

# Victory Christian Academy

## Secondary Student Handbook 2024-2025



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## INTRODUCTION

### **ADMINISTRATIVE PREROGATIVE**

The intent of this handbook is to give general overall guidelines to be adhered to by students and parents. Sometimes new situations or circumstances, not covered specifically by this handbook, will occur, and the administration reserves the right to exercise its administrative prerogative in responding to these new situations. **This handbook becomes part of the contract between parents, students, and VCA. VCA administration also reserves the right to amend its policies, without notice, as it deems necessary.**

### **VISION STATEMENT**

Victory Christian Academy strives to create a positive environment that inspires and motivates students to achieve spiritual, academic, athletic, and social excellence through a biblical worldview by encouraging servant leadership to influence their families, church, community and the world.

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

*To know Christ and make Him known through academics, athletics, and the arts.*

The goal of our academy is to provide a quality educational program that challenges and encourages children to achieve their fullest potential. We fully support the church's mission "to know Christ and make Him known." We recognize each child as a unique gift from God to each of his or her parents, and we pledge to always show God's love by our words and deeds. Therefore, each staff member has been chosen to reflect the ideals and goals of the academy. We teach Christian principles, not doctrine, in our academy. All academy staff and families are expected to maintain regular church attendance and ministry involvement.

### **ACADEMY BELIEF STATEMENT**

- Each student is unique and capable of achievement.
- Provide a safe environment in which to teach and learn.
- Provide before/after school opportunities to include childcare, tutoring, clubs, athletics, and community service.
- Students learn in diverse ways and require a variety of teaching strategies.
- Students learn best in an environment that is disciplined, fosters respect for authority, and encourages learning.
- Students learn best when family members are actively involved in their education.
- Students are challenged by a curriculum that is dynamic and responsive to the changing needs of society.
- Teachers and administrators are professionals who work continuously to upgrade their knowledge and engage in activities that enhance their effectiveness as educators.
- Provide students with an environment that inspires them and is joyful, unique and engaging.
- Provide flexibility for changing learning needs over time.
- Provide technology for learning and maintaining communication with parents.
- Teachers and administrators will seek to develop innovative and creative strategies that enhance the educational climate.
- School personnel, students, parents, and the community will work in partnership and demonstrate an active commitment to education.
- Education is lifelong learning and learning for life.

## **EXPECTED SCHOOLWIDE LEARNING RESULTS**

- A VCA graduate will demonstrate an understanding of biblical knowledge and truth with the purpose of developing a Christian worldview resulting in a personal, defensible relationship with Jesus Christ.
- A VCA graduate will develop the interpersonal and organizational skills needed to function effectively in life.
- A VCA graduate will be a learner who demonstrates a solid acquisition of the academic disciplines needed to allow them to successfully fulfill God's plan for his/her life.
- A VCA graduate will be an effective communicator.
- A VCA graduate will be a critical thinker.

## **STATEMENT OF FAITH**

- We believe the Bible is the inspired and only infallible and authoritative written Word of God (II Timothy 3:16).
- We believe there is one God, eternally existent in three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit (II Corinthians 3:14).
- We believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His atoning death, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, in His personal future return to this earth in power and glory to rule a thousand years (Matthew 16:16; I Corinthians 15:3, 4).
- We believe in the Blessed Hope—which is the rapture of the Church at Christ's coming (Titus 2:13).
- We believe the only means of being cleansed from sin is through repentance and faith in the precious blood of Christ (I Peter 2:24).
- We believe regeneration by the Holy Spirit is essential for personal salvation (John 3:3-5).
- We believe the redemptive work of Christ on the cross provides healing of the human body in answer to believing power (I Peter 2:24).
- We believe the baptism in the Holy Spirit, according to Acts 2:4, is given to believers who ask for it (Acts 2:39).
- We believe in the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a holy life (Galatians 5:16).
- We believe in the resurrection of the saved and the lost, the one to everlasting life and the other to everlasting damnation (John 5:28, 29).

## **ACCREDITATION**

VCA is fully accredited by the International League of Christian Schools (ILCS) and Cognia (formerly AdvancED.)

## **TEACHER QUALIFICATIONS**

Teachers must meet the Florida State Department of Education requirements for accredited private schools. VCA teachers will not only be considered for their professional expertise, they also will be evaluated for their ability to be a role model of the Christian lifestyle and teach biblical principles integrative with the subject matter. They will be certified with, or certifiable by, the Florida League of Christian Schools and/or FLDOE.

## GENERAL POLICIES

### **BIBLE/CHAPEL**

Bible study is recognized at VCA as being of fundamental importance and is a required subject for all grades. Knowledge of the Bible is one of the greatest educational assets a person can have in addition to moral and spiritual values resulting from Bible study. A regular part of the student's life is the weekly chapel service. Chapel is intended to aide student growth as a Christian, and to provide the opportunity to worship and praise God together with fellow students and teachers. Attendance at all chapel services is required. Any misconduct during chapel will be handled in the same manner as a classroom offense. Students in grades 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> are expected to take notes in chapel.

### **CHANGE OF ADDRESS/PHONE NUMBER**

Students and parents are asked to inform the school office if they have a change of home address or telephone number. It is imperative that all families' phone numbers are up to date in FactsMgt.com especially in case of an emergency.

### **CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

All VCA faculty, staff, volunteers, parents, and students are expected to exemplify Christian living by their daily examples. It is the desire and goal of VCA that all relationships are positive, fulfilling, and above reproach. However, there are times when conditions need improvement and relationships are tested. When this happens, the situation needs to be corrected as soon as possible, according to the principles outlined in Matthew 18:15-17. If the situation remains unresolved, the person, or persons, involved should bring the matter to administration, seeking counsel and accepting of recommendations.

