



LIONHEART CLASSICAL ACADEMY
CHARTERED PUBLIC SCHOOL

Family Handbook
2023-2024

10 Sharon Rd, Peterborough, NH 03458
(603) 602-1560

<http://lionheartclassical.org>

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ABOUT LIONHEART CLASSICAL ACADEMY

An Introduction

Dear Families,

Welcome to Year Two of Lionheart Classical Academy! We are honored and humbled to be a part of your education journey.

This handbook contains important information about our school, academics, procedures, discipline, expectations and more. Please read carefully and reach out with questions and concerns.

We are looking forward to partnering with you as we train the minds and inspire the hearts of our students!

Kerry Locke Bedard
Executive Director

Our Mission

To train the minds and inspire the hearts of our students through a liberal arts and sciences education that supports academic achievement, virtuous living, and responsible citizenship.

Our Virtues

- **Compassion**
We are gentle and kind to others and ourselves knowing that we are seeking progress not perfection. We give of our time and abilities to serve others.
- **Courage**
We always do what we know to be right despite fear, hardship, and opposition. We resist negative peer pressure, defend our rights and the rights of others, and encourage others to do the same.
- **Gratitude**
We are grateful and ever more aware of the countless gifts each day holds. From the people we share our school days and home days with, to the rich content we are learning. We share our thoughts and ideas from a place of abundance and kindness with others.
- **Humility**
We work with others for the good of all involved with a positive attitude. We accept feedback and correction with the knowledge that every moment is an opportunity for growth. We serve the needs of others with joy and intention.
- **Integrity**
We are individuals of strong ethical values who consistently make good choices in keeping with our knowledge of right and wrong. We are honest with ourselves and others, seeking always to uphold and preserve the truth. We seek wisdom from others in cases of moral uncertainty.
- **Perseverance**
We spurn despair and strive to complete tasks to the best of our abilities, regardless of the difficulty. We respond creatively to overcome obstacles and ask for help when necessary.
- **Respect**
We regard others and ourselves as deserving of kind and just treatment. Our conduct is considerate and polite. We look for the good in others and demonstrate compassion. Our attitude toward others and their property reflects the way we wish to be treated.
- **Responsibility**
We accept obligations related to our own good and the good of others, and we act on those obligations in a manner suitable to their timely and satisfactory fulfillment. We are willingly accountable for what we do and say, and we seek to learn from our mistakes.
- **Service**
We are proud of the opportunities presented every day to perform tasks for others. Like the honorable men and women who have served our country, we strive to grow as dedicated American citizens willing to overcome obstacles and hardships to protect and foster a virtuous life for ourselves and those around us.

Reference Information

- **School Number:** 603-602-1560
- **School Address:** 10 Sharon Rd, Peterborough NH 03458
- **School Website:** lionheartclassical.org
- **School Hours:**
 - Drop Off: 7:40a-7:55a
 - School Day Starts: 8:00a
 - School Day Ends: 2:45p
 - After Care: 2:45p- 4:30p
- **Administration Contact information**
 - ❖ Kerry Locke Bedard, Executive Director
kbedard@lionheartclassical.org
603-602-1558
 - ❖ Mercy DeMasi, Principal
mdemasi@lionheartclassical.org
603-602-1572
 - ❖ Fiona Byrne, Director of Student Support
fbyrne@lionheartclassical.org
603-602-1573
 - ❖ Ashlee Wheel, Administrative Assistant, Front Desk
awheel@lionheartclassical.org
603-602-1804
 - ❖ Leah Seymour, Administrative Assistant, Records
lseymour@lionheartclassical.org
603-602-1565
 - ❖ Sherree Hodgson, School Nurse
shodgson@lionheartclassical.org
603-602-1559

Affiliation with Hillsdale College

The Barney Charter School Initiative (BCSI) is an outreach program of Hillsdale College devoted to the revitalization of public education through the launch and support of classical K-12 charter schools.

Through this initiative, Hillsdale College promotes a model of education that is rooted in the liberal arts and sciences, offers a firm grounding in civic virtue, and cultivates moral character.

Begun in 2010, BCSI collaborated with its first school openings in the fall of 2012. Since that time, BCSI has assisted in the launch of dozens of schools across the country. In the 2020-21 school year, Hillsdale Member Schools served more than 14,500 K-12 students with over 8,000 students on waitlists.

Hillsdale College affiliated classical schools receive the K-12 Program Guide through a free license. The K-12 Program Guide provides a scope of the topics to be taught, a sequence in which to teach them, and a complement of vetted and reviewed books, primary sources, and other resources for teachers and students using the guide.

The K-12 Program Guide is unique in offering a comprehensive plan of instruction from Kindergarten through 12th grade. Guided by the liberal arts, and produced by the Hillsdale College faculty and master teachers in Hillsdale's affiliated schools, the curriculum follows stages of learning appropriate to students' development and a spiraling structure that allows for recurrent examination of subjects throughout a student's career. Graduates are well prepared intellectually, morally, and civically, regardless of their future vocations.

Lionheart Classical Academy Chartered Public School is a licensee of the Hillsdale College's K-12 Program Guide used by Barney Charter Schools. For more information, visit [Hillsdale College K-12 Education](#)

ACADEMICS

Homework

Our purpose in assigning homework is to accomplish three things:

1. To provide additional practice to improve students' performance and retention.
2. To develop responsibility in students.
3. To prepare students for upcoming classes.

Every grade level has a homework policy. In general, homework will be assigned each school day and most weekends except holidays. The maximum expected homework time allotment for each grade is listed below. This may vary from day to day, and times listed are intended for the average student and may not apply to every student. Some students may need more time and some may need less.

Homework will be assigned on school days, but not on the school day prior to an observed holiday.

