and Password.

## **Policies and Procedures**

### **Attendance**

Preschool and Early Learning students are strongly encouraged to attend regularly. Absences can cause children to fall behind in their learning and miss special projects or activities.

### **Biting**

It can be common in preschool settings for periodic outbreaks of biting to occur among infants, toddlers, two-year olds and sometimes even among preschoolers. When it happens, it is very stressful for children, parents, and teachers. As this is a normal part of development, it is important to remember to not blame the child, the parents, or the teachers and there are no quick and easy solutions to solving it.

- Should a biting incident occur, the child who did the biting is immediately removed and given firm, but age-appropriate direction such as “no biting”. The child who was bitten is consoled and the area is treated. An accident report will be completed and sent home with both children. Please note: the name of a biting child is not released.
- If a second bite occurs, we will call and ask that you come get the child immediately and keep him/her home the day after the incident.
- Should a third bite occur, the child must be removed from school for three months. Parents may choose to pay tuition for those three months and have the child return to school after the three-month time frame. If the child returns to school and bites again, the child must leave school for the remainder of that school year. If parents do not want to use the three-month option, the child will be removed from school for the remainder of that school year but will be offered placement the following school year.

### **Book bags & Lunch Boxes**

Parents should purchase a lunch box and book bag for their child. Please avoid the book bags/back packs that have wheels. The book bag should be a size that your child can carry themselves. Write your child’s first and last name on the book bag, lunch box, thermos, cup and cold pack.

### **Carline**

**It is imperative that all families follow the designated carline map and procedures for both morning and afternoon carlines.** We provide carline tags for Academy families that hang from the vehicles’ rearview mirror. For more information concerning carline, please refer to the section concerning arrival and departure procedures.

### **Change of Address/Phone Numbers**

ANY change of address, email address, or telephone number should be reported to the school office as soon as the change is made. It is important that the office records contain the correct contact information at all times.

### **Clothing**

Children should wear comfortable play clothes to school. Shoes with rubber soles are preferred. A complete change of clothes should be available each day. Be sure all clothing is clearly marked with your child’s name. Tuesdays are spirit days! All Preschool children are encouraged to show their school spirit by wearing spirit shirts on Tuesdays.

**Communication**

A newsletter from your child's teacher and some of your child's completed work will be sent home each week. The Director will email weekly announcements, reminders, as well as a monthly newsletter - The Pony to all families at the end of each school week.

Should you need to contact your child's teacher, please send a written note with your child or email the Director. Teachers may also be reached by email; however, email accounts are normally not checked until after school.

**Divorce/Child Custody Issues**

It is the policy of Sugar Hill Christian Academy that staff members do not become involved in divorce or child custody issues among SHCA families. Teachers may not enter into any conversation with either parent about the divorce or custody. If a parent feels their child is in danger and does not want the other parent to pick them up from school, they should speak directly with the Director and provide a restraining order from the courts. School communication will be sent to the primary physical custodian unless otherwise arranged.

**Early Check Outs**

If you need to pick up your child before the end of the school day, please report to the reception desk for assistance. If you know about the early check out in advance, please send a note to your child's teacher so the child can be prepared for early dismissal. In an effort to keep disruptions to a minimum and ensure students are ready for carline to begin on time each day, we strongly discourage check outs during the last 30 minutes of the school day.

**Lunch & Daily Snacks**

Half Day K4 students have the option of purchasing hot lunches online through My Hot Lunchbox. Information on ordering and payment can be found on their website. If you choose not to purchase lunch for your child, please be sure to pack a well-balanced lunch. Please send children with packages and containers that they can open independently when at all possible. Much valuable lunch time can be wasted waiting for a staff member to open packages. Also, send any necessary utensils so that your child can begin eating as soon as possible. We want your child to be able to take advantage of this time of relaxation and nourishment.

Please be sure to send water each day in labeled non-spill cup.

Please avoid glass containers. We cannot refrigerate food nor can we heat food.

Each child will need to bring his/her own healthy snack each day. Snack time will differ for each classroom based on their daily schedule.

**Potty Training**

Please let us know when you begin potty training and we will help you. Unfortunately, we cannot allow potty or folding seats to be brought from home. Bathrooms are equipped with either small toilets or stepstools and teachers will help your child to reach the potty if needed. All bathrooms are thoroughly cleaned each day and monitored during the day for accidents.

