



Parent Handbook

A ministry of
First @ Firewheel
5500 Lavon Drive, Garland, Texas 75040

Mrs. Stephanie Fuchs, Principal
Pastor Adam Herod, Headmaster
Dr. E. Wayne Hanks, Senior Pastor

Revised January 2019

Firewheel Christian Academy's educational philosophy is emphasizing academic excellence, balanced extra-curricular offerings, and service to the community.

Firewheel Christian Academy strives to develop an individual and a graduate who will:

- practice the Gospel values of loving God, loving others, and loving himself
- think and communicate with clarity and precision
- exhibit curiosity, discernment, and reflection as a life-long learner
- achieve a balanced life based on spiritual, emotional and physical health
- seek opportunities to serve through community outreach
- make ethical decisions, act with integrity, and accept responsibility for his actions
- demonstrate self-confidence and discipline in applying his unique gifts and talents
- collaborate to accomplish goals, solve problems, and resolve conflict
- manifest the living presence of God in his life

Vision Statement

Students from Firewheel Christian Academy will acquire wisdom, knowledge, and a biblical worldview as evidenced by a lifestyle of character, leadership, service, stewardship, and worship. (Matthew 22:37; Luke 2:52; Matthew 5:13-14; and Romans 12:1)

Mission Statement

The mission of Firewheel Christian Academy states that the school exists to nurture and develop the whole child: spiritually, intellectually, physically, and artistically.

Philosophy of Education

Firewheel Christian Academy is a ministry of First @ Firewheel. It was established in 1980 as a private Christian school committed to providing a biblically-based education by using biblically based curriculum to teach all the subjects as parts of an integrated whole with the Scriptures as the center. We strive to operate as an extension of the family under the assumption that the education of young people is the responsibility of parents.

Doctrinal Statement

1. **We believe** the Bible to be the inspired and only infallible and authoritative Word of God. (*II Timothy 3:14; II Peter 1:21*)
2. **We believe** there is only one God, eternally existent in three persons: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. (*Genesis 1:1; Matthew 28:19; John 10:30*)

3. **We believe** in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ (*John 10:33*); in His virgin birth (*Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23; Luke 1:35*); in His sinless life (*Hebrews 4:15; 7:26*); in His miracles (*John 2:11*); in His vicarious and atoning death (*I Corinthians 15:3; Ephesians 1:7; Hebrews 2:9*); in His bodily resurrection (*John 11:25; I Corinthians 15:4*); in His ascension to the right hand of the Father (*Mark 16:19*); in His personal return to this earth in power and glory to rule a thousand years. (*Acts 1:11; Revelation 19:11*).
4. **We believe** in the blessed hope – the rapture of the Church at Christ’s coming.
5. **We believe** the only means of being cleansed from sin is through repentance and faith in the precious blood of Christ.
6. **We believe** that the regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely essential for personal salvation. (*John 3:16-19; 5:24; Romans 3:23; 5:8-9; Ephesians 2:9-10; Titus 3:5*).
7. **We believe** that the redemptive work of Christ on the cross provides healing of the human body in answer to prayer.
8. **We believe** in the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a holy life.
9. **We believe** in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost; the one to everlasting life and the other to everlasting punishment. (*John 5:28-29*)

School History

In January 1980, a small group of leaders initiated strategy to organize a Christian school as part of the ministries of First @ Firewheel. Pastor E. Wayne Hanks, Reverend and Mrs. Raymond White, Mr. and Mrs. Bill Pyle, Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Ratcliff and others, designed a long-range plan to begin the school. Submitted to the congregation, the plan was approved unanimously. A school committee was created with Mr. Gordon Ratcliff as first chairman. After much prayer and many meetings, Buckingham North Christian School was launched September 1981, with five kindergarten students. The 1982-83 school year registered 23 students in one kindergarten class and one first-second grade combination class. More grades were added as the years progressed. Continued growth saw the addition of enrichment classes such as music, Spanish, computers and athletics. The Parent-Teacher Fellowship was formed in 1984-85. Equipping the computer lab was a first project. Relocation to the Lavon Drive campus in 2004 has greatly enhanced future potential for achieving the school’s mission. In 2007, the name was changed to Firewheel Christian Academy.

