

GRACEPOINT SCHOOL

2019-2020 Student / Parent Handbook



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Mission Statement:

GRACEPOINT School equips dyslexic students with skills needed to develop into independent and confident learners. Our goal is to instill in the students a life-long desire for growing in wisdom and knowledge of the Lord, so that each will fulfill God's purpose and bring Him glory.

Vision

The vision of GRACEPOINT School is to serve students with dyslexia in a quality Christian environment that offers a comprehensive, high-quality, traditional education program combining remediation with enrichment and acceleration.

Philosophy

We believe that by providing an instructional environment where approaches to learning are multi-sensory and relevant combined with prescriptive planning for exposures and techniques that address reading deficits will enable our students to be successful learners.

Curriculum at GRACEPOINT

A hands-on philosophy in learning is practiced in every subject area to enable students to reach their potential.

Reading and Spelling

GRACEPOINT's priority is to provide our students with explicitly systematic teaching in phonological awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension. Each area plays an equal role in successful reading comprehension.

Reading and spelling are core academic subjects and must be taught explicitly and systematically. To answer the phonological, phonics and fluency piece of reading and spelling, GRACEPOINT uses the Orton Gillingham Approach. Orton Gillingham is a diagnostic, prescriptive and multi-sensory approach to reading and spelling. Our teachers are trained to use this approach when teaching reading and to reinforce the approach throughout the day in all subject areas. Students receive 60-90 minutes of reading instruction daily.

Major objectives that permeate the fabric of the GRACEPOINT environment is a love of learning; independent, critical, imaginative thinking; intellectual curiosity; and moral decision-making. It is expected that all faculty members have an uncompromising commitment to academic excellence and a dedication to encouraging, supporting, and nurturing students in their pursuit of success as they strive to become knowledgeable, thinking, responsible citizens.

Admissions/Re-enrollment Policy

GRACEPOINT School does not discriminate against applicants or students on the basis of race, color, religion, or national origin.

The admission of each student is based on information obtained from their individual psycho- educational evaluation, current teacher evaluations, placement assessment testing and school records.

RENWEB

It is the parents' responsibility to verify all personal/family information is listed correctly in the RENWEB system for GRACEPOINT School. As a reminder, please note this information is used in many areas of our school, including the event of an emergency. RENWEB serves as our default or main information system.

Policy on Tuition

The tuition is set and approved by GRACEPOINT School Board of Trustees.

- a) An annual fee is required each year for re-enrollment.
- b) This non-refundable fee is due with the submission of an enrollment contract. This deposit will be reflected in your final tuition payment for the school year.

FACTS

- a) All families are required to register and establish an account with FACTS at <https://factsmgt.com/> (FACTS is widely used by many private schools in the country and with all payments going through this system GRACEPOINT will maintain a projected and controlled budget throughout the year.
- b) GRACEPOINT School uses the FACTS Financial Management system to process ALL tuition payments. Each family must have a financial payment account (credit card or bank account) reflected in the FACTS system. If a check is delivered to the school at least five business days prior to the FACTS scheduled auto draft payment date, we will manually process said payment which will eliminate the related scheduled auto draft payment.

Attendance

School hours are from 8:15 A.M. to 3:15 P.M. daily. Students are considered tardy after 8:15 A.M. If a student is tardy parents should report to the office to sign in before their child can go to the classroom. If you are taking your child before dismissal at 3:15, **you must sign them out at the front desk prior to 2:45.** If you arrive after 3:30 and carpool is over, the responsible party must come into the building and sign them out at the front desk. In the event your child is riding home with someone other than their assigned carpool, it is **mandatory** you send an email to the front desk before noon of that day. frontdesk@gracepointschool.org

Absences

As a security measure for the school, parents or guardians are asked to call, text or email the front desk between 8:00 A.M. and 9:00 A.M. to report students who are going to be absent or late.

frontdesk@gracepointschool.org

678-709-6634

Regular attendance is vital to learning experience. While we do all that we can to support students during a period of absence, nothing can replace the combination of instructional excellence, interactions with supportive peers, and classroom discussions and activities.