**Publication Authorization**

We promote the ministry of SHCA through a variety of mediums. Video footage and photographs may be taken of students at school and special events to share with prospective parents, church members and on our school website, Facebook and other social media outlets. However, neither videos nor the website would include the full name of a student. If you do not agree to have your child photographed or videotaped, please inform SHCA in writing.

**Recordkeeping/Reports**

All students attending SHCA Preschool must have a Georgia Certificate of Immunization (Form 3231) or waiver on file by the first day of school.

Full day K4 must also have:

- Copy of Birth Certificate
- Georgia Department of Public Health Form 3300 (Certificate of Vision, Hearing, Dental and Nutrition)

**Security**

After much prayer and discussion with congregation members and Academy families, COTH and Christian Academy has decided to provide armed security on campus. While it is our prayer that God continues to provide us with a nurturing and safe environment, we live in a fallen world and it is our duty to ensure the safety of our families. The security team members have passed a full battery of tests and training including mental evaluations and certification in areas of unarmed and armed security. All certifications will be maintained onsite as required by Georgia statutes.

We are pleased to announce that we will be using the Raptor Visitor Management System to strengthen campus safety for students and faculty. Part of keeping students and faculty safe is knowing who is in our buildings at all times, and the Raptor system will allow us to do that. The Raptor system checks all visitors' name and date of birth for comparison with a national database of registered sex offenders. The registered sex offender database is the only official database checked by the Raptor system. No other data from the ID is gathered or recorded and the information is not shared with any outside agency. Once entry is approved, Raptor will issue a badge that identifies the visitor, the date, and the purpose of his/her visit. The safety of our students is our highest priority and the Raptor visitor management system allows us to quickly identify those that may present a danger to our students and faculty.

### **Temporary Guardian Information**

When parents are out-of-town and children are left in the care of another adult, SHCA must be notified in writing or via email. Information should include the name and phone numbers of the guardian authorized to pick up the child and have permission to authorize emergency care.

### **Toys**

We prefer that all toys stay at home. However, if your child brings a toy to school for a special activity, please remind him/her that when at school, the toy needs to stay in his/her book bag unless otherwise instructed by his/her teacher. Please do not allow your child to bring to school any "war" related toys such as toy guns, knives, etc. The Academy is not responsible for any lost or damaged toys.

### **Visitors**

Any visitor to the Academy must report to the reception desk to sign in the Raptor Management System upon arrival at the school. A visitor nametag must be worn at all times while at the school. Academy and COTH staff members will question any person in the school area without a nametag in order to ensure the safety of our children. Parents are encouraged to visit; however, please arrange such visits with your child's teacher or an administrator prior to classroom visits.

Parents will not be allowed to go to the classrooms unless they are volunteering. If you need to drop off something for your child, please leave it with the Receptionist.

### **Harassment Policy**

SHCA will not tolerate harassment of students or employees, based on race, color, gender, nationality origin, religion, age, sexual orientation, or disability. The following are some examples of inappropriate harassment behavior.

- Threatening language of any kind
- Obscene or suggestive remarks or jokes, verbal abuse, insults
- Display of explicit, offensive or demeaning materials
- Physical or verbal hazing
- Threats
- Comments, whether written, verbal or electronic, which are demeaning with respect to race, religion, ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation, or class. SHCA strives to maintain an environment where students and employees can study, work, and live free of harassment.

All complaints of harassment should be reported promptly to administration. An investigation will be conducted immediately and privately; and a determination of appropriate action will be made. Until that time, the person(s) making the alleged threats, remarks, etc. will not be allowed on campus. This includes the students of parents who are accused of this behavior. The complainant should not discuss the matter with others to assure privacy of all parties is maintained.

Please be aware that any direct threat toward our school as an entity or any individuals in our school may be turned over to school security and/or police officials.

## Arrival and Departure Procedures

Preschool and half day K4 classes begin each day at 9:00 a.m. and conclude at 1:00 p.m. Carline will begin each morning at 8:40 a.m. Any child arriving after 9:00 is tardy and must be walked into the building accompanied by an adult for check in.

