



Mercy Ships Academy

m/v Africa Mercy

**Parent & Student
Handbook
2009-2010**

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CHAPTER 1: Introduction

1.1 Letter from the Head of the School

Dear Parents and Students,

*".... do it all for the glory of God."
1 Corinthians 10 v 31b*

Welcome to the start of the 2009/2010 academic year!

I have a growing sense of anticipation as I see the pieces God has put into place over the last few months, weeks, and even days within the Academy. God is building and He has gathered together an excellent team of teachers to do this! We start the school year with a full staff compliment and I am impressed with the quality and dedication that the team has shown already over the Teacher Orientation. Our desire is to bring glory to God in all we do! As we start the academic year I am excited about what will be happening both inside and outside the classrooms and look forward to sharing that with you.

I believe that this is going to be a good year of building the Academy into the school it is meant to be. God has provided a fantastic staff who I look forward to serving with throughout the year.

As always if you have any questions or concerns please feel free to email me.

In Him,

Nikki

Nikki Aldum
Principal
Mercy Ships Academy
m/v Africa Mercy

1.2 School Leadership and Educational Board

The Mercy Ships Academy will be establishing a School Board by the end of this year, as directed by the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) and in accordance to accreditation requirements.

God has provided experienced and qualified Christian educators and administrators, who are receiving on-going training through ACSI to lead the Academy. The Mercy Ships Academy is not a parent governed school, but the Educational Board will have parent representation.

Parents will have the opportunity to be involved in the day to day running of the school through the Parent Feedback Meetings and opportunities to volunteer in classrooms and other areas of need in the Academy.

The present members of the Mercy Ships Academy Educational Board are

Chairperson	Sam Smith
Africa Mercy Based Members	Ken Berry
	Peter Koontz
	Rob Cairncross
	Bill Martin
IOC Based Members	Alicia Robins
	Andrew Clark
Non-voting Members	Brain Blackburn (<i>Chief Administrator</i>)
	Nikki Aldum (<i>Principal</i>)

1.3 School Leadership

Chief Administrator	Brian Blackburn
Principal	Nikki Aldum
Head of High School	Tommy Farrell
Head of Elementary	Shelly Davies

1.4 Faculty

<i>Position</i>	<i>Additional Responsibilities</i>
Nursery Teacher	Dara Koontz
Preschool Teacher	Elizabeth Glaser
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Teacher-in-Charge of the Library</i>• <i>Elementary Computer Teacher</i>

Kindergarten	Estelle Pretorius	
Grade 1	Shelly Davies	• <i>Head of the Elementary School</i>
Grade 2	Danae Johnston	
Grade 3	Amy Handy	
Grade 4 & 5	Haley Nichols	
Science Specialist	Christina Orman	• <i>Teacher-in-Charge of Science</i> • <i>Equipment</i>
IT & Math Specialist	Tommy Farrell	• <i>Head of the High School</i> • <i>Teacher-in-Charge of Academy Computers</i>
English & Bible Specialist	Kim Robinson	
PE Specialist	Ben Calvert	• <i>Teacher-in-Charge of PE Equipment</i>
World Geography	Nikki Aldum	• Principal

1.5 Support Staff

Administrative Assistant	Carol Tanzola	• <i>Substitute Teacher</i>
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1.6 Part-time Staff

English/Music	Patricia Royston
Music	Lena Kristensen
Music	Sharon Trethaway

Christian schooling is a Christ-centered educative agent, and it addresses each of these four developing areas of a child's life:

- **ACADEMICS** – Thinking that includes knowing and understanding
- **SKILLS** – Proficiency in using content and ideas
- **WORLDVIEW** – Belief system about the world and how it works
- **SPRITUALITY** – Individual personhood and the core beliefs that control behaviour

In the academic area it takes seriously its responsibility for development of the life of the mind, but it does not distance or discount God from the academic life. It views preparing skilled young people as essential to assisting each child to reach her or his God-given potential in Christ. The Christian school helps cultivate a worldview that gives God His rightful place, and it looks to the Bible for guidance in answering life's big questions. And finally, Christian Schooling enhances the child's spiritual development in an intentional and nurturing manner.

The desired end of Christian schooling is to develop spiritually formed thinkers who are academically well skilled and who are biblically oriented in their world perspective as they seek daily to love and please God in all that they do. Dallas Willard (*in Education for Renovation*, NACPE paper, October 2001, 1) aptly states the distinctive goal of Christian education this way: *The aim of Christian education is to bring students to the place where they walk routinely and easily in the power of Jesus Christ.*

Extracts from *The Distinctives of Christian Schooling*, by Derek J Keenan, EdD,
Vice-president of ACSI President

CHAPTER 2: Mercy Ships Academy – M/V Africa Mercy

2.1 *Mission and Vision Statement*

Mission Statement

Mercy Ships Academy provides an exceptional biblically-based education for crew members' children, inspiring them to truly follow the example of Jesus.

Vision Statement

Mercy Ships Academy brings glory to God by fully equipping each student with the foundation of knowledge and skills necessary to fulfill God's purposes in their lives. We will do this by partnering with parents in developing Christian character in their children through teaching values based on a biblical worldview within the structure of a quality academic education; meeting the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of each student.

Formally adopted by the Mercy Ships Academy Educational Board on 2nd of September 2009

"And Jesus kept increasing in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and men. "
Luke 2 v 52

"Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?" And He said to him, "you shall love the lord your god with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind." "This is the great and foremost commandment." The second is like it, ' you shall love your neighbour as yourself.'
Matthew 22 v 36 - 39

2.2 *Philosophy of Education*

Mercy Ships Academy Philosophy of Education

"A person's philosophy toward education will determine his meanings, choices, and values...."¹

Thus, a Christian philosophy of education is central to the Christian school. The Mercy Ships Academy philosophy of education seeks to

- ***glorify God*** in everything we do as a school
- ***understand its students*** as learners and meet their needs as Missionary Kids
- ***uses biblical aims and objectives*** throughout our school

¹ R. Larry Overstreet, "Developing a Christian Philosophy of Education." *Journal of Christian Education* 2, No 2 (1982): 33.

- provide, develop and retain **quality Christian teachers**
- be an **extension of the Christian home** by recognizing the ultimate responsibility that parents have for their children's education
- promote and integrate **Biblical principles** in all aspects of our school
- function with and impart a **Christian worldview** to our students

For a detailed explanation of our Christian Philosophy of Education, please go to the Academy page on Navigator.

*"So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God."
1 Corinthians 10 v 31*

2.3 Expected Student Outcomes

As we strive to attain our vision, we believe it to be important that ACSI member schools develop programs, strategies, and methodologies within the context of biblical principals, producing graduates with a Christian worldview, who...

1. are well prepared in all academic disciplines, and are skilled in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and thinking.
2. are proficient in mathematics and science.
3. have a knowledge and an understanding of people, events, and movements in history (including church history) and the cultures of other people and places.
4. appreciate literature and the arts and understand how they express and shape their beliefs and values.
5. have a critical appreciation of language and cultures of other peoples, dispelling prejudice, promoting interethnic harmony, and encouraging biblical hospitality for the 'alien' or 'stranger.'
6. personally respond to carrying out the Great Commission locally and around the world in a culturally sensitive manner.
7. know how to utilize resources including technology to find, analyze, and evaluate information.
8. are committed to lifelong learning.
9. have the skills to question, solve problems and make wise decisions.
10. understand the worth of every human being as created in the image of God.
11. can articulate and defend their Christian worldview while having a basic understanding of opposing worldview.
12. understand and commit to a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.
13. know, understand, and apply God's Word in daily life.
14. possess apologetic skills to defend their faith.
15. are empowered by the Holy Spirit and pursue a life of faith, goodness, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, godliness, brotherly kindness, and love.
16. treat their bodies as the temple of the Holy Spirit.
17. are actively involved in a church community, serving God and others.
18. understand, value, and engage in appropriate social (community) and civic (political) activities.

19. embrace and practice justice, mercy, and peacemaking in family and society.
20. value intellectual inquiry and are engaged in the marketplace of ideas (open, honest exchange of ideas.).
21. respect and relate appropriately with integrity to the people with whom they work, play, and live.
22. have an appreciation for the natural environment and practice responsible stewardship of God's creation.
23. are prepared to practice the principles of healthy, moral family living.
24. are good stewards of their finances, time (including discretionary time) and other resources.
25. understand that work has dignity as an expression of the nature of God.

Adapted from the ACSI Expected Student Outcome.

2.4 Statement of Faith

The Apostles Creed

1. We believe in God the Father, Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth:
2. And in Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son, our Lord:
3. Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary:
4. Suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, dead and buried: He descended into hell:
5. The third day he rose again from the dead:
6. He ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty:
7. From thence he shall come to judge the living and the dead:
8. We believe in the Holy Spirit:
9. We believe in the holy catholic church: the communion of saints:
10. The forgiveness of sins:
11. The resurrection of the body:
12. And the life everlasting. Amen.

2.5 Values of Mercy Ships and Academy

VALUE - Desiring to follow the example of Jesus, we seek to

LOVE GOD, expressed by

- Knowing God
- Obeying God
- Hearing God
- Serving God
- Worshipping God

LOVE AND SERVE OTHERS, demonstrated by

- Praying for each other
- Caring for each other
- Focusing on the forgotten poor
- Believing the best in others
- Practicing hospitality, generosity, mercy, and forgiveness

BE PEOPLE OF INTEGRITY, distinguished by

- Being accountable
- Communicating truthfully
- Serving faithfully
- Living in purity
- Doing what we say

BE PEOPLE OF EXCELLENCE IN ALL WE SAY AND DO, exhibited by

- Honoring God in our work
- Staying strategically focused
- Monitoring, evaluating, and improving performance
- Exercising sound financial stewardship
- Taking responsibility for personal and professional growth

2.6 School History

Mercy Ships is a unique charity that utilizes ocean-going vessels as hospitals and relief and development tools, partnering with developing nations to make a long-term difference in the lives of the poor and needy.

A school on board the *M/V Anastasis* was founded in 1979 to provide an education for the children of crew members, mainly using an American-based curriculum. Schooling is for children of ages ranging from Nursery up to High School. The average number of students each year is approximately fifty. The High School averages twelve students. In the year 2003 the word 'Academy' was adopted, to define the on-board schools for children. From 2007, an Academy on board the *Africa Mercy* will operate in the same way as that on her sister ship *Anastasis*, and offering the same scope.

The schools fall under no educational authority in the way that a land-based school is under the authority of the state or regional school board. We are in the process of having our school accredited with the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI). Our High School program provides academic courses to prepare students for college or university entrance. All our former students who have desired to go to these institutions have been accepted on the basis of SAT scores, our graduation diploma, and school reports.

2.7 School Affiliation and Accreditation Process

The Mercy Ships Academy is a member of the Association of Christian Schools International (ACSI) and is aiming for accreditation in 2011.

The Mercy Ships Academy is seeking a dual accreditation through both ACSI and Middle State Association of Schools and Colleges (MSA). Both these processors will be completed simultaneously and be evaluated by the same visiting team in April 2011.