Types of Absences

Excused Absences- Parents must submit a written note/email to document the absence. (An excused absence does not mean that a student will not be marked absent.)

- A. Without administrative approval
 - sickness or doctor's appointment
 - death in the immediate family
- B. With administrative approval at least 3 days in advance
 - Family travel or functions with education benefits (we request the educational experience be journaled by the student)
 - attendance at religious activities
 - court

Unexcused Absence- Absences other than those listed above are unexcused.

A student not physically present at school, excused or unexcused, is marked absent.

Partial Day Absences

If a student enters **3** hours after school begins, they shall be marked as absent for a half day. If a student leaves with more than **2** hours remaining in the day, they shall be marked as absent for half day. If a student misses **3** hours during any portion of the school day, they shall be marked as absent for a half day.

School will be in session from 8:15 a.m. until 3:15 p.m., Monday-Friday, except Wednesdays, when arrival is at 9:15 a.m. Morning carpool and supervision begin at 7:45 a.m. The school day officially begins at 8:15 a.m.

Students are expected to be in school and on time all days when school is in session, including days scheduled for field trips.

It is the belief of GRACEPOINT School that regular class attendance is important/essential for continuity in academic growth. Students who are absent from school or tardy miss valuable instruction time and other

important school activities. Chronic tardiness and absence from school results in a student being less likely to master skills, concepts, and principles needed to achieve on his or her respective grade level, especially as they prepare for outplacement from GRACEPOINT. A student at GRACEPOINT who has accumulated excessive absences cannot be expected to complete remediation in an expected or reasonable amount of time. It is also the desire of the school to instill in students, habits of punctuality and attendance that are vital for future educational and occupational success. Therefore, the following should be noted with regard to attendance and punctuality:

- Parents/guardians and students are reminded that Georgia Law requires students to be enrolled and regularly attend school.
- Parents/guardians and students are reminded of the school's yearly calendar that provides sufficient vacations periods.

Parents will receive an email notifying them when one of the following occurs:

- the student has accumulated **3** or more unexcused absences
 - the student has accumulated **5** or more tardies or early dismissals
 - the student has accumulated **8** or more **total** absences
- *The accumulation of **8** unexcused absences will require a meeting with the Head of School.

Make Up Work

All work missed because of an excused or unexcused absence must be made up to the satisfaction of the teacher. Due to the nature of our school environment and curriculum, make-up work will be at the discretion of the individual teacher and communicated to the student and their parents.

Make-up assignments are the responsibility of the student and he/she should make provisions to obtain assignments and books on days absent. If it is necessary for a parent to pick up assignments for a student, please notify the school by 9:00 that morning. In addition, assignments are posted on the teacher blog which can be found on our website.

***At the teacher's discretion, and if possible work may be issued ahead of time for students who anticipate being out of school. Educational experiences lost during an absence are irretrievable because make-up work seldom duplicates classroom interaction.**

Excessive Absences

In the event of excessive absences a student may be required to repeat the present grade level, or may be asked to leave the school. This decision is made by the Head of School. According to the State Department of Education, a student can miss no more than 8 school days during a semester to be promoted to the next grade level.

Health

A sick child should not be in school but should remain home in an environment where proper care may be given. A child who has a 100 degrees temperature or who exhibits upper respiratory infection signs and symptoms, or who has been ill (vomiting) the night before, should not be sent to school. When the symptoms are gone for 24 hours the child is free to return to school.

GRACEPOINT School is recognized as a **Project S.A.V.E. (Sudden Cardiac Arrest: Awareness, Vision for Prevention, Education)** School. All GRACEPOINT staff members are trained by Children's Healthcare of Atlanta (CHOA) in CPR and First Aid training under **Project S.A.V.E.** guidelines.

When a student becomes ill at school, parents are called and asked to retrieve their child. Parents **MUST** sign their student out at the front desk before the child may leave school property.

Immunization and Health Records

Georgia law requires that all students entering Georgia schools for the first time have a Georgia Certificate of Immunization (Form 3231) on file no later than the first day of school. All students entering sixth grade are required to have a second MMR vaccine.

