



# ALL CHILDREN'S ACADEMY

*Parent/Student Handbook*

2024



## GENERAL INFORMATION

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### Welcome to All Children's Academy

All Children's Academy is a 501©(3) non-profit faith-based school that blends classical education with integrative academics, biblical concepts, and therapeutic methods to ensure students are successful in their studies. This approach enhances our learner's educational experience by intricately weaving within many areas of their lives beyond the walls of our school.

ACA partners with local public schools, adhering to the Arkansas state frameworks and national testing, but is not governed by state entities. The Arkansas curriculum framework serves as the foundation of the state's school accountability system. These frameworks, also known as *academic content standards* in statute, describe what students must know and be able to do in each academic subject area at each grade level, as specified by the Student Board of Education (SBOE). Statute does not specify how the subject matter is to be taught or what resources teachers must use; rather, districts, schools, and teachers are held accountable for ensuring that students demonstrate mastery of the knowledge and skills in the frameworks by scoring "proficient" or above on state assessments.

We are excited that you have chosen us to provide educational services to your child/children and will strive to support your child/children throughout your time with us.

### Our Mission

ACA uses a multi-tiered learning approach to match each child's learning pace and individual needs. Working within the Arkansas state frameworks curriculum, our certified teachers strive to instill a lifelong love of learning into each student. Outdoor learning, growth mindset, in-house therapeutic services, and community engagement are strongly utilized within the teaching model of the Academy.



With an emphasis on academic and social and emotional growth, ACA families are given the opportunity to pursue an integrative approach to everyday learning and development. High expectations for behavior and regular parent communication ensure safety and consistency in the classroom.

## Review and Revision of Policies

This handbook is for parents and children who are considering or are already attending ACA. The handbook provides a better understanding of paperwork, environment, and other factors relevant to our students and parents and is not intended to be comprehensive.

ACA reserves the right to make amendments, modifications, changes, and updates of policies that we believe are in the best interest of the school, the students, and the staff. All changes to policies will be published through typical communication channels and updated in this handbook. Administration along with our board members will have policy revision capabilities and access.

## Academic Calendar

<https://www.allchildrensacademyhs.com/academic-calendar.html>

## Tuition and Program Fees

Tuition covers “Field Day Friday” outings (Garvan Woodland Gardens) and performances. Tuition does NOT cover daily snacks, lunches, field trips, school supplies, or after-school care. Please note that tuition and fees are subject to change based on sponsorships in the future with the growth of ACA.



## Contact Information

### *ACA General*

- *Office:* 501-617-8114
- *Email:* [aca@allchildrensacademyhs.org](mailto:aca@allchildrensacademyhs.org)
- *Address:* 105 Village Rd, Hot Springs, AR 71913
- *Website:* [www.allchildrensacademyhs.com](http://www.allchildrensacademyhs.com)
- *Facebook:* [All Children's Academy | Facebook](#)

### *ACA Director*

- Amy Diehl – Director  
*Email:* [adiehl@allchildrensacademyhs.org](mailto:adiehl@allchildrensacademyhs.org)

## Calendar Year Tuition

- *Full days:* \$8,200 per 178-day school year
- *Payment Schedule:* monthly, semi-annually, annually
- *Full day tuition discounts:*
  - Upfront – 5% off
  - Semi-annually – 2% off
  - Monthly – 1<sup>st</sup> day of the month

## Acceptable Forms of Payment

- All Children's Academy accepts payments through FACTS only, which is required for all students.
- This includes payments for tuition, lunches, field trips, and other fees.



## Withdrawal Process

Withdrawal must be submitted in written form and submitted by May 1<sup>st</sup> of the academic year that your child is currently enrolled in.

## Joining in the Middle of the Year

Students must have completed paperwork checklist according to ACA processes and copies of all required documents turned in before child will be allowed to attend school.

## Lunch Forms

Lunch will be provided for a fee Monday through Thursday. Please bring a sack lunch on Fridays. Please make sure your lunch balance is paid via FACTS by Friday of each week. Lunch will not be ordered for children who have a negative lunch balance.