Please feel free to take a look at their websites: www.acsi.org and www.middlestates.org

2.8 Admission Policy and Procedures

Admission Policies

Special Educational Needs and Learning Disabilities

A child has special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special provision to be made. This special educational provision means educational provision which is additional to, or otherwise different from, the educational provision made generally for children for that age group. Some examples of Special Educational Needs might include: personality disorder, dyslexia, depression, ADD/ADHD or any other condition that would affect his/her performance at school.

- The Academy is not able to accept children with special educational needs or learning disabilities because we do not have the staff or facilities to assist them in successful learning.
- If the Principal discovers that a student needs specialized care, continuation in the Academy is not a given outcome. (Diagnosing special education needs requires specialized programs and constant monitoring by professionals. This type of program is not available in the Academy.)

English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL)

- *In most cases the Academy is not able to accept children who are not able to read, write, and speak English fluently up to their appropriate grade level. Ideally we encourage students, where possible, to attend an English-speaking school for at least one year prior to attending Mercy Ships Academy.*
- When students do not have English Language fluency up to their appropriate grade level the parent caregiver may be required to support the child in the classroom for a minimum of 3 months until the language fluency is adequate for functioning. (In some cases this type of parental English language classroom support may be necessary for longer than three months.)
- The Principal does not expect that Academy teachers will adapt their teaching methods to enable non-English speaking students to access the curriculum.
- The placement of parents in the classroom to act as full time English language support teachers must go through the Human Resources Department on board the Ship as well as the Academy Principal.

Home School Students

- The Academy cannot offer any provision for home-schooling on board. The Academy is also not staffed to offer assistance or supervision of the home-schooler.
- It is necessary that the Principal be informed regarding the application to the ship of families with home-schooled children.

Short Term Students

- The Academy is not able to offer places for the children of short term crew who are staying less than 3 months on board.
- Normally families would need to make a commitment to the ship as crew members for 3 months or more before their children would be considered eligible to join the Academy.

All Mercy Ships Academy Policies are under review by the Mercy Ships Academy Educational Board. Once this process is complete the approved and adopted Policies will be posted on the Academy Page in Navigator for access by all parents.

2.9 Grade Levels and School Hours

Grade	Age	Hours	Important Information
Nursery	1-3 years	1-3 years <i>Time to be determined by Primary Care Givers.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families with children up to age 3 have the option of placing their child in the nursery program or to stay with them at home. Nursery care is only made available for the parent who is working. The nursery will be overseen by the Academy, but staffed by parents of nursery age children.
Preschool	3 and 4 years	Year 2 08:00 - 12:00 Year 1 09:00 - 12:00	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children who are 3 years old on or before SEPTEMBER 30 may begin Preschool Year 1 in September. Children who are 4 years old on or before SEPTEMBER 30 may begin Preschool Year 2 in September. In the first year of Preschool parents are given the option (in consultation with the Academy) to reduce their child's attendance. In the second full year of preschool children are required to attend for 4 hours a day & will be using the Open Court Reading Curriculum in preparation for Kindergarten schooling.
Kindergarten	5 and 6 years	08:00-12:00 12:55-15:20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children who are 5 years old on or before SEPTEMBER 30 may begin Kindergarten in September..
1 st Grade – 12 th Grade	6 years and older	08:00-12:00 12:55-15:20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Placement in grade level is according to the previous school records & school experience of the child – at the discretion of the principal. A placement test may be given to new students before grade placement is decided. Fluency in spoken and written English is another factor that can affect placement.

Students are required to attend the Academy for the full day (from 8.00 a.m. – 3.20 p.m.) from Grade K-12. There are approximately 36 weeks or a minimum of 180 days in our school year. School usually starts in mid-August and ends in mid to late June depending on the schedule of the ship. A variety of school holidays are offered through the year.

2.10 Family and Student Enrolment Process for Academy

1. Mercy Ship applications are processed at the IOC.
2. An Academy student enrolment form is sent to the parents by the AFM HR Manager to be completed.
3. The Academy reviews the student enrolment form and previous school records with the Academy Administrator's consultation.
4. They are approved or denied from the IOC based on availability of positions, family housing and Academy acceptance.
5. If approved, the applications are sent to the ship for final approval.
6. If ship housing and Academy enrolment is signed-off, the HR Facilitator then sends an Acceptance Letter to the Family.

*The instructional program consists of carefully developed, thoroughly documented, and well-executed curriculum elements that include **educational philosophy, school wide outcomes**, a variety of effective **instructional strategies, adequate resources**, and appropriate assessments that are based on research and quality practices. The curriculum of the school/program is driven by well-written policies and procedures. It is sufficiently funded, collaboratively reviewed on a regular basis, and **compiled using the school's mission, vision, and core values** statements to ensure a biblical foundation for instruction. A method for assessing the effectiveness of learning outcomes is in place.*
(REACH Manual: ACSI Accreditation Standard Five p. 26)

CHAPTER 3: Academy Procedures

Academics Overview

As a requirement for ACSI Accreditation we need to provide a complete standards-based curriculum for our entire school program, Kindergarten to Grade 12 at every grade and course level. It is important to ask the following question:

Why are standards important?

There appear to be three principal reasons for the development of standards: standards serve both to **clarify** and to **raise** expectations, and standards provide a common set of **expectations**.

<http://www.mcrel.org/standards-benchmarks/docs/purpose.asp>

A Standards-Based Education System

Standards-based education is a process for planning, delivering, monitoring and improving academic programs in which clearly defined academic content standards provide the basis for content in instruction and assessment.

- **Standards help ensure students learn what is important**, rather than allowing textbooks to dictate classroom practice.
- **Student learning is the focus** - aiming for a high and deep level of student understanding that goes beyond traditional textbook-based or lesson-based instruction.

A standards-based system

- **measures** its success based on student learning (the achievement of standards) rather than compliance with rules and regulations
- **aligns policies, initiatives, curriculum, instruction, and assessments** with clearly defined academic standards
- **consistently communicates** and uses standards to focus on ways to ensure success for all students
- **[uses assessment to inform instruction.](#)**

Standards-based systems increases student achievement

Students generally learn better in a standards-based environment because everybody's working towards the same goal:

- **Teachers** know what the standards are and choose classroom activities and teaching strategies that enable students to achieve the standards
- **Students** know the standards, too, and can see scoring guides that embody them. The students can use them to complete their work

- **Parents** know them and can help students by seeing that their homework aligns with the standards
- **Administrators** know what is necessary to attain the standards and provide professional development, resources and materials to ensure that students are able to reach the prescribed standards

“The standards come alive when teachers study student work, collaborate with other teachers to improve their understanding of subjects and students’ thinking, and develop new approaches to teaching that are relevant and useful for them and their students”
 - Linda Darling-Hammond, 1997

<http://www.am.dodea.edu/ddessasc/aboutddess/standards/standardsbased.html>

3.1 Attendance Policy

Update to Academy Attendance Policy – January 2008

Created by Brian Blackburn – Academy Chief Administrator - 1/8/08

The Mercy Ships Academy must follow at the minimum, the Texas Education Agency (TEA)², and also regulations for ACSI regarding school policies:

- Teachers are to keep an accurate record of all student attendance.
- The school secretary will collect all attendance records, keep them for reports, and record them in the student cumulative folder.
- The Academy must schedule at least **180 days** of academic instruction.
- Students must attend **90% of the school year** in order to be eligible for promotion to the next school grade.
- Students may accrue **18 days of unexcused absences** before having to repeat a school year. Students are responsible for all missed class work.
- After 9 days of unexcused absences per semester, a student will receive a warning to ensure that they are not in danger of accumulating too many unexcused absences on their school record.
- **Excused Absence** – A student is recorded as excused only for medical or family emergency, the student is still responsible for missed classroom work. The student must have a signed note from a parent or doctor.
- **Unexcused Absence** – A student is recorded as unexcused unless for the above excused reasons. The student is responsible for any missed assignments.

² <http://www.tea.state.tx.us/school.finance/handbook/index.html>

- **Lates (Tardies)** – When a student is late to class for an unexcused reason then they are counted as tardy. Four lates (tardies) equals one unexcused absence.
- If a student has excessive unexcused absences, the student can arrange with the school principle to make up class time after official school hours. This arrangement is at the discretion of the principal.
- **Full-Day attendance** – the student must attend at least 4 hours of instruction to be counted as “full-day” attendance.
- **Half-Day attendance** – the student must attend at least two hours (3 lessons) of instruction to be counted as “half-day” attendance.
- **LOA situation** – Students, who are not attending school due to a family’s Leave of Absence (LOA), may be counted as Excused. Students are still responsible for all missed assignments and a due date for missed assignments shall be assigned by the teacher or principal.
 - If the LOA is longer than 25 school days, the student shall be withdrawn from the Academy and the parents must “home school.”
 - The Academy is not responsible for organizing school work for students on a LOA longer than 25 school days.
 - An LOA will be recorded in the official school record.
 - Grades will not be reported for assignments that parents create while “homeschooling.”
- **Personal Time-off (PTO or vacation)** – When the Academy is in session and a student is not attending school for family PTO reasons, they are counted as Unexcused unless the family is taking a LOA. Students are responsible for all missed class work.
- Students who are recorded as Absent or Unexcused are still responsible for missed assignments. The teachers and principal have the discretion of creating due dates for missed work for Absent and Unexcused students.

3.2 Absence through sickness

Parents should call the Academy Office (ext. 1408 or 1409) between 07.15 and 07.45 to notify the school if the child is staying home because of illness. If the child goes home during the school day (after break or lunch, for example, with no opportunity to inform the teacher) please call the office immediately so the teacher will not be calling for them. If a child has to be absent for a day or more it is possible to arrange for the teacher to send class assignments home, at a parent’s request.

If your child shows any of the following symptoms, please keep him or her at home: contagious disease or infection, vomiting, fever, constantly running nose, sore throat, bad cough, diarrhoea, or constant crying due to illness. The child should be kept at home until 24 hours after symptoms subside. If such symptoms develop while your child is at school we will call you to ask you to take your child home. We seek to maintain a happy and healthy environment for all our children, with your help.

First-aid will be administered at the teacher’s discretion, e.g. application of plasters, cold compresses etc. In the case of an emergency, every effort will be made to contact parents, but children will be taken to clinic for treatment as soon as possible.

3.3 Parents-Teacher Conferences

Parents are welcome to request a conference with any of the Academy Teachers and Principal. Please contact the Academy Office to make an appointment.

3.4 Reported grades

Each student needs a cumulative grade for each course that shows how well they have mastered the standards covered in that course. This grade must be based upon a variety of assessment types taken from the entire course.

Elementary

Each unit will contribute one grade towards the final aggregated grade. **The unit grade will be arrived at from a combination of assessment activities within the unit.**

Example 1: In Math the grade could come from a mini-test at the end of the first week, a unit test at the end of the second week and two assessed homework activities.

Example 2: In Social Studies the grade may come from a quiz, a project and a presentation.