• Kindergarten	10 minutes (could just be reading with your child)
• Grade 1	10 minutes (does not include additional reading time)
• Grade 2	20 minutes
• Grade 3	30 minutes
• Grade 4	40 minutes
• Grade 5	50 minutes
• Grade 6	60 minutes
• Grade 7	70 minutes
• Grade 8	80 minutes
• Grades 9-12	120 minutes

We always encourage additional time reading for pleasure, especially as a family.

Teachers may notify parents concerning the homework expectations for their individual class.

The following suggestions may be helpful to you and your child:

- Your attitude will directly affect that of your child. Be excited about the learning process.
- Establish a set time and a quiet place for homework without distractions such as phones, video games, or televisions.
- We suggest that a child be allowed a break when he/she first gets home. After the break, but before dinner, is often a suitable time for homework.
- Provide support when needed but expect your child to complete the homework independently.
- Be sure the work is completed and immediately returned to a designated place where it will be remembered the next morning (e.g. the backpack).

Academic Honesty

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is defined as the appropriation of another's ideas or words in order to present them as one's own. Plagiarism will not be tolerated from students in any subject. The entire system of assessment rests on the assumption that the work a student turns in is his or her own. Plagiarism compromises this system, is unfair to other students in the class who do their own work, and constitutes a form of theft of others' ideas and labor.

Cheating

Cheating occurs when a student uses someone else's work or a prohibited source of information in order to gain an unfair advantage on a test or an assignment and to avoid doing his own work. Cheating comes in many forms. One student copying off another, a student using a "cheat sheet" to answer questions on a test, and a student trying to pass off another student's work as his own are examples of cheating. A student who allows others to copy his work will also be held accountable in the same fashion. Like plagiarism, cheating will not be tolerated from students in any subject.

Instances of plagiarism and cheating will be handled per the discipline policy with potential for acceleration to an infraction as these are serious offenses.

Reporting Student Progress

For students to be successful, both they and their parents should be informed of their standing in class. In addition to the regular grading of assignments, the school will inform parents of their student's academic progress in the following ways:

- If a student is determined to be significantly below grade level, a meeting will be scheduled with a parent, the teacher, and other faculty as deemed appropriate. This meeting will be to discuss helps to put in place for the student's growth and future academic success.
- Progress reports/report cards will be emailed quarterly.
- Twice a year (fall, spring), parent-teacher conferences will occur to discuss the student's academic progress.
- Parents have the ability to review student progress via online access on the student information system.

Although teachers are expected to communicate with parents when their child is struggling, please let your child's teacher know if you have concerns. We seek effective two-way communication. The letter and numerical grades for this system are listed below:

- A 90-100%
- B 80-89%
- C 70-79%
- D 60-69%
- F 0-59%

Promotion and Retention Policy

The purpose of promotions and retentions is to provide maximum consideration for the long-range welfare of the student and to provide an opportunity for each student to progress through school according to his/her own needs and abilities.

It is expected that most students will be promoted annually from one grade level to another upon completion of satisfactory work, however, a student may be retained when his/her standards of achievement or social, emotional, mental, or physical development would not allow satisfactory progress in the next higher grade.

Before considering a student for retention, school administration is committed to meeting with parents to discuss the student's academic progress and to working collaboratively to produce a successful school year for the students. The decision to recommend the retention of a student in a grade level shall be carefully considered by school administration, teachers, and parents. In certain cases, school administration may recommend or require that a student be retained.

Student Placement

For students to thrive in school, they must master the fundamentals. The grade level placement policy is designed to promote educational excellence and fairness by placing students at the most appropriate level for instruction. Lionheart will respect the promotion and retention decisions from the school district from which a student transfers. If students new to the school are found to be reading more than one grade level behind their existing peer group, they may be asked to enroll in the grade level deemed appropriate by the teacher and Executive Director. If the parent chooses that the student be placed at the grade level in which the student originally enrolled against the advice of the teacher and Executive Director, a letter will be added to the file.

Requests for Teacher/Classroom Placement

A challenge all schools face each year is creating well balanced classrooms for children. As always, it is our goal to provide your child with a positive classroom experience. Each year, you will have the opportunity to share with LCA requests you may have for your child to be with certain students, or to be placed in a different section from certain students. While we always consider parent requests, we work to make classrooms that work as a whole taking into consideration many factors.

School Supplies

LCA uses specific school supplies and seeks to reduce distraction in the classroom. We also can buy in bulk for the year. Student supplies are therefore purchased by the school each year. Parents are asked to pay a fee per child to cover the cost. This can be done through the school website or by stopping in and submitting a payment with the front office. This ensures that the students have the proper supplies, classroom distractions are minimized, and the school has consistency throughout classes and grade levels.

Lost/Damaged Books

Some of the books that students use at Lionheart are consumable, meaning the student will write in them and keep them at the end of the year. Other books are reusable and on loan to the student and these will be returned to the School at the end of the school year. For certain books, paper covers will be required to protect the covers and bindings and ensure its use for several years. If you have questions about whether a book is yours to keep after the school year, you may ask your child's teacher.

Students will be charged for lost or damaged books. Non-payment will result in withholding of your child's report cards, loss of online access to student's grades in Alma, and/or loss of participation in field trips, extra-curricular activities, and field days.

Videos in the Classroom

From time to time, videos or other media may be used to support a classroom lesson. To be used in class they must meet a specific curricular objective and will not have profane language or sexually explicit material. Students will not be shown a full movie in class without prior parent permission.

Controversial Subjects

Controversial subjects are defined as contemporary problems, issues, or questions of a political or social nature where there are entrenched differences of opinion and passions run high.

Controversial issues will be explored only when emanating from some part of the curriculum in grades 9 through 12. When these subjects come up, teachers will present an impartial view of all sides of the issue without advocating. Contemporary controversial issues will not be discussed in the elementary and middle school without Executive Director approval.