Divisive attitudes and conversations by faculty, staff, or academy families will not be condoned at VCA. Tolerance and patience with each other, despite our faults and weaknesses, are a true mark of Christianity. The principal's door is open to those who need to speak regarding unresolved conflict or offense. Family counseling is available to academy families who may need guidance for issues unrelated to academy matters.

### **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

Students will participate in monthly emergency drills to practice effective and proper classroom dismissal for inclement weather and situations. All due caution will be taken to provide a safe and orderly environment for VCA students

### **FOOD at SCHOOL**

#### **Lunches**

- VCA students are not permitted to order food from an outside vendor and have it delivered to campus. Ex: Uber eats, Grub Hub, Pizza deliveries etc.
- Students are not permitted to go off campus or be checked out of school to get lunch.
- Students may bring their individual lunch from home and a microwave is available for upper elementary, middle and high school students to heat their food. Carbonated beverages are not permitted.
- Nutritious hot lunches are available for student purchase through a local catering restaurant. Lunches should be ordered, and **paid for, on Wednesday of the prior week.** **Lunch price: \$4.00 per day.** Students will not be allowed to go off campus for lunch. A snack table is available for students to purchase individual items to eat for lunch or add to their lunch for a reasonable price.

**If you are delivering food to your child for lunch, make sure it arrives in time for their scheduled lunch time.** You will be asked to label it with your child's name, walk the lunch over to the cafeteria, and place it in the designated area. The office can no longer keep food in the lobby. **Students are not permitted to pick lunch up in the parking lot or drive through and deliveries from restaurants are not permitted.**

- Beverages **with lids** are allowed unless this becomes a problem, at which point we would allow water only. Some teachers may ask students to place drinks on a table when they enter until the end of class.
- Food will not be allowed in classrooms. This is a distraction to the teacher, your child and classmates that are near them. It will also help keep our facility much cleaner.
- Snacks may be eaten on the deck during the 5 min break between classes but must be finished or put away during class time.
- Make sure to arrive at school early enough to eat any food you've brought as your breakfast in the assigned area.

### **Birthday Celebrations**

Homemade food items are not permitted for birthday celebrations or other special occasions. If providing birthday foods **please choose mini cupcakes, cookies** etc., that can be distributed easily. (Cakes are not permitted). **If delivering food to your child, it must arrive at school prior to their lunch time.** Elementary 10:25-11:50; Middle School 11:50 am; High School 12:45 pm.

### **INSURANCE**

Every student is covered by a school accident insurance plan. The school insurance is not a primary policy. If a student is injured, a claim should be made with the parents' insurance company first, then the school insurance will pick up covered expenses in excess of the parents' company. Parents must pay the expenses first, and then the school insurance will reimburse the amount after the deductible has been met.

### **LOCKERS**

Lockers are available to MS and HS students and are the property of the school. There is a \$5.00 yearly rental fee. For security, lockers should always remain locked.

- A \$10 fine will be levied for all damaged lockers or those not cleaned out at the end of the year.
- Students are encouraged to keep lockers clean, and the locker combination confidential.
- Lockers are not to be shared with others.
- The school administration reserves the right to inspect lockers and their content at any time.

### **LOST AND FOUND**

Lost and Found items will be kept in the hallway closet by the gym and will be open all day every Tuesday and Thursday from 7AM-6PM. At the beginning of each month, unclaimed items will be donated or discarded. **Please clearly identify all items that your child brings to school, including clothing.** This will assist us in locating the owner of misplaced items.

*VCA is not responsible for theft, loss of phones, electronic devices, equipment, clothing etc. MS/HS students should lock up valuable items in a school or athletic locker.*

### **MEDICAL MATTERS**

Students will not be allowed to start school without an up-to-date immunization record, physical exam, and birth certificate on file in the school office. See the school office for more information regarding immunizations.

- When a student is ill enough to be out of class, parents are notified to pick up the student or to give permission for the student to go home.
- If a child's temperature registers 100.0 degrees or greater, parents will be notified to pick up the student. In the event of injury or accident, parents are notified immediately according to home, work, and emergency phone numbers supplied to the school office. Every effort is made to contact parents before medical attention is obtained.
- The Medical Release Form for medical attention is sent with the student to the doctor/hospital indicating parental permission for treatment. Only minor first aid is administered by the school. **Students are not permitted to keep prescription or over-the-counter medications in their possession.**
- All medications, prescription or over-the-counter, must be kept in the school nurses office with a current school-year *Medication Administration Form* on file. Medications will be administered by the school nurse or designated office personnel. Medication must be in the original container identified with the student's name. Where possible, please ask your physician to prescribe medications that may be given before or after school.

### RE-ENROLLMENT

**Early re-enrollment will begin in January 2025.** Parents who re-enroll at that time will receive a discounted rate of \$50. **On February 1<sup>st</sup> open enrollment begins** for the public. At this time, if your child is not re-enrolled they are at risk of not having a seat for the following year. We are blessed to retain over 95% of our students annually. VCA students that haven't re-enrolled by March 1<sup>st</sup> will be required to pay the full re-enrollment fee of \$100 if any seats remain in the designated grade level.

### SCHOOL AND CHURCH GROUNDS

- Students are not permitted to use the church restrooms or access the church facilities without administrative approval.
- Students K-12 not involved in school sponsored activities after school must not loiter around school and church grounds following daily school dismissal. PLEASE PICK UP YOUR STUDENT PROMPTLY.
- Extended care supervises **K-5 students only** from 7 AM- until 6 PM. **K-5 students who are still on campus after 3:30 PM will be signed into KidZone** and billed the appropriate fee.
- Students who are in an approved supervised sport/activity must stay with that coach or sponsor until picked up by an adult.

Students remaining at school after an event, field trip or practice will have 15 minutes to be picked up by parents or a **\$20.00 fee assessed for late pickup.** Our teachers' and coaches' time is important and must be respected.