School Sponsorship and Affiliation

Firewheel Christian Academy is a ministry of First @ Firewheel. We are accredited of the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI).

School Hours

School Office:	7:30 A.M.-3:45 P.M.
Before-School Supervision:	7:00 A.M.-8:00 A.M.
Four Year Old 5-Day Program:	8:00 A.M.-3:00 P.M.
Four Year Old 3-Day Program (T/Wed/Th)	9:00 A.M.-2:00 P.M.
5 Year Old	8:00 A.M.-3:00 P.M.
1 st grade -on	8:00 A.M.-3:30 P.M.
After-School Supervision:	3:40 P.M.- 6:00 P.M.

Summer Hours: (Monday-Thursday) 9:00 A.M.- 3:00 P.M.
On early dismissal days students will be dismissed at 11:45 am (K4 & K5) or 12:00 pm (grades 1-9).

Admission Philosophy

Firewheel Christian Academy purposes to provide a Christian education. If accepted for admission, potential and current families must adhere to FCA policies and procedures. As a private institution, attendance at FCA is a privilege and not a right. This privilege may be forfeited by any student who does not conform to the school's standards of conduct and/or who is unwilling to adjust to our environment. FCA admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origins 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, national and ethnic origin in admissions policies. FCA reserves the right to enroll students on the basis of academic performance, religious commitment, lifestyle choices, and personal qualifications including a willingness to cooperate with FCA administration and to abide by its policies. The school maintains the right to refuse the admittance to anyone who fails to meet entrance requirements and to suspend or dismiss any student who violates the standards set down in the Student Handbook or other rules and regulations as established by the school administration.

Admissions Process

1. Registration for returning students and their siblings will be open in December of the current academic school year.
2. Registration will be open to the general public the first week in February. Students in grades 2nd and on will be given a diagnostic assessment for placement decisions. Additionally, families will meet with the principal.
3. Registration is on a first-come basis. While teacher requests can be made, final placement decisions will be made at the discretion of the principal.

Student Disabilities

Students who have been diagnosed as having a learning disability will be required to meet the same academic standards as all other students in their grade. A student with a severe learning disability will not be admitted to FCA due to the lack of adequate staff, funding and facilities.

Tuition

1. A charge of **\$25.00** will be required for all returned checks and late tuition payments.
2. Student report cards will be withheld when tuition or other fees are more than **60 days late**. A student whose tuition is more than two months late may be asked to leave the school.
3. Student financial records must be current in order for a student to be eligible to begin a new school year.

Academic Probation and Dismissal

If a student does not exhibit proficiency at his grade level, upon recommendation of the teacher and principal, the student may be retained.

Promotion/Retention Policy

Any student failing two or more subjects for the academic year will be promoted after he/she has successfully completed the school-approved summer school.

Report Cards and Progress Reports

Progress reports are sent home at the end of the third week in the session. Report Cards are issued one week after the end of each session (six-weeks). Progress reports and report cards should be signed and returned promptly. Parents are encouraged to schedule conferences as needed. Parents have access to their child's grades within the Headmaster system.

K4 Grading Scale

Grade	Interpretation
E	Excellent
V	Very Good
G	Good
S	Satisfactory
N	Needs Improvement

K5-and older students Grading Scale

Percentage	Grade
100-97	A+
96-94	A
93-90	A-
89-87	B+
86-84	B
83-80	B-
79-77	C+
76-74	C
73-70	C-
69-below	F

Grading and Testing

1. One assignment can yield grades for more than one subject. For example, a history assignment can be used for a history grade in its content and for a writing grade in its spelling and writing mechanics.
2. Student assessment will occur throughout the academic year. These assessments are designed to serve as a formative tool for teachers.

Homework and Daily Workload

The purpose of homework is to provide an opportunity for the student to develop discipline and good study habits as well as provide an opportunity for the parent to become involved with their child's studies. It is an opportunity to reinforce the concepts presented in the curriculum during the school day.