In each case the success criteria (rubrics) for the assessed activities should be shared with the students before the work is completed. Feedback from the activities (assessments) should be referenced back to those success criteria.

The **First Quarter** progress grade will be the average of the five grades from the first 5 units.

Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4	Unit 5
equal weighting for each unit				

The **Semester 1** grade will be the average of the nine grades from the first 9 units.

Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4	Unit 5	Unit 6	Unit 7	Unit 8	Unit 9
equal weighting for each unit								

The **Third Quarter** progress grade will be the average of the five grades from units ten through fourteen.

Unit 10	Unit 11	Unit 12	Unit 13	Unit 14
equal weighting for each unit				

The **Final Report** will have a grade for the year based upon the average of all 18 units, as well as a **Semester 2** grade based on the nine grades from units 10 through 18.

In Grade 4 & 5 Quarter Tests need to be introduced so that the students can develop good study methods and understanding of test taking over larger sections of work. These

tests are not high stakes tests and will count as, or contribute to, the unit assessment for the last unit of each quarter.

Junior High & High School

As in Elementary, each unit will contribute one grade towards the final aggregated grade. **The unit grade will be arrived at from a combination of assessment activities within the unit.**

Example 1: In Math the grade could come from a mini-test at the end of the first week, a topic test at the end of the second week and two assessed homework activities.

Example 2: In Social studies the grade may come from a quiz, a project and a presentation.

However there will also be four formal tests throughout the year: a mid-term in each semester; a semester exam at the end of Semester 1; and a Final exam at the end of the year.

The **First quarter** progress grade will be the straight average of the 5 grades from the first five units and the grade in the mid-term as shown below:

Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4	Unit 5	Mid-Term
equal weighting for each grade					

The **Semester 1** grade will be the average of the nine grades from the first nine units, as well as the mid-term and the Semester exam, with the Semester exam counting towards 20% of the grade as shown below:

Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4	Unit 5	Mid-Term	Unit 6	Unit 7	Unit 8	Unit 9	Semester
8%	8%	8%	8%	8%	8%	8%	8%	8%	8%	20%

The **Third Quarter** progress grade will be the straight average of the five grades from units 10 through 14 and the grade in the mid-term as shown below:

Unit 10	Unit 11	Unit 12	Unit 13	Unit 14	Mid-Term
equal weighting for each grade					

The **Semester 2** grade will be the average of the nine grades from the last nine units, as well as the mid-term and the Final exam, with the Final exam counting towards 20% of the grade as shown below:

Unit 10	Unit 11	Unit 12	Unit 13	Unit 14	Mid-Term	Unit 15	Unit 16	Unit 17	Unit 18	Final
8%	8%	8%	8%	8%	8%	8%	8%	8%	8%	20%

The **Final Grade** for the year will be based upon all of the grades from all 18 units, as well as the two mid-terms, the Semester 1 exam and the final. The weightings will be as follows:

Semester 1										
Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4	Unit 5	Mid-Term	Unit 6	Unit 7	Unit 8	Unit 9	Semester
4%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%	10%

Semester 2										
Unit 10	Unit 11	Unit 12	Unit 13	Unit 14	Mid-Term	Unit 15	Unit 16	Unit 17	Unit 18	Final
4%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%	10%

3.5 Grading Structure

It is important that within the Academy formal, summative assessment activities are carefully planned and structured. Care must be given to make sure that the frequency of such activities is appropriate for the purpose of measuring students' progress towards attaining the required standards (the examples above suggest about three assessment activities within a two-week unit). The structure of the assessments will also reflect the Academy's vision to provide an exceptional education. In view of this, graded assessment activities should have the following structure:

- 50% of the Activity should test students' routine knowledge of the standards
- 40% of the Activity should test students' application of the standards to problems
- 10% of the Activity should be challenging material requiring non-routine problem solving and higher-order thinking skills

To reflect this more challenging structure, while retaining compatibility with standard American grading we propose the following grade boundaries:

	%	GPA	Explanation of Grades
A+	90 - 100%	4.0	Outstanding Achievement , above and beyond the required standards.
A	85 - 89%	4.0	Excellent Achievement , able to apply knowledge and skills consistently
A-	80 - 84%	3.7	Excellent Achievement , with a few errors
B+	77 - 79%	3.3	Mastered Skills , consistently achieving success
B	73 - 76%	3.0	Mastered Skills , with few errors
B-	70 - 72%	2.7	Mastered Skills , meets required objectives, needs assistance.
C+	67 - 69%	2.3	Average
C	63 - 66%	2.0	Average , needs Assistance
C-	60 - 62%	1.7	Average , inconsistently meets objectives, attention needed
D+	57 - 59%	1.3	Below Average , an area of concern
D	53 - 56%	1.0	Below Average , an area of great concern
D-	50 - 52%	0.7	Only meets basic requirements , at risk of failure
F	0 - 49 %	0.0	Failure to achieve the standards required

We recognize that this is a significant change for students, teachers and parents. As such we will provide initial and ongoing support to

- students in understanding the assessment process
- staff in designing such assessment activities
- parents in interpreting their child's grades and understanding the rationale for this policy

3.6 Recording Attainment against Benchmarks

As we adopt a standards based curriculum it is important that we record students' attainment against the standards to inform teaching and planning. The benchmarks for each grade will be set at the start of the year. From these, specific benchmarks for each unit are identified and assessed in each Unit. Individual student mastery of benchmarks will be recorded **each time** an activity addresses that benchmark.

There are two purposes to this recording:

The first is to inform planning. Since the goal of a standards-based curriculum is for every child to reach the benchmarks, when monitoring shows a lack of mastery in a particular area this highlights the need for content to be revisited.

The second reason for this recording is to provide meaningful reporting of students' attainment against the benchmarks. At each reporting time students will be given a summary of their mastery against the benchmarks based upon their cumulative performance against that benchmark. For further information please read the Reporting policy.

3.7 Formative Assessment

While it is important to measure how our students are doing in terms of meeting the standards set for the courses, it is also important to remember that measuring by itself does not bring improvement. It is here that we acknowledge the central role Formative Assessment must play in everyday classroom practice in the Academy.

“formative assessment is the process of seeking and interpreting evidence for use by learners and their teachers to decide where they are in their learning, where they need to go and how best to get there.”

[Janet Looney and Dylan William (2003)]

Much research has been done into the role effective formative assessment has in raising achievement of students (see bibliography). Research suggests that effective learning takes place when

Questions are used to stimulate thinking in the students. Leaving adequate waiting time for students to consider their response is essential. All students should be expected to contribute to questions, with incorrect or incomplete answers being used to tackle misconceptions and stimulate the thinking of all students in the class.

Feedback identifies what has been done well, what needs to be improved and how to make that improvement. Grades and marks have been shown to prevent students from responding effectively to feedback and should be communicated after feedback has been given.

Peer and Self Assessment is a regular part of students' learning experience. Research suggests that marking their own or peers' work brings a level of understanding about the concepts taught, and the success criteria for an activity that cannot be achieved any other way. Although it takes time for students trained to give helpful, constructive feedback, they gain a much deeper understanding of the task and their learning and also how to interpret feedback from teachers and put it into practice.

As Mercy Ships Academy seeks to deliver an exceptional education our staff development and medium term planning will include opportunities to share best practice within the Academy on implementing formative assessment in the classroom.

References (pdf copies available in Academy Staff folder)

Black et al (1999), *Beyond the Black Box*, Department of Education and Professional Studies, King's College, London.

Black et al (2002), *Working Inside the Black Box: Assessment for Learning in the classroom*, King's College, London and Stanford University, California.

Black, P. and William, D. (1998), *Inside the Black Box: Raising standards through classroom assessment*, Department of Education and Professional Studies, King's College, London.

Looney, J. and William, D. (2003), *Implementing Formative Assessment In A High Stakes Environment*, OECD, England

3.8 Grading Scales

The Academy will be using a combination of letter grades and percentages for the student's academic progress. Effort grades will be awarded using a different system.

Grading Scale: Preschool, Kindergarten and Grade 1

1: Has mastered skill (independently)
2: Is learning skill (with assistance)
3: Area of Concern
X: Not Evaluated
NA: Not Applicable

Grading Scale: Grade 1 to Grade 8

G	%	Explanation of Grades
A+	90 - 100%	Outstanding Achievement, above and beyond the required standards.
A	85 - 89%	Excellent Achievement, able to apply knowledge and skills consistently
A-	80 - 84%	Excellent Achievement, with a few errors
B+	77 - 79%	Mastered Skills, consistently achieving success
B	73 - 76%	Mastered Skills, with few errors
B-	70 - 72%	Mastered Skills, meets required objectives, needs assistance.
C+	67 - 69%	Average
C	63 - 66%	Average, needs Assistance
C-	60 - 62%	Average, inconsistently meets objectives, attention needed
D+	57 - 59%	Below Average, an area of concern
D	53 - 56%	Below Average, an area of great concern
D-	50 - 52%	Only meets basic requirements, at risk of failure
F	0 - 49 %	Failure to achieve the standards required

Effort Scale Grades: Kindergarten to Grade 5

E	Excellent	Displays a positive attitude, works independently and always gives of his/her best.
S +	Good	The student has a good attitude and gives of his/her best.
S	Satisfactory	The student displays a satisfactory attitude and co-operates with the teacher.
S -	Needs to improve	The student's attitude towards this area of work needs to improve.
U	Unsatisfactory	The student displays a negative attitude and does not co-operate with the teacher.

Grading Scale: Grade 9 to Grade 12

G	%	GPA	Explanation of Grades
A+	90 - 100%	4.0	Outstanding Achievement, above and beyond the required standards.
A	85 - 89%	4.0	Excellent Achievement, able to apply knowledge and skills consistently
A-	80 - 84%	3.7	Excellent Achievement, with a few errors
B+	77 - 79%	3.3	Mastered Skills, consistently achieving success
B	73 - 76%	3.0	Mastered Skills, with few errors
B-	70 - 72%	2.7	Mastered Skills, meets required objectives, needs assistance.
C+	67 - 69%	2.3	Average
C	63 - 66%	2.0	Average, needs Assistance
C-	60 - 62%	1.7	Average, inconsistently meets objectives, attention needed
D+	57 - 59%	1.3	Below Average, an area of concern
D	53 - 56%	1.0	Below Average, an area of great concern
D-	50 - 52%	0.7	Only meets basic requirements, at risk of failure
F	0 - 49 %	0.0	Failure to achieve the standards required

3.9 Grading Policy

Junior High and High School

- Assignments are due at the beginning of the class period of the due day.
- Late papers will not receive credit, but all assignments must be completed to attain the learning we desire. If a student turns in his or her assignment after class has begun, the assignment will receive no credit (at the discretion of the teacher).
- If the assignment has not been turned in by 15.20 that day, the student will report to the teacher to arrange a detention to make up the assignment. Detention can be served Tuesday through Thursday, after 15.30 with teacher approval.

Grace: The lowest grade in each subject of marking will be dropped each grading period.

3.10 Graduation Requirements

For Students Entering High School before 2008

MERCY SHIPS ACADEMY GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Minimum of **25.5 credits** are required for Graduation.