### SPORTSMANSHIP

VCA students and families are expected to demonstrate sportsmanship at all athletic events. "Sportsmanship is a blending of cheers for "your team" and applause for the "opponents," observing the letter and spirit of the rules and showing consideration for others. Sportsmanship is the "golden rule" of athletics – treating others as you wish to be treated." Demeaning or belittling comments towards opposing players, coaches or referees will not be tolerated and will result in disciplinary action including the loss of the privilege of attending VCA events.

## **STUDENT DRIVERS**

- All students holding a valid driver's license, and wishing to drive to school, must apply for a student's parking permit. Permit fees are \$10.00.
- The parking permit must be displayed in the windshield area of the vehicle while on campus. An application for a parking permit may be obtained from the school office.
- All students who drive must park their car in the parking lot on the north side of the church by the VCA Office in the last four rows.
- Student parking is not permitted on the grass by the dirt road or by the Athletic facility.
- Any student who drives carelessly, or in any inappropriate manner, will have their on campus VCA driving privileges revoked.
- Students are not permitted to go to their cars during the school day without permission from the school office.
- Students must exit their car upon arrival.

## **STUDENT ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

Students are not permitted to sell any item at school for personal gain. Only school fundraiser items or items approved by the administration are permitted to be sold on campus.

## **VISITORS – PARENTS**

Parents are always welcome at VCA. A 24-hour notice must be given to the school prior to a request for a classroom visit. This is to ensure the safety of all students. When you wish to visit the classroom or lunchroom for any reason, please check in at the school office first to receive your visitor's badge. Parents will be asked to leave their keys with staff. If a parent wishes to talk to their child's teacher, they can arrange for a private conference by contacting the teacher or calling the school office.

## **VISITORS – STUDENTS**

Students visiting the school are only allowed if they are potential VCA students. Approved visitors must come to the office first to obtain a visitor's pass. All visitors must comply with VCA's dress code and student behavior. Students who have been asked to leave VCA for disciplinary reasons may not be on campus during school hours.

## **ACADEMIC POLICIES**

The primary responsibility for the education of children rests with their parents. VCA exists to assist parents in that responsibility. Parents are expected to monitor their child's academic progress, attendance, and behavior on a weekly basis.

**FACTSMGT.COM** is our online student information system, ([www.FactsMgt.com.com](http://www.FactsMgt.com.com)) click Logins, then click ParentsWeb Login: School code is VIC-FL Type in your email address. Access to student coursework, financial info, behavior, and grades is offered to parents via the internet. You will receive an email with further instructions. Contact the registrar for assistance.

### **ACADEMIC AND NEW STUDENT PROBATION**

All new students will be placed on academic and discipline probation for one semester. Students must maintain a 2.5 GPA for both grading periods. The academic requirements, discipline, and environment require a considerable adjustment for many students. A student is placed on academic probation when his/her grade point average is below a 2.0 for any semester.

**Two consecutive nine weeks with a GPA below 2.5 or excessive discipline referrals, excessive absences/tardies (8 absences or 6 tardies) will result in a conference with the parent and administrative team to extend probation or parents being asked to withdraw student from school.**

### **ACHIEVEMENT TESTS**

**Measurement of Academic Progress (MAP)** is VCA's Grade 4-12 standardized achievement test that is administered to students three times a year. These tests are critical for assessing student progress, adjusting classroom instruction and course placement throughout the year. Therefore, students are expected to give these tests their very best effort. Results are distributed after each assessment.

**American College Testing (ACT)** is a curriculum-based education and career planning tool for high school students that assess the mastery of college readiness standards. The student is responsible for registering for this test if they choose to take it.

**Advanced placement (AP) exams** are administered at the end of the year for students taking those classes. To receive credit at the AP level the student **MUST** sit for the exam. If not, you will be assessed the **\$90 cost of the test and credit for the AP course will not be weighted.**

**Classic Learning Test (CLT)** is a new standardized test that can be used to earn a concordance score for the Bright Futures Scholarship and accepted by some colleges and universities.

**SAT/SAT School Day** allows VCA to offer the SAT to juniors and seniors in school, on a weekday, expanding access to a globally recognized college admission test that's accepted at all U.S. colleges.

**PSAT** is administered to all sophomores once a year.

**Postsecondary Education Readiness Test (PERT)** is a college placement exam used by colleges and universities in the state of Florida to determine what level of college courses in math and English an applicant is adequately prepared for.



## COMMUNITY SERVICE

A student must accumulate 100 Community Service hours as a graduation requirement. We will endeavor to assist high school students to obtain community service opportunities. Ultimately, it is the student's responsibility to serve and return completed forms to Mrs. Dobson or Mrs. Borders. Community service forms and guidelines are available in the main office and on the website. **Graduating seniors must submit all community service by April 1 to be eligible for graduation and awards. The due date for underclassmen is May 1.**

**Recognition:** Pin = 200+ hours, Cord = 300+ hours, Medallion = 500+ hours.

## DUAL ENROLLMENT

Dual enrollment is an opportunity for qualifying VCA **junior and senior** students to enroll concurrently in courses offered at Polk State College, SEU or other approved institutions. Tuition at VCA will not be reduced for dual enrollment students. **Approval for dual enrollment is based on MAP, PERT, ACT, or SAT scores as well as academic preparedness (at least a 3.5 GPA), teacher recommendation, scheduling, and administrative review.**

### Policy for Dual Enrollment Credits:

Dual Enrollment Program credits may be in addition to the regular high school load used to satisfy an academic or elective graduation requirement. Upon receiving the transcript from the institution, the course will be added to the student's official transcript. A diploma will be awarded when a student has completed all the requirements for graduation. Students are expected to follow the 7 steps for dual enrollment.

