



Student & Family Handbook

MISSION STATEMENT

We exist to provide a Christ-centered education for the children who attend our school so that they are prepared to passionately serve God in whatever He has planned for their life after high school graduation. Because of this, we call ourselves a “Kingdom Preparatory” school, not simply a “college preparatory” school. Our ultimate goal is to bring honor and glory to the Lord through our teaching and discipleship of the students we serve.

ADMISSIONS

We serve families of Good Shepherd's Fold, Global Outreach International missionary families, and families who serve with Amazima Ministries. As space and staffing permits, we consider accepting students from families who live and serve in the nearby area outside of the previously mentioned organizations.

TUITION

- There is no cost for the children of GSF Missionaries.
- The cost to Global Outreach (non-GSF) missionary children is:
 - Elementary (K-5th grade): \$1,250/child per year
 - Middle and Upper school (6th -12th): \$1,500/child per year
- The cost for the children of families not affiliated with Global Outreach is:
 - Elementary (K-5th grade): \$2,500/child per year
 - Middle and High School (6th – 12th): \$3,000/child per year

These figures are for the 2020/2021 school year. Tuition is subject to change.

CURRICULUM

GSFIS is an “American” school, which means we are aligned with American standards for grade-level expectations and overall educational outcomes. We use a variety of publishers and curricula. Some of our texts are “Christian” while others are secular. We see the text as a tool to be implemented by a wise and discerning teacher and therefore the curriculum does not “drive” the course. The teacher is the guide and has the freedom, in consultation with their administrator, to use whichever materials will best aid learning.

DAILY SCHEDULE

The school day begins at 8:30 with a “morning meeting.” Students may arrive up to fifteen minutes before the beginning of the school day. Supervision will not be guaranteed earlier. Students have a break from 10:30-11:00 and eat lunch from 1:00–1:45. The school day ends at different times for different students depending on their age and their schedule. The last classes of the day will be finished at 3:30. Classes end at 1:00 pm on Fridays.

ATTENDANCE

Any assignments missed must be made up in a timely manner in coordination with the teachers. Absences in elementary school (K-5th grade) and middle school (6th-8th grades) must be fewer than 20 for the year or advancement to the next grade level may be in jeopardy. Absences in high school (9th-12th grades) must be fewer than 12 per semester or no credit will be awarded for that semester/course. Exceptions may be granted due to unusual circumstances like extended illness.

SICK POLICY

Though our small class sizes have many benefits, one of the drawbacks is that illness spreads much faster with how closely we all work together. We also have students who come from many different backgrounds, which means that some may have more severe reactions to illness than that of the average child.

With this in mind, we ask that if you have a child who is sick, that you please keep them home until you are certain they are not contagious. Generally speaking, the guidelines for many illnesses are 24 hours fever-free without fever-reducing medicine and 24 hours without vomiting and/or diarrhea, again, without medicine aiding in this. We kindly request teachers to follow the same guidelines.

For an illness such as a cold, we understand that it can be long-lasting, and we certainly do not expect you to keep your child at home that entire duration. We also recognize that certain illnesses, including malaria and bilharzia, are not contagious even with the above symptoms present. Please use your discretion in these circumstances.

CALENDAR

The school year will consist of four quarters for elementary and middle school classes and two semesters for all high school classes. We will divide the school year in half around Christmas break, so that following first semester exams (high school), the students can have a true "Sabbath." We will begin the school year in late July or early August, end in late May or early June, constituting a total of 180 school days. We will try to take Ugandan holidays into account as we schedule the school year, but we cannot guarantee that these days will be "off."

COLLEGE ADMISSION

We will provide a transcript of all high school courses completed through our school. Any courses taken elsewhere will need their own documentation as we are not able to vouch for their content or rigor.

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

We do not have specific graduation requirements. These will be determined by the parents, in consultation with the teachers, and will take into account each student's particular post-secondary objectives. In light of this, parents should research the admission requirements for the colleges and universities that their child wishes to attend and we will work with the families to prepare the student for admission to the school of their choice. Standardized testing like the SAT is administered by the College Board at various locations in Kampala and it will be the parents' responsibility to see that their child registers and takes any necessary tests. We are happy to advise and assist with this process.