One credit equals **one hundred twenty** instructional hours (Carnegie Credit) in a 34 week school year. The Academy includes service projects, school retreats, and a 7-th grade finals week to construct a 36 week school calendar or at least 180 school days.

SUBJECT	CREDITS
ENGLISH	4
SCIENCE <i>Physical Science, Biology, Chemistry, or Physics</i>	3
MATH <i>Must include Algebra 1, Algebra 2, Geometry</i>	3
SOCIAL SCIENCE <i>World History, US History or Local History Comparative Government (0.5) and Economics (0.5)</i>	3
FOREIGN LANGUAGE <i>French, Spanish, German - must have 2 consecutive years of the same language</i>	2
SPEECH	0.5
HEALTH	0.5
INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES (ICT)	1
FINE ARTS	1
PHYSICAL EDUCATION	1.5
BIBLE	4
ADDITIONAL ELECTIVES	2
TOTAL CREDITS	25.5

ADDITIONAL ELECTIVES can be chosen from the following when available:

PSYCHOLOGY

SOCIOLOGY

INTERNSHIP with ship departments such as:

COMPUTERS, ENGINEERING ELECTRONICS, ETC.

- o - All offering work experience and instruction if available.

For Students Entering High School 2008 and beyond

**MERCY SHIPS ACADEMY
GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

Minimum of **27.5 credits** are required for Graduation.

One credit equals **one hundred twenty** instructional hours (Carnegie Credit) in a 34 week school year. The Academy includes service projects, school retreats, and a 7-12th grade finals week to construct a minimum 36 week school calendar or at least 180 school days.

SUBJECT	CREDITS
ENGLISH	4
SCIENCE <i>Physical Science, Biology, Chemistry, and Physics</i>	4
MATH <i>Algebra 1, Algebra 2, Geometry, MMA, Trigonometry or Pre-Calculus</i>	4
SOCIAL SCIENCE <i>World Geography, Ancient History, Modern History Comparative Government (0.5) and Economics (0.5)</i>	4
FOREIGN LANGUAGE <i>French, Spanish, German</i> <i>- must have 2 consecutive years of the same language</i>	2
SPEECH	0.5
HEALTH	0.5
INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES (ICT)	1
FINE ARTS	1
PHYSICAL EDUCATION	1.5
BIBLE	4
ADDITIONAL ELECTIVES	1
TOTAL CREDITS	27.5

ADDITIONAL ELECTIVES can be chosen from the following when available:

PSYCHOLOGY

SOCIOLOGY

INTERNSHIP with ship departments such as:

COMPUTERS, ENGINEERING ELECTRONICS, ETC.

- All offering work experience and instruction if available

3.11 High School 4 Year Plan

This is something that we are working on to design a High School Plan that would be more internationally recognize and yet meet the needs of our North American families. What course we offer also depends on the teachers we have on staff so can vary. Any updates in the plan will be communicated with Parents after it has been approved by the Educational Board.

(Based on the American system - 2008)

		7 th & 8 th		9 th & 10 th		11 th & 12 th		
		Year 1	Year 2	Year 1	Year 2	Year 1	Year 2	
* Credits required for High School Graduation		Required Courses for High School Graduation						
Math * 4 credits	5X per week	Fundamental of Math 1 credit	Pre-algebra 1 credit	Algebra I * 1 credit	Algebra II * 1 credit	Geometry *1 credit	Trig, MMA or Calculus *1 credit	
Science *4 credits	5X per week	Integrated Science	Integrated Science	Physics *1 credit	Biology *1 credit	Chemistry *1 credit	Science Elective or AP Level Course *0.5 credits	
Social Studies *4 credits	5X per week	World Geography 1 credit	World History 1 credit	Ancient History *1 credit	Modern History *1 credit	World Geography *1 credit	Comparative Government *0.5 credits	
English *4 credits	5X per week	Reading, Grammar & Writing 1 credit	Reading, Grammar & Writing 1 credit	Fundamentals of Literature I *1 credit	Fundamentals of Literature II *1 credit	Advanced Literature and Writing I *1 credit	Advanced Literature and Writing II *1 credit	
		7 th & 8 th		Required Electives 9th – 12th Grade				
Bible *4 credits	4X per week	Bible 1 credit	Bible 1 credit	Bible *1 credit	Bible *1 credit	Bible *1 credit	Bible *1 credit	
Arts *1 credits	2x per week	Art 0.5 credits	Art 0.5 credits	Art *0.5 credits	Art *0.5 credits			
P.E. *1.5 credits	2X per week	PE 0.5 credits	PE 0.5 credits	PE *0.5 credits	PE *0.5 credits	PE *0.5 credits	Health *0.5 credits	
Health 0..5 credits			Health 0.5 credits				Health *0.5 credits	
Language *2 credits	5 X per week			French I *1 Credit **other language options through correspondence or on-line instruction can be taken at additional cost to parents.	French II *1 Credit **other language options through correspondence or on-line instruction can be taken at additional cost to parents.			
ICT *1 credit		ICT 0.5 credit	ICT 0.5 credit	ICT *0.5 credit	ICT *0.5 credit			
Speech *0.5 credits					Speech *0.5 credits			
				Electives 9th – 12th Grade				
Internship *1 Credit								
Psychology *1 credit								
Sociology *1 credit								
Life Skills *1 credit								

Key:



Courses using a 2-year rotation system



Classes with 2 courses being taught at the same time



- Due to teaching staff limitations and class enrolment, some classes may not be offered each year.
- Correspondence courses may be offered when needed.
- **27.5 Complete Carnegie units for graduation** *One Unit represents one hour per day each academic year or between 180 to 190 hours or classroom contact.*
- **Courses offered are subject to change due to teacher availability and scheduling.**

3.12 Homework Guidelines

Homework is part of our general academic expectations for our students. It prepares students for High School, college or university and the work world to be faced upon graduation. It also helps develop a strong work ethic and personal organizational skills. Its immediate educational purpose is

- to reinforce skills and concepts learned in class
- to develop study skills and habits
- to inform parents of what is being taught in the classroom

Homework assignments may be expected Monday through Friday of each week, with less on Thursdays due to evening Community Meetings. They may be modified to accommodate the needs of your child. If your child consistently is not getting homework assignments finished in a reasonable amount of time, please contact your child's teacher. The goal is to reinforce, not burden, the student.

Please keep in mind that homework requirements, both in content and length of time required, will look significantly different for a Junior High and High School student than an elementary child's homework requirements.

Homework Assignments for Elementary Students

In addition to daily reading, assignments for elementary students during a week will most probably include scripture memory work, study for weekly spelling and vocabulary assessments, mathematics review, and perhaps working toward a long term project. Revision for science and social studies tests will be ongoing for upper elementary students.

Kindergarten: The students will have homework for approximately **10 – 15 minutes per day**. They may be asked to rehearse their memory verse, practice spelling words, work with flash cards, or do some reading.

Grades 1: The students will have homework for approximately **20 minutes per day**. They may be asked to rehearse their memory verse, practice spelling words, work with flash cards, or do some reading.

Grades 2: The students may also be asked to practice spelling, rehearse their memory verse, do some math work or reading, and prepare for a test. Generally this will take about **25 minutes** and it should not take more than 30 minutes.

Grades 3, 4 & 5: The students should study spelling every day for about 10 minutes to prepare for Friday's test. A maximum of two subjects, excluding spelling list and memory verses, will be set for each day's homework, which should take a maximum of **45 minutes total**. On Community Meeting nights only one subject should be set.

Homework Assignments for Junior High and High School Students

Grades 6 to 12 will be given assigned homework each night. (Work not finished in class, when given a reasonable amount of time to complete, is not considered assigned homework.) On Community Meeting nights less homework will be set. Major tests will not

be given on Fridays. Teachers will not overload students, but will aim to spread out their work over the week, adjusting deadlines accordingly.

Grades 6 to 8: The students will be given no more than **1 and half hours** of homework a night, Monday to Friday. Plus they will need to take time to study for tests.

Grades 9 to 12: will be given homework as required. A student should not spend more than **2 hours** of homework a night, but this is dependent on their course load and present deadlines as well as their own pace of work. Plus they will need to take time to study for tests.

Students are encouraged to approach teachers when their homework is overwhelming and they feel they do not have the time to manage it all. Teachers are open to moving deadlines, but this can not be done on the deadline day itself. Students need to take the initiative and approach the teacher beforehand.

Homework Books (Student Planners)

Kindergarten to Grade 8

Homework books (Student Planners) will be given to students in grade K - 8. Teachers will not overload students, but will aim to spread out their work over the week, adjusting deadlines accordingly. All homework assigned, and the setting of due dates for long-term projects, must be recorded daily by students in their homework record books for **parents to see and to sign off** when the work is completed.

Grade 9 to 12

Homework books will be optional from students in grades 7-12. If a student has difficulty with keeping track of their school assignments, a homework book may be required for them to fill out each day until progress is made.

3.13 Reports and Progress Reports – *Preschool, Kindergarten to Grade 5 and Grade 6 to 12*

For Preschool

Preschool Reports are issued twice a year soon at the end of each semester.

From Kindergarten to 12th Grade



Report Cards are issued twice a year soon after the end of each semester for Kindergarten through to Grade 12. In addition to the two Semester Reports each year, students in Grades K-12 will receive a Progress Report every 9 weeks.

Copies of all report cards must be signed by parents and returned to the Academy office.

If students withdraw during the school year, an additional Progress Report will **not** be issued if the student has not attended a minimum of 4 weeks of the 6-week grading period.

3.14 School Day – Timetable

The school day begins at 8 a.m. (08.45 on Tuesdays), with period divisions as below for Grades K to 12.

Lessons			
	Mon, Wed - Fri		Tuesday
8.00 - 8.15	Academy Devotions	7.45 - 8.30	Community Meeting
8.15 - 9.10	Lesson 1	8.45 - 9.10	Lesson 1
9.15 - 10.00	Lesson 2	9.15 - 10.00	Lesson 2
10.00 - 10.25	Morning Break	10.00 - 10.25	Morning Break
10.25 - 11.10	Lesson 3	10.25 - 11.10	Lesson 3
11.15 - 12.00	Lesson 4	11.15 - 12.00	Lesson 4
12.00 - 12.55	Lunch	12.00 - 12.55	Lunch
12.55 - 13.40	Lesson 5	12.55 - 13.40	Lesson 5
13.45 - 14.30	Lesson 6	13.45 - 14.30	Lesson 6
14.35 - 3.20	Lesson 7	14.35 - 3.20	Lesson 7

School classes **end** at the following times for the different age levels:

Preschool 12.00 p.m.
Grades K-12 15.20 p.m.

Parents are to be responsible for their children outside of these school hours as well as at lunch time. School resumes at 12.55 promptly and students should not be at the classroom before 12.50.

3.15 The School Year

There are to be a minimum of 180 instructional days in our school year. The nature of our ministry will sometimes cause us to change the school schedule.

The School Year is divided into two semesters – approximately the start of school to Christmas, and New Year to the end of the School Year. You will be notified of school closure days. Vacation periods for students may be scheduled during those days.