Contact: Rhonda Borders, Administrator of Student Services

**College Board School ID Code** for Victory Christian Academy is **102-085**.

## FAILED COURSES

Credit for a subject failed with an "F" (0-59), is only received by one of the following methods: Repeat the course another year and earn a passing grade or make up the course through Ignitia; or Florida Virtual School. Although the failed course will remain on the student's permanent transcript, the new grade of "C" or better will replace the "F" when calculating GPA. When failure is received in a two-semester course, the student will be required to make up only the failed semester.

**FLVS and Ignitia courses are not covered by any scholarship or VCA tuition. It is an additional cost and is the parents' responsibility.**

### Exams

Middle school students will take four "quarter exams" and high school students will take two "semester" exams. **Students who miss more than 8 class periods during a semester must earn 70% or above to receive credit for the course.** All students must take the exam. At the teacher's discretion, a high school student who has earned an "A" in the class 9 weeks "may" be exempt from the semester exam. However, it is at the teacher's discretion.

## GRADE POINT AVERAGE and Valedictorian/Salutatorian

Honors classes (.5), advance placement classes (1.0), and dual-enrollment (1.0) classes are given appropriate weight in determining grade point average.

Grade point average is the determining factor for Valedictorian, Salutatorian, and graduating with honors. A student must attend VCA for his/her **final two years** of high school to be eligible for Valedictorian or Salutatorian.

## **GRADING SCALE**

VCA uses the following grading scale in conjunction with the Florida Department of Education and the Florida High School Activities Association:

A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	0-59 (No Credit)

## **HOMEWORK**

Homework is an integral part of the educational process at VCA. It is given to extend the classroom learning or practice that will help internalize what has been taught. Limited homework may be assigned on Wednesdays. However, tests or projects may be assigned in advance that require studying on Wednesdays. Students and families are encouraged to attend Wednesday night services.

## **NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY**

The National Honor Society is a service organization designed to recognize those students in grades 9-12 who have achieved all A and B semester grades and have a cumulative **GPA of at least 3.5**. They must also possess high moral character, have served either the school or community, and demonstrated leadership capabilities. A high scholastic average alone is not enough to be admitted to National Honor Society. Students are elected to the NHS by the faculty and administration. A member receives a warning the first time their cumulative GPA drops below 3.5, and they are removed if their GPA is not raised to the appropriate level by the end of the following semester. To be considered for NHS the application must be completed by the assigned due date. Excessive absences/tardies or discipline issues may affect a student's standing in NHS. Students identified as cheating are not eligible to apply or participate in NHS for one calendar year.

## **PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Appointments may be scheduled with the classroom teacher for all students. If requesting a "team" conference for middle or high school, please contact the team leader or office and a conference will be scheduled.

## **PROMOTION AND GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

### **Grades 6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup>**

The student must have a 2.0 cumulative grade point average in all core academic classes and be recommended by his/her teacher for promotion. If a student receives an "F" (failing grade) in any academic course, credit recovery will be required with administrative approval. Any student failing two or more classes will need to repeat the entire year.

### **Grades 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup>**

The student must pass all courses in order to graduate. VCA requires each student to earn 7 credits a year. The State of Florida and VCA require a cumulative grade point average of 2.0 to graduate. A total of 24 credits are required for students to graduate.

**Requirements: Credits**

English	4.0 credits
Math	4.0 credits
Science	4.0 credits
Social Science	4.0 credits
Foreign Language	2.0 credits
Fine/Performing Arts	1.0 credit
Physical Education/Health	1.0 credit
Electives/Bible	<u>4.0 credits</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>24.0 credits</b>

**Minimum Hours of Instruction**

Students must complete a minimum of 135 hours of instruction in a particular course, consistent with *accreditation requirements*.

**Credit:** A student that does not meet attendance requirements as determined by the principal will be required to pass an end of course test (final exam) with a score of 70 in order to receive credit, provided that the student's class average is 75 or above on all course work completed before the final.

**PROGRESS REPORTS AND REPORT CARDS**

The purpose of reporting is to give parents an indication of the progress being made by students. Progress Reports will be emailed midway through each grading period. Report cards are issued every nine weeks. At any time during the school year, teachers or parents may ask for a conference to discuss student progress. Parents and students are expected to monitor FactsMgt.com at least three times per week.

**SPORTS ELIGIBILITY**

A student must maintain a 2.0 grade point average to be eligible to participate in VCA's sports program. VCA is governed by the Florida High School Athletic Association (FHSAA) and its bylaws.

**TRANSFER CREDIT**

Request for a transfer of credit is subject to the approval of the administration.

**TRANSCRIPT REQUESTS**

A student requesting a transcript be sent to another school or university must fill out the *Transcript Request Form* provided in the VCA office. Transcript requests will need to have **24 hour** notice. All requests will be handled by the Administrator of Student Services, Registrar, and Student Accounts Manager before being released.

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

There is a direct relationship between attendance and learning. Missed classroom teaching and learning activities can never truly be replaced. Attitudes regarding the value of education and the importance of study is shaped by parental priorities regarding school attendance.

School attendance policies are designed to encourage a high value on education. **It is imperative that parents support the importance of school attendance by ensuring their child is at school by 7:50 AM and by not asking for**

**or supporting unnecessary absences.** Students who accumulate more than 6 tardies and/or 8 unexcused absences per semester will be placed on an attendance “probationary” status. **Students who participate in sports are not permitted to practice or participate in athletic contests on days they are absent from school.**

\*Students receiving scholarship funding with excessive tardies or absences are at risk of losing their scholarship. School Choice requires attendance reports to be sent to them annually.

