



2024-2025

Parent Handbook

FORWARD

This handbook is an outline of policies and procedures but does not encompass every circumstance. Therefore, the school is not limited to what is written in the handbook and reserves the right to develop policies and procedures as needed to provide an appropriate environment.

Communication among parents and staff is encouraged. If we are made aware that a concern exists, we can deal with it in a mutually satisfying manner. If we are unaware of a concern, we are powerless to address it. This can affect the functioning of the school and the student's learning. Clear and open communication among parents and staff is encouraged and promoted.

Group pictures and individual pictures are used in The Annual Newsletter, The Vine School Social Media pages, and our website for publicity purposes and to enhance the learning environment. Should you **NOT** want your child's picture, or a group picture that includes your child, to be used by the school or a public entity, please make sure to indicate this in the enrollment packet ([see media release](#)).

Please read through this handbook carefully and return the signed section acknowledging that you have received and read the Parent/Student Handbook.

THE VINE SCHOOL

1.1 MISSION STATEMENT OF THE FOUNDATIONS PROGRAM

Our mission is to create a customized learning environment and use specialized teaching methods to serve children ages two through eighteen affected by Autism Spectrum Disorders and related Communication Disorders.

1.2 PURPOSE AND AIMS

We believe in using a multisensory curriculum that addresses the social, academic, behavioral and language challenges children with Autism encounter. A low student to teacher ratio is essential to achieving this goal. Our specialized learning environment nurtures a child's special needs.

We are committed to the following aims:

- Provide a safe and nurturing environment for our students to learn meaningful social interactions.
- Provide a multisensory curriculum in order to teach children with Autism most effectively.
- Small teach to student ratios
- Individualized education plans for each student
- Provide community education and public awareness about Autism and related disorders.
- Maintain affordability so that new students, teachers and aides can be attracted and retained.

1.3 MISSION STATEMENT OF THE BRIDGE PROGRAM AT THE VINE SCHOOL

The Bridge Program is a private, accredited program that enables and empowers students with language-based learning differences, such as Dyslexia, Dysgraphia, Dyscalculia, and other learning difficulties. The Bridge Program provides therapeutic, research-driven instructional programs in a supportive and structured learning environment.

1.4 PURPOSE AND AIMS

We believe in using a multisensory curriculum that addresses the social and language challenges children with learning differences encounter. A low student-to-teacher ratio is essential to achieving this goal. Our specialized learning environment combined with our unique approach will nurture your child's needs.

We are committed to the following aims:

- To provide multisensory-based instruction in all core subjects, supported by Orton-Gillingham methodology.
- To understand and develop each student's unique learning style.
- To build academic skills and increase confidence.
- To identify specific academic and developmental differences and to develop an individualized intervention plan to increase the student's skills in a systematic approach
- To learn in small group settings, small student-to-teacher ratios
- To develop individualized language-based instruction implemented by Speech-Language Pathologists and highly trained staff.

We believe:

- Teachers must respect their students and require responsibility from their students
- We teach students, not subjects
- We search to find the way a student learns and retains information
- We provide an environment of encouragement
- We remediate weaknesses to the fullest extent possible
- We celebrate strengths
- We empower by fostering self-discipline
- We require our student's best
- We do not change the goals for a student with learning differences; we change the way we reach them

1.5 MISSION STATEMENT OF THE BRANCHING OUT PROGRAM AT THE VINE SCHOOL

The Branching Out Program is a day program for youth/young adults with Intellectual Differences. The program provides pre-vocational skills and partners with organizations and businesses in our community. This helps our members have a purpose and feel a sense of belonging as they transition into adulthood. Daily living and self-help skills, social skills, friendship building, health and wellness practices, as well as leisure and recreational activities give our members beneficial life skills in a safe place in order to grow every day.

1.6 HISTORY OF THE VINE SCHOOL

The Vine School was developed by Erin Hatley and John and Melody Handley in March of 2008. The Vine School was created to fill a need for an appropriate place to educate children with Autism Spectrum Disorders in the Victoria area. In 2019, The Vine School realized that there was another population of students that was underserved in our community. The Vine School, parents and professionals developed The Bridge Program at The Vine School to serve children diagnosed with learning differences, such as Dyslexia, Dysgraphia and Dyscalculia. In January 2022, we opened the Branching Out Program that provides young adults with intellectual differences a place to develop vocational skills in a safe and supportive environment.