We recommend the following:

Math: 4 Credits

Science: 4 Credits

History: 4 Credits

English: 4 Credits

Bible/Theology: 4 Credits
Foreign Language: 2 Credits
Physical Education: 1/2 Credit
Health: 1/2 Credit
Fine Arts/Performing Arts: 1 Credit

ACCREDITATION

GSF International School is not accredited by any organization. We are a “member school” of the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) and are working toward accreditation with this organization. We submit transcripts to colleges as a “homeschool.” This is one reason why standardized testing is essential for our students who wish to apply to various colleges and universities. A College Board administered test such as the SAT serves as an independent reference point from which to view a student’s GPA and high school transcript.

ACHIEVEMENT TESTING

In the fourth quarter of each school year, we will conduct achievement testing in order to help evaluate a student’s progress through the curriculum and as accountability for our own educational performance as teachers. The results of these tests will be available for parents and teachers, but they are not used for any outside purposes or reported to any outside agency. We are currently using the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS). These test results can be useful for students when/if they transfer to a new school and the results can be given to prospective schools at the request of the parents.

TRANSPORTATION

We are not able to provide transport to or from school, except for field trips and other special events. We encourage parents to work together to solve this issue.

DRESS CODE

Please have your children dress modestly. Boys may wear pants or shorts that come to the knee. Once girls reach 4th grade they should wear skirts that come to the knee or below. Girls younger than 4th grade don’t need to wear skirts but do need to wear bottoms that are at least knee-length. If the bottoms are spandex or other similar stretchy material, she must wear something over the spandex that covers her backside. All girls need to wear tops that have straps that are at least two fingers wide. Shorts to the knee are permitted in the context of athletics or dance class (P.E., sports day, etc.). Leggings are permitted for athletics/dance but should be worn under knee-length shorts/skirts/dresses. This dress code is subject to change for special activities, with administrative approval. We operate under the broader rules of GSF which is in a “village” context, and we need to respect the more traditional views that this entails. Thank you!

STUDENT ELECTRONIC USE

Technology is a gift from God and we believe, if used appropriately it can be a great asset to the learning environment. We endeavor to teach our students what it means to use technology in a God-honoring way. Therefore, students are permitted to bring phones, tablets, and laptops to school but they should only be used when approved by the appropriate teacher or during break times. We encourage students to use breaks for personal interaction rather than staring at a screen, but we recognize that there may be legitimate need for using a device. Students should never view inappropriate content or share with other students.

GRADES

In the elementary school (K-5th) we will use the following grading scale:

N: Needs improvement

S: Satisfactory

E: Excellent

In the middle and high school, we will use the following grading scale:

Letter Grade	Numerical Grade	Grade point
A+	97-100	4.00
A	93-96	4.00
A-	90-92	3.67
B+	87-89	3.33
B	83-86	3.00
B-	80-82	2.67
C+	77-79	2.33
C	73-76	2.00
C-	70-72	1.67
D+	67-69	1.33
D	63-66	1.00
D-	60-62	0.67
F	Below 60	0.00

If student work is turned in after it is due, there will be a 10% reduction in grade for each school day that it is late. For example, if an assignment is due on Monday but is turned in on Tuesday, the maximum grade the student can receive is an 90%. If it is due on Monday but turned in on Thursday, the maximum grade possible is a 60%. If not turned in by the fifth day, the grade will automatically become a 0%. Extenuating circumstances will be handled on a case-by-case basis, given communication with parents.

DISCIPLINE PROCEDURE

We commit to address outward behavior and internal “heart” problems from a loving and biblical perspective in partnership with the parents. Thus, we require at least one parent to be a professing Christian who agrees with the Global Outreach Statement of Faith which can be found at <https://globaloutreach.org/about#statement-of-beliefs>. Initial problems will be addressed by the teacher in the classroom. Should this not prove adequate, the appropriate administrator will be included in the conversation. At this point, a conversation with the parents will occur in order to make sure we are all proceeding in unison.

PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

The parents will meet twice a year with all of their child’s teachers to discuss the student’s progress. These conferences will occur at the end of the first quarter (usually October) and at the end of the third quarter (usually March). Parents or teachers may schedule meetings in addition to these as needed. If it is necessary to meet with a teacher, the parent(s) should request a meeting time that is good for both the teacher and parent(s). If necessary, the appropriate department head or administrator may be included in the meeting to assist with resolving the issue. We should all

proceed with an attitude of humility, assuming the best about the other person and not gossiping to others about an issue. We want to follow the pattern that Jesus describes in Matthew 18:15-17.

ABUSE PREVENTION/ STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS

If you become aware of any violation of the following policy please let a teacher or administrator know immediately.

Abuse of any kind is not permitted. This would include verbal, physical, sexual, and emotional abuse. We are to treat one another with kindness as we would want to be treated. Conversations should avoid gossip, vulgar or profane language, sexual joking or other inappropriate ways of speaking. Students and teachers should avoid inappropriate physical contact. Students are asked to treat one another with respect and dignity as each student is an image bearer of God. Abuse takes many shapes and forms. For the purpose of this document, abuse is identified as Child abuse can occur with or without the consent of the victim. In the context of this policy, definitions include sexual abuse, physical abuse, emotional abuse, and neglect.

Bullying:

GSFIS does not tolerate bullying of any kind. Students engaged in any form of bullying will be subject to disciplinary action as laid out in the Discipline Procedure section above.

“Bullying occurs when a person or group is intimidated, frightened, excluded or hurt by a pattern of reoccurring behaviors directed at them by others.” “Bullying in Schools – The Hidden Curriculum” Greg Griffiths 2003

Some actions when present in an ongoing form that constitute bullying are:

- Physical aggression (including hitting, punching, kicking)
- Teasing or verbal abuse (including insults, name calling, racial remarks)
- Discrimination based on characteristics such as age, race, ethnicity, religion, sex, family status, physical or mental abilities
- Intentional exclusion of others from activities or friendship groups
- Putting others in humiliating situations or insulting experiences
- Damaging a person’s property/possessions or taking them without permission
- Threatening a person or his/her belongings through gestures, actions, or words
- Written/verbal/electronic messages that contain threats, putdowns, gossip or slander
- Cyberbullying through social media sites, instant messages, email or other electronic means. Cyberbullying includes sending, posting, or sharing negative, harmful, false, or mean content about someone else. Cyberbullying also includes using electronic means to harass, threaten, or intimidate someone.

Sexual Harassment:

GSFIS has adopted the following definition of sexual harassment:

“Sexual harassment means any conduct, comment, gesture or contact of a sexual nature, whether on a one-time basis or in a continuous series of incidents, that might reasonably: (a) be expected to cause offense or humiliation to any individual; or (b) be perceived by the individual as placing a condition of a sexual nature on employment or on any opportunity for training or promotion, academic status or academic accreditation; (c) interfere with an individual’s work or academic performance or create an intimidating, hostile or offensive working, academic or residence environment.” Federal Govt. Policy on Harassment in the Work Place, 1991, Canada

If behavior is identified that raises concerns regarding the treatment and social interactions of a child, but does not meet GSFIS's definition of sexual harassment, a conclusion of inappropriate behavior will be reached.

DISPLAY OF AFFECTION

Whether students are permitted to be involved in dating/romantic relationships is left to each family to decide and we will support each family in their respective positions. While on the GSF campus, during school hours, students may not show physical affection of a romantic nature towards one another.

DISTANCE LEARNING

As a result of the 2020 pandemic, we have been forced to learn new ways of conducting school. As we have learned this new technology, we have become convinced that some of these techniques need to become a permanent part of how we educate our students. Starting in the 2020/2021 school year, all students will be enrolled in "Google Classrooms" and should be able to participate in "Zoom meetings." When school is meeting in our physical location, these features will merely supplement our teaching. However, when physically meeting together is not possible due to pandemic, political unrest, or prolonged student illness, etc., we will rely heavily on these platforms for instruction, assessment and communication. We will work with families to learn these new technologies and to ensure that every family has the means with which to use these programs. More details will be communicated at a later date.