### TARDIES

Irregular and unfaithful class attendance jeopardizes the student’s progress and detracts from the instruction and learning time. Please minimize tardiness in order to insure the best learning for your student. ONLY TARDINESS DUE TO DOCTOR OR DENTIST APPOINTMENTS OR OCCASIONAL EMERGENCY SITUATIONS ACCOMPANIED BY A NOTE WILL BE EXCUSED. **All students are expected to be in class and ready to work at 7:50 am. K-5 Students who arrive after 8:00 am are considered tardy and must check-in at the main office for a pass to class.**

***CHOICE ROOM: Secondary students 6<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> who are late to school will report to the choice room where they will work on iXL reading and math until the end of the period. It’s important that classroom instruction is not interrupted for the teacher and other students. At the 8:00 bell students will not be permitted to enter class.***

Students who are not in class at the bell to begin class will be marked with an unexcused tardy unless they have a note from the office or another teacher excusing their lateness.

Consequences for excessive unexcused tardies are listed below:

- **3 Unexcused tardies = Discipline Referral:** Excessive Tardiness; **Consequence:** Warning
- **6 Unexcused tardies= Discipline Referral:** Excessive Tardiness; **Consequence:** 2 days silent lunch, Attendance Probation Letter, Parent Phone Conference Required
- **9 Unexcused tardies = Discipline Referral:** Excessive Tardiness; **Consequence:** Lunchroom Work Detail, Parent Conference to determine enrollment status
- **Additional tardies** will result in out of school suspension and possible reenrollment denial.
- **3 tardies = 1 unexcused absence**

### ALL-DAY ABSENCE

#### Excused

Absences for illness, death in the family, dire family emergency, rare and unusual circumstances as approved by the principal are excused. All work missed can be made up for full credit. Upon return, the student must bring a note providing the **date, specific reason for being absent, parent signature, and phone number** where the parent can be reached during the day. Any absence of a student returning to school without submitting a written note within 48 hours will be considered unexcused. For all absences

for illness lasting 3 or more consecutive days, a doctor's note is required to excuse the absences. **Excused/Unexcused absences count toward the number of total absences allowed for the semester/year. (Maximum of 8 class periods per class per semester) \*see guidelines for makeup work.**

### **Unexcused**

Reasons not fitting the above circumstances are unexcused. These include: hair appointments, visits with relatives, sleeping in, etc.

**\*Unexcused/Excused absences count toward the number of total absences allowed for the semester/year. (Maximum of 8 class periods per class per semester) \*see guidelines for make-up work**

### **Cumulative Exam Due to Absences**

Students **exceeding 8 total days absent from any class** will be required to take a cumulative examination for that semester or nine weeks for middle school. Students must pass the exam with a 70% or above to receive credit for that semester's work.

### **Pre-Arranged Absences**

Parents may request a pre-arranged absence for their child for church related activities, out of town family trips, or other special circumstances approved by the administration at least **one calendar week in advance**. All approvals are based on the student's current attendance and academic standing. Parents may request work the child will miss during time out of school. **Pre-arranged absences count toward the number of total absences allowed for the semester/year.** \*see guidelines for make-up work

### **PARTIAL-DAY ABSENCE**

#### **Entering School During the School Day**

Students coming to school after school begins must bring a note signed by a parent or guardian giving the **date, specific reason for being late, parent signature, and phone number** where the parent can be reached during the day. Students must sign in at the office when they report to school. When the student arrives late for school, all work and projects due on that day must be turned in to the appropriate teacher or it will be considered late work. A make-up schedule for all tests and quizzes must be arranged by the student with the appropriate teacher.

#### **Partial Day Excused/Unexcused**

Students are generally excused for doctor/dentist appointments, illness, and verified family emergencies when accompanied by a doctor/dentist note. Reasons for absences are not automatically excused even when accompanied by a note signed by the parent. The school makes the final judgment on excused or unexcused absences that are not medically related.

#### **Leaving School During the School Day (Early check out)**

Upon arrival at school, students are not permitted to leave campus without parental and administrative permission. A student who leaves school property without permission from the administration is considered to be skipping school and will be suspended and a conference will be held with administration to determine if the student remains at VCA.

Parents who request their child leave school during the day must provide a note signed by the parent stating the time, specific reason for departure, and phone number where the parent can be reached during the day. Students are not permitted to leave school for non-crucial appointments. This note must be brought to the VCA office at the beginning of the school day. A determination to excuse the absence will

be made at that time. Students must be signed out at the school office when leaving the campus. Students will not be permitted to leave campus for lunch.

### **EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

Students participating in an extracurricular activity must attend school or an approved school activity for four class periods prior to the dismissal for the school event. When the student leaves early for a school-sponsored event, all work and projects due on that day must be turned in to the appropriate teacher prior to leaving or it will be considered late work. A make-up schedule for all tests and quizzes must be pre-arranged with the teacher. Students who are on suspension are not permitted to participate in extracurricular activities until the day following the last day of their suspension.

#### **Special Events**

It is not our practice to dismiss students to attend athletic or other events as spectators. In the case of a special event, an approved check-out time will be posted. Students who leave school before the approved time will be unexcused for all the classes missed. Students on Academic or Behavioral Probation will not be granted permission to leave school early.

#### **Field Trips**

Field trips are designed for the students and it is not an expectation that parents attend. Parent chaperones may be utilized for purposes of supervision at the discretion of the teacher and approval of the administration (Live Scanned). **Siblings of students are not permitted to attend field trips.** Parents of students who are of a discipline concern will be required to supervise their child on the field trip or the student will not be permitted to attend.