1.7 GOVERNANCE OF THE VINE SCHOOL

STRUCTURE OF THE VINE SCHOOL

A Board of Directors serves as a major governing body of the School. The Board makes policy decisions and works through committees. The Director of The Vine School and Program Directors serve as ex-officio (non-voting) members of the Board of Directors.

A board of directors establishes policies and procedures for the School. Current directors are:

Erin Hatley – Ex-officio Member, Executive Director

John Handley – President

Tom Stocker –Treasurer

Carole Oliphant – Secretary

Lynn Gisler – Member

Tylar Dick - Member

Glen Dry – Member

Charlotte Fitzgerald– Member

Melody Handley – Member

Erich Heinold – Member

Carrie Hendrix - Member

David Murphy - Member

Brenda Tally – Member

Geanie Morrison- Member

1.8 RESOLVING QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS WITH BOARD ASSISTANCE

The Board of Directors is the *final* authority at the School. If you have a question or concern about any aspect of the School's operation (other than a concern about discrimination, harassment, or retaliation, which are addressed separately), you should direct it *initially* to the immediate Program Director. If it is not resolved to your satisfaction, you should direct it to the Executive Director. If it is still not resolved to your satisfaction, you may bring the matter to the Board of Director Liason. The Board of Director Liason is a Board Member who is nominated

by the Board of Directors to serve as an additional line of communication between parents, staff, and the Board of Directors.

The Board of Director Liason for the 2024-2025 school year is Lynn Gisler. You may reach out to her via email at lynngisler@me.com with any questions or concerns.

ADMISSIONS

The Vine School programs strive to maintain the appropriate environment in which to create a functional learning experience for children with learning differences. Potential parents are invited to make an appointment to tour the school so they will be able to make an informed decision on whether or not the programs and services we provide are an appropriate placement for their child. An initial screening is then conducted to determine each child's eligibility for admission including:

1. Review of formal diagnosis from a developmental pediatrician or diagnostician
2. Review of relevant developmental history
3. Review of any previous standardized assessments
4. Informal evaluation of the child with screening.
5. Parent interview
6. Review detailed application information

Every child who is admitted must have a completed medical examination including detailed pediatric evaluations as well as hearing assessments and a vision assessment. A copy of immunization records must be kept on file. Vaccine exemptions must be applied through the State of Texas and must be kept on file.

NOTE: No child deemed by the administration to be a serious safety threat to themselves, or others, shall be enrolled.

Please read your enrollment application carefully. We consider the enrollment and re-enrollment agreements legal and binding.

EDUCATIONAL PROCESS

Assessment

We believe that a thorough educational plan can be best developed for a student when we have identified their specific strengths and needs. Thorough formal and informal assessment for each core subject area and related educational domains will be conducted each September in order for our staff to determine specific intervention goals for each student and to determine areas of progress and continued need. Using the data gathered from these assessments, individualized plans for educational interventions will be developed for each student for each subject and related skill area. Data will be tracked daily for each student to monitor progress in all areas. Assessments may be repeated throughout the school year as needed in order to update student strengths and needs. All formal assessments are norm-referenced, standardized measures. We do not use testing that compares students to other students in the state or country for state or federal information. As a private school program, our trained and qualified staff administer relevant assessments to allow us to meet The Vine School's goals.

Classroom Curriculum

Curriculum for The Vine School is highly specialized and uniquely tailored to each student's developmental and academic needs. The curriculum has been developed for each subject and skill area to meet the goals of the program for each student. Modifications and accommodations will be used in all subjects and educational areas as they are needed to provide the highest level of education for each student. Modifications and accommodations are considered a regular part of the curriculum and school program for all students.

Progress

Foundations Program - Individual Plans will be updated every nine weeks using a formal progress report that will be sent home for review. The dates for progress reports to be sent home

will be indicated on the school year calendar. Parents will then be contacted to schedule a Parent/Teacher Conference to review the Progress Report and Data associated with the goals in place.