# ACADEMICS

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## Academic Standards, Curriculum and Frameworks

ACA will offer outdoor learning experiences that follow unified themes, daily writing/reading, cursive and number patterns. Students will rely on daily routines at all levels that allow them to grow better at skills rather than to just finish a checklist. The curriculum will spiral on skills from kindergarten to the 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

Rote memorization will be a part of the foundational approach paired with multisensory hands-on *Project-Based Learning* that allows for critical thinking followed with paper-based accountability. *Project Based Learning* (PBL) is a teaching method in which students learn by actively engaging in real-world and personally meaningful projects.

The *Science of Reading* will be a cornerstone in our learning-to-read classroom. The *Science of Reading* is a comprehensive body of research that encompasses years of scientific knowledge,



spans across many languages, and shares the contributions of experts from relevant disciplines such as education, special education, literacy, psychology, neurology, and more.

The Arkansas state frameworks will be delivered at the mastery level to your child at his/her individual pace through small group instruction. This allows strong students to be challenged and to grow through the frameworks while allowing struggling learners to receive the proper support before being pushed past a skill that hasn't been developed automatically.

A full list of curriculum and curriculum guides is available upon request.

## Academic Approaches

<i>Approach/Idea</i>	<i>Principle/Process</i>	<i>Purpose/Benefits</i>
Reading therapy	Onsite dyslexia therapist may push into the classroom and co-teach with the teacher, will guide the teacher on best practices academic and curriculum plans, and will incorporate intervention techniques and accommodations as needed	Growing/building from individual current level rather than skipping steps to follow a curriculum guide providing tools to support daily function in addition to reading therapy
Small group reading	Highly trained teacher who is supported in pulling all children daily into small group math and reading	Builds the foundation to foster individual growth for the child
Confidence	Daily routine checklist, growth mindset, and individualized instruction	Confidence leads to academic growth



Inclusion	Small ratio with peers of varying skills and social levels; school that understands and celebrates individual strengths and weaknesses; encourages family involvement	Builds confidence, intrinsic motivation, and ownership of personal strengths and weaknesses; establishes normalcy and safety within the child's environment
Individualized schedule	Support staff to modify and adjust as needed	Flexible routine allows for the child to know what to expect, but to also not become stagnant in the day-to-day; small changes within routine lead to growth in executive function forcing the brain to change and adjust within a controlled and safe environment
Feeling safe	Small class sizes	Multiple opportunities for outdoor time and nature-based learning Multi-sensory approach that builds confidence and leads to confidence on pencil to paperwork
Small group CR math	Bringing the frameworks to each child to allow for a	Growth at individual level



	foundation to be built and extended on	
Growth mindset	Accepting weaknesses and pushing strengths	Understanding of personal strengths and weaknesses
Safe place retreat	Counseling team to assist students in identifying safe people and safe places in our school environment	Provides an environment for the child to grow and feel safe
Model differentiation	Multi-sensory Outdoor education	Hands on approach changes the “buy-in” from students and allows for them to learn through play  More confidence is gained as a result, and we see more confidence in pencil-to-paperwork
Support staff/model	Model is set up to create an environment where administration is hands-on with kids and/or available for supporting all staff and students	We have therapy staff, counseling staff, enrichment staff, educators and admin working together to honor God and students with their talents
Sensory diet	Therapists treat qualifying students based on their individual plan of care; train teachers on best practices; mix pushing into class and	When the plan is followed, the child will be successful  If child is not successful, team meets and adjusts with family





	pull-out model based on their plan of care	
Social skills to allow for career readiness	Striving to have moments of interest-led learning and opportunities to grow each students' strengths and reach their long-term goals	Providing leadership opportunities within our flex Friday outings for the child to practice strengths that lead to confidence and career readiness
Critical thinking	More time More freedom Smaller class size Staff working to partner with students to equip them with age-appropriate problem-solving skills in our setting	Backbone for success Build and hone these life skills

## Classroom Dynamics

ACA is a small environment that allows parental knowledge and consent over curriculum to meet their child's educational and social and emotional needs. We strive to empower families to guide their child/children. Our model is framed around a growth mindset and classroom community.