Medication

When a prescription medication must be given during the school day, a *Prescription Medication Authorization* form must be completed by a parent/guardian for each prescription. **Medications will not be administered to any student without this authorization form.** Medications sent to school must be in their original container (up to date/non-expired) and labeled with the student's name and correct dosage.

We have certain over the counter medications in the clinic and will administer those medications as needed if you have indicated your permission on the Health and Emergency Medical Consent Form.

Student Allergies

Student allergy information is not transferred from the previous school year.

It is the parent/guardian responsibility to detail all health concerns on the GRACEPOINT School Clinic Card yearly. It is also the parent's responsibility to enter this important information regarding your child's health concerns and allergies into the RenWeb system. Please note your child will carry their inhaler or epi-pen in their school issued "blue allergy bag" during school hours.

Notification of Communicable Diseases

Please notify the school immediately of any of the following illnesses: chickenpox, pink eye, impetigo, measles, mononucleosis, mumps, head lice, meningitis, poison ivy and whooping cough. All information will be kept confidential except as needed to protect other students.

Head Lice

It is common for children to contract head lice each year. Playing in close contact with each other, exchange of clothing, brushes, combs, etc. can result in transmission of head lice from one child to another. Please notify the school as soon as possible if your child has head lice so that the school can prevent lice from spreading and/or re-infecting other students. When the school is notified of any case of head lice, the school will send a note home with each student advising parents to check their children to see if he/she may have this condition. Parents are advised to consult a physician for treatment.

Inclement Weather

In case of inclement weather, and should it be necessary to close school, we will send text messages and post it on our website and Facebook pages. (Please remember we continue to follow Cobb County's lead on school cancellation due to the area we serve.)

Lunch

All students must bring a lunch to school Monday through Thursday. Each Friday we offer a Friday Fun Lunch. Lunch is \$6 and is ordered by the parents through RenWeb. Parents are strongly encouraged to place all orders at once for the entire year. Orders must be placed by Wednesday at 12noon for lunch the following Friday. Detailed instructions for ordering Friday Lunch in RenWeb are on the school website www.gracepointschool.org.

If your child forgets their lunch or does not order lunch for Friday Fun Lunch, they will be served a "Lunchable." The first time this occurs you will not be charged, but every additional time your RenWeb account will be charged \$6.

If your child forgets their snack, we will provide saltine crackers.

If your child has any food allergies please assure you have made the front desk and their teachers aware.

Playground

Teachers will supervise students during the recess period. Since the safety of our children is an important priority there must be a GRACEPOINT employee present to supervise them on the playground at all times.

Field Trips

Field trips are an essential aspect of our curriculum. The trip usually has a direct application to a unit of work studied by the student, or as an opportunity for team building. Preparation for the trip is made with the class in advance to indicate the nature of the trip, and its purpose.

Students should be made aware of the fact that field trips are privileges and not an absolute right. **Students can be denied participation in field trips if they fail to meet academic or behavioral requirements.**

ALL PARENTS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR ASSURING THEY HAVE SIGNED AND SUBMITTED THE FIELD TRIP PERMISSION FORM. THIS MUST BE OBTAINED BEFORE A STUDENT WILL BE ALLOWED TO GO ON A TRIP. There are NO EXCEPTIONS to this rule.

These learning opportunities are important and are encouraged to make learning more relevant to our students.

- Students must wear GRACEPOINT attire on the trip unless otherwise directed.
- Every student must have a permission slip FORM ON FILE, (as stated previously) from his or her parents before a student may attend a field trip.
- Students who have not demonstrated self-control within the classroom environment may not be allowed to accompany the class on a field trip.
- Students are expected to exhibit the same good behavior on a field trip as they do in the classroom.
- Field trips are a part of the educational experience for students. If parents attend the field trip, siblings are not to accompany them.

Carpool

GRACEPOINT students are transported to and from all school functions in carpools or by their parents. We ask that parents drop children off and pick them up in the areas designated for this purpose. Please follow the traffic patterns that are given to you.