Bridge Program

- Individual progress will be reported every nine weeks using a formal progress report that will be sent home for review. The dates for progress reports to be sent home will be indicated on the school year calendar. Parents will then be contacted to schedule a Parent/Teacher Conference (at least twice per school year, once in Fall Semester and once in the Spring Semester) to review the Progress Report and Data associated with the goals in place. The Program Director and Lead Teacher will have individual goals in place for each student that will be developed after baseline assessments are completed in September.
- The students will earn grades for subject areas; however, if curriculum or instruction is modified and/or if accommodations are utilized to aid a student, this information will be documented on the progress report. Information regarding baseline assessment information and recommended accommodations/modifications for students will be presented during the first progress report meeting of the school year.
- It should be noted that we want to be cognizant of the use of grades for our students. We desire to use the administration of grades in a manner that will be encouraging to students, as our overall goal is to increase skills and confidence in learning. The Lead Teacher in each classroom will decide a grading rubric/system per student, including information about late work, that is appropriate for that student's learning needs.
- We believe that the majority of academic learning should occur in the classroom. The nature of our specialty curriculums and extensive training allow us to provide instruction in a highly customized manner. Specific prompting or techniques will be utilized for students. For these reasons, homework expectations are different in each classroom and will be communicated by the teacher. We highly encourage parents to allow their child the opportunity to learn through other modalities outside of the school setting, such as through sports, the arts, community service, social interactions, etc. Pairing this variance in a child's day will result in a more impacting and long-lasting educational experience and will avoid the child being "over-stressed" to learn rote information or in a manner that does not best meet their learning needs. Because we want our students to be responsible and accountable, we encourage parents to not bring forgotten homework, projects, study sheets, or any class materials to the students at school.
- In place of traditional homework, the teacher may make assignments that include a project to be completed within the home. Such projects are intended to create a generalization of our classroom instruction and skill development in the student's home. We will strive to teach the students to use their strategies for organization and learning

within the home environment. Having home projects will allow us the structure to develop those transitions into the home environment.

Dismissal

Dismissal from The Vine School is a qualitative and quantitative analysis. We use Individual Plans, Assessments, and staff recommendations along with parent input to determine a child's eligibility to remain enrolled or if there is another educational program that will provide a more functional environment for the student.

Students may be dismissed for the following reasons:

- **Irregular attendance interfering with the student's progress**
- **Failure to follow the attendance improvement plan**
- **Failure to attend mandatory parent meetings**
- **Failure to respond to important communication from the school administration and/or staff.**
- **Lack of family cooperation as outlined in the *Parent Code of Conduct***
- **Student's inability to gain further benefit from the services of the school**

PROCEDURES

TUITION

There are several options for payment of tuition to The Vine School. If paying bi-monthly, payments are due by the first and fifteenth day of each month. If paying bi-annually, the payments are due by September 1st and January 1st. If paying the amount in whole it is due by September 1st. Statements are not mailed to parents unless the account is in arrears. We use FACTS as our third party payment processor. Each student will need a FACTS account created in order to submit payments through this system. The Vine School does accept payments at the school. We ask that if any payments are made at the school, that they be submitted at least 4 business days before FACTS is due to deduct payment from your account. We are unable to post payments to the account after the payment due date!!!

Any child whose parents are in arrears after 60 days is subject to dismissal until such time as the accounts owed are paid in full, including the month when the child shall return unless arrangements have been made with the Executive Director and the Board of Directors.

ATTENDANCE, ARRIVAL, ABSENCE AND DISMISSAL

Consistent attendance is critical to student success. We ask that parents participate with our staff in expressing the importance of attending school on a daily basis.