Full day K4 classes begin each day at 8:15 a.m. and conclude at 3:15 p.m. Students will be admitted to their classrooms beginning at 8:00 a.m. Any child arriving after 8:15 is tardy and must be walked into the building accompanied by an adult for check in.

If a full day K4 child checks in during Praise and Worship (8:30-8:50 a.m.), the parent will need to accompany the student to the appropriate location. Please do not drop off a child to enter the building alone. Otherwise, the student will sit with the Receptionist until Praise and Worship is over and all students have returned to their classrooms.

Morning Drop Off/Afternoon Pickup- All Preschool children (MMO, 2s, 3s and 4s) should be dropped off/picked up at the main preschool/church doors behind the fountain.

Full day K4 children should be dropped off at the Academy doors.

At afternoon pickup, staff members will place children in the appropriate cars in the carline. Please follow the directions for forming the car line to help ensure the safety of all adults and children involved.

- MMO, 2's, 3's and Half day K4 will begin afternoon carline at 1:00pm. Carline will conclude at 1:20pm.
- Full Day K4 will begin afternoon carline at 3:15pm.
- Leave the car tag provided to you on your rear-view mirror until all children you are picking up are in the car.
- Please help your child memorize their car line number as soon as possible. All students will be called by their assigned number.

You should remain in your car and in the car line at pick up time. **Do not get out of the carline and do not enter the building to get your child.** Teachers will not be permitted to dismiss children in this manner. During this time, it is necessary for our staff to give the safety of the children their undivided attention. The safest and most effective way for us to ensure that all children leave with an approved and appropriate adult is through the car line.

Please be considerate of the Academy's car line zone and refrain from parking in it or crossing under the portico. Should you need to enter the building during car line, please do not cross where students are entering/exiting vehicles. **Please: for the safety of all children, there should be no cell phone usage in the portico area.** Also, please consistently follow the directional arrows in the parking lot. Traffic flow in the parking lot has been designed specifically to ensure everyone's safety. If you deviate from the expected patterns, you may cause an accident and perhaps injury. **Speed limits on campus are not to exceed 10 m.p.h. Upon entering our campus, please reduce speed, even if you are running late.**

If you should arrive late or need to pick up your child before the end of the school day, please call and then report to the Academy or Preschool reception desk for assistance. Children will only be released to those parties who are listed as authorized pickup/emergency contacts in the office. Any time a parent/guardian wishes to add or remove people able to pick up the child from school, it must be done in writing.

If someone else will be picking up your child, please notify the teacher in writing. You must walk into the school in the morning and give the teacher the car seat and the person picking up the child in the afternoon must walk in to retrieve the car seat and pick up your child. **The teacher or other staff members cannot bring the car seat through carline.** If you will be delayed in picking up your child due to an emergency, please call the office prior to dismissal time. Any child remaining at the Academy after carline, will wait with a staff member in the reception area. Parents must park and enter the building to sign out their student. For the first two late pick-ups, you will be given a warning. After that you will be charged \$15.00 for each late pick up.

## **Student Health & Medical**

### **Allergy Policy**

SHCA will employ the following procedures when enrolling a student with allergies:

- Parent will complete a Medical Authorization form and Medical Action Plan for emergency administration of epipen and supply current epipen in prescription labeled package for their student.
- All teachers (including enrichment) and lunchroom staff will be notified of allergy and epipen location for student.
- All epipens are kept in a central location in the school office. They are filed alphabetically and are easily and quickly accessible in case of emergency. When students leave campus on a field trip, the homeroom teacher will check out the student's epipen and return it to the front office afterwards.
- Although SHCA cannot guarantee a totally allergen-free facility, the student's homeroom teacher will notify his/her students' parents that his/her class has a student with a severe, contact food allergy and appropriate accommodations will be made in the classroom, i.e. no peanut products, separate tables, etc. depending upon the type of food allergy.
- The homeroom teacher will be responsible for cleaning the table each morning and again before and after snack time in the classroom.
- At lunch, the student will sit at an "allergy-free" desk that is pulled up to the end of a lunchroom table so that he/she can socialize with classmates, yet have an additional distance away from potential allergens.
- All students in the classroom are instructed to wash their hands immediately after snack and lunch.
- Enrichment teachers will ensure surfaces (keyboards, art tables, etc.) are wiped clean prior to student's use.
- Lunchroom coordinator will clean off "allergy-free" desks before the first lunch shift and after all lunch shifts.
- Extended care staff will clean off "allergy-free" desks before after school care begins.
- All SHCA parents and staff, as part of our school-wide policy outlined in the Parent/Student Handbook, are advised to select snacks that do NOT contain nuts and are not manufactured at a facility that uses nuts, when bringing special snacks for sharing. The parents of a severely allergic child must notify the teacher and record on their student's Medical Authorization that their child is NOT allowed to partake in birthday cupcakes/cookies/cakes/ice cream treats, if this is applicable.