#### **Volunteers and Chaperones**

In order to protect our students and help maintain a safe environment, VCA requires that all employees, contracted personnel, chaperones and volunteers be “live scan” fingerprinted for VCA. The VCA Office will provide information so that the individual can schedule a screening session through an outside agency. The screening process checks the individual’s record in the State of Florida and also on a national level through the FBI. **The “live scan” process costs \$55.00 and is the parent’s responsibility to pay.** VCA will pay for the renewal fee each year after as long as the parent is an active member of **VCAPA**. If a parent or volunteer has been fingerprinted for another agency, we still require that they be fingerprinted for VCA so that the school has access to their clearance record and electronic file. Parents who are asked to volunteer or are interested in chaperoning should contact the VCA Office for instructions. **Adults are expected to be modestly dressed if volunteering in classrooms or representing VCA on a field trip.**

### **RETURNING TO SCHOOL AFTER AN ABSENCE**

Students returning to school after an absence must provide a note signed by the parent which includes the date of the absence, a specific reason for the absence, and a phone number where the parent can be reached during the day. Students must bring the note to the VCA office within 48 hours of the absence. A parent note does not mean an absence will be automatically excused. The school makes the final determination whether an absence is excused or unexcused.

#### **Make-up Work**

Students are allowed to make-up tests, homework, and class work missed due to an excused absence. Make-up work is the responsibility of the student, not the teacher. Suspension days are considered unexcused absences. Make-up work for unexcused absences is at the discretion of the teacher. Please note: one day absent...one day to make up the work. Two days absent...two days to make up, etc.

## DISCIPLINE POLICY (Secondary)

Discipline is defined as training that develops self-control, orderliness, and efficiency. Hebrews 12 declares the need for proper, love-based teaching of discipline. If accepted properly, discipline yields “the peaceful fruit of righteousness.”

VCA incorporates many disciplinary methods including student conferences, parent conferences, calls to parents, office referrals, in-school suspension, suspension, and dismissal from school. A cooperative spirit between home and school is an important prerequisite for student growth.

### **STORM CARDS Middle School (6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>)**

Storm Cards are used to help students and parents monitor behavior. Students can earn “positive” marks and also “negative” marks. Storm Cards are expected to be in the student’s possession daily, in the Agenda/Planner. Parents should check the Agenda/Planner and Storm Card daily to monitor daily assignments and daily behavior. **Storm cards are located in the front of the agenda. If a student removes the STORM card from the agenda planner, they must meet with an administrator. The replacement card will be a Red STORM card and the student will be placed on probation.**

### **BEHAVIOR CONDUCT**

Because of the concern for the spiritual life of each student, and the desire to maintain spiritual growth in our students, VCA has adopted the following standards, which students must observe whether **on** or **off** campus:

1. Students are expected to maintain high standards of Christian courtesy, kindness, morality, and honesty.
2. Students will refrain from using profanity, vulgarity and making inappropriate comments.
3. Students are expected to dress modestly and be groomed appropriately.
4. Students are not to use tobacco/nicotine/marijuana products (smoking, vaping or juuling) or partake in the use of alcohol.
5. Immoral behavior at any level is not acceptable.
6. Students are expected to exhibit good sportsmanship. Any type of jeering, taunting, or provocation are not appropriate actions during class or an athletic event.
7. Students are expected to avoid inappropriate movies, concerts, playing/singing music with inappropriate lyrics, therefore **earbuds are not allowed** because we cannot monitor what students are listening to or what they expose to others.
8. Cheating is completely unacceptable in any form, including plagiarism and the use of artificial intelligence (AI). A student guilty of cheating is considered to be lying and stealing and may receive a “0” on the work. Parents and administration will be notified, and further disciplinary action may follow.
9. Students should not make disparaging or inciting comments or willfully create unrest with other students.
10. Students are not allowed to leave campus without permission. This includes being out of area, skipping class or leaving for lunch.
11. Inappropriate use of social media and electronic devices will not be tolerated. Disrespectful or hateful text, remarks, posts, retweets, or photos towards others, school/church personnel will result in immediate administrative action.

\*Students who show insufficient interest in maintaining these standards or are disruptive in our efforts to maintain our Christ-like environment, may lose the privilege of attending Victory Christian Academy. The administration may suspend or dismiss a student depending upon the nature and severity of the situation. Parents of students in violation of these policies may be asked to withdraw them from the school.

***These rules are not all inclusive and other specific area rules may be given. All rules are expected to be followed with the appropriate attitude.***

### **CELL PHONES / ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

Students are not allowed to use any electronic devices (cell phones, tablets, smart watches etc.) and are not allowed to access any social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok etc.) during the school day. All devices **must be turned off** and **placed in their locker or backpack or classroom device holder**. Wireless communication devices should be turned off upon arrival to school and not activated until the end of the school day. Cell phones will be taken or collected and subject to search if there is suspicion of inappropriate use or content.

\*It is extremely important to the VCA staff that our students are fully engaged in learning during the school day. Texting and social media are a distraction to the daily educational process. By not permitting cell phone usage during the school day, we reduce discipline issues.

- Middle school students may NOT use their phones during the day or at lunch from 7 am - 3 pm.
- High school students may use their phone during lunch only and for educational purposes at the discretion of the teacher.
- Students are not permitted to use their phone on the deck, hallway, locker area, or during class transitions as well as from 7 am-3 pm.
- If a student needs to contact a parent during the school day, they may use the office phone, and parents are free to call the office to speak to their student or leave a message for them.

### **Consequences:**

**1st violation** - Warning and cell phone will be turned in to the office.

**2nd violation** - \$10 charge and will receive the phone back once the fee is paid.

**3rd violation** - \$15 charge and will receive the phone back once the fee is paid.

**4th violation** - \$20 charge and will receive the phone back once the fee is paid and be required to leave the phone in the office each day. A parent conference will be held to discuss the consequences.

Monies collected for the violations will be donated to the senior class mission trip special project.

*Please Note:* Cellular phones should be kept in a secure place. The school is not responsible for theft or loss.