Guest speakers who cover controversial topics must be screened by the Executive Director. The screening may include an interview of the guest by the Executive Director or designee. Parents must be notified prior to guest speaker presentations on controversial issues, including religions covered in the academic sequence. Parents may have students excused from such presentations and understand that the student will be supervised in a silent study hall. Teachers will provide permission slips to parents as notification of a guest speaker covering controversial issues and indicate an option on the permission slip for student to be excused.

Religion

Western civilization has had and continues to have an ongoing, vigorous, and thoughtful conversation concerning the place of religion in human life. We will encourage such discussions as they arise from the material that students engage, and will respect the diverse viewpoints that such a topic elicits, so long as those views are offered respectfully and with the solemnity they merit.

In the course of history and literature classes, Lionheart curriculum will include texts, stories, histories, and beliefs connected to Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism. Knowledge of these topics is crucial to understanding the modern world and much of our own

history. Teachers will address these topics without either advocating or undermining religion in general or any specific faith.

Evolution

Lionheart embraces a rigorous program in the natural sciences. In biology, the school will teach the theory of evolution as found in the standard high-school biology textbooks and as also taught at the college level in both secular and many religious colleges.

The theory of evolution is largely misunderstood today by the general public. Much of what constitutes the teaching of evolution concerns adaptation of species to their environment and change over time. A great many of these phenomena are observable. A very small percentage of evolutionary theory deals with the more controversial issue of the origins of life. This latter aspect of evolution, to the extent it is taught, will be introduced to students briefly with a great deal of circumspection; it is not a central part of the theory. Furthermore, the study of science will be confined to the investigation of the physical world. It is not the place of science to make metaphysical claims nor to confirm or deny the validity of religion or the existence of God.

Lionheart recognizes a clear distinction between science and scientism. Science is the continued research into the natural world in order to find the most plausible explanations for natural phenomena. Scientism is the belief—and it is a belief—that science is the only means of understanding our world, thus excluding other ways of interpreting the world, such as through literature or religion. Keeping in mind this distinction, the teachers at Lionheart will leave matters of faith up to students and their parents. The role of a teacher in a chartered public school is neither that of a preacher nor of a skeptic. Teachers, students, and parents must realize that a biology class has a particular purpose for which drawn out philosophical or theological discussion on the existence of God or claims relating to the activity of God or absence thereof in the natural world would be a distraction to the core content of the class.

Human Sexuality

At Lionheart, we believe parents own the fundamental responsibility for their children's education, which includes the areas of morality and sexuality. The School's role, at most, should be viewed as a supportive one. It is apparent that sexuality is more than biology and physiology. It also encompasses morality, spirituality, and emotions. Because it is a part of the whole human experience, it must be taught with circumspection and sensitivity.

We believe children are naturally modest concerning their bodies and are not ready to learn everything at once. They are naturally curious, however, and need to get answers to their questions in a way appropriate to their stage of development. In teaching this topic, we want to minimize the anxiety associated with it.

During our usual science curriculum, 5th grade students will learn about human reproductive organs, reproduction, and the menstrual cycle (as required by the State of NH). The class will be taught in a gender-separated environment. Parents will receive notification of the class and content. Parents will have the choice of having their children opt out of this portion of the class, which will be taught during the regular science time.

Faculty and staff will not discuss their personal lives on such matters with students.

State Assessments

The State of NH requires standardized testing in reading and math for grades 3-8 as well as testing in history and science for grades 5, 8, and 11. While Lionheart is required to participate in these exams and will take them seriously when they arrive in the spring, our approach differs from that in many public schools and deserves a comment.

Our curriculum is not designed around the state assessments and our teachers do not “teach to the test.” We do dedicate some time to test preparation, but to do so excessively would detract from the classical course of study that Lionheart provides. Test preparation at Lionheart has less to do with content than it does with the form and manner in which test questions are written, as well as the order in which certain subjects are placed in the general state curriculum. Our math curriculum, for instance, follows a rational order that deepens and broadens student knowledge, but not in an order that aligns perfectly with the math subjects in the state exams. In order to do well on these assessments, we will supplement our curriculum where necessary.

A testing schedule will be sent to all parents as much in advance as possible. On state testing dates, access to the campus is limited and students may not be picked up early from school. Please plan accordingly.

LCA PROCEDURES

Attendance

Classical education is highly interactive and students benefit the most from consistent and regular attendance. Because the classical approach relies heavily on classroom discussion among students and teachers, reading and written assignments can be made up from home but the full depth of the learning experience cannot be made up if a student is absent. For this reason, parents are requested to exercise prudence and make every reasonable effort to ensure that students do not miss class, including limiting trips to the allotted breaks.

Punctuality is important for academic success. Parents/guardians are responsible for their child’s attendance.

When your child is absent, please update PickUp Patrol or notify the office at awheel@lionheartclassical.org or (603) 602-1560 before 7:30am.

All communication, including emails, doctor’s notes, parent notes, and phone calls about student absences should be submitted to the front desk and not the teacher.

Excused Absences

1. An illness of the student. The School may ask for documentation.
2. Brief illness, appointments, and family business are considered absences for purposes of meeting attendance policy requirements. Absences must be documented by written communication from parents and may or may not be considered excused absences at the Principal’s discretion.
3. An observance of an established religious holiday or for pre-arranged religious instruction.
4. A court subpoena or a required court appearance.

Unexcused Absences

Unexcused absences may include, but not be limited to truancy, class cuts, vacations, and three tardies of 1 hour or more or six tardies of less than 1 hour.

Truancy

If a student has more than ten half days of unexcused absences in any year, the student may be classified as habitually truant according to New Hampshire law. A student who is absent from school without permission will be considered truant and is subject to disciplinary action at the Executive Director's decision, for she acts as the truancy officer.

The Executive Director will call a meeting with the parents if/when she deems it necessary or beneficial to do so.

Makeup Work

Students are to be provided one (1) school day for each school day absent to make-up work missed without academic penalty. It is the responsibility of the student to arrange for such makeup work. Work not completed within the specified time period will receive a grade of "F".