### **Health Records**

As stated in the Georgia code 1950-51 Op. Attorney General p. 47, all students must have the Georgia Department of Human Resources (DHR) Certificate of Immunization (Form 3231). Full day K4 must also have a Birth Certificate and the DHR Certificate of Ear, Eye, Dental and Nutrition Examinations (Form 3300). Both forms (3231 and 3300) can be obtained from your child's pediatrician or your local Health Department office. If parents oppose vaccinations on the grounds of religious beliefs they must sign an

immunization waiver. Any missing enrollment documents may result in the disenrollment of a student. **These forms must be on file by the first day of school.**

### **Is Your Child Too Sick for School?**

Children should stay home from school if:

- (1) he/she is too sick to be comfortable at school
- (2) there is a fever over 100 degrees, and/or vomiting, diarrhea, a very frequent cough, persistent pain (ear, stomach, etc.), or a wide-spread rash
- (3) at least one event of diarrhea or vomiting
- (4) your child was sent home the previous day

**It is the policy of SHCA that a student must be symptom free and fever free for at least 24 hours before returning to school.**

### **Other common illnesses for students include:**

- Strep throat – students must be fever free (without fever reducing medication) and on medication for at least 24 hours before returning to school
- Head lice – students are to be treated with a lice treatment shampoo according to package directions. Upon returning to school, students will be checked by an SHCA staff member before returning to the classroom.
- Pink Eye – students can usually return to school 24 hours after an antibiotic has been started if symptoms have improved.
- Chicken pox - students should stay at home until all bumps are scabbed and no new bumps have shown up in two days.
- Flu – students must be fever free (without fever reducing medication) **for at least 48 hours before returning to school**

We are required to report all notifiable diseases to the Health Department with student information. All illnesses spread quite easily, both in school and at home. Keep in mind that regular hand washing is the single most important thing you can do and teach your child to do to help prevent the spread of infections. Whenever you are in doubt, please consult your doctor before sending your child to school. Please contact your child's teacher or the office if your child has been diagnosed by your doctor.

### **Medical Attention**

In the event of an accident, first aid will be administered by a staff member. In addition to soap and water, the following topical ointments may be administered: Bactine spray, Calamine or Benadryl ointment/spray and sting-kill ointment/spray. In addition, saline eye solution is available for an eye wash. If you do not wish for any or all of the medications to be used on your student, please notify SHCA in writing.

If a student becomes ill or injured while at school, the staff of SHCA will make all reasonable attempts to contact the parent. However, if a parent cannot be reached, only those people listed as emergency contacts on the student profile form will be contacted. We must have at least one emergency contact on your child's registration form other than the parents. *By signing the Parent Handbook Signature Page, I agree to and understand that, if deemed necessary, SHCA will secure emergency medical treatment, including transportation by ambulance to a hospital in the event of an emergency illness or injury while at school or a school sponsored trip.*

## **Liability Release**

By signing the Parent Handbook Signature Page, I agree to and understand the following:

- I agree for my child (or myself) to participate in SHCA activities including recess, physical education, or other activities (the “Activities”) that may be hazardous or otherwise involves a risk of physical injury or death to participants.
- I expressly assume any and all risks of injury or death arising from or relating to the Activities and waive and release any and all action, claims, suits or demands of any kind or nature whatsoever against COTH or its corporate affiliates, contractors, vendors, officers, agents, sponsors, volunteers or representatives of any kind (collectively “Releasees”) arising from or relating in any way to my child’s voluntary participation in the Activities. I understand that the SHCA school policies acceptance agreement means, among other things, that if my child (or myself) is injured or dies as a result of his/her participation in any of the Activities, I and/or my family or heirs cannot under any circumstances sue Releasees or any of them for damages relating to or caused by my child’s (or myself) injuries or death.
- I agree to indemnify Releasees and their subrogates, if any, in the event of any loss, damage or claim arising from or relating in any way to my child’s (my participation) in any of the Activities.
- In the event of an emergency, I hereby authorize SHCA administration as an agent for me, to consent to: any x-ray examination, medical, dental or surgical diagnosis, treatments, or hospital care advised and supervised by a physician, surgeon or dentist (as appropriate) licensed to practice under the laws of the state where services are rendered, either at a doctor’s office or in a hospital. I expect my student’s family will be contacted as soon as possible.

## **Weather Conditions**

Weather conditions are monitored to ensure the safety of our students during both hot and cold weather. The playground will be closed if the heat index reaches 95 degrees and/or the smog alert is a “code red” or higher (purple or black). Additionally, children will not use the playground during the winter months if the temperature or wind chill factor is 42 degrees or lower.

## **Academics & Enrichment**

Our curriculum represents a strong core of traditional skills implemented by dedicated teachers who possess a passion for teaching and a love for their students. Our academics are based on age-appropriate, hands-on learning which allows the children opportunities to play, explore, investigate, and practice self-expression. Traditional, Biblically-based values are integrated into all of our classes and daily routines.

### **Music**

Each music class will meet weekly for 30 minutes. The curriculum will teach singing and listening skills with a variety of musical styles and instruments.

Full day K4 classes will meet weekly for art, Spanish, computer, PE, and library.

### **Praise & Worship**

Preschool and Early Learning children will come together each week for a praise & worship time. Praise & worship time is based on a monthly theme, Bible memory verse and application. Teachers will reinforce praise & worship lessons in the classrooms with age-appropriate projects and activities.

## **Evaluations & Parent/Teacher Conferences**

Parent/Teacher Conferences are scheduled in the fall and the spring. At that time, parents are encouraged to come to the school and discuss your child's progress with his/her teacher. Information will be sent home concerning the process for scheduling conferences on designated conference days. If, at any other time during the year you should have questions or concerns to discuss, please contact your child's teacher to schedule additional conference time(s).

## **Programming**

### **Extended Care**

Full day K4 children are welcome to join the Extended Care Program for either before school and after school, classes, or both. Only K4 children enrolled in the Full Day program are eligible for after school care and classes. Before school care begins at 7:00 a.m. and aftercare is available until 6:00 p.m. Students attending morning care must be walked in and signed in. Please call Jenn DeVaney for more information regarding before and after care.

### **Room Moms**

Each class will need one Room Mom to work with the teacher to coordinate parties and other special events. Room Moms must have good communication, organizational and delegation skills. Room Moms should not solely host all parties; other parents want to and should be involved. If being a Room Mom or a party host becomes a financial burden, please contact the Preschool Director.

**Please note:** Room Moms and party hosts may ask for monetary donations for parties, gifts, etc. but a specific dollar amount cannot be requested. Room Moms and party hosts are encouraged to request help from all parents in the classroom before soliciting donations.

### **School Photographs**

School pictures will be taken in the fall and spring. More information will be sent home closer to these dates.

### **Special Events**

SHCA hosts several special events throughout the school year. For dates and times, please refer to the Parent Calendar and website. While every effort is made to plan accordingly, please note some events dates or times may change. For the most up to date information on events, parents should read the weekly newsletter.

- **Fall Harvest Party** - Bring a chair and a bowl of candy as children walk around in their favorite costumes and receive treats! Parents are encouraged to wear their favorite costumes as well. This is a combined event with the elementary and middle school. For the safety of the smaller children, we are limiting this to Threes and K4 children only.
- **Book Fair Weeks** - Come and purchase books to help support the library. Special Preschool Events are planned for the book fair weeks. The book fair will be open daily in addition to Family Nights! Family Nights are one of the students' favorites. Bring your entire family out for a night of fun, food and BOOKS! More details will be available closer to these events.