Excused Absences

On occasion, students may need to miss school and will be excused for the following reasons per state law:

- Participation in a extracurricular activity like sports competition, 4H competition or a related instructional program
- Illness, health condition or medical appointment/testing (including but not limited to medical, therapeutic, dental, optometry appointments)
- Family emergency, including but not limited to a death or illness in the family
- Religious or cultural purposes including observance of a religious or cultural holiday or participation in religious or cultural activity.
- Court of judicial proceedings
- Temporary absences excused upon the request of a parent/guardian must be turned in via email or written note to Executive Director and Program Director, provided that such excused absences shall not be permitted if deemed to cause a serious adverse effect upon the student's educational progress.
- **In order to excuse an absence, parents/guardians MUST contact the school using the school phone number - 361-212-8463 by 9:00AM the morning of the absence or send an email to their child's teacher by 9:00AM the morning of the absence. If we have not heard from the parent regarding the child's absence by 9:00AM, the absence will be considered "unexcused" unless documentation is provided by a medical professional on the day the child returns to school. Only days noted by medical professionals are excused. (For example: Doctor excuses 2 days from school, child is out for four days, 2 days will be excused and 2 of those days will be unexcused)**
- After **five** unexcused absences the parent and the school must enter an attendance improvement plan to improve the students' attendance. Students' who have not shown

improvement with their attendance after the attendance improvement plan is in place are subject to dismissal from the school and if applicable, their tuition assistance revoked.

Parents are to use the carpool line for drop off in the morning and pick up at dismissal. Keeping the hallways clear of excessive traffic will aid in the safety of our school and its students and staff. The morning car line runs promptly from 8:00 AM. - 8:15 AM. The afternoon carline runs from 2:00PM-2:15PM. Please assist us in moving the carline as quickly as possible, by having the following items in order:

- child's backpack, lunchbox, other materials needed for their day
- child off any devices (iPhone, iPad, etc.) We highly encourage NO device use in the car in the mornings, as it is a struggle for most students to transition out of the car after using an electronic device.

If someone other than the parent or guardian is picking up the student, a note or a phone call is necessary, and the person must be on the transportation release form in your FACTS SIS profile. If the person picking up is not on the transportation release a Valid ID is required before we release the child into their custody.

Any students remaining after 2:20 pm will be subject to a fee of \$5.00 for the first ten minutes and \$1.00 every minute after that. We understand that there are emergencies and circumstances that cannot be avoided. In these times we ask that you call and make alternative arrangements in order to not accrue a late pick up fee.

SUPPLIES

1. Each student receives a school supply list during the summer months. We ask that your student be ready with his/her necessary school supplies at the beginning of the school year. When a student needs a "replacement", it is the parent's responsibility . A note will be sent home indicating that a particular supply is needed.
2. Student curriculum materials (i.e textbooks, workbooks, etc.) are covered in the tuition each school year. If a student loses curriculum materials, he/she will need to replace it.
3. A book bag or backpack may be used to carry books and supplies to and from home. Each student will have a space for their materials. The space is designed to facilitate organization and ease of accessing materials.
4. Occasionally our students have the opportunity to visit the Victoria Public Library and check out books. Please make sure to have books returned to the teacher when requested. Failure to do so will result in library late fees or replacement fees to be charged to your FACTS account.

THINGS TO BRING AND THINGS TO LEAVE AT HOME

TO BRING:

- Basic supplies are provided on the first day of school that will be added to the student's school supplies that they are instructed to bring for the school year. The teacher or Program Director must approve any additional items brought to school.
- The teacher or Program Director may request additional supplies as needed.

TO LEAVE AT HOME:

- Students are not to bring any expensive items to school. Students tend to become upset if their electronic equipment, jewelry, trading cards, iPads, iPhones, Apple watches, money, etc are damaged or misplaced.
- Do not send any live animals unless it has been prearranged with the Program Director.
- Students should not bring candy to school. Limited amounts of candy (with parent permission) will be used to reward behavior at school.
- Absolutely no harmful objects (real or pretend) may be brought to school, such as knives, guns, lighters, etc.
- Toys of any kind are not brought to school. Small items or trinkets that may be earned as a reward at school will be placed in the student's backpack for the duration of the day.
- We do not feel that elementary aged children need cell phones at school. If there is ever a need to send a cell phone with your child to school, it must be turned off and left in his/her backpack, stored in a designated area or left with the Program Director all day. Use of cell phones without the permission from school personnel will result in the phone being confiscated (parents will be notified). The Executive Director of School and the Program Directors reserve the right to inspect the contents of the phone if confiscated

TELEPHONE USAGE

1. Children may use the office phone for emergency calls only, with permission only, or at the request of a teacher.
2. We strongly discourage any student from bringing a cell phone to school. If a student brings a cell phone into the school building, it will be kept "off" and in the student's backpack all day.