The Principal may extend the time for makeup work when in her judgment extenuating circumstances justify such extension. However, long-term assignments given before the student is absent are expected to be turned in on the date the student returns to school. These provisions shall apply to all grade levels. Please note this make up work needs to be done in addition to the regular assignments for those days.

Extended Excused Absences

Lionheart recognizes the individual nature of extended excused absences including, but not limited to, such situations as acute or chronic illnesses/injuries, a terminally ill family member, or a death in the family. Families can expect to be informed by the Executive Director, or his/her designee, of the general expectation of the faculty related to the completion of assignments and, as applicable, to the student's status for promotion to the next grade.

Late Arrival/Early Release

A late arrival is when a student arrives after the start time of the school day, but less than two hours after that time. Early release is when a student is picked up from school earlier than the end time of the school day, but less than two hours before that time. Three (3) late arrivals or early releases make one half-day absence.

In order for a late arrival or early release to be excused, it must follow the guidelines for an excused absence. For an excused late arrival, please notify the front desk prior to 8:00 a.m. on the day.

There is no early dismissal after 2:00pm unless it is an emergency approved by the Executive Director or designee. Otherwise, after that time, parents will need to wait for the regular dismissal.

An unexcused late arrival or early release is subject to the same provisions as an unexcused absence.

Student Drop-Off and Pick-Up

Students should begin arriving no earlier than 7:40 a.m. Staff and volunteers will be at the front of the building in the morning to escort our younger students from their vehicles into the building. Other staff and faculty will be inside to supervise students on their way to class. Our doors will be locked to ensure the security of students and staff.

Car line

Procedures for drop-off and pick-up give priority to the safety and security of all students. Parents are expected to cooperate fully to ensure that the process is safe and orderly. The school will release students only to parents, legal guardians, or adult designees.

The adults driving through the carpool line are expected to serve as role models by always exhibiting courteous behavior.

Cars will enter one way, drop off at the front door, and exit one way.

Communication Policy

Communication is an essential part of any successful organization. Effective, quality communication helps ensure parents, students and other community members are well informed.

We provide clear and timely information by way of the following:

- LCA School Website
- LCA Family Handbook
- Boomerang Folders
- Weekly Teacher Newsletters
- Parent-Teacher Conferences
- Teacher communication including email, notes, and phone calls
- School Emails
- Alma Parent Portal
- Monthly Take Home Calendar – new fall 2023

Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled twice per year. As it is important to have open and honest dialogue between the parents and the teachers, students are not permitted to attend conferences.

Parents are not permitted to “drop in” to see a teacher before or after school without an appointment. The teacher’s entire day is carefully scheduled to permit instruction, preparation for class work, team meetings, and so on. To ensure proper communication, we ask that you follow a few simple guidelines:

- Send a note or an email to the teacher.

- *Please note: teachers are not permitted to conduct conferences or accept calls during instructional time with students.*
- Parents should not address concerns about students in the presence of children, including their own.
- The Teacher Weekly Newsletter is a communication emailed home each week in the elementary school.

Electronic Communication

The LCA electronic communications systems and computers/laptops are the property of the School. LCA reserves the right to monitor and disclose all electronic communications activities of any employee, student, or other user. This includes sent and received e-mail messages, web sites visited, and files stored. There are no personal privacy rights in the use of these systems.

Student access to electronic communications systems will be permitted only when access is an integral component of a specific educational program or authorized by the Principal. Filters are installed to attempt to restrict access to Internet sites that contain explicit content or otherwise objectionable. Ultimately, each individual is responsible for his/her own conduct.

In all cases, student and employee use of the LCA Internet Service, email, computer systems and software, networks, or similar technology are governed by LCA Policy. Access to these electronic communications systems is provided solely for educational and operational purposes. All other use is prohibited.

Discriminatory, harassing, slanderous and offensive materials and messages are considered cyberstalking and bullying. This applies not only to messages sent on school computers but also material, messages and images sent by personal computers, texts and images sent via cellphone. Such action is strictly prohibited.

Abuse of electronic communications systems or failure to adhere to this policy will subject the user to disciplinary action, including denial of LCA electronic communications systems.

Phones and Other Personal Electronic Devices

Electronic devices, including cellphones, may not be brought to school by students.

Electronic devices include but are not limited to cellphones, computers, portable game units, smart watches, and other internet-capable devices.

The student may be disciplined for inappropriate content stored on electronic devices brought to school, school functions, or on a school bus.

Failure to follow rules for cell phones/electronic devices will result in disciplinary action. Loss/or theft of personal items at school or on the bus is not the responsibility of the school.

Photos and Videos

Lionheart Classical Academy staff, faculty, and volunteers regularly take photographs and record video and audio for official use on its website, its Facebook page, the yearbook, and other promotional materials in various media. Parents who prefer not to have their children featured as such are required to complete the required denial of release form available through the front office.

An absence of this form will be presumed to be consent to have photographs, video, and audio recorded and used by LCA as described above. Staff, faculty, parents, and volunteers should not photograph or video students for their personal use or to post on social media.

Parent and Community Involvement

Parent School Partnership

LCA is proud of the relationship we have with our parents, community partners, and local businesses.

Parents who choose to join our school are active partners with LCA in developing well-rounded and successful citizens who abide by our Virtues. The following responsibilities need to be supported by a partnership between the parents and the school.