- **Holiday Parties & Special Snacks** – Parties and special snacks are celebrated in individual classrooms and hosted by parents. For specific dates, please see the parent calendar.
- **Thanksgiving Program & Feast** – This annual program includes all students from the 2s and 2/3s. All Preschool and Half Day K4 students will celebrate with a Thanksgiving Feast in their classrooms.
- **Christmas Program** - This annual program includes all students from the 3s and Half Day K4s. Full day K4 students will participate with the elementary students. See the parent calendar for date and time.
- **K4 Pastries with Parents Valentine Event**
- **Mother's Day Tea** – A special event for the 3s children to celebrate their moms. See the parent calendar for the date and time.
- **Spring Concert and Easter Egg Hunts** - All preschool students, Half Day K4 and Full Day K4 students will participate.
- **K4 Graduation** - This ceremony honors the K4 children and sends them with many blessings to kindergarten. See the parent calendar for the time and date.

#### **Substitute Teachers**

The Academy and Preschool need parents to work in the classrooms when regular staff must be absent. Substitute teachers work in the classrooms with a staff member at all times. Please call Angel Richards at 770-945-2845 ext. 294 to request an application. This is a paid position.

## **Emergencies, Security & Inclement Weather Procedures Emergency Drills**

We are required by Georgia State Law to hold regular fire drills and submit reports of those drills to the state insurance commissioner's office. We also participate in two tornado drills in addition to two lockdown drills during the year. Please help us by discussing the importance of calmness and cooperation during these drill times.

Challenging behavior during these drills will not be tolerated in the best interest for the safety of all students and staff members.

COTH and Sugar Hill Christian Academy have an Emergency Operation Plan in place should any type of weather condition or other emergency take place during school hours. This Plan has been written with the policies and procedures suggested by the Georgia Emergency Management Association (GEMA). Parents are welcome to come to the school to review this plan.

## **School Closings Due to Inclement Weather**

In case of inclement weather, please tune to Channel 11 or Channel 2 or visit our website at [www.sugarhillchristian.org](http://www.sugarhillchristian.org) to see if weather conditions make it impractical for the Academy to open and/or operate. Parents who provide an email for school communication will receive an email should it be necessary to close. The Academy does not necessarily close when Gwinnett County Public School System chooses to do so due to weather conditions. Students living in a county where county schools are closed due to weather will be given an excused absence if they cannot get to school.

## **Student Safety**

The Academy makes every effort possible to ensure the safety of your child. Parents and visitors should enter only at the Academy or Preschool entrances to sign-in and obtain a nametag. All outside doors remain locked at all times throughout the school day.

In order for your child to go home with anyone other than the parent(s)/guardian(s), we must receive written permission from the parent/guardian. For car pools, daycare centers, and other regular after-school caregivers, forms are to be filled out giving permission for those necessary people to pick up your child on a regular basis.

## **Behavior Management Plan**

An important part of our teaching task involves helping children develop inner discipline. This means teachers must provide reasonable rules, logical consequences for breaking those rules, and be willing to give more responsibility to the children as they are able to assume it.

The first step toward a disciplined classroom is setting expectations for the children. At the beginning of the school year the teacher will help the children understand the “class rules” and the “consequences” for breaking them. When an infraction occurs, an action appropriate for the child’s age will be taken. In most cases this simply means removing the child from the situation or redirecting the child’s attention to another activity.

The Preschool uses the 1-2-3 Magic Discipline Plan. All of our teachers and assistants are trained in the course. Occasionally a child may need a “time-out.” A child will be given three warnings before they are sent to “time out”. Children will be removed to another area of the room until he/she is ready to be a helpful member of the group.

Children are not kept in time out for more than one minute per year of age. A child that has been in time out 3 times in the same day will be taken to the office to calm down. If a child is taken to the office two times in one day, the parent will be called to pick up the child. If a child is sent home two consecutive school days, a conference between the parents, the teacher and the Director will be held. If there is consistent behavior that is disruptive to the entire class or endangers another child, we reserve the right to remove your child from school.

Although our staff has professional staff development training, we do not have the staff, materials or equipment adequate for students with significant learning disabilities, emotional disturbances, hyperactive behavior, or severe visual, auditory or learning impairments. If at any time we feel we are not equipped to provide appropriate programming for your child, the school administration will meet with the parents to discuss a modified school day, dismissal from the school or other options. The school must act in the best interest of all the children in the class.