Daily routines are consistently used to give structure to a child's day. The learning approach includes foundational skills mixed with project-based learning and being partnered with high accountability for children to show they are growing in skills. Children are pulled in multiple small groups daily that facilitate the child's growth through goals. ACA facilitates the state framework to our students at each child's individual pace to completion at the mastery level.

Our certified teachers use "scaffolding" approaches that fit each individual child's learning needs. This process of teaching is where the teacher models and/or demonstrates how to solve a



problem for the students and then allows the student to try to solve the problem themselves by taking a step back and only giving support when needed.

ACA holds high accountability for behavior to maintain classroom safety and consistency. Open communication is expected between the classroom and the home, allowing discipline to come from the child's home.

## Grades

Each teacher will use mastery/unmastered, numerical, or letter grades. The form of grading is up to each individual teacher for their age group and skill level.

## Forest Fridays

Fridays are flexible for students to attend. They may use this day to spend with family or ACA, in accordance with the groups' plan. This day may include a visit from a community helper, a fun project incorporating weekly themes from the classroom, or "Forest Fridays" with a field trip for nature-based learning. ACA will notify parents of all Forest Friday events. Parent participation is strongly encouraged. The purpose of Forest Fridays is to get out in our community and provide enrichment activities for students and families.

# STUDENT LIFE

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## Christian Activity and Influence at ACA

- We will say the Lord's prayer daily.
- Behavior policy stems from encouraging strong character in each of our students
- Students will be built up and taught how to handle different situations from a place of accountability to themselves, their families, and God.
- Character awards align with the fruits of the Spirit.



- Worship songs will be taught and sung throughout the day and/or during music enrichment.
- Scripture verses will be assigned weekly for memorization. Students and teachers are free to pray for and with one another at any time.

## Screen Consumption

A primary goal of ACA is to remove screens from the classroom as much as possible. However, we will be using Chromebooks for some state testing, typing, coding lessons, and other assignments decided upon by the teachers. Students will not complete lessons online or spend more than 10% of their day on a computer.

## Classrooms

Classrooms will remain low for teacher-student ratio, and placement decisions will be determined by academic skills level and overall developmental readiness.

## Discipline

Proverbs 13:24 says, *“Whoever spares the rod hates their children, but the one who loves their children is careful to discipline them.”* It is the goal of ACA to build relationships with the students and to train them through consistent accountability. ACA empowers the family to discipline and instruct each child. Staff and parents are expected to work with one another to help guide the child and if proper steps are not taken, the child will not travel into the community with the school. Restoration of behavior is the goal for all students. Individual consequences and behavior plans will be given to meet individual children’s needs. Corporal punishment, however, will not be used by staff. Parents have the option to schedule a private conference with the director during the day.



## Student Property

Any property brought to school (outside of water bottles, clothing, lunchbox) is community property and is at risk of not being returned if lost or stolen. ACA provides recess equipment. There is a lost and found basket in the front hallway that will contain items left in the building.

## Dress Code

ACA trusts and values the input from our families. Students are expected to use the *GPS for Success* when dressing for school. Good grooming on the part of students is a factor in developing a desirable classroom climate and aids in promoting growth, pride, and service, establishing self-esteem, and developing respect in themselves and in our school.

A student's dress is expected to not be distracting, unreasonable, immodest, or unkempt. Any student whose dress or conduct is disruptive to the educational process or could constitute a threat to the safety, health, and welfare of self or others will result in a consultation with their parents and supporting staff and will be asked to change into more appropriate clothing. This may include wearing a sweater to cover a shirt or changing outfits. Remember, if you are in doubt whether the outfit is appropriate for school, it is not. When in doubt, do not wear it out.