School Responsibilities During the 7-Hour School Day

- Ensure a safe and secure learning environment
- Deliver a Classical Education to students
- Instruct using traditional methods based on our Virtues
- Maintain a culture of discipline
- Maintain a culture of respect for others
- Cultivate a distraction-free learning environment
- Assign appropriate homework to support learning objectives
- Hire appropriate personnel with virtue and knowledge
- Help create a joy filled environment with focus on learning and growing
- Maintain respect for parents as the primary educator of their child
- Keep school and classrooms organized and clean
- Communicate effectively with parents

Parent Responsibilities During the Other 17 Hours of the Day

- Start off the day by waking up early and having a good breakfast
- Buy or pack a healthy lunch
- Help student wear proper uniforms
- Get your children to school on time and minimize absences
- Pick up your children on time and talk to them about their day and what they learned
- Understand the LCA Handbook
- Reinforce the LCA Virtues
- Reinforce respect for teachers and school staff

- Reinforce care of books and materials
- Read weekly newsletters and other communication from the school
- Maintain positive communications with teachers and school staff
- Ensure your child has a distraction free and quiet place for homework
- Ensure your child has completed all his/her homework neatly and thoroughly
- Build a habit of reading through great literature
- Limit television, social media, and video games
- Ensure your child gets to bed early for a good night's sleep

Volunteer Program

Lionheart Classical Academy strives to have an active volunteer program that includes parents and interested community members. Our volunteers are a critical part of providing a quality education for our students and we seek 1-2x week commitment. There also are opportunities for one-time volunteering.

School Discipline

Disciplinary action at Lionheart ranges from verbal correction to suspension (or in rare and extreme circumstances, expulsion), and will be used to promote both a student's self-discipline and personal growth and an orderly environment for all. Even when more serious discipline like a suspension is necessary, the purpose is not to punish but to educate and restore. Our goal is to educate and form students with an eye towards justice, not to tie every offense to a formulaic consequence. LCA intentionally does not have a "If you do this, then this will happen" chart. Instead, students are given the opportunity to identify their choices, how their choices impacted them and others, and what choices they would make in the future. This being said, there are guidelines which LCA as instituted to support and protect the learning environment while students grow in personal responsibility and maturity.

Forms of disciplinary action at Lionheart include but are not limited to:

- verbal correction and redirection
- removal from a classroom
- education to promote behavioral growth and personal accountability
- expecting the student to make a formal apology
- loss of privileges
- parent meeting
- act of service to the school community
- lunch or after school detention
- in or out of school suspension

When a student acts in violation of school rules, directions given by an adult in authority, or the Lionheart Honor Code, the school has implemented three levels of consequences:

1. Verbal correction/warning – no note in student discipline record, in-class behavior protocols will apply

2. Written warning – referral to administration and note in student discipline record, parents will be notified and behavioral education will be given, in class behavior protocols will apply
3. Final warning – referral to administration, given if there is already a note in the student discipline record for the same offense within the same school year, parents will be notified, behavioral education will occur, and a consequence may be determined
4. Infraction – a major offense either occurring from repetition of misbehavior (as noted by written and final warnings already noted) or from a serious offense, such as cheating, plagiarism, violence, substance abuse, etc.; parents will be notified and a definite serious consequence (most often detention) will be determined, a meeting between the school, student, and parent may be called to support the student to make better choices in the future.

In-class behavior protocols are generally informal tracking systems whose consequences may include poor participation grades and/or small assignments meant to correct student behavior.

Notifying Parents

The School will notify parents of discipline problems that escalate to the level of a written warning. The School (particularly teachers) may also notify parents of lesser infractions, especially in cases involving a recurring problem. When a discipline problem escalates to an infraction, the School will contact the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) as soon as possible to request a conference, which may include the student.

Infractions

Infractions accumulate over the course of the school year, and a student's total will not reset until the end of the school year. Receiving an Infraction indicates that a student's behavior is a serious problem, and earning repeated Infractions will result in more serious consequences each time. It is our hope that the consequences for receiving an Infraction will encourage students to display good character and act in accordance with the Lionheart mission.

Multiple Infractions could earn a student an in or out of school suspension. Infractions are the only discipline records that will be reported outside the school (such as for school transfers or college applications). Warnings are seen as such and so are only to be used for tracking purposes within Lionheart.

Restraint

If a student is disruptive to the point where he, she, or others are in danger, school faculty and personnel are authorized to use restraint or seclusion pursuant to New Hampshire state laws. The school shall contact the parent(s) or legal guardian(s) as soon as possible after physical restraint or seclusion is initiated. The student will need to go home for the remainder of the day unless decided otherwise by the Executive Director. Complaints regarding the use of restraint or seclusion should follow the grievance process as outlined in this Handbook.

Detention

Students may receive detention as a consequence of misbehavior for an infraction. Detention will occur during lunch or after school. During lunch detention, students will generally be

permitted to do homework and eat their lunches quietly. After school detention is a more serious consequence, and students will be assigned appropriate tasks during this time. Students who miss detention will need to make it up and serve another detention.

Suspension and Expulsion

Suspension and expulsion are legal matters and Lionheart will conform to the state law (see NH RSA 193:13) and precedents governing our charter school. Both are disciplinary actions that are used only as last resorts, once all other attempts at redirecting and improving student behavior have failed. Typically, only short-term suspensions (5 days or less) would be utilized with K-5th grade students, even then only as an escalated consequence. Suspension will be employed when patterns of misbehavior continue despite reasonable efforts to improve student behavior in collaboration with the student's parents/guardians, or in an incident involving violence, destruction, or theft.

Bullying

Lionheart has zero-tolerance for bullying, harassment, intimidation, and/or bodily harm that adheres to the definitions established by state laws.

In accordance with NH State Law (RSA 193-F:6,II), bullying is defined as a single significant incident, or a pattern of incidents involving written, verbal or electronic communication, or physical or a physical act or gesture directed at another student which:

- Physically harms a pupil or damages the pupil's property;
- Interferes with a pupil's educational opportunities;
- Causes emotional distress to a pupil;
- Creates a hostile educational environment; or
- Substantially disrupts the orderly operation of the school.

Bullying includes actions motivated by an imbalance of power based on a pupil's actual or perceived personal characteristics, behaviors, or beliefs, or motivated by the pupil's association with another person and based on the other person's characteristics, behaviors, or beliefs.