In the morning, assigned faculty members will be on duty to receive students in the carpool area. From 7:45 until 8:10 A.M., 1st through 8th grade students may report to the area which will be supervised by an assigned faculty member. *(Doors will be locked at 8:15 and the students arriving after that time must check in with the front desk accompanied by their parent or carpool driver. It is the carpool driver's responsibility to sign in each applicable student to avoid them being reported absent.)*

Please do not walk your children into the school unless they are late.

We ask all parents to pick up their children between 3:15 P.M. – 3:30 P.M. After that time the remaining students will be taken to a designated area in the school building. The carpool driver or responsible party must come to front desk and sign out all applicable students. Please call the school at [678-709-6634](tel:678-709-6634) if you will arrive after 3:30 P.M.

Technology and Internet Access

Students and parents are required to sign an *Acceptable Use Policy*. **Any violations of this policy will result in loss of computer privileges, suspension and, possibly, expulsion.**

TECHNOLOGY ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY (this policy is located on our website) GRACEPOINT School provides a variety of technology resources for the purpose of supporting the school's educational mission. We fully expect that all members of the school community will use the school network in a responsible, appropriate, and legal manner at all times. The term "school network" is meant to include, but is not limited to, GRACEPOINT owned or-leased computers, tablets, servers, printers, remote databases, network storage, digital media, software applications (both web-based and local), library catalogs, communication technologies, personal devices used to access GRACEPOINT's network, internet access, and email. This policy also governs off-campus behaviors that infringe upon the educational environment on campus, independent of whether the technology used for such behavior is school-owned or personal.

Privacy Expectations

The student must recognize that any material posted or accessed—even in seemingly secure places or private threads—ultimately creates a digital footprint, and is, in fact, not private at all. This policy is intended to help students create and maintain a digital footprint that reflects their best selves. GRACEPOINT School reserves the right to access, view, or monitor network use and activity, to disclose the contents of email messages, and to restrict access to inappropriate websites and unacceptable materials. There should be no expectation of a right to privacy concerning the GRACEPOINT School network and computing resources.

Cell Phone and SmartWatch Guidelines

If students bring their cell phone to school they are required to turn it in to the Middle School Director upon arrival. The phone will be turned off and kept in a secure location during the school day and returned to the student(s) upon dismissal. If you check out before dismissal it is the student's/parent's responsibility to retrieve the phone from the front desk. SmartWatches may be worn as long as the sim card is disabled.

Offensive, Harassing, or Explicit Material:

- Students must use appropriate language and images in all electronic or digital communication or posting. Profanity, vulgarity, and other inappropriate language, gestures, or images are forbidden.
- Students are not allowed to harass, bully, intimidate, stalk, demean, ridicule, deride, or threaten under any circumstances, through any medium or any resource, including but not limited to GRACEPOINT School's technology resources, personal or home computers, personal cell phones, and other personal or home electronic devices, as well as social network sites and internet sites.

- Students are not allowed to retrieve, save, download, forward, text, or display hate-based or offensive material.
- Students are not allowed to create, forward, text, retrieve, save, download, print, copy, or display pornographic (nude or partially nude) or sexually explicit material.

Defamation:

- Students are not allowed to engage in electronic or digital activities that reflect negatively on themselves or defame or disparage other students, teachers, or GRACEPOINT School.
- Students will follow all guidelines set forth by their teachers for classroom use of electronic devices. Devices used outside of those guidelines may be confiscated by the teacher and turned over to the Head of School at the teacher’s discretion.

Plagiarism:

- Students are not allowed to copy information and present it as their own work without proper citation.

Falsification:

- Students are not allowed to pretend to be someone else when posting or transmitting material. This includes, but is not limited to, sending out email, creating accounts, or posting messages, images, or other online content in someone else’s name or without permission to post.
- Students are not allowed to attempt to use one another’s login or give out their own login information to others.

ACADEMICS

Standardized testing

GRACEPOINT will give a **MAP (The Measures of Academic Progress)** standardized test to all students in grades 1-8 in the fall and spring of each year. The results of these tests are shared with parents and staff to monitor the academic achievement of individual students.