Honor Roll

1. Eligibility for the Honor Roll will include academic.
2. In order to be on the "A" Honor Roll students must receive all "A's" on the report card. (average "90" or above)

3. Students on the "AB" Honor Roll must not make lower than a "B" in any subject.

Attendance

Students **cannot** miss more than **15 days** per year. If a student surpasses 15 absences, their case will be reviewed by the Firewheel Christian Academy Advisory Committee and may result in expulsion or retention for that grade level.

Excused Absences

Absences resulting from illness and family emergencies will be excused. The principal considers other valid reasons for absences on a case-by-case basis. Students will be permitted to make up work missed due to an excused absence only.

Tardiness

Students are expected to be prompt in their arrival to school and to subsequent classes throughout the day. It is important for all students to be on time.

Illness and Permission to Leave School

Teachers will not release any student to anyone without prior notice from the school office. The teachers and the principal have the responsibility for and temporary custody of all the students while they are at school. Students arriving late to the campus or leaving early must be signed in or out in the office by a parent or pre-approved person.

Medical and Professional Appointments

Leaving during the school day for appointments is strongly discouraged. Medical appointments should be arranged for after school hours whenever possible. If there is no alternative, parents should provide a doctor's note to the school office.

Make-Up Work

Please check with your child's teacher regarding make-up expectations.

Student Conduct

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that is honoring to God, themselves, their parents, and the school. This expectation applies to the time that students are in school and at school activities as well as the time they are away from school.

Student Discipline

The goal of all disciplinary procedures at FCA is to encourage the development of godly character in every student. Discipline is instruction according to biblical standards. Discipline at FCA should develop self-control and character in students as well as the attitude of proper biblical submission to authority. FCA seeks to teach students the commandments of God, and to train them by comparing their behavior to biblical requirements and correcting them appropriately when they fail.

Basic School Rules

The following list of rules is the essential standard for behavior that FCA expects of all students. Teachers will require students to follow the classroom rules.

1. Students will adhere to basic Christian standards of behavior and speech.

2. Students will treat all faculty members, staff, parents, visitors, and other students with respect. Respect and care will also be given to school materials, equipment and facilities.
3. Students will dress appropriately and modestly according to the uniform policy.
4. Students are not to use school-owned electronic devices except as directed by the teacher.
5. Computers are only to be used for legitimate academic purposes.

Bullying

Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.” In order to be considered bullying, the behavior must be aggressive and include:

1. An Imbalance of Power: Kids who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.
2. Repetition: Bullying behaviors happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.

Anti-Bullying Plan

1. The Incident is reported

2. The Incident is investigated

If the bullying behavior/incident is founded in truth, the following steps are taken:

Step 1: The principal will have a conference with student If severe enough, move to Step 2.

Step 2: The student’s parents are contacted and requested to come in for a conference with the principal. During the conference, the parents are informed of their child’s behavior, the school policy, and the consequences for future infractions. (If a second incident occurs, the student could receive *up to 3 days* of suspension)

Step 3: A third incident results in *up to 5 days* of suspension.

Step 4: The fourth incident results in a recommendation for expulsion.

Office Visits for Misconduct

Students will be sent to the office **immediately** when the following behaviors are observed or suspected: verbal arguing with an adult, disobedience to instruction, bullying, fighting, stealing, destroying property, obscene vulgar or profane language bringing obscene materials, leaving campus without permission, possession of alcohol, tobacco, weapons, and drugs, etc. FCA reserves the right of not enrolling a student or dismissing a student at any time for excessive office visits.

Dress Code: Uniforms

1. FCA uniform shirts are sold through the school office only.
2. Only FCA sweatshirts, hoodies, and jackets are allowed in class. The FCA uniform shirt **must** be worn underneath. During cooler weather solid color turtlenecks shirts or long sleeve shirts (white, black, navy and gray) may be worn underneath.
3. Pant and skirt guidelines are as follows:

- Uniform style skirts are French Toast navy/gold plaid (specific style) (Girls only)
 - Solid color khaki, navy blue or black capris and knee-length shorts are also acceptable.
 - Solid color khaki or navy blue jumpers are acceptable. Parents must order through school office. Please wear shorts under jumpers. (Girls only)
 - Knee-length, uniform style shorts and long pants are allowed.
 - Solid color navy blue jeans may be worn on Fridays only. No holes in the jeans.
4. Shoes:
- **All students must wear athletic shoes and socks everyday.** Girls may wear solid color (white, navy, black, beige) leggings or tights underneath their jumpers or skirts.
5. Other Dress Code items:
- Boys are not allowed to wear earrings.
 - No Mohawk, unnatural colors, "Punk" hairdos, "hair tails", etc. are not allowed.
 - Any and all items regarding the dress/uniform code are at the discretion of the principal.