Cyber-bullying is conduct defined as bullying (above) that is undertaken through the use of electronic devices including telephones, cell phones, computers, pagers, email, instant messaging, text messaging, and websites/social media sites.

Bullying or cyber-bullying is said to occur when an action or communication of bullying as defined above:

- Occurs on, or is delivered to school property or a school sponsored activity or event on or off school property;
- Occurs off school property or outside of a school-sponsored activity or event in the conduct interferes with a pupil's educational opportunities or substantially disrupts the orderly operations of the school or school-sponsored activity or event.

Conflict is normal in a child's life. To help distinguish between normal conflict and bullying remember bullying behavior is: repeated, intentional, and involves an imbalance of power. If you think your child has been the victim of bullying or harassment, please contact the Principal.

LCA Student Behavior Expectations

Morning Arrival

- Arrive between 7:40am and 7:55am. Be seated by 8:00am.
- Remain in designated area.
- Receive permission to leave designated areas.
- Follow morning routines and complete morning work quietly.

Hallways and Class Transitions

- Students are expected to maintain low voices in the hallways.
- Do not disrupt passing classes (i.e. high-fiving students in elementary class lines)
- Students are not to loiter in halls (leaning on cubbies, blocking traffic to socialize). Socializing between classes is permitted in the classrooms.
- Backpacks are not permitted in classrooms. They stay in cubbies/hallways neatly lined up
- Do not take items from the cubbies/backpacks of other students without permission. This will be considered theft and handled accordingly.
- Neatness is enforced. Backpacks should have all items within, be zipped up and lined accordingly
- Eating in the hallways is not permitted.
- Students in hallways during class time must have student pass (either the bathroom pass or nurse pass).

In the Classroom

- Follow the classroom policies established by each teacher.
- Do not leave classrooms without explicit permission from the teacher.
- Come to class prepared and organized with all necessary supplies, including planner, textbooks, notebooks, and pencil pouch with all writing implements.
- Student planners should be used to document upcoming assignments and daily homework.
- Let a teacher know immediately if a replacement of a school item is needed so that it can be replaced promptly.
- Water bottles and food are not permitted at the desks except during snack and lunch time.

Lunch Time

- Keep voices at a reasonable volume.
- Use appropriate table manners.
- Eating areas must be tidied up before leaving the table/desk.

Recess

- Recess is outside for all students except in the case of special authorized circumstances.
- Walk to and from all areas.

- Respect others and keep silent in the hallways.
- Use equipment the way it was intended.
- Follow posted/outlined rules.

Bathrooms

- Only one boy and one girl are permitted to leave the classroom for a bathroom break at a time.
- Any writing utensils brought into the bathrooms will result in significant disciplinary action.
- Use the bathroom passes.
- Students are not permitted to use staff bathrooms.
- Flush the toilet.
- Leave the area clean.
- Hands must be cleaned.
- Help conserve supplies.
- The bathroom is not an area for social gathering.

Dismissal

- Students must be in the designated area by 2:45pm and remain there until dismissed.
- Students should listen for their number and are responsible for hearing it when it is announced.
- Carline is for students dismissing from carline only. Additional students there for socializing are distractions and thus safety hazards.
- Concern for safety must be demonstrated at all times.
- If cars are moving, students are not.
- Students must keep all items in the backpack and keep it closed.

At All Times

- Students are not permitted to have cell phones on campus at any time.
- Gum is prohibited anywhere on campus at any time.
- Respect for teachers and others is communicated through tone, attitude, and body language.
- Fragrances, perfumes, and scented oils/lotions/hand sanitizers are prohibited under the Lionheart Classical Academy dress code. Students should maintain personal hygiene so as not to require the use of fragrances or perfumes. Some fragrances can trigger allergic reactions.
- Destruction or the defacing of school property is not tolerated and will result in serious disciplinary action.
- No writing or drawing on the hands, arms, legs, or uniforms.

Student Dress Code

A strong correlation exists between student appearance and the perception of excellence. Lionheart Classical Academy students are required to dress and groom themselves in a way that aligns with our philosophy of maintaining a learning environment focused on the development of each student's academic potential, personal character, and leadership skills.

Our uniform policy and dress code foster an atmosphere in which our Virtues can thrive: Courage, Compassion, Gratitude, Humility, Integrity, Perseverance, Respect, Responsibility, and Service. Daily reinforcement of strong personal habits promotes courtesy, the honor of self and others, modesty, and discipline. Adherence to the code diminishes economic and social barriers between students; increases a sense of belonging and school pride; encourages good judgment; models good citizenship and encourages all to perform at their highest level.

All Lionheart Classical Academy students are expected to be in school uniform during school hours and during all school activities and events unless otherwise specified. Attire and accessories that attract undue or negative attention or which infringes on the rights or values of others is not considered to be in the spirit of the dress code not only for students, but also for staff and parents visiting the campus. Attire is expected to be clean, in good condition, business-like, and properly sized to fit.

By signing the registration documents, students, staff, parents, and volunteers agree to abide by the policy and remain dedicated to interacting with one another as ladies and gentlemen. In doing so, we are choosing to be actively engaged in the safe and secure, nurturing environment of this exceptional learning community. Students in violation of the uniform policy will not attend class until they are in proper uniform. A failure to remedy the situation immediately could result in the student being sent home. Repeated violations may result in consequences determined by the Principal.

Any medical or religious concerns or limitations that might preclude meeting the uniform guidelines should be addressed to the Principal to determine if reasonable accommodations are necessary.

The uniform guidelines at Lionheart Classical Academy are not meant to be financially prohibitive for any student's ability to attend our school. Families may request assistance with uniform requirements. Assistance will be handled confidentially by contacting the Executive Director.