The Preschool reserves the right to dismiss any child whose general attitude or habitual actions are contrary to the interests of the school. Further, the school reserves the right to dismiss any child whose parent/guardian’s actions interfere with the educational purposes of the school. If a child’s behavior leads to dismissal during the remainder of the current school year, re-enrollment for the next school year may be cancelled.

Staff members will enforce the School Behavior Code consistently and without exception primarily within his/her own classroom.

## Parent Code of Conduct

A Christian school is made up of people: parents, administrators, teachers and students. As with all people, those associated with a Christian school have the potential for misunderstanding, disagreement, and even wrongdoing. Nevertheless, it is God's will that we live and work together in harmony. Jesus said, "A new commandment I give to you, that you are my disciples, if you love one another." John 13:34-35.

Because of our human nature we may at times irritate others, resulting in misunderstanding or strong disagreements. In Matthew 18:15-17, Jesus gives His formula for solving person to person problems. It is called "the Matthew 18 Principle". The following are the words of Jesus:

"Moreover, if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother. But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector." Matthew 18:15- 17

We expect parents to follow the Matthew 18 Principle to resolve conflict in their interactions with other families and school staff.

There are several clear principles that Jesus taught in solving people to people problems.

ONE: Keep the matter confidential. The very pattern of sharing the problem only with those directly involved establishes the principle of confidentiality. The Bible has much to say about those who gossip or malign others with their words. "The loose tongue of the godless spreads destruction; the common sense of the godly preserves them." Proverbs 11:9

TWO: Keep the circle small. "If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone." The first step and most often only step needed in solving a person to person problem is for one of the two people involved to initiate face-to-face dialogue. Most problems are solved at the two people level.

THREE: Be straightforward. "Tell him his fault." Jesus tells us to be forthright and to love honestly. Sometimes it is difficult to be straightforward and tell someone the very heart of the matter. But restoration and improvement can only come when the issues are lovingly yet clearly presented.

FOUR: Be forgiving. "If he hears you, you have gained your brother." This implies that once the matter is resolved we should whole heartily forgive and restore the person whose fault has offended us. "If a man is overtaken in any trespass you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself or you also may be tempted." Galatians 6:1

As a parent of a child in Sugar Hill Christian Academy, I will:

- Fully support the Academy mission statement which is to provide students with an excellent academic and Christian education while nurturing their development of a real relationship with Jesus Christ.
- Characterize my fellowship, speech and manner with other parents and school staff with love, grace and humility. I will refrain from expressing demeaning attitudes through criticism or complaint toward anyone.
- Be an encourager, acting in integrity and discretion.
- Express divergent views and differences of opinion constructively and with grace, honesty, integrity, dignity, and respect.
- Avoid gossiping about other families, students or school staff. Proverbs 11:12 “A man who lacks judgment derides his neighbor, but a man of understanding holds his tongue.”
- Refrain from slander of other families, students or school staff. Titus 3: 2 “to slander no one, to be peaceable and considerate...”
- Attempt to resolve differences with other parents and school staff by following the Biblical pattern of Matthew 18:15-17. In practical terms the Matthew 18 Principle means parents must follow the below stated process to resolve differences or concerns:
  1. The parents must talk to (conference with) teachers about concerns with their children before talking to the Director. Parents may receive counsel from the Director for suggestions on approaching the teacher. The teacher and parent must agree to a proposed plan of action to resolve the difference or concern.
  2. After conferencing with the teacher, if the difference or concern is not resolved, the parent can then go to the Director with these same concerns. The teacher may or may not be present at parent conferences with the Director; however, in most cases the teacher should be present.
  3. If the differences or concerns are not resolved after completion of conferences with the teacher and Director using the Matthew 18 Principle, the parent can then contact the Principal. The teacher and Director may or may not be present at any conference made with the Principal; however, in most cases the teacher and Director should be present.
  4. If escalation, or failure to resolve the conflict, is still apparent after following the Matthew 18 Principle and the resolution proposal stated here within, the Senior Pastor may then be contacted. All persons involved in the difference or concern may or may not be present at conferences with the Senior Pastor; however, in most cases all persons involved should be present.
  5. If escalation, or failure to resolve the conflict, is still apparent after following the Matthew 18 Principle and the resolution proposal stated here within, the Academy Council may then be contacted. All persons involved in the difference or concern may or may not be present at conferences with the Academy Council; however, in most cases all persons involved should be present.