Homework

Homework is an integral part of the school program in aiding students to advance in their studies. **Homework should always reinforce the learning in the classroom and be relevant in nature.** Each student is required therefore to complete homework assignments. Homework is given for several purposes:

For drill: We believe that students require drilling to master material essential to their educational progress

For practice and reinforcement: Following classroom explanation, illustration, and drill on new work, homework is given so that the material will be mastered.

For special projects: Book reports, compositions, special research assignments and projects are some of the activities that are frequently the subject of homework.

All students will be required to read nightly. Students are strongly encouraged to read on the weekends as well.

Teachers should communicate frequently with the parents to determine the amount of time and effort that students are putting in to homework and make adjustments as needed. If there are questions or concerns regarding homework please contact your child's teacher(s).

Middle School Students

Failure to turn in homework on the specified due date will lose 10 points on the assignment. For every day the assignment is not completed 10 points will be subtracted. For example: late one day=10 points subtracted from total; late two days 20 points will be subtracted from total etc.

Failure to complete long-term assignments will have significant consequences to a student's final grade.

Assignment Notebooks are required of all students in grades 3-8. These are used to record daily homework assignments AND as a means of communication between teacher and parent.

Evaluation Key

The following evaluations are used on GRACEPOINT report cards for grades 1-8 depending on the grade level and course:

(E) Excellent	(A) 90-100
(S) Satisfactory	(B) 80-89
(I) Inconsistent	(C) 75-79
(N) Needs Improvement	(D) 70-74

Progress Conferencing

Teachers will communicate with the parents on a regular basis regarding progress of the student. Parents may request a conference to discuss progress by contacting the child's teacher.

Parent/Teacher Conference Days

There are 2 scheduled conferences (November and March) each academic year. All parents are strongly encouraged to attend and will meet all of their child's teachers at one time. Students in grades 5-8 will attend the spring conference with their parents.

Report cards

Report cards will be issued to students in grades 1-8 at the end of each twelve -week grading period. The final report card will be mailed at the end of the school year. The report card is for the family to keep; but the report card acknowledgment form must be signed by a parent and returned within two days after each tri-mester.

(A report card will not be issued if there are any outstanding fees owed to GRACEPOINT School at that time.)

MID-TERM REPORTS- all students in grades 3-8 will receive a grade report 3 times yearly approximately every six weeks detailing their current grade average in core subject areas.

Transcripts

All transcripts, report cards, student records, and diplomas are the property of GRACEPOINT School and will not be issued to students who transfer or roll-out **until tuition and fees are paid in full**. The parent must notify the school in writing if the student is transferring during the school year.

Student Withdrawal Procedure

When a student withdraws from GRACEPOINT School during the school year, the parent must notify the school in writing prior to withdrawal. The student's transcript will be sent to the new school upon written request as long as all financial commitments have been met.

Student Outplacement Procedure

One of the goals at GRACEPOINT is to assist families in the transition to the next school environment for their child. The Outplacement Director will continually communicate with teachers regarding students who may be ready to transition to another school at the end of the 2019-20 school year. Parents of 8th grade students will be contacted to set up individual meetings regarding rollout in the fall. After the first conference in November, parents of other grades who feel their child could potentially roll out in May of 2020 should reach out to the outplacement director to discuss next steps. All teacher recommendation forms should be submitted to the outplacement director who will then see that they are completed by the appropriate staff.

School Uniform Code

Please refer to our website at www.gracepointschool.org for detailed and required uniform guidelines.

Hair Code and General Appearance

Hair should always be neat and well groomed. Unusual or "trendy" hairstyles are not permitted. Hairstyles must be conservative and not a distraction to others in the learning environment. Girls' and boys' hair are to be neatly combed and in such a manner as to not interfere with schoolwork. The school is the final judge of the suitability of grooming. Repeated violations of hair regulations will result in disciplinary action. There is to be no bleaching or coloring of hair. Hair should be

neat and well-groomed at all times. In addition, boys' hair should be cut to a length so as not to cover the eyebrows, and should be well above the shirt collar, and well above the ears. Girls hair should be combed and styled in a way that does not cover their eyes or hang in their face in a distracting manner. Ponytails and barrettes are highly recommend. Again, school administration reserves the right to determine suitability of hair styles.

