



Briarwood Christian School

2204 Briarwood Way
Birmingham, Alabama 35243
(205) 776-5803

BRIARWOOD CHRISTIAN SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

PREFACE

Believing that all truth is a manifestation of God's sovereignty in creation, we desire to establish a school which in its ultimate purpose glorifies and reveals God. Man, made in the image of God, is responsible to God in all things; therefore, his education must enable him to understand and use the created universe and to live by the precepts which He has established for Godly living. Knowing that man has chosen to glorify himself and worship his own works rather than worship and glorify God, we understand that our students have a nature which hinders them from achieving the objectives which we have named. However, knowing that the Lord Himself has provided a way for these children to reach their full potential through His payment for sin on the cross, we realize that each child here has a unique and valuable place in the plan of God and must be highly esteemed and respected.

It is, therefore, important that our ministry to the student be well-rounded; introducing him to the redeeming work of Christ, helping him to appreciate himself and his fellow man, and enabling him to take his proper position in creation as one who bears the image of God and exercises dominion over created reality.

Our basic philosophy could be succinctly stated by Romans 11:36:

***For of Him and through Him, and to Him are all things;
to whom be glory forever.***

Briarwood Christian School Philosophy

I. AUTHORITY

- A. Briarwood Christian School is based on the foundation of the Bible as the inspired, infallible Word of God. We accept it as the final authority in giving us direction for every area of life. Therefore, it is the basis for our philosophy.
- B. We believe that the parents have the basic responsibility and authority for the education of their children. Consequently, we will work with and through the parents and will not undermine their authority. For this reason, we must insist on having the cooperation and participation of all parents as long as their children are enrolled. (1)
- C. We believe students should be taught a proper attitude toward their government. They must learn not to look at the government as the answer to all of life's problems; that government is ordained by God and should, therefore, be obeyed and respected; that government officials and law enforcement officers are "ministers of God" and their positions should be respected regardless of their personal shortcomings; that the only proper defense against injustice is through the democratic process in the courts and legislative system. We will have a strong emphasis on patriotism. We will teach our children that America, in spite of all its problems, is still "one nation, under God" and God has made it the greatest nation in the history of mankind. (2)
- D. We believe the Bible clearly supports the free enterprise system and it shall be taught in our School. Our children should learn that God expects them to be good stewards of their time, talents and treasures; and that those who do so will be rewarded with profits; and that those who refuse to work, should not eat. (3)
- E. We believe the Bible teaches the use of corporal punishment in the discipline of young people. We instruct our staff to use the paddle whenever necessary, but always in love and with another adult as a witness. For more serious offenses, we will resort to conferences with parents, suspension, and finally expulsion. We cannot keep students whose attitude and behavior hinder the education of other students. The most important aspect of discipline is that it be firm, fair, consistent, and always administered in love. (4)
- F. The School Board will be made up of laymen and will serve two basic purposes: (1) to determine philosophy and set policies and (2) to serve as volunteer resource material for school staff. The Board should not get involved in the day-to-day administration of the School.

II. EDUCATION

In Luke 2:52, we read that as a young man, *Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.* We believe this gives us the ideal balance of what should be included in a child's development. Consequently we stress education in each of these four areas of development: academic, physical, spiritual, and social.

A. Academic

1. Our objective is to provide a college preparatory education.
2. The key to quality academic instruction is the teaching staff. Teachers of academic subjects should be college graduates and should be certified by the State of Alabama. We want to have the most highly qualified teachers available in each area of instruction. Secondly, but equally important, each teacher must have a clear Christian testimony, both in word and deed.
3. We will not try to upgrade the level of academic instruction by student enrollment based on intelligence. We will accept students with different degrees of intelligence and will provide individualized instruction, as we can, for those students needing special attention in certain subjects.
4. Although the size of the class is not as important as the quality of the teacher, we believe that a small class size is desirable.
5. In addition to college preparatory curriculum offered in public schools, we will offer Bible as a required course. We will also have a strong emphasis on instruction in patriotism, respect for authority, and the free enterprise system.
6. Every course will be taught from the Christian perspective in order to teach the students that God plays a role in every area of our lives.

B. Physical

1. We believe that the body is the temple of the Holy Spirit and thus we will teach our children how to take proper care of the bodies the Lord has given them. This should involve instruction in proper eating habits, rest, and exercise. (5)
2. We want to have a strong intramural program for both boys and girls.
3. The purpose of competitive sports is to teach teamwork, dedication, discipline, sportsmanship, and to provide a fun activity for both players and spectators. A good intramural program (especially in football and basketball) helps overall school spirit.