3. Use of phones for videotaping or audio-taping is not permitted at school.

STUDENT RECORDS

All student assessments, records, and grades are kept through the FACTS Student Information System. If you require records, please request from the Program Director with a minimum of 48 hours' notice.

VISITORS IN THE SCHOOL

- Visitors (parents or professionals) are welcome at school. We do ask that potential visitors call in advance and schedule a time with the Program Director. We encourage parents to attend our parent/family engagement opportunities throughout the school year.
- Requests to observe particular classrooms will not be allowed due to confidentiality concerns for students and staff.

BREAKFAST, LUNCH & SNACKS

Breakfast

Please provide your child with a nutritious breakfast daily.

Lunch

Please send lunch daily. **If you plan on dropping lunch or having lunch delivered, please communicate your plans to the teacher as soon as possible via email or call the school number at 361-212-8463.** Lunch containers will be stored in our refrigerator.

Snacks

Students are encouraged to bring a healthy snack daily. We will eat snacks mid-morning as it fits with our daily schedule. Parents are welcome to send enough snacks for the week for their child and we will store them in our kitchen. Parents should indicate if students are NOT allowed to share snacks.

FIELD TRIPS

Traditionally field trips are a part of a child's experience in an educational program. Field trips are an integral part of The Vine School's curriculum. We intend to provide community learning opportunities to our students appropriately and functionally. The purpose of every field trip is to extend the classroom curriculum and provide our students access to the community we live in. Teachers will notify parents of the upcoming field trip through a permission slip that must be signed and returned to the lead teacher. Volunteers and parents are regularly asked to attend and participate in our field trips. Anyone who assists in the transportation of the students must provide the school with a copy of their automobile insurance and driver's license. Parents cover the transportation cost of the field trips. To ensure proper supervision of the students, younger siblings may not accompany chaperones on field trips, unless prior consent has been given by the Director of School.

BIRTHDAYS & SEASONAL CELEBRATIONS

Sharing a birthday with peers and family members is an important part of a child's life. Children may share birthday cupcakes or other appropriate treats with their classmates during a specified time agreed on by the lead teacher and the parent(s). We ask that you give us advanced notice of what items you may be bringing in order to accommodate those students that are on a special diet. Party invitations may be issued at school, if and only if every student in the class is included.

Parents will be notified of upcoming seasonal celebrations via school-home communication.

CANCELLATION OF SCHOOL

With severe weather, storm, danger of flooding and/or staff being severely ill, The Vine School will not hold school. Most local radio and/or TV stations will carry any severe weather closing announcements. If The Vine School is not mentioned then please follow the procedures put in place by VISD, unless otherwise notified. If bad weather occurs during the day, regardless of what VISD announces, school would be closed early only if there is time to contact parents by 1:00 pm at the latest. No student in a regular carpool will be permitted to leave in another vehicle unless arrangements have been made with parents and the Program Director has been notified by phone or note.

COMMUNICATION FROM HOME TO SCHOOL

Due to the nature of our school and the development of our students, frequent communication between home and school is essential. Each child will have a communication section in their binder or a home folder. In this binder/folder will be any daily/weekly communication from the teacher or administration. **Parents are to check this binder daily to be informed of upcoming**

events, assignments and their child's progress. There is also an area in the binder for parents to notify the teacher of any concerns, questions or general information. The staff expects communication from home for the following circumstances:

1. You will be out of town leaving your child in the care of someone else. Write down the dates of your absence, how we can reach you, responsible parties contact information and any deviations we should make from our general procedures in case of an emergency.
2. If there is some change or stress being experienced in the family that may affect your child.
3. If there was an absence, a written excuse can be placed in this area.

Please respect our staff members' private time outside of The Vine School. We ask that you keep any school related communication with staff through email, staff has been instructed to not discuss school related topics with parents via text or social media.

In order to continue to support communication from home to school we ask that staff members and parents return communication within 24-48 hours during instructional days.

FACTS SIS

Every student has a FACTS SIS account. This account enables parents or other authorized users to log into the parent portal to access information such as lesson plans, grades, attendance, medication administered, health and medical events and the school calendar. You can access the FACTS FAMILY app in the App Store for an extra annual fee or free on your desktop computer.