Uniform Guidelines Common to Boys and Girls K-6th

Shirts	Navy Polo, short or long sleeved, with or without logo Buttoned to one below top
Sweaters, Cardigans	Must be a knit sweater White, navy or gray Approved uniform shirt must be worn underneath at all times. Sleeves must not extend past the wrists and cover the hands. Hoodies, jackets, and other outerwear (including LCA spirit wear) may not be worn indoors.
Pants and Shorts	Chino material; khaki color Must come within one inch of natural waistline Long pants should be below the ankle

Shoes	Plain, flat, closed toe, non-marking sole. Sneakers or dress shoes are acceptable in black, brown, gray, navy or white. All shoes should be solid in color and sneakers should have minimal branding in white or dark colors. Sneakers may be worn every day and must be worn for PE. Colorful soles or laces are not permissible Short dress boots for girls are permitted. Heels and wedges are not permitted. Winter boots are not permissible in the classroom.
Socks and Hosiery	Socks must be black, white, gray or navy. Socks must always be worn and be visible and cover the ankle (i.e. ankle and “no show” socks are not permitted. Crew, dress, trouser, and knee socks are acceptable. Thigh high hosiery is not permitted.
Hair	Hair must be clean, neat, and out of the eyes. Only natural hair colors are allowed. Hair styling or coloring arrangements which are disruptive or distracting are not permitted.
Outerwear	Outerwear is not to be worn inside the building and should be removed as soon as is practical when entering the school. Hoodies are considered Spirit Wear and outerwear and may not be worn inside the building
Other	No hats, no scarves, no bandanas indoors. Colognes, perfumes, lotions, and pungent substances which may cause distraction or allergic reactions are not permitted.

Uniform Guidelines for Girls K-6th

Skirts, Dresses, & Jumpers	Chino material; khaki color for skirts, skorts, and jumpers Navy polo dresses As a general guideline, skirts, skorts, and jumpers are to be worn no higher than halfway between the top of the kneecap and the tips of the fingers when standing up straight with the arm hanging straight down. Must be worn with shorts, tights or leggings underneath.
Jumpers	Chino material; khaki color May be worn with a white cotton shirt, short or long sleeved.
Hosiery	White, or navy tights or leggings can be worn under skirts, dresses, or jumpers if desired.
Hair	Hair accessories should be minimal, appropriate for academic environment and not distracting. Headbands in solid color, dots, or stripes (navy blue, black, or white) are permissible.
Undergarments	Camisoles following undergarment color requirements are acceptable. Bras are required for girls for whom support is necessary for modesty. Shorts should not be visible under hemline with no visible logo and must be navy blue or black in color.

Uniform Guidelines for Boys and Girls 5th-6th

Shirts	All shirts must be tucked in when worn with pants or shorts
Belts	Must be worn with the every day uniform pants and shorts Black or brown, plain in color and design, and must not dangle.
Active Wear	Only to be worn on Friday gym day Lionheart t-shirt Gym pants or shorts, navy or black in color Navy, black or gray sweatshirt. May be Lionheart or plain

Volunteers Dress Guidelines

Whereas this is a school environment, volunteer attire is expected to be safe, modest, and not distracting to students and staff. Guidelines for students' garment lengths are to be followed by volunteers.

Health and Safety

Communicable Illness

Children with any evidence of a communicable disease must stay out of school until there is no danger of infections to other children. If all visible signs have disappeared, the child may return. In case of illness such as chicken pox, where the lesions remain visible after the contagious stage, it may be necessary to have a physician certify that it is permissible for the child to return.

Fevers

The normal body temperature for a healthy child is 98°F. If you suspect your child has a fever, always use a thermometer. Never try to guess by feeling their forehead. Before returning to school, children should be fever free for at least 24 hours without any fever-reducing medication. Children at school who develop a fever 100°F or higher will be sent home and should not return to school the next day.

Head Lice

Mandatory attendance laws require all children to be in school. It is expected that if your child has been sent home with lice and/or nits, he/she will be treated and will return lice-free the next school day. A parent must accompany the child upon return to school. Before readmission, your child will be checked by a staff member for lice. Staff members will also re-check your child periodically to ensure treatment was effective and no lice and/or nits are present. Normally we will not send class/school-wide notifications home about head lice unless 10% or more of a particular classroom is infected.

Snacks and Parties

Due to known and unknown allergies, LCA does not permit food to be shared among students. Parties at school are not permitted as this interferes with instructional time. Do not bring food or have food delivered to the school for your children. This is a safety issue for the school. Do not send or bring anything to the school, including treats, to celebrate birthdays or holidays. These should be celebrated at home with family and friends.

Party Invitations

Party invitations will not be handed out to classes. This is not an appropriate task for teachers to manage. Parents may reach out to the school to connect with other parents and plan outside of school hours.

Smoke and Tobacco Free Environment

The Lionheart Classical Academy building is smoke and tobacco free in order to protect the health, safety and welfare of students, staff and visitors. This includes all interior and exterior spaces within the property boundaries. For purposes of this policy, “smoke free” shall mean the smoking of any substance, including “vapor” devices. “Tobacco” shall include the use of tobacco, including, but not limited to, cigars, cigarettes, pipes, chewing tobacco, snuff, or any other matter or substances that contain tobacco in addition to papers used to roll cigarettes. Violations of this policy by members of the public who fail to cooperate will result in their removal from the property and a report to the New Hampshire Department of Health. Violation of this policy by any student or school employee shall result in appropriate disciplinary action.

Items to Be Left at Home

- Cellphones, electronic tablets, video games, headphones, tape recorders, or any other electronic devices.
- Distracting pencils and pens, specialty erasers, or other non-standard school supplies.
- Pets.
- Party paraphernalia including balloons, party hats, noisemakers, etc. and party food such as cupcakes, cakes, brownies, ice cream, popsicles, etc.
- Knives and other sharp objects, guns (including toy guns), bullets, fireworks, or other explosives, etc. Any item that can be hazardous to children must not be brought to school.
- Money that is not required for field trips, snacks, or other school-related payments.
- Items or sales materials for organizations not affiliated with the school.
- Heirlooms, jewelry, and other irreplaceable articles.
- Unapproved toys.
- Skateboards, rip sticks, roller blades, hover boards, Heelys, etc

GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT

Board of Trustees

The School is governed by its Board of Trustees (the “Board”). The Board operates in accordance with its bylaws and using the principles of policy governance. The Board has entered into a Charter Agreement with the New Hampshire Department of Education. The bylaws and policies are available on the School’s website.