### **LAW ENFORCEMENT**

There are situations where administration or staff are required to report or notify law enforcement. Listed below are examples where law enforcement may be contacted, and parents notified. However, law enforcement will determine the process of handling the situation.

#### **Arrest or Conviction of a Crime**

VCA students are expected to obey the laws of the community, state, and nation. Any student who is arrested, charged with, or convicted of a crime, other than minor traffic violations will be subject to school discipline which may include expulsion. Offenders are required to report such incidents to the school administration for review. Failure to report an incident will result in immediate suspension or dismissal from school.



### **Dangerous Weapons/Items**

Any student who brings a dangerous weapon (firearms/knives) or any item that would endanger the health, safety, and well-being of students or staff on school property will immediately be suspended from school. A determination for expulsion may be made at this time. Any student who is complicit in concealing the presence of a weapon may also be suspended or dismissal from school. Pocket knives, lighters, firecrackers, red laser lights, nor other types of dangerous objects are not permitted at school or on busses/transportation provided by the school.

Note: The possession of a concealed weapon is a felony crime and requires that the incident be reported to the authorities.

### **Drugs, Alcohol, Tobacco**

VCA endeavors to maintain a drug free environment. The school takes a serious view of drug possession and abuse, both as a legal and spiritual issue. Students are not permitted to possess, use, be under the influence of, or supply to another student any form of alcohol, illegal drug, K2/synthetic drugs, or tobacco product or vape-pen or e-cigarette. In addition, students are expected to avoid situations in which drugs/alcohol are being used. Should students find themselves in such a situation, they are expected to leave. This includes pictures or references in social media/texting etc. These standards apply to the student off-campus as well as on-campus. Any violation of this policy will result in suspension or dismissal from VCA. Involvement with drugs or alcohol normally results in expulsion. Law enforcements agencies will be notified when appropriate.

### **Drug Testing (Students)**

VCA is committed to maintaining a drug-free environment. In order to realize this goal, the school maintains the right to require parents to have their student tested for drugs and the results submitted to the administration or the school will administer the drug test. A student may be suspended until the school receives the results. Negative test results can be used as evidence to dispel rumors. Positive findings will normally result in expulsion, though the school will make an effort to assist the family in obtaining help for the student. The response of the family and the student in dealing with the problem will determine whether or not the student will be considered for readmission at a later time. Failure to comply with a drug test request will result in expulsion.

### **Electronic Recording Devices**

Any type of recording device may not be used to record students, teachers, or staff without specific permission from a VCA administration or staff. (go pros, smartwatches, smartphone or drone etc.) Students and staff have a right to privacy while on campus and extra-curricular activities.

### **Inappropriate Messaging**

In order to provide a safe environment the school considers inappropriate messaging the act of sending, receiving, or forwarding sexually explicit or suggestive messages, photos or images via cell phone, computer or other digital device. This violation will result in school discipline, up to and including expulsion and the notification of local law enforcement. Students are expected to immediately report any such activities to a teacher or school administrator.

### **Threats**

If a VCA student makes a threat to hurt and/or harm themselves and/or others administration and parents will be notified immediately. The seriousness of the threat will determine whether the student remains at VCA. Threats made by a student may also be referred to law enforcement where appropriate. Students and teachers are required to inform the administration of any threats they hear, or are made aware of, immediately.

## DRESS CODE POLICY

### **Note to Parents**

Parents are encouraged to teach their children to live happily and submissively within the code's guideline. Although much of the dress code is mere institutional preference, **it is not optional**. When we accepted your child into our school, it was with the understanding that your child would comply with the dress code and **parents are expected to monitor compliance before your children leave home**. We do not want students to spend valuable instructional time out of class due to dress code matters. It is inappropriate that complying students, teachers, or principals be sidetracked from the educational process, due to those failing in his or her commitment to follow the dress code expectations in a K-12 Christian school.

The school established its rules of dress to meet these standards and to reasonably enforce them. Some specific items of dress are not permitted at school because of the difficulty in making fine distinctions between appropriate and inappropriate attire, fit or length. Judgments of interpretation are always a part of dress code implementation. However, students and parents with questions are encouraged to check with the administration **before purchasing clothing**.

**Students should arrive at school dressed in appropriate uniform and shoes to avoid confrontation and being late for class. The locker room will be closed at 7:45 and should not be used as a closet.**

**The following consequences will be enforced when a student chooses to be out of compliance:**

- **1st Violation** – Written Warning/FACTS notice to parents and correct the violation.
- **2<sup>nd</sup> Violation** – FACTS referral, Parents are notified and are expected to bring a change of clothes or correct the violation. If not, the student will serve an out of school suspension the following day.
- **3<sup>rd</sup> Violation** – FACTS referral, and student may not return to school until a parent conference is held to determine if the student will remain at VCA.
- **4<sup>th</sup> Violation** – FACTS referral, OSS, or student may be dismissed for non-compliance

### **MS/HS UNIFORM TOPS**

1. Collared solid **red, gray or black** short sleeved shirt with VCA LOGO, purchased through Booster. The link is located on the school website.
2. VCA Storm Team Shirts, VCA Logo T-Shirts, and past years chapel t-shirts (non-collared) may be worn on Fridays only with uniform bottoms.
3. 2024-25 VCA Chapel t-shirts are worn on chapel day with uniform bottoms.
4. Plain, solid red, black, gray or white sweaters, vests, and lightweight jackets may be worn with a school uniform shirt.
5. **VCA "hoodies"** may be worn, but the hood may not be placed on the head. Hoodies may not contain writing or pictures of any kind other than the academy name or logo.
6. **Undershirts** may be worn but must comply with school colors (red, grey, black, or white)
7. **SENIORS ONLY** may wear college/university hoodies once they are accepted to that particular school with office approval.
8. Seniors may opt out the 25<sup>th</sup> of each month as a senior privilege.