FIRE AND DISASTER DRILLS

We are aware that fire drills and disaster drills are exceptionally difficult for some of our students. We intend to make this activity and transition as calm and efficient as possible by providing visual and verbal support to our students as needed.

HEALTH AND EMERGENCIES

Health Records – we encourage parents to update their child's file regularly with any new health records, evaluations or reports. These can be turned in to your child's lead teacher or Program Director. Please indicate if this information is the Original document or record and if you need copies made for your child's file.

Physician's Name – is required in case of a medical emergency when the parent cannot be reached. Please make sure all physician contact information is updated and current.

Emergency Number – please make sure emergency contact information is updated and current.

Illness – Parents are asked to not send sick children to school; it causes other children and staff to become sick; this includes colds, fevers, and any contagious illness. **After an illness, a child must be free of fever, vomiting and/or diarrhea for twenty-four (24) hours without the assistance of fever reducing medications before returning to school.**

If a child becomes ill at school and cannot remain in classes, parents or emergency contact will be called to pick up their child.

Medications – for the administration of medications, the following conditions must be met before a school employee can be authorized to administer medication to your child:

1. A signed request to administer the medication to a student has been provided by the parent or legal guardian.
2. All medications are in the **original container**, properly labeled, stating:
 - a. Name of student
 - b. Name of Medicine
 - c. Dosage to be administered
 - d. Time to be administered

Medical Emergencies – when these arise, school personnel will render first aid, contact family or authorized persons in their absence, contact the child's physician when necessary, or take the child to the nearest medical facility if needed.

Lost and Found – Please identify all articles of clothing and other items with your child's first and last name. Lost and Found articles will be brought to the Lost and Found box, which you may find in the front office.

Messages – If you need to get a message to your child's teacher during the school day, please contact the school number at 361-212-8463. Teachers are engaged in teaching and are not always available to read and respond to messages during the school day.

Parent Conferences – The Director of School, Program Director and teaching staff welcome conferences with parents at any time throughout the school year, **by appointment**. Any concerns or problems should be brought to the Program Director's attention immediately so that the best possible solution can be found in a timely manner. There are mandatory conferences throughout

the school year; **once in the Fall and once in the Spring**. You will be notified of scheduling via email. Again, these are the conferences that are mandatory to review assessments and your child's progress; any additional conferences can be scheduled throughout the year by contacting the Program Director or the Lead Teacher. **It is NOT safe or appropriate to conference about detailed topics during the carpool line. Your child's teacher can set up an appropriate time to discuss these matters with you.**

Dress code – We do not follow a certain dress code. Although, we do suggest that the following things be taken in consideration when preparing your child for school:

- a. All shoes have functional fastenings, laces, straps
- b. All clothing fits comfortably – not too loose or too tight
- c. Remove tags out of clothing if this tends to be a sensory threat to your child
- d. Appropriate clothing for the seasons. Your child will not be able to attend outside activities if a jacket is not provided during cold weather.
- e. No distracting jewelry or hair ties
- f. No strong smelling lotions or perfumes

DRUG FREE SCHOOL POLICY

The Vine School has a responsibility to our employees, staff, parents and students to assure that our operations are free from the effects of drug, alcohol, or other substance abuse. The purpose of this policy statement is to reemphasize the school's policy on the use of drugs, alcohol, and other intoxicating substances and to develop procedures to address and control their use. This policy applies to all employees, contractors, and students of The Vine School.

Policy – The Vine School:

1. Prohibits the possession, sale, distribution, and/or use by its employees, contractors, and students, and
2. Does not tolerate its employees, contractors, or students being under the influence of or in a state indicating the use or abuse of any illegal drugs, or other mind, mood, or body-altering substances, alcoholic beverages, or prescription drugs (except when taken as directed by the person's medical doctor)at anytime while on school premises, on school business, or school activities. Reporting to work for classes or other school activities under the influence of or in a state indicating the use or abuse of alcohol, illegal drugs, or other mind, mood, body altering substances is a violation of school policy.