Occasionally it becomes necessary for a family to leave during the school year for vacation or support-raising. This situation is not ideal because the child loses valuable classroom instruction time, and must either work with the parents during the period of absence, or catch up after they return to the ship. However we do recognize that it is sometimes inevitable. Teachers will provide guidelines as much as possible for the student but please be aware that detailed instructions will not be available for lengthy periods of absence.

Occasionally High School students may choose to make time to do the required work upon their return to school, and the subject teachers will set reasonable dates for its completion. Extensive absence may result in loss of credit for certain subjects, and parents should be sure to notify the Principal if children are to miss school.

3.16 Transcripts

A transcript is issued for a High School student who graduates or transfers to another school. If there are special needs for obtaining a transcript for a particular country of nationality, the Principal should be supplied with specific regulations. Academy transcripts are issued in the English language. Graduates will be provided with one official transcript. If more copies are requested there may be a small charge.

We provide students with high quality instruction in as wide a range of subjects as possible, but we cannot offer all the subjects that are available to students in large High Schools. There may therefore be subjects that students will need to pursue in their home country after graduation from Mercy Ships Academy. Students may take correspondence courses with approval from the Academy administration. Additional costs may apply.

Transfers from Other High Schools to Mercy Ships Academy

- Transfer students must submit an Official Transcript from their former school and a letter from the Principal outlining their Board of Education Requirements for Graduation from High School.
- Where possible Mercy Ships Academy will provide the necessary courses to complete the requirements needed, or substitute other courses.
- If a failing grade is obtained by a transfer student who would still qualify for graduation without the course in his home school, a failing grade will not be recorded on the official transcript.
- All students must take the full course allotment scheduled for their Grade each year unless the Principal grants special permission.
- Mercy Ships Academy graduation diplomas will be awarded only to students who satisfactorily fulfill our requirements as listed above.

Lifestyle Expectations

3.17 Student Discipline

Our focus is on rewarding *positive* behavior. If needed, correction of your child will be done by talking to him or her privately, withdrawing privileges, or by detention (for grades 6 -12). If your child does not respond appropriately, we will contact you to discuss the matter further. In the unusual event that your child is detained by a teacher after school for misdemeanor or to complete work, the teacher will notify you of that. If you already have a family event or a planned visit ashore at which you need your child to be present, please let us know, and the detention will then be moved to the next day. (Please note that a delay in detention should generally be accepted only if there is a prior family arrangement.)

Each Elementary Class teacher has a **Class Room Management Plan** that is age appropriate and managed by the teacher themselves. If at any point the teacher needs assistance they are welcome to call on the Principal for advise or help.

3.18 Student Dress Code

During school hours children should be neatly and modestly dressed at all times. Clothing should be clean and in good condition. In hot climates shorts are fine, but very short shorts may not be worn by children over six years of age. Skin-tight clothing is not appropriate. Pupils in very long T-shirts may be asked to tuck them in. T-shirts that display disrespectful or vulgar logos or wording, sleeveless “tank-tops”, and dirty or baggy jeans, are not acceptable. Undergarments must not be visible. Hats, caps or hoods must not be worn on school premises during school hours.

In African countries clothing and accessories that may offend local culture and customs may not be worn.

There is a Ship Dress Code, and all students in the 6th Grade and above must observe this code. Students who come to school dressed in a manner which is not compliant with the dress code will be sent home to change. Personal appearance should also be neat and tidy, with clean hands and face, and with combed hair. Flip-flops as footwear are acceptable in hot climates but they must be kept on the feet. Students walking barefoot will lose the privilege of wearing flip-flops. **Running shoes are required for PE classes. Students must bring them to school; they will not be allowed to return to their cabins to fetch them.** For the younger children (Nursery to Kindergarten) it is advisable to dress your child in clothes that don't matter if they get paint on them. We use washable paints, and cover the child with a painting smock, but there is still the possibility of spillage of paint on their clothes.

Opportunities for Parents Involvement

3.19 Parents Meetings

Parents are invited to participate in Parent Meetings and will receive detailed explanations 1 week prior to the meetings.

3.20 Volunteering

Calling all Moms and Dads!

We would love our parents to be more involved in the Academy. Please think about volunteering in the following areas

- Class Assistants (on an as needed basis)
- Drivers for Class Outings
- Library Assistants – covering books, cataloging books
- Bakers for Academy Functions

Please sign up in the Academy Office

Chapter 4: Emergency Procedures

4.1 **MERCY SHIPS ACADEMY EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**

In the event of an emergency while the ship is in port, the first alarm heard will be the **Crew Alert alarm**, which consists of one loud continuous tone over the public address system. This summons the emergency teams only; it is not the signal to muster.

The **General Emergency Alarm** signal consists of seven short tones followed by one long tone over the public address alarm system. This alarm is for all crew to muster.

4.2 **IN-PORT Emergency Procedures**

Outside of School Hours, including lunch breaks

Children should be taken ashore by their parent, or if unattended, by a crew-member, via a safe route to the parent's muster station and identified as being present. Parents are to report missing children as soon as possible to the person in charge of the muster group. Children are to be kept quietly with the family in the muster group until released by the person in charge.

During School Hours, excluding lunch breaks

Children will be taken ashore by their teachers, immediately, quietly and via a safe route having regard to the location of the fire or emergency.

Nursery / Preschool:

A sufficient number of senior students will be sent up to Deck Seven after the Crew Alert alarm. If the General Alarm follows, they will enter the Nursery/Preschool classroom to assist with carrying or leading the young children down to Deck Five and off the ship. This is particularly important when both Preschool and Nursery are in session at the time of the alarm.

Once on the dock:

- All students will line up in grade order and mustered by the Academy Administrative Assistant.
- Any child not claimed shall go with the teacher to the teacher's assigned muster station and be reported to the muster leader.
- If a child is absent or missing during a dock muster when the parent comes to the gangway to pick up their child from the Academy, the principal (or whoever is acting in charge of Academy) should notify Reception.

In case of a drill parents are responsible for making sure that the children are delivered back to the Academy Muster Station near the gangway and the teachers will lead the students back to the Academy.

4.3 **AT SEA Emergency Procedures**

During School Hours, excluding lunch breaks

At the first alarm: All teachers and students muster on the first alarm to the two Deck 7 classrooms.

The Junior High and High School students muster with the Preschool and Nursery students (if Nursery is in session) in the Preschool classroom on the starboard side. In this way, the older students can help the teachers with the youngest students.

All other classes - Kindergarten to Grade 5 - muster in the Grades 1 classroom on the port side. Muster takers in those classrooms will make sure all students are present and accounted for. All students are to be seated quietly while the Muster Taker calls each name.

At the second alarm: the parents may come to those classrooms to collect their children and take them to their appointed family muster station. The Muster Taker will call the Family name and students will stand and meet their parents at the classroom door. Should a parent be unduly delayed, a teacher will take the child to her/his muster station after making a notation on the Deck 7 classroom muster list so that the parent, arriving later, may know who has taken responsibility for their child and at which muster station they may be found. The Principal will keep the Muster lists once they are complete. As soon as their students are collected the teachers report to their Muster Stations.

The Head of High School serves as the Muster Taker in the Preschool classroom and the Head of Elementary serves as the Muster Taker in the Grade 1 classroom. Behind the door in each class is an up to date Muster List.

4.4 Definitions

- Child:** Any child aged 1 - 18 years old and related to, or in the care of crew members. For purposes of this procedure, children visiting for tours or functions on board are not included
- Adult:** Crew member, 18 years old, or older.
- Teacher:** Any adult person assigned to Mercy Ships Academy department, but not limited to; principal, teachers, and secretary.
- School:** Mercy Ships Academy, including the "Summer Program".

4.5 Parental Responsibility

Parents are **responsible** for

1. Raising their children in a manner consistent with Christian principles and the community living environment on board.
2. Training their children to live safely on board and to follow the ship's Community Guidelines.

Parents are **accountable** for

- the actions of their children in general
- for their safety in emergency situations when not in school

4.6 Mercy Ships Academy Responsibility

Mercy Ships Academy is responsible for the safety of the children during school hours. These hours will be posted in the *Schoolroom*. Children become their parents' responsibility during the lunch break.

Ratified by the Captain of the Anastasis & the Academy Principal, 21 Feb, 2001

CHAPTER 5: General and Miscellaneous Information

5.1 *Emergency Contact Person*

When must an Emergency Contact person be assigned?

1. *Absence from Ship of Both Parents*

If both parents will be off the ship during school hours, you **MUST** designate an adult to be responsible for your child in the event of emergency or illness that necessitates sending the child home.

2. *Primary Caregiver Off Ship and other Parent is part of an Emergency Team*

If the Primary Caregiver is off ship and the other parent is a member of an Emergency Team, which includes the following

- Fire Team
- Emergence Medical Team
- Stairway Guide
- Muster Caller
- An Officer
- A Teacher

Another adult needs to be assigned the responsibility of collecting the students from the Academy Muster Station and caring for the students during the emergency.

3. *Primary Caregiver Off Ship for Work related matter*

In the case of the Primary Caregiver being off ship for work related matters or events, that even includes the Hospitality Centre, an Emergency Contact Person needs to be assigned each and every time. It can not be assumed that the Academy Staff knows each parents work schedule.

Please inform the School Secretary by phone (☎1408), and make sure your child is aware of who is responsible for him or her and fill in the 'Primary Caregiver Off Ship' form on the Academy Office door. (In an emergency this list is taken to the Academy Muster and used to make sure each student is in the correct place.)

What is the purpose of an Emergency Contact Person?

There are 2 different reasons why we have the back up plan of an Emergency Contact Person:

1. **In case of Emergency on board** and the need to evacuate the ship all members can be accounted for at their muster stations.
2. **In Case of illness or injury.** If a student is ill and needs to go home or be taken to the Crew Clinic, it is not the responsibility of the Academy to do this, another adults needs to be assigned and available to take care of your child in your absence. In the case of injury the student will be given First Aid and if need be

taken to the Crew Clinic directly, but an adult who is responsible for the child will be contacted and would need to meet the Academy Staff member at the Crew Clinic.

Who cannot be an Emergency Contact Person?

The following people cannot be assigned as Emergency Contact People:

- Fire Team
- Emergence Medical Team
- Stairway Guide
- Muster Caller
- An Officer
- A Teacher
- Receptionists
- Hospital staff on duty, or involved in surgery
- A crew member working off ship
- Security Staff

Please make sure the Emergency Contact Person is aware that they are responsible for your children and what their responsibilities are.

The sign up sheet is outside the Academy Office door and available 24 hours, please sign up so that the Academy Staff can respond accordingly.