### **UNIFORM BOTTOMS (GIRLS)**

1. **Elementary Girls K-5 only** may wear skirts, shorts, or skort (must be two inches above the knee or longer.)
2. **Elementary girls** may wear shorts and tights under skirts in school colors.
3. Black, grey or khaki- pants, capris, cropped pants, joggers. Black or grey denim **is allowed**.

4. Capri/cropped pants may be purchased from other department stores in khaki, grey or black twill.
5. **No stretch pants, yoga pants**, sweatpants, or tight-fitting pants. Pants may not have holes, rips or patches etc.
6. MS or HS girls may not wear shorts, skirts or skorts.

**\*No blue jeans, stonewashed, blue cotton/denim pants, bib-overalls, warm-up pants, sweatpants, leather, pleather, stretch pants, leggings, jeggings spandex, lycra, or tight styles.**

### UNIFORM BOTTOMS (BOYS)

1. **Black, grey, or khaki pants or joggers.** Shorts and pants may be purchased from other department stores.
2. Pants/shorts may not have holes or rips and worn at the waist.
3. The hem should be neat, not frayed or cut-off.
4. Boys shorts must be worn at the top of the knee, **not mid-thigh.**
5. Boxers or athletic shorts may not hang below the bottom of the shorts.
6. Black or grey denim only is allowed.

### ACCESSORIES – BOYS & GIRLS

1. Boys with earrings must wear clear posts, clear studs or nothing at all during school hours or school related activities.
2. Nose piercing- clear posts or studs must be worn
3. Boys may not wear nail polish.
4. Jewelry, belts, socks or additional clothing that is excessive or distracting to the uniform is not permitted.
5. Extreme makeup should be avoided. Makeup should be tasteful and conservative.
6. **No hats**, headbands or bandanas worn during school hours. Appropriate headwear (caps, sweatbands, etc.) will be allowed for outside athletic activities.
7. Sunglasses may not be worn on your head or indoors during school hours.
8. Students that attend Victory Church Wednesday night groups may wear their t-shirts or sweatshirts on Wednesdays to school.
9. Belts may be worn with belt loops but belts are not required. A coordinating, conservative, and solid colored belt may be worn.
10. Offensive pictures or logos are not permitted on any article of clothing or accessory.

### SHOES

1. Shoes must have a closed toe and closed heel.
2. No steel toed shoes, hard heel boots, or high heel stilettos. (These will damage the gym floor and heels will slip through the planks on the deck areas) Wedge heels are acceptable.
3. Tennis shoes must be worn in Physical Education daily and only soft soled shoes may be worn on the gym floor.
4. **No “crocs”, slides or flip-flops** allowed during class.

### HAIR/SKIN

1. Students must be neatly groomed, and all hair issues must be resolved in 2 days or less.
2. **Boys must be clean shaven.** (We have pre-k through elementary on this campus and it is important that our young men be clean cut and shaven daily due to the multi ages as well as preparing for the workforce)
3. All hair styles must be clean and neat. **Boys’ hair length may not exceed the top of the collar and bangs may not cover the eyes or hang in your face.** If a boy’s hair does exceed the collar, it must

be pulled up neatly to meet dress code requirements during school hours and school sporting events.

4. Hair attire, including sweatbands, curlers, picks and/or other headgear are not allowed. Headbands are permitted only to keep hair out of the face.
5. Hair may be highlighted or colored with a **“natural” hair color only**. No blue, red, yellow, pink, green, purple hair dye is allowed all over, in braids, tips of hair, or highlights.

**SPECIAL OCCASIONS** – On special occasions VCA may determine that uniforms will not be required. On such days, parents will be notified in advance as to the date and occasion for special dress. Students will be expected to dress in **modest attire**. For example, tank tops, crop tops, strapless, or spaghetti strap tops, bike shorts, yoga pants or pajamas pants are not permitted. Shorts must be no shorter than 2” above the knee.

#### **“Weight Room/Work Out/Gym” Attire**

**Boys** will be required to wear VCA sports attire (t-shirt, shorts, tennis shoes).

**Girls** may wear their PE uniform, gym shorts (5’ inseam) or spandex leggings with a cover shirt.

**Volleyball players** must wear cover shorts outside the gym. Calf length spandex leggings are encouraged. Spandex shorts must be 5’ inseam or longer. (5’ is measured from center of short down each leg) No tank tops permitted for boys or girls.

**Theme days** - Students are expected to dress in theme. If not, students must be in uniform. **All modesty standards remain in effect on special occasions and theme days.**

#### **Friday “Spirit Day” Attire**

Students may wear a VCA sports team shirt, VCA club, previous years chapel t-shirts, or VCA t-shirt of their choice with uniform bottoms. Jeans are not permitted.

#### **“Jeans Day” for Missions or Special Offerings**

Throughout the year, the administration will announce a special day in which students who choose to participate may wear jeans by donating \$1.00 or \$2.00 to the special cause.

#### **“Opt Out Day” Attire**

Students are permitted to wear non-uniform attire as long as it is **modest and appropriate** for school. Students are provided wrist bands designating permission for them to participate. \*No jeans with holes, rips or tears, warm-up pants, pajama bottoms, sweatpants, athletic pants, leather, pleather, stretch pants, leggings, spandex, or tight styles.

(MS students who earn 6 negative marks on their STORM Card or who have earned a Yellow or Red Storm Card lose the privilege to participate in “Opt Out” days, as designated on the card).

#### **“Sports Day” Attire**

On game days, VCA athletes are permitted to wear their sports jersey with their school uniform bottoms except for Chapel Day. If the jersey is of a tank top nature, then it should be worn over a “spirit” shirt.

#### **“Chapel Day” Attire**

Students may wear their uniform or the present year chapel t-shirt. (Previous years chapel t-shirts are permitted to be worn on Friday.)