Definitions - As used in this policy the word “drug” includes alcoholic beverages, inhalants, other substances capable of causing intoxication or altering bodily functions regardless of how

introduced, illegal drugs, prescription drugs that are not prescribed for current medical treatment by the person's physician. "Illegal drugs" are those substances defined as illegal under federal, state, or local laws including, but not limited to, marijuana, heroin, hashish, cocaine, hallucinogens, and depressants and stimulants not prescribed for current medical treatment by a person's physician.

Consequences of Violation - An employee, contractor, or student who violates a provision of this policy can and may be subject to disciplinary action up to, and including, termination.

Available Treatment - The Vine School encourages employees, contractors, and students who recognize that they have problems with drug addiction, alcoholism, or other substance abuse to resolve those problems voluntarily through treatment, counseling, or other means. **Participation in a rehabilitation or treatment program, counseling, or other positive actions by an employee, contractor, or student will not, however, excuse non-compliance with the policies of the school.**

Drug Testing – All applicants for a position with the school will, if and when requested to do so, submit to a urinalysis for the purpose of detecting any illegal drugs. The Vine School does not presently have a regular testing program for existing employees, contractors or students, but reserves the right to institute such a program at any time.

HARASSMENT POLICY

GENERAL POLICY

The Vine School seeks to be a community in which every individual is treated with sensitivity and respect. The school encourages consideration of others and will not tolerate harassment of individuals based on ethnic or religious background, race, sex or sexual orientation.

The environment necessary for the educational program and fostered by the school must be one in which all individuals are free to work, learn, and develop appropriate relationships. The individual must be able to pursue his or her work or academic program without fear of intimidation, humiliation, or degradation from the unwelcome and unacceptable behavior of another.

It is the policy of the school to prevent, correct, and remedy any form of harassment. All students, faculty, staff, and volunteers are subject to this policy. Individuals who engage in such behavior are subject to discipline up to, and including, discharge, expulsion, or other appropriate sanctions.

ETHNIC, RELIGIOUS, OR RACIAL HARASSMENT

Ethnic, religious, or racial harassment is an abuse of an individual or group on the basis of ethnicity, religious preference, or race. Harassment includes both easily identifiable acts of verbal, written, or physical abuse and subtler, but equally damaging, forms of harassment such as graffiti, epithets, and stereotyped remarks of humor.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment is a violation of anti-discrimination laws. It is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when: (1) submission to or rejection of such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of employment or a basis for employment decisions; (2) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance; (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of creating a hostile, intimidating, or offensive work environment (Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964).

Activities that may constitute Sexual Harassment, include, but are not limited to:

1. Physical assault
2. Subtle pressure for sexual activity
3. Any demeaning sexual propositions
4. Inappropriate touching
5. Sexually explicit or suggestive remarks about a person's physical attributes, clothing, or behavior
6. Sexually stereotyped insults, humor, or verbal abuse
7. Inappropriate personal questions
8. Inappropriate or exploitative media such as, but not limited to, posters, calendars, magazines, movies, and emails.

REPORTING PROCEDURE

Any alleged violation of the Harassment Policy should be reported immediately. When the accused or accuser is a faculty member or staff member of the school, grievances may be brought to The Director of the School.

If a student or colleague comes to you with a report of harassment, follow these guidelines:

1. Allow the individual to express his/her feelings. Avoid asking for details.
2. Report the incident to the Program Director.

3. Maintain confidentiality.

INVESTIGATIVE PROCEDURE

Any alleged violations of the Harassment Policy involving students, faculty, or staff will promptly be investigated in a timely and appropriate manner, depending upon the circumstances of the individual case. To protect the alleged accused and accuser, the school will make all reasonable efforts to keep the matter confidential, except as required by law.

The investigation process will be at the discretion of the Director of the School. Depending on the circumstances of the case The Board of Directors may be called upon to review the case and submit recommendations to the Director of School.

Following a full investigation of the circumstances, if the evidence suggests that action is appropriate, depending on the severity of the offense, sanctions may include, but are not limited to:

1. An apology to the individual(s) involved
2. Participation in appropriate counseling
3. Probation, suspension, non –renewal of appointment, or termination.

I have read the Parent Handbook and understand all the policies, rules and procedures explained herein. I agree to follow all rules, policies and procedures put in place by The Vine School administration and staff.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Student's Name