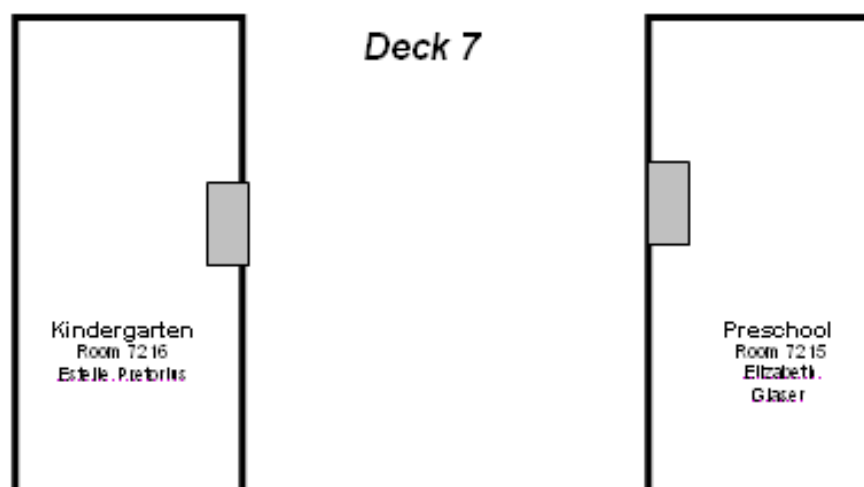
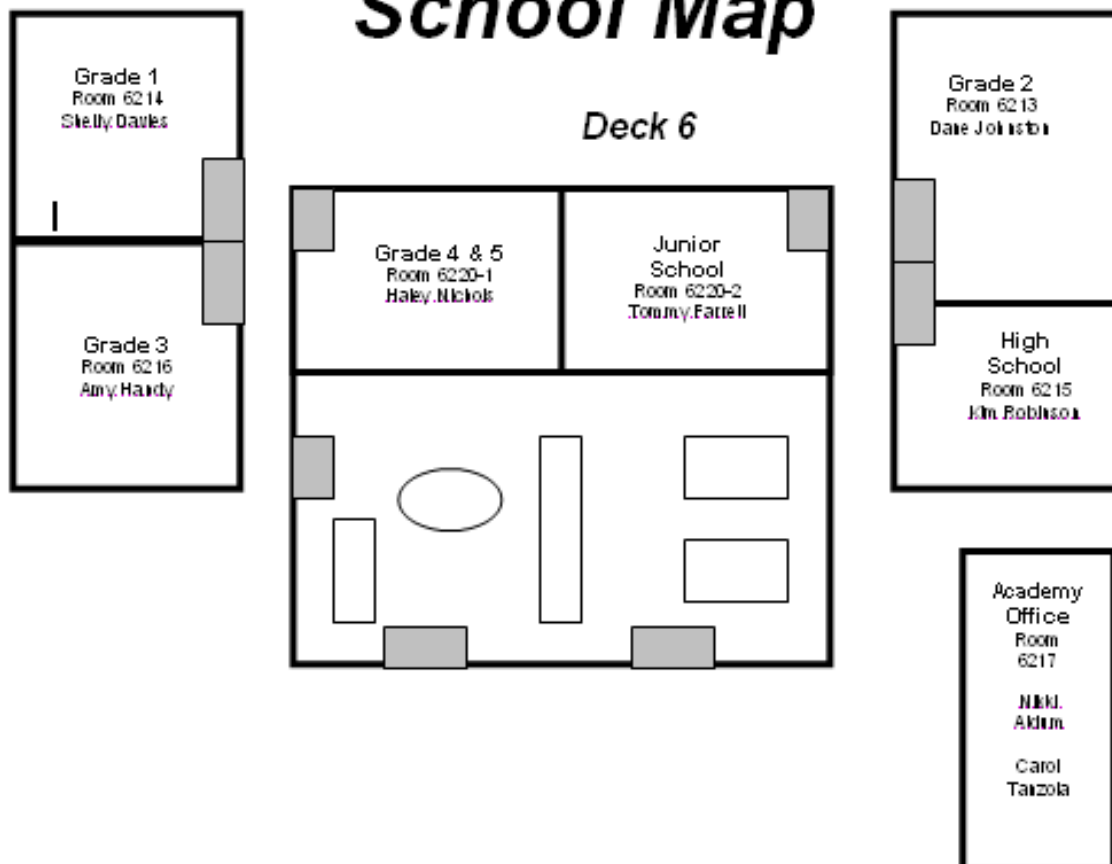
5.2 Academy Age Grouping and School Hours per Week

Grade Levels and School Hours

Grade	Age	Hours
Nursery	1-3 years	<i>Monday, Wednesday and Fridays 9.00 – 12.00</i>
Preschool	3 and 4 years	Year 2 08.00 -12.00 <i>Except Tuesday start at 8.45</i> Year 1 09.00 -12.00
Kindergarten	5 and 6 years	08.00-12.00 <i>Except Tuesday start at 8.45</i> 12:55-15:20
1st Grade – 12th Grade	6 years and older	08.00-12.00 <i>Except Tuesday start at 8.45</i> 12.55-15.20

5.3 Academy Map

Mercy Ships Academy School Map



5.4 Academy Office Hours

The Academy Office is open from 8.00 a.m. – 5.00 p.m., excluding lunch 12 - 1 p.m.. If the office is closed please feel free to leave a message on 📞 1408 and we will get back to you as soon as possible.

5.5 Anti-bullying Policy

A. Introduction

The aim of the anti-bullying policy is to ensure that pupils learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. Bullying is anti-social behavior and affects everyone; it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Only when all issues of bullying are addressed will pupils be able to benefit fully from the opportunities available in the school.

B. Definition

Bullying is defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. The three main types of bullying are

- physical (hitting, kicking, theft)
- verbal (name-calling, racist remarks)
- indirect (spreading rumors, excluding someone from social groups)

C. Biblical Perspective

*"You have heard that it was said, 'Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth'."
"But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you..."
Matthew 5: 38, 44*

*Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord.
Romans 12: 17-19*

D. Academy Guidelines to Students

There are mainly three different responses, which you can make if you are bullied:

1. **Passive** - ignore the bullies, walk away, allow you to be a victim
2. **Assertive** - aggressive, explosive, get into a violent argument or fight
3. **Assertive** - but with the thought "WWJD" (What would Jesus do?)
tell them to stop and then walk away
tell them how you feel, that you feel bullied
get to a parent, teacher or other grown up

If you are being bullied

- Try to stay calm and look as confident as you can.
- Be firm and clear. Look them in the eye and tell them to stop.
- Get away from the situation as soon as you can, without violence.
- Tell an adult without delay what has happened.

After you have been bullied

- Tell a teacher or another adult in your school.
- Tell your family.
- If you are scared to tell a teacher or other adult on your own, ask a friend to go with you. Ask any witness to go with you anyway. Don't give up reporting the bullying until someone listens and does something to stop it.
- Don't blame yourself for what has happened.

E. Reporting Procedure

Students who have witnessed or have been involved in bullying should be encouraged to talk privately to a teacher so that that teacher can deal with the situation in an appropriate way. If the teacher considers the situation to be of a serious nature he or she should then report the matter to the Principal.

F. Follow-up Procedure

The Principal, in discussion with teachers, chaplains, pupils and parents as appropriate, will coordinate sanctions, counseling and support.

The anti-bullying policy described above is based very closely on that of the M/V Anastasis, signed by the Principal in 2002.

5.6 Attendance of Non-Crew Children

Because of our space limitations we cannot undertake to make provision for visiting friends and relatives to attend Mercy Ships Academy classes. **We do not have the facilities to host exchange visits with children from other schools.** Any exceptions to this rule are made at the discretion of the Principal.

5.7 Break Time – Indoor and Outdoor

Academy Policy on Morning Break Time

Kindergarten to Grade 5

Take their break on the Deck 7 Starboard or Deck 8 when completed and safe, (or if too wet, Deck 6 Midships Lounge) from 10.00 a.m. – 10.25 a.m..

Grade 6 to 12 (older students)

Take their break on the Deck 7 Starboard (when completed and safe) or an alternative designated area from 9.50 a.m. - 10.15 a.m.. *Students age 13 or above who have submitted permission slips signed by parents will **not** be the responsibility of Academy staff during break time. Such students may return to their own cabin (not anyone else's), visit appropriate ship locations, or the dock. It is necessary to be seated back in the classroom complete with necessary books and supplies **ready to work at 10.15 a.m.** This is a privilege that can be withdrawn if it is abused.*

Students are required to leave the classrooms and the Schoolroom during break time every day, for the duration of the break.

For every morning break one teacher will be responsible in each designated area.

Indoor Break Time

In the event of heavy rain, break will be held in the Midships Lounge. The Principal will decide if indoor break will be held. Cold weather is not an excuse to stay inside, since suitable clothing should be available.

If your child is recovering from a recent illness and will not be participating, then please send a note to the teacher. The student will still stay with the teacher and be supervised.

5.8 Clean Up Teams

Every day after school has finished children from Grades 6 to 12 serve on a clean-up team to clean and tidy the school facilities. This activity is teacher-supervised and takes place from 15:20 each school day. Students will average at least 20 minutes of clean-up time for each team, and a few days' notice of the duty is always given.

Cleaning of toilets is not included.

5.9 Entering the BigRoom after School Hours

Students are not permitted in the school outside of regular school hours without permission. There is an exception: High School students (Grades 7-12) may do homework, using the computers if they wish, in the *Schoolroom* until 17.00 (with permission, and with a teacher in the vicinity). They are not permitted to invite anyone else to be there with them apart from those with whom they are studying. This is a privilege that can be withdrawn if it is abused.

5.10 Field Trips

Before students go on scheduled field trips, parents must sign and return to the teacher the Field Trip Permission Form. These will be distributed prior to the trip, and may contain special instructions concerning the safety and good conduct of the trip.


5.11 Mentor Teacher Program

Each Junior High and High School student group will be assigned a Mentor Teacher. The purpose of this program is to designate a specific teacher who offers support to students in what ever are they need. The students will meet with their Mentor Teacher regularly and are there to help not only the students but parents too.

Mentor Teacher for 2009/2010	
Grade 6	Miss Christina Orman
Grade 7 & 8	Mrs. Kim Robinson
Grade 9 & 10	Mr. Ben Calvert
Grade 11 & 12	Mr. Tommy Farrell

5.12 Human Resources Working Parent Policy AFM

For clarification please see the Human Resources Department directly.

	<u>HUMAN RESOURCE POLICIES</u>	M/V <i>Africa Mercy</i>
	POLICY: Working Parent Policy	
	REVISION DATE: 16 th August 2005	PAGE 1 OF 2

OBJECTIVE:

The Working Parent Policy of the *Africa Mercy* is designed to balance the needs of families on board with the requirements of the ship's ministry, based upon input received from parents, the Academy, and ship leadership. Whilst we will endeavour to place a Parental Care Provider (PCP) into a position that suits their preference/skills, there needs to be clear understanding that flexibility is required to help meet the needs of under staffed departments. There may be occasions where it is necessary for you to change departments.

When a family is accepted as crew, one parent is to work full-time (40 hours per week). The second parent may be accepted by a department as the PCP and will fall into either Option 1 PCP or Option 2 PCP.

Primary Care Provider – Option 1

An Option 1 is defined as a Primary Care Provider who is assigned to a departmental position and is included in that department's bed allocation. Working hours are while the Academy is in session.