In addition, the School is a 501(c)3 organization with a non-profit corporation status.

Board Responsibilities and Obligations

The Board is the governing body of the School, has fiduciary responsibilities, and is responsible for overseeing the effective, faithful execution of its mission. The Monadnock Freedom to Learn Coalition created Lionheart Classical Academy specifically to implement a traditional, classical, liberal-arts and sciences education guided by the following mission:

To train the minds and inspire the hearts of its students through a classical liberal arts and sciences education that supports academic achievement, virtuous living, and responsible citizenship

Board Meetings

In compliance with NH State regulations for chartered public school governance, the Board will:

- Establish a set schedule of meetings;
- Post meeting dates in two public places;
- Post agendas in two locations at least forty-eight hours before a meeting, except in the case of emergency meeting, in which case notices will be posted as soon as possible;
- Post and place 24-hour notice for special meetings and state the reason for the special meeting in the notice;
- Provide specific agendas for meetings to advise the public of the matters expected to come before the Board;
- Keep minutes of all Board Meetings, including members present, description of motions or of votes. These will be posted publicly on the website, LionheartClassical.org.

The Board welcomes public comments at each regular Board meeting and public comment is governed by the BEDH Policy – Public Participation at Board Meetings.

Communication to the Board

The role of the Board is governance and fiduciary oversight, so the Board will generally defer to the Executive Director to address questions, complaints, and grievances brought to the attention of school leadership regarding the operation of the school. Lionheart understands that parents will have questions, opinions, and comments that need to be expressed concerning their children's education. Such communication can be very helpful to the running of the school.

The Board does, however, recognize that accountability and good governance sometimes require that communication be brought to the Board directly. In such cases, the Board directs that the communication be submitted in writing to the Board Chair. Such communication can be addressed accordingly and delivered to the School or sent via email and also be provided verbally during the public comment period at a regular meeting of the Board.

Furthermore, the Board's collective authority is not held by individual Board Trustees acting alone. The Board would like to remind members of the Lionheart community refrain from approaching individual Board Trustees. Any communication to the Board should follow the Grievance Policy detailed below.

Role of the Executive Director

The Executive Director is the Chief Executive Officer of the school and is accountable to the Board for its performance in all aspects, academics, financial and operational. The Executive Director shall integrate the functions of the school, serve its staff and constituents, and advance the mission and vision of the school.

Chain of Command

The Board has established a chain of command whereby all authority for the management of the school rests with the Executive Director, who has the sole responsibility of reporting to the Board and managing the operations of the School. It is the expectation of the Board that the

Executive Director will establish a chain of command within the School to assist with its operations.

In all communication to the School, the Board expects the Lionheart community to observe the chain of command and direct communications accordingly. The Board is not the first point of contact and therefore will refer communications that seek response or action to the appropriate members of the School hierarchy. The reason for this chain of command is that the teacher invariably has the most direct knowledge of the child and can usually do more to remedy a situation than can an administrator or board member.

Grievance Policy

Grievance Related to the Classroom

Lionheart firmly believes that adults must be models of good character even in the most difficult situations. Should a parent have a grievance concerning a particular class or the administration of the school, that grievance should be resolved using the chain of command (laid out above).

Issues that arise in a particular classroom should always be addressed to the teacher first since the teacher always has more direct knowledge of the student than anyone else.

- The Teacher: Parents should schedule a meeting with the teacher through the office. Under no circumstance is it ever acceptable for a parent to confront a teacher about an issue with students present, including his/her own.
- The Principal: If the grievance cannot be resolved with the teacher, the parent should discuss the matter with the Principal.
- The Executive Director: If the grievance cannot be resolved with the principal, the parent should discuss the matter with the Executive Director.
- The Board: If the grievance cannot be resolved with the Executive Director, the parent should refer the matter to the Board, preferably in writing.

Grievance Related to Administration

For grievances regarding an administrator who reports to the Executive Director, the grievance should be directed to the individual first, then the Executive Director. If necessary, grievances left unresolved by the Executive Director should be submitted in writing to the Board.

Grievances regarding the Executive Director should be directed to the individual first, then in writing to the Board.

Upon receiving a written grievance, the Board will evaluate and if needed, will conduct a hearing, following a fair and open process.

PARENT ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I _____ [print name(s)] do hereby recognize receipt and review of the *Lionheart Classical Academy Chartered Public School Family Handbook, 2023-2024*. As a parent of a child enrolled in Lionheart, I agree to abide by these terms and support the mission and operations of the school.

Signature(s): _____

Date: _____

Honor Code

A Lionheart Classical Academy student is honest in word and deed, dutiful in study and service, and respectful and kind to others. The student aspires to excellence in compassion, courage, gratitude, humility, integrity, perseverance, respect, responsibility, and service.

Parent Pledge

I have carefully discussed the Lionheart Honor Code with my child and he/she understands what it means. I pledge to encourage my child to be honest in word and deed, dutiful in study and service, and respectful and kind to others. I will help my child aspire to excellence in compassion, courage, gratitude, humility, integrity, perseverance, respect, responsibility, and service.

Name(s): _____

Signature(s): _____

Date: _____

Student Pledge—To be signed by all students in grades 2-6

I understand the Lionheart Honor Code and have discussed it with my parent(s). I pledge to be honest in word and deed, dutiful in study and service, and respectful and kind to others. I will aspire to excellence in compassion, courage, gratitude, humility, integrity, perseverance, respect, responsibility, and service.

Name(s): _____

Signature(s): _____

Date: _____