The following guidelines are to be followed:

- Upon arrival at the school, students are to remove all hats and head coverings (unless otherwise approved by the teacher).
- While attending school, students may not dress unacceptably. The following example of unacceptable attire includes, but is not limited to:
  - No animal attire, action figure attire, costumes, or clothing/attire that distracts from the learning environment unless related to a teacher-planned activity such as Book Character Dress-Up Day or other approved school- wide activity



- Clothing which depicts, advertises, or promotes drugs, alcohol, tobacco, violence, gangs, nudity, obscenities, or profanity
- Clothing that contains messages that are vulgar, offensive, obscene, or libelous, that denigrate others based on federally protected classes
- Clothing or accessories that may pose a potential danger or threat such as that which may be used as a weapon, or pose a safety or health concern such as spiked jewelry, wallet chains, studded belts, or unusually large chain necklaces
- Clothing which could reflect gang membership, activity, affiliation, or gang look-a-like
- Clothing items which are brief or revealing are not appropriate apparel for the school day, such as halter tops, half-shirts, spaghetti strap tops, strapless tops, backless, or tops with one shoulder
- Midriffs must be always covered when students are standing or sitting
- Shorts, skirts, and dresses must be of an appropriate length: it should not rise above the mid-thigh and students must be able to bend over and/or sit down without the length of the garment becoming shorter than mid-thigh
- Any holes in pants/shorts/skirts must not have any tears that are above the mid-thigh
- Garments that are see-through or cut low
- Tops should cover all undergarments. At no times should undergarments be exposed

## Sweets and Treats

Students may bring sweets to celebrate their birthdays. They are restricted in the classroom outside of special celebrations. Soda and/or candy bars are not allowed for student snacks.



## Daily Snacks

Each child should bring a daily snack. It would be appreciated but is not required that parents provide their child with snacks monthly.

## Addressing Adults

All students are expected to address adults by their title and last name. For example, “Mr. Jones” unless the adult directs the child to use his/her first name. At that point the child must continue to use the adult’s title before their first name “Mr. Mike.” Please help to cultivate an atmosphere of respect by softly reminding children when they forget. Sir and Ma’am should be expected as well.

## Teachers’ Lounge

The teacher’s lounge/kitchen is off limits to students.

## Visitors at School

ACA loves visitors and helping hands! You are always welcome at lunch and on *Forest Fridays*. If you would like to volunteer in the classroom, please contact your child's teacher. All visitors must sign in at the front desk.

## Morning Procedures

7:45 – 8:00 AM	Free time (gym, outside, etc.)
8:01 AM – 2:45 PM	After 8:00 am, parents must come into the building to sign in their students. The doors will be locked after 8:00 AM.



## STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

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### Parent Teacher Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences will be scheduled every twelve (12) weeks. Parents or teachers may request a conference to review any social/emotional needs, academics, or other areas of concern at any time within those 12-week periods. Each class will have a universal form of communication with parents and weekly newsletters. There will also be a school-wide newsletter sent out.

### Volunteer Opportunities

ACA believes it takes all of us to build a healthy school. We have assembled volunteer committees and truly would be honored if you would contribute and sit on one of these committees to help us make fair and balanced decisions that represent the needs of all students. If you have a committee idea that is not listed, please submit your idea to the program director and offer your assistance by being on it. Please contact the PTO leader for any questions regarding opportunities to serve. Parents are encouraged to become volunteers with the PTO in one or more committees.

Our current committees include:

- Run Young & Free 5K & Kid Run
- Community Outreach
- Forest Fridays
- Gardening



## Therapy Services

Therapy services are offered to qualifying students through contracting with New Hope Therapy. Therapists support ACA staff through training, diagnostics and on-site treatment. Please talk with the director or teacher for more information.