Primary Care Provider – Option 2

An Option 2 is defined as a Parental Care Provider who is required to work part time in a ship department. The number of hours will be determined in conjunction with HR using a number of criteria; including the age of the children, school hours, term times but must fall in line with the criteria set out in the chart below. This will be decided on an individual basis concerning limited working periods in different departments, taking into account family responsibilities. The department that an Option 2 PCP works in will be determined on an individual basis taking into account the skill set and desire of the parent but will also take into account of departments that are not fully crewed.

This system will honor Option 2 PCP as a bonus and advantage to a department whilst maintaining the key role of a primary care provider to the family.

A PCP first priority is to be focused upon their children's needs and thus they will work part-time, under the following conditions:

1) **Working Hours** - The working hours of the primary care provider will vary according to the desires of the parent as well as the requirements of the department where they serve. The schedule can be flexible where appropriate as long as the following conditions are met:

- Each primary care provider commits to engage in the community and contribute to its objectives
- The primary care provider is willing to commit to both Human Resources and the department head to work in the department for the agreed number of hours - related to the time their youngest child is in school (see chart).

CHILD'S AGE	SCHOOL YEAR	SCHOOL HOURS PER WEEK		WORK HOURS PER WEEK
0-12 months		No option	0 hours	0 hrs
1 year	Nursery	Option of:	0 hrs	0
			10 hrs #*@	At least 5 hrs
2 years	Nursery	Option of:	0 hrs	0
			10 hrs#*@	At least 5 hrs
3 years	1 st year Preschool	Option of:	0 hrs	0
			10 hrs#*@	At least 5 hrs
			20hrs#*	At least 10 hrs
4 years	2 nd yr Preschool	20 hrs*		At least 10 hrs
5 years	Kindergarten	30 hrs*		At least 20 hrs
6 -13 years	Grade 1-8	30 hrs		At least 20 hrs
14-18 years	Grade 9-12	30hrs		30hrs
NOTES:				
# Once all children in a family are attending Academy facilities the Parent is required to work.				
@ The hours that a child attends the Academy must be equal each day. (i.e.: If a child attends the preschool class on the 10 hour program, this child must attend the same 2 hours each day.)				

2) **Bedspace** - As Primary Care Providers will be working part-time hours they will not fill a full-time bed space & therefore boost the departmental numbers to which they are assigned.

3) **Nursery / Kindergarten** - Parents can choose to put their child in nursery or preschool from the age of one through three. Although the nursery program is optional, if the youngest child attends nursery, the primary care provider is required to work (as per above). Beginning with age 4, it is compulsory for the child to be enrolled in school, and the primary care provider is then expected to work according to the table above.

4) **Vacation and Holidays** - During the summer school vacation time, children up to 12 years of age are required to attend the “summer program” (if a program is offered) and the primary care provider will continue to work as per usual. There is usually a free week between the end of school and the start of this summer program, and two weeks afterwards (for the teachers to prepare for the next term). During these times, during dry dock, and during all ship and any other school holidays, primary care providers are off work and stay with their children.

NOTE: Please note that it is the responsibility of parents to ensure that their child is properly supervised at all times when not in school.

5.13 Illness and Academy Students

Impetigo or Other Contagious Diseases

If a pupil has a contagious infection or rash he or she may not attend school until the Crew Physician or Nurse gives the school assurance that the condition is no longer contagious. If such a condition is detected at school the parents will be contacted immediately so that the pupil may be examined by the physician.

Pink Eye Policy

On advice from the medical department, the Academy requests that children with “pink eye” be seen by the doctors in the Crew Clinic. Pink Eye is a highly contagious disease and should be treated as soon as possible. Once treatment has been started, children

should not come into school for 24 hours. During the period of treatment, please ask them not to touch their eyes, and ensure that they wash their hands regularly. We also ask that once children have started treatment their class teachers are informed.

Seasickness

All children from Grades 1 to 12 should carry a plastic bag while we are at sea. If a child vomits at school, the teacher will call the parent to clean up if the child is unable to do it. If your child is very ill the teacher will call you to take the child home. Please see the medical department for seasickness medication. Classes continue as normal unless the school announces its closure because of extremely rough weather. This occurrence is rare.

Colds or Allergies

Pupils who have bad colds or certain allergies must bring a supply of tissues with them to class. Tissues are provided in the Nursery and Preschool only.

Lice

If students are found to have lice, they must be treated according to the directions of the Crew Clinic before they may return to the classroom. The parents must inform the Academy if their child has lice.

5.14 Primary Caregivers Communication Meeting

All Primary Caregivers and Mom's who are not able to attend their department meetings are welcome to join a group of Mom's and Dad's that meet **Thursday mornings at 9 a.m.** in the Midships Lounge to hear any ship news that was communicated through the Management Team Briefings on Wednesday mornings. It is also a time where PCG can raise any concerns that need to be taken to the Senior Management Team by the Academy Principal.

5.15 Messages

If you would like to leave a message for your child you are welcome to phone the Academy Office and the Academy Admin. Assistant will pass the message on. If you would like to leave a message for any of the teachers please leave them with the Academy Admin. Assist. rather than phone the teacher during school hours.

5.16 Personal Items Brought to School

No video games, cassette players, cameras, radios, mp3 players, or other electronic entertainment devices may be used in the school unless used for instructional purposes. Toys may be brought to school **only** at the request of the teacher.

5.17 Physical Education Requirements

Please send your child to school on PE afternoons dressed appropriately for Physical Education activities, specifically closed-toed (tennis or trainer) shoes.

We request, in the interests of hygiene, that these clothes are specifically chosen and used for PE lessons.

Please also provide a hat, such as a baseball cap, during hot weather for children to protect them from the sun's ultra-violet rays. Families may also consider supplying insect repellent to their children.

Finally, please send your child to school with a bag each day so that he or she can carry equipment and books to and from school easily.

Please note that it is the responsibility of parents to ensure that their child is properly supervised at all times when not in school.

5.18 Respecting Property

Please encourage your children to respect the property of others as well as materials supplied to the students at the beginning of the school year. We will gladly replace empty ballpoint pens and one-inch pencils as trade-ins on new ones. We do not normally replace those that are declared "lost". The students should replace lost or broken ones.

5.19 School Calendar

As published and updated on Navigator.

5.20 School Closure Information

Release of Academy Students and Staff from scheduled work times

The Academy is a structure within an organization and does not always fit into the day-to-day running of the Africa Mercy without flexibility and effective communication. In an attempt to add effective planning and communication, the following guidelines have been put in place.

Departing and Arriving in a Host Nation (Liberia, Sierra Leone etc.)

The Academy students could be released from class during the arrival and departures from a host nation. This should not, but could, mean that students would miss a large part of the school day, depending on the day's events. The Academy will communicate with parents at least 2 days before the arrival or departure.

We understand that specific times are not always possible to communicate but recognize that this is an important time which we would like our children to share with the rest of the crew. Due to the change in schedule for the entire crew it is not likely to affect more than 2 days of the school year.

The decision to release students from class will be made by the Principal and communicate to both parents and students.

Departing and Arriving in a Visiting Nation (Tenerife etc.)

The Academy students will not be released for arrivals and departures in visiting nations. The school day will proceed as scheduled. Teachers can choose to take their students to Deck 7, with the permission of the Academy Principal.

Crew Briefings

We believe that it is important for our older students and teachers to be part of the Country Briefings. These are scheduled events and should interrupt only a portion of the school day. The Academy will communicate with parents at least 2 days before a New Country Briefing and children will be dismissed at the discretion of the Principal.

Safety and Security Mandatory Meetings

As Academy students and teachers are considered crew members and their safety and security is a priority, students and teachers will be released to attend these meetings at the discretion of the Principal.

5.21 School Fees

These are the current 2009 fees.

	Nursery	Preschool	K - 6	7 - 12
1 st Child	<i>Will be confirmed at a later date.</i>	\$30.00	\$40.00	\$50.00
Developing Nations (Tier 2) pay approximately 50% on school fees listed.				

School fees will ***not*** increase in January 2010, as announced by email on Friday the 4th of September 2009 by Kerry Petersen.

5.22 School Supplies

The Academy will provide all school supplies for each Academy student. Please encourage your child to value these items as we will not be able to replace items that are lost through carelessness.

Generally school supplies are ***not*** available for non-school use. The Principal must first agree for any special occasions to be regarded as exceptions. Academy property is not usually to be shared with sports teams from other departments, or even with the Kids' Club, unless full permission has been given.

5.23 Ship Rules for Students

1. **Two feet** on the deck. This means no climbing on the rails or on anything that is not designed for climbing on.
2. **No running** on board, except on the exercise or play area of the Deck 7.
3. **No screaming**. This is because screaming is acceptable only in emergencies such as the 'man overboard' situation.

5.24 Short Term Students

- The Academy is not able to offer places for the children of short term crew who are staying less than 3 months on board.
- Normally families would need to make a commitment to the ship as crew members

for 3 months or more before their children would be considered eligible to join the Academy.

5.25 Snacks at Break-Time

Children up to age 13 need to bring their snack with them at the start of the day, as they will not be allowed to return to their cabins. If their snack is forgotten, parents may bring it to them on Starboard Prom Deck during break. Snacks (a drink and some small food item) are also to be provided by parents for Nursery and Pre-school. We encourage you not to allow sweets or sugary snacks during school hours. Of course, no gum or candy (or any food) is permitted within the Academy unless it is part of a teacher-planned opportunity. The only drink permitted is water, and this is particularly desirable in tropical conditions. Students are encouraged to bring a closed container water bottle at the beginning of each day.

5.26 Special Educational Needs

A child has special educational needs if they have a learning difficulty which calls for special provision to be made. This special educational provision means educational provision which is additional to, or otherwise different from, the educational provision made generally for children for that age group. Some examples of Special Educational Needs might include: personality disorder, dyslexia, depression, ADD/ADHD or any other condition that would affect his/her performance at school.

- The Academy is not able to accept children with special educational needs or learning disabilities because we do not have the staff or facilities to assist them in successful learning.
- If the Principal discovers that a student needs specialized care, continuation in the Academy is not a given outcome. (Diagnosing special education needs requires specialized programs and constant monitoring by professionals. This type of program is not available in the Academy.)

5.27 Substitution of Electives for Home Language Instruction or Additional Educational Support for Kindergarten to Grade 8 Students only.

The Mercy Ships Academy recognizes the need for additional time to be created for families to address needs in the following areas: Home Language Instruction and additional educational support for children with mild special educational needs. This can be done by the Substitution of Electives.

For the above reasons the following guidelines have been drawn up to facilitate this process, that fall within the requirements laid out by our admission policy and time off school policy and that falls inline with the recommendation of our Educational Accreditation Agency: Association of Christian School International.