The office staff can call the parent and request them to bring students the correct clothing.

Dress Code (on non-uniform dates only)

1. Students **cannot wear** spaghetti strap dresses, halter tops, crop tops, tank tops or shirts with inappropriate slogans. Students should not wear clothing or accessories that represent secular music groups or other inappropriate groups.
2. Any book bags, lunch boxes, and clothing representing "witchcraft" is unacceptable.
3. Students who are inappropriately dressed may be required to wait in the school office until a change of clothing is brought for them.

Distribution and Consumption of Medication

If students need to take medication while at school or at a school-related activity, the medication must be sent from home with child's name and dosage and authorized in writing by the parent each year. **All medications must be dispensed and logged from the school office.**

Important Note: Students may return to school when they are fever-free for 24 hours.

Illness During School

If a student begins running a temperature, we will call the parents to pick them up.

Immunization State Regulations and Health Screening

Go to www.dshs.texas.gov for the state guidelines

All students must be current with state-required immunizations.

Campus Visitors

All visitors must check-in at the school office.

Parents are invited to join their children for lunch on campus.

To avoid interrupting the classroom teaching or a teacher's planning time, parents are not allowed into the classroom without an appointment.

Delivery and Pickup of Students

1. **Parents should wait in vehicles in the carpool line.**

2. For the safety of your child, the speed limit in the parking lot is **10 miles an hour**.
3. Maps, carpool names, and information concerning carpool lines will be distributed at Parent/Student Orientation from the school office.
4. If a student is to be picked up by someone other than the regular driver, the office and teacher **must be notified**.
5. If parents need to pick up a student during school hours, they must check in at the school office.

Field Trips, Parties and Volunteers

The FCA experience is designed to extend beyond the classroom. Field trips are an important part of the educational program. Each class will participate in field trips. Faculty members will decide the location for the field trips and supervise these excursions. Parents may provide transportation in private cars, or special group transportation may be provided. Arrive in the school lobby for "check-in." **Siblings do not attend field trips.** All drivers must be pre-approved by the school.. The driver and owner of any automobile that is used must look to their own insurance coverage for the purpose of covering their liability and damages to their vehicle. When traveling, all drivers will require that all passengers wear seat belts and that posted speed limits always be observed. Each driver assumes full legal and financial responsibility for the operation of his/her vehicle and the safety of the passengers. If there is a mechanical problem or an accident, the driver must ensure the safety and medical care for the students as a first priority. Personal music and devices **ONLY** play Christian music. In summary, while on field trips or school-sponsored activities, students and parents are expected to conduct themselves as in the presence of God, doing all for His glory, in harmony with the standards and policies of FCA.

Class Parties/Student Birthday Celebrations

Please adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Birthdays are to be celebrated at lunch. Cookies are requested. **Cakes and candles are not allowed**
2. If a student brings invitations to class to be handed out to classmates, the **entire class** must have an invitation in order for the teacher to permit the distribution of invitations.
3. The teacher must approve all activities related to an in-class party, even if parents or students do the planning.

Volunteers

Volunteers greatly enhance the quality of the school and are much appreciated. Students benefit and feel "special" when parents are able to help with school activities.

1. All volunteers must meet all requirements for "Safeguarding Our Children."
2. Anyone entering the building during school hours must sign in at the school office..
3. Volunteers are **not to bring** pre-school age children to school activities, class parties, field trips or any other event that occurs during school hours.

Change of Contact Information

When families move or change emails addresses during the course of a school year, it is critical that they notify the school office.

School Closure Information

Should severe weather force the Garland Independent School District schools to close for the day, we will close. Such closings or delayed openings are announced on WFAA Channel 8.