## New Hope Therapy Process for Therapeutic Services

### *For homeschool enrolled children*

- 1.** Enrollment packet has therapy section
- 2.** ACA office will submit child information to New Hope
  - a. Parents will fill out the additional New Hope intake packet for therapeutic services
- 3.** Therapist will initiate testing at ACA for ACA therapy services partnered with New Hope
- 4.** Therapy will send results to New Hope administrative office who will work on PCP approval and insurance billing and to discuss costs with you. However, parents will not be subject to any costs above what insurance pays. This only applies to families receiving services through New Hope Therapy.
  - a. All insurance claims and processing will occur through outpatient services at New Hope on site at ACA
- 5.** ACA office contacts the parent to set up a therapy team meeting which includes
  - a. Needs for therapy
  - b. Needs for classroom
  - c. Review diagnostic findings
- 6.** Services through ACA will be initiated immediately after PCP approval and therapy team meeting if the child qualifies for services and your insurance will be billed as outpatient services





7. Communication throughout the process will be with the New Hope administrative team, and lead therapist.
8. If a child no longer attends ACA, they cannot receive services on this campus.

## OTHER POLICES AND REGULATIONS

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### Emergency Procedures

All parents will be notified of necessary emergencies and provided with updates as they are available. Weather will be closely monitored. Students and staff will practice emergency drills every nine (9) weeks. The following codes are used to assist staff in responding to emergencies:

- Code blue – used for suspicious activity in the vicinity of the school. This is used to gather and group children quickly.
- Code red – used for fire. Staff and students will meet in the front parking lot of the building
- Code gray – used for a tornado and/or other weather emergencies. Staff and students will gather into the interior hallways

### Late Pick-Up of Students

Pickup time for students is between 2:45 pm and 3:00 pm every day. Any student not picked up by 3:15 pm will be charged an additional \$25.

### Inclement Weather

When there is inclement weather and we choose to close, we will post this on our Facebook page and via email. Closings will be made by 6 AM the day of potential closing, based on the needs of



ACA students and their families. All closings/missed days for inclement weather will be made up if more than four (4) days.

## Infectious Disease and Other Health Situations

### Admission and Exclusion

- Share information: parents are expected to openly share information about their child's behavior, symptoms, or exposure to illnesses.
- Doctor's note is only necessary if any special care is required by the child or poses a health risk to others.
- Decision final say: ACA director decides if a child can attend/stay at school or if they cannot come to school/must be sent home.
- Criteria used include the child's ability to participate, the need for more care and the risk of spreading to others.

### Conditions or symptoms that DO NOT require exclusion:

- Common colds (regardless of color of nasal discharge)
- Coughs not associated with an infectious disease
- Watery yellow/white discharge or crusting eye discharge without fever, eye pain or eyelid redness and is not associated with pink or red conjunctivitis
- Rash without fever or behavioral changes
- Children with chronic infectious conditions that can be accommodated according to the legal requirement of federal law in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

## Drug Policy

All medication must be given hand-to-hand to a member of the ACA staff from the parent in its original bottle with a label. Inhalers, over the counter and prescription medicine may not be in a student's backpack.



Any illegal substances and/or alcohol are prohibited. The misuse or abuse of any legal or illegal substances (this includes vaping) will lead to the academy's student disciplinary process.

## Weapons

No weapons will be allowed on campus.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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### New Hope Therapy Therapeutic Team

- Olivia Jones – MS, CCC-SLP (Speech Therapy)
- Pam Handloser – MS, OTR/L (Occupational Therapy)
- Courtney Shull – PT, DPT (Physical Therapy)
- Amy Higgins – LCSW (Mental Health Therapy)
- Ashley Brown – LPEE (Diagnostic Examiner)

### ACA Association Members

- Colleen Villareal – Association President, Parent Representative, Fundraising
- Ashley Brown – Association Vice President, LPEE, New Hope Therapy, Education
- Nicki Sessions – PT, DPT, Business Owner, Anchored619 in Allegiance CEO, Co-founder
- Amy Diehl – ACA Program Director
- Tim Metcalf – Hot Springs 1st Choice Realty
- James Bornhoft, Bornhoft Law
- Sarah Miller – Parent Representative
- Matt Shull – Parent Representative
- Kayla Hartsfield - Member