SHCA reserves the right to ask a family to withdraw their child(ren) if one or both parents does not follow the Matthew 18 Principle, is negative toward the Academy staff or administration, speaks negatively about the Academy to others, or any like action that suggests they are not keeping the commitment made when agreeing to and signing the Parent/Student Handbook.

## FAMILY COMMITMENT CONTRACT

I/We \_\_\_\_\_, parent/legal guardians of \_\_\_\_\_ do hereby agree to the following Family Commitment Contracts. (Note: Please initial beside each statement.)

\_\_\_\_\_ 1. We agree to uphold the school consistently in prayer, to support the volunteer programs and fundraising efforts and to serve the school with our time and talents.

\_\_\_\_\_ 2. We agree that the school reserves the right to deny entrance or to dismiss any new family or re-applying family. Non-acceptance of application may be for reasons of non-cooperation in areas such as school policies, philosophy, and/or educational process. We further understand and agree that if at any time it becomes apparent to SHCA that they are unable to serve a student, then the school reserves the right to dismiss that student.

\_\_\_\_\_ 3. We understand and accept the fact that the Administration has the responsibility and freedom to determine when it is in the student's and/or school's best interest for a student to withdraw. If this is determined in the case of our family, we will cooperate and support the decision to withdraw as quietly as possible, avoiding discussion with those not involved.

\_\_\_\_\_ 4. We agree to provide SHCA with all required forms at time of enrollment.

\_\_\_\_\_ 5. We agree to pay all fees and tuition, as set by SHCA, on a timely basis as established by the school. We understand and agree that if we become delinquent in payment of fees and/or tuition, SHCA may take appropriate actions in dealing with delinquent accounts. These actions may include, but are not limited to, efforts to collect any past due amounts. Failure of SHCA to exercise any rights hereunder shall not be considered or deemed a waiver of any such rights.

\_\_\_\_\_ 6. We agree to the school's policy that all new students are accepted on academic and behavioral probation for the first semester attending SHCA.

\_\_\_\_\_ 7. We agree that transcripts and school records will not be released if there is an outstanding balance on our account.

\_\_\_\_\_ 8. We agree to notify the school by signing a Withdrawal Statement and submitting to the school's main office if we choose to no longer attend SHCA.

\_\_\_\_\_ 9. We agree to be responsible in providing the school with the most current custody or guardianship information and any vital health information that could be necessary in the proper care and safety of the student. We further agree that in the event of legal separation and/or divorce to provide SHCA with certified copies of court orders regarding custody and visitation.

\_\_\_\_\_ 10. We agree to follow scriptural principles when questions or areas of concern arise. We agree to go through the proper channels and the Biblical example of dealing with conflict as described in Matthew 18.

\_\_\_\_\_ 11. We understand and agree to abide by the policies and procedures in the Parent-Student Handbook.

\_\_\_\_\_ 12. We pledge our loyalty to the aims and ideals of the Academy, agree to abide by all policies of SHCA, and will direct any criticisms to the appropriate person.

\_\_\_\_\_ 13. We support the school's Statement of Faith, Statement of Human Sexuality, and Code of Conduct beliefs.

\_\_\_\_\_ 14. We understand this to mean that this Family Commitment Contract is also a binding financial obligation. Tuition payments are due on the date stipulated under the plan chosen on the financial policy.

\_\_\_\_\_ 15. We understand this handbook does not serve as an offer of admission to SHCA and is subject to change without notice by the school's administration at any time.

**Perpetual Contract Coverage:**

By signing this contract, I agree that this contract is valid as long as I have my student at Sugar Hill Christian Academy. Future reenrollment via an online process shall not invalidate nor terminate this signed contract unless a new enrollment contract is signed, in which case the new enrollment contract will supersede any previously signed enrollment contract.

Parent/Legal Guardian's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Legal Guardian's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