Cosmetics and Jewelry

Extreme make-up is not permitted. Boys and girls are allowed to wear one small necklace. One set of small hoop earrings or small stud earrings are permitted for girls. Other body piercings are prohibited. Boys are not permitted to wear earrings. No costume jewelry, beaded jewelry, dangle or large hoop style earrings are permitted. Watches are permitted if they do not cause a distraction to the child or to the class. One ring is permitted.

Dress Code for Non-Uniform Days

The school is the final judge on the suitability of attire. Shorts and skirts should be no shorter than 4 inches above the knee. Violations of uniform regulations may result in a required change of clothing and parents will be notified. No shirts with inappropriate verbiage or pictures.

Code of Discipline

Discipline plans will be age-appropriate and outlined by the teacher along with the classroom rules. In the event of a suspension or expulsion parents will be contacted by the Head of School.

All Grade Levels

In case of a serious offense, such as a child hurting another child intentionally, or doing intentional damage to property, the Head of School will be told immediately. The teacher will record the incident. The teacher will make a telephone call to the parents that day. If a second offense occurs, the parents will be contacted and a conference will be scheduled with the parents.

Unacceptable conduct includes, but is not limited to:

1. Any verbal or physical attack on another person.
2. Disrespect to any other person or their property including desks and/or lockers.
3. Dishonesty in written and spoken work, including copying homework.
4. Profanity.
5. Behavior that is not consistent with GRACEPOINT School values.

6. Refusal to complete assignments or consistent lack of preparation for class.
7. Unacceptable school, uniform, or appearance.
8. Violation of the Acceptable Use Technology policy.
9. Violation of cell phone and smart watch guidelines.

*** An accumulation of 3 behavior issues will result in a suspension.**

Unacceptable conduct that may result in immediate suspension or expulsion includes, but is not limited to:

1. Possession of firearms or weapons (toy or real) or anything that resembles a weapon.
2. Destruction of any school property or the property of others.
3. Theft
4. Any form of verbal or sexual harassment.
5. Bully behavior toward another student/teacher/staff.
6. Possession of any inappropriate magazines, any form of pornography or culturally offensive material/media.
7. Possession of alcohol, drugs, tobacco, or any illegal substance.
8. Violation of the Acceptable Use Technology policy.
9. Violation of cell phone and smart watch guidelines.

Bullying:

GRACEPOINT School is committed to protecting its students from acts of bullying. Students are to refrain from conduct that may humiliate, ridicule, defame, demean, or intimidate other students or place them in fear of being subjected to violence, injury, personal harm, or damage to his or her property. No student shall be subjected to bullying either on or off school property, if the conduct interferes with a student's educational opportunities or substantially disrupts the orderly operations of a school or a school sponsored activity or event.

Bullying may involve but is not limited to, unwanted teasing, threats, intimidation, stalking, cyberbullying, harassment, violence, threats of violence, humiliation, destruction of personal property, social exclusion, spreading of rumors or falsehoods, or inciting and/or coercing others to commit any of these acts. Individuals who believe they are being bullied, or have a knowledge of a student being bullied are encouraged to report the problem verbally or in writing

to the headmaster, or other faculty/staff member immediately. Any student guilty is subject to suspension or expulsion.

Expulsion:

- The teacher presents the Head of School with a detailed report about the student's behavior, indicating the reasons for the proposed expulsion.
- The Head of School will weigh the motives and, if necessary, will call a meeting with the teacher(s), in order to clarify the case as much as possible.
- Head of School will meet with the family in order to communicate the decision to them.
- The Head of School reserves the right to move to immediate expulsion when the safety of the school community is at stake.

Disclaimer: GRACEPOINT School reserves the right to make changes to this document. You will be notified of any changes that are made.