Guidelines that need to be followed

- Any decision to apply for the Substitution of Electives must be made in consultation with the Principal and requested in writing.
- Parents are allowed to select **a maximum of 3 or 4 electives*** per week which would prove a total of 5 or 6 hours of instruction.
- If a family chooses to select an elective that has more than one lesson a week the students will be excused for all the lessons. *e.g. PE is timetabled for Monday afternoon 7th lesson*

and Wednesday afternoon 7th lesson, a student can not attend the Monday lesson and then attend the Wednesday lesson, both lessons will be assigned for Homeschooling.

- No student will be excused from a Core Subject.
- Once the specific electives have been selected by the family, students will be excused for those lessons for the entire semester and no grade will be given for that class and n/a will be reflected on their school reports.
- Students will be sent home during these lessons and it is the parent's responsibility to ensure that the student is supervised and receives instruction during this time.
- The Academy is not able to make changes to the school timetable to accommodate families, rather families have the choice of electives to choose from once the timetable has been set for the semester.

If a family would like more time or any requests that fall outside of these guidelines they are able to make an application to the Mercy Ships Academy Educational Board in writing through the chairperson (Present Chairman of the Mercy Ships Academy Sam Smith: Samuel.smith@mercyships.org).

* Electives are subjects offered over and above the 5 Core Subjects: Bible, Math, English, Science and Social Studies.

5.28 Starting Age for Schools around the World

Education Systems around the World

This information should be helpful to you as you try to understand how your school system compares with that of the US. This chart was put together by Judy Hewer from CHED UK and modified.

Age of children at Start of school year	England and Wales	USA Schools	Korean	Swedish	Canadian	German*
4	Rising Fives					Optional Kindergarten
5	Year 1	Kindergarten	Optional Kindergarten	Optional Kindergarten	Kindergarten	
6	Year 2	Grade 1	Institute of Music & Art	Preschool/Year 0	Grade 1	Grundschule
7	Year 3	Grade 2	Primary 1	Primary 1	Grade 2	
8	Year 4	Grade 3	2	2	Grade 3	
9	Year 5	Grade 4	3	3	Grade 4	
10	Year 6	Grade 5	4	Middle Stage 4	Grade 5	Hauptschule Realschule Gymnasium Gesamtschule
11	Year 7	Grade 6	5	5	Grade 6	
12	Year 8	Grade 7	6	6	Grade 7	
13	Year 9	Grade 8	7	Higher Stage 7	Grade 8	
14	Year 10	Grade 9	Middle School	8	Grade 9	
15	Year 11	Grade 10	2	9	Grade 10	
16	Year 12	Grade 11	3	Gymnasium 1	Grade 11	
17	Year 13	Grade 12	High School	2	Grade 12	Vocational Training Qualified Abitur University
18	University	University/College	2	3	University/College	
19			3	University		
20			University			

<http://www.mk2mk.org/Resources~/college%20handbook/collegehndbk.pdf>

* For more detailed explanation see the below website: <http://library.thinkquest.org/26576/schoolpage.htm>

5.29 Summer Program

Summer Program is designed to provide supervision for children from Nursery age through Grade 6 (children who are 12 years old or younger) for parents who have work duties.

Therefore parents who are not working should NOT send children to the Summer Program unless they are prepared to help with the running of the program.

Children cannot drop in and out of the Summer Program on a day-to-day basis, as this causes problems with organizing activities; instead children must commit to Week 1, Week 2, and Week 3.

There will be three age groups: *(these age groups can vary depending on the availability of staff)*

Nursery & Pre School	9:00 – 12:00
Kindergarten + Grades 1-4	9:00 - 12.00 and 13.00 - 15.00
Grades 5-6	9:00 - 12.00 and 13.00 - 15.00
Grades 7-12	can attend the program only when:

- They have arranged it through the Summer Program leaders
- They have signed up for the field trip 48 hours in advance
- They have handed in a signed parental permission slip for the field trip to the office

Policy Details

1. Children are expected to attend the Summer Program if parents are working. Parents are not entitled to have time-off work to look after their children unless they take it as vacation.
2. If the parents of children in Grade 5 and 6 feel that their children are responsible enough to take care of themselves on the ship, they are free to choose if their children should attend the program. Parents must provide adequate supervision while doing their own departmental job. If the children are found not to be responsible, they must attend Summer Program.
3. Some of the children in Grade 5 and 6 may like to help in a department (eg. Hospitality or Academy). This is only possible if the parent and the department head agree. The parent is responsible for arranging this agreement, but must notify the Academy. Should the situation prove unsuitable, the child must return to the Summer Program.
4. There is a daily fee of \$1 for each child attending the program. This is to provide funding to purchase supplies used. Summer Program fees are charged on a daily basis, and billed to the parents through the crew banking system at the end of the program. Occasionally parents are asked to provide some additional costs for outings.
5. During the Summer Program, due to limited staffing, if a staff member is ill we may need to ask parents to volunteer to help for the day. If this is not possible, and in conjunction with the Executive Director, parents will be notified, class cancelled, and the students sent home.
6. Grade 7 -12 students are encouraged to help in the Summer Program or another department for some of the time if there is a suitable position. The Principal or Vice-Principal will be pleased to discuss this with the parents in order to help them make arrangements.
7. Please do not assume that you may bring or send any visitors to the Summer Program. Please direct your request to the Principal.

5.30 Unusual Circumstances

If any unusual circumstance affects your child on any day, please send a note or write a note in the homework diary rather than asking the child to pass on instructions.

Examples of this are

- any injury that would prevent participation in some classes
- a trip to the clinic
- homework that is not completed for any reason
- a request for early release from school

5.31 Use of School Equipment

School equipment is not for general crew use and is not available for loan to individuals or groups. Any exceptions must be agreed with the Principal.

If school equipment or textbooks are abused, parents will be requested to replace the materials or pay the replacement cost. Student textbooks will be issued at the beginning of the school year with a text book condition form on the inside cover, describing the current condition of the book and the name and date of the user.

Most students in Grades 5 and above will have the use of a book locker located in the Schoolroom. These must be kept clean and tidy, and will be regularly inspected.

All science equipment is kept locked away, in the interests of safety, and will be used only under the supervision of a science teacher

5.32 Acceptable use of Technology

The Academy recognizes that new technologies have shifted the manner in which information is accessed, communicated, and transferred. These new technologies will alter the nature of teaching and learning. Access to technology will allow students to explore databases, libraries, Internet sites, bulletin boards and the like while exchanging information with individuals throughout the world. The Academy supports access by pupils and employees to these information sources and the potential they have to enhance students' educational experiences, but it reserves the right to limit in-school use to materials appropriate to educational purposes.

This is an important document, and parents and students are asked to take the time to read it carefully. Before permitting access to the computer network, Mercy Ships' Academy requires students and their parents or guardians to sign and return this letter, acknowledging that

- they have read the Acceptable Use Policy and understand its contents
- they agree to comply with the policy

Safe Use of the Internet

Students should not do anything via the Academy's computer network which may possibly jeopardize their or other's personal safety either at school or outside school.

In particular, students

- MUST NOT give out any identifying details such as their home address, telephone number, and school name in a public chat or bulletin board
- MUST NOT give out any personal information.
- MUST NOT arrange a meeting in person with another person they have "met" or only communicated with by computer.
- MUST NOT respond to messages or bulletin board items that are indecent, suggestive, belligerent, discriminatory, threatening, or which make the student feel uncomfortable or unsafe in any way.

In addition, students

- SHOULD be aware that people they meet or communicate with on-line may pretend to be someone else.
- SHOULD remember that everything they read on line may not be accurate and consider the reliability of the information they find.
- SHOULD avoid offers which involve either financial transactions or personal meetings.

Care for Academy Equipment

Particular attention is drawn to the Academy equipment located in the BigRoom. At no time should a student remove any piece of equipment (including but not limited to head phones, keyboards, mice, webcams) that is connected to one of the computers. If a student needs to use this equipment and there isn't a suitable piece already attached to their computer they should log off and log on to a different computer with the required equipment already attached.

General Acceptable Use

The following is modified from the general IS Acceptable use Policy which can be found at

<http://navigator.mercyships.org/display/ISPublic/Acceptable+Use+Policy>

This policy covers any Academy equipment, which is connected to a Mercy Ships network, situated at an Academy location or used in the name of the Academy. A 'User' is a person operating or using any equipment. "Equipment" includes but is not limited to projectors, computers, networks, printers, and associated peripherals. This policy may be supplemented by additional policies relating to the acceptable use of IS equipment - see Navigator for details.

Conduct

Users must not

1. perform any act that may be construed as illegal or unethical
2. create or transmit defamatory, offensive or harassing material
3. undertake deliberate activities that waste staff effort or networked resources
4. make, download or use copies of copyrighted materials or software, store such copies on a Mercy Ships system, or transmit them over a Mercy Ships network, unless it is covered or permitted under a commercial agreement or other such license

5. engage in any activity that might be purposefully harmful to systems or to any information stored thereon, such as creating or propagating viruses, disrupting services, damaging files, gaining unauthorized access or modifying a Mercy Ships system or data
6. remove, install, or modify any Academy hardware or software, unless given permission by the IS department

Security

Users must not

1. attempt to circumvent or subvert system or network security measures
2. attempt to gain access to systems or services which are not authorized for their use
3. use another person's user ID or password
4. conceal their identity when using IS resources, such as masquerading as or impersonating others, or otherwise using a false identity

Users must

1. logoff when not using their computer
2. protect their user ID and password from unauthorized use. Users are responsible for all activities connected to or originate from their user ID
3. access only information that is their own, that is publicly available, or to which they have been given authorized access

Internet and Email

Users must not

1. visit Internet sites that contain obscene, hateful, pornographic or other inappropriate material
2. download excessive quantities of information or files, thereby impeding the speed of the internet connection. Specifically, the use of multi-media streaming, such as video or audio conferencing services are prohibited
3. use the internet to play online games
4. use mail or messaging services to harass or intimidate another person, for example, by broadcasting unsolicited messages, or by repeatedly sending unwanted mail

IS Staff may

1. access user accounts and data for the purposes of support and maintenance
2. remotely observe user workstation activity for the purposes of support and maintenance
3. monitor or log user activity for the purposes of security and auditing

IS Staff will not

1. divulge to any third party, any information or data acquired in the course of their duties, unless there has been a breach of this policy, in which case staff will inform the appropriate authority. All IS Staff are required to sign a Staff Confidentiality Agreement;
2. access user accounts or data except for the purpose of performing their job function as described by their Job Description.

5.33 DVD/Video Viewing Policy

Preschool and Elementary School

- **No video/DVD can be shown to any Academy Class rated PG, without the permission of each student's parents.**
- All video/DVD (including G) viewing needs to be communicated with parents, via email or short note, giving 24 hours notice. If a parent would not like their child to view a particular video, an alternative activity needs to be designed for the student.
- Please notify the Academy Principal of all videos/DVDs you will be viewing, to help with communication.

High School and Junior High School

- **No video/DVD can be shown to any Academy Class rated PG, without the permission of each student's parents.**
- All video/DVD viewing needs to be communicated with parents, via email or short note, giving 24 hours notice. If a parent or student is not comfortable with the material being viewed they have the right to not participate, or leave if they feel uncomfortable and given an alternative assignment.