4. At the Elementary level, emphasis will be on having fun, good sportsmanship, teamwork, participation of all regardless of ability, and teaching basics of the sport. There will be a low emphasis on competition. As students enter Junior High and High School, more emphasis will be placed on dedication, discipline, and competition. At all levels we will strive to reward effort and dedication more than ability.
5. We plan to have an athletic program strong enough to satisfy students with outstanding athletic ability and one that will enable them to compete for athletic scholarships to the major universities in the Southeast.

C. Spiritual

1. We believe that the single most important thing a child must learn is to have the proper relationship with God (*this is the first and great Commandment*). (6) Everything we do at our School is done with this basic foundation.
2. We believe the Bible is the inspired, infallible Word of God. We will stand firm on the doctrines that are clear in the Scriptures as put forth in the Westminster Confession of Faith. We will give unbiased instruction in those areas of Christian doctrine on which evangelical, fundamental Christians disagree so that our students will have knowledge of both sides of these issues. Although our basic stance is of the “Reformed” position, we will not take a dogmatic stand on such things as mode of baptism, eschatological issues and the special gifts.
3. Although our basic function is to provide instruction in the Christian doctrine and Christian living, we believe the most healthy spiritual growth comes from a program involving output as well as intake. Consequently, we will promote and support programs that will involve students in some type of Christian outreach, such as personal evangelism, group evangelism, leading Bible studies, prayer groups, neighborhood Bible clubs, summer Christian camp programs, etc.

D. Social

1. The second most important thing a child must learn is his proper relationship with other people (the second great Commandment). (7) In a world of degenerating social values where peer pressure is so strong in influence toward evil, we feel that our School should provide an atmosphere for social development with a Christian foundation.
2. At the Elementary level, we will have a limited number of social events during the year, such as class parties at Christmas, Valentine’s Day, and at the end of the School year.

3. At the Junior High and High School level, we should provide a meeting place for students to meet on an informal basis. In addition, we will have several planned social functions during the school year. These functions should be basically for fun and any spiritual emphasis should be spontaneous from the students - not the staff.
4. All social functions shall be properly chaperoned by staff and/or parents.

III. Admission

- A. We want to accept first of all, students who want a Christian education and secondly, students whose parents want them to have a Christian education. Hopefully, both students and parents will want the same. In either event, both students and parents should be fully informed of the Christian emphasis and both must agree to support this part of the training. Both should also be informed of the rules and discipline procedures and must agree to support them.

- B. PRIORITY ENROLLMENT:

Kindergarten - Sixth Grade Enrollment

Briarwood offers limited Priority Enrollment for presently enrolled students, provided the privilege is exercised within the Priority Enrollment Period (by January 31).

Limited Priority Enrollment for qualified, new students in kindergarten through sixth grade is offered, as space is available, to students who are siblings of currently enrolled students, children of Briarwood Christian School graduates, and children of Briarwood Presbyterian Church members. The enrollment privilege must be exercised within the Priority Enrollment period (by January 31). Qualified students are those who have passed the admissions test and met all of the requirements for enrollment.

Enrollment priorities can be honored for qualified students only as space is available.

Junior High and High School Enrollment

Enrollment of all new students for grades seven through twelve, including the priority groups listed above, is determined by a different procedure and requirements. The procedure and requirements are available through the Admissions Director.

- C. All admission policies will be in compliance with non-discrimination guidelines of the government.

IV. Financial Structure

- A. Although we believe that the parents whose children attend Briarwood Christian School should assume most of the financial responsibility, we also feel that the Church and the community receive a great benefit from this type of educational institution. Therefore, they should assume some of the financial responsibility. We also want to keep the tuition as low as possible in order to make it available to as many as possible who desire a Christian education.
- B. The Church, School, and the Christian community should share the cost of providing the physical facilities and maintenance. These facilities can also be used by the Church for weekend and night functions.
- C. The tuition and fee schedule is established at a level which covers the operating costs of the School. Expenditures are carefully controlled to maintain affordable tuition.
- D. All ancillary functions (lunchroom operations, shuttle bus service, before and after school care, etc.) are self-supporting.
- E. The Church administers a scholarship fund for students needing financial assistance. The School administers a limited financial assistance program from funds provided by contributions which are restricted to this purpose.

Biblical References:

- (1) Deuteronomy 6; Ephesians 6:4
- (2) Luke 20:25; I Timothy 2:1-2
- (3) 2 Thessalonians 3:10
- (4) Proverbs 22:15; Revelation 3:19; Hebrews 12:6
- (5) I Corinthians 3:17
- (6) Matthew 22:38
- (7) Matthew 22:39