



**2020 - 2021**  
**BRANDON ACADEMY**  
**STUDENT & PARENT**  
**HANDBOOK**

QUALITY EDUCATION IN A COMMUNITY OF RESPECT

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## INTRODUCTION TO BRANDON ACADEMY

### **FORWARD**

This Student/Parent Handbook is designed to help you make the best of what Brandon Academy has to offer, and it is designed to help guide both parent and student. Please read it with care; we encourage each family to review it together. Although Brandon Academy encourages the development of individual talents and respects the right of every student to his or her own opinion, the Student/Parent Handbook serves as a guide and sets a standard for what is expected of you as a member of the BA community. There are commonly accepted standards of behavior and communication and you will find these standards in this handbook. It is assumed that you will read them, understand them, and, by your presence in the school, intend to maintain them. We expect each member of the community to embrace the spirit as well as the letter of the school rules and policies. Goodwill and good faith must be the basis of our relationship with each other.

Brandon Academy assumes that its students enter the school with a serious purpose and that conscience and good sense are sufficient guides to behavior. The school expects honesty from its students. The faculty intends to develop among students a sense of responsibility for personal conduct and for the well-being of the larger community. To that end, the school encourages freedom, within reasonable limitations, and enforces rules defining them, which are necessary to maintain relative freedom for all.

Rules and expectations simply impose limits; they do not define mature behavior. Respect for other people, honesty, and courtesy are fundamental standards in which the school believes and that are expected of everyone. These, coupled with an attitude of cooperation and mutual understanding, make for enjoyable and creative community life. This is what we want for everyone. We trust that you will do your part in making this a reality. It is our hope not only that you will learn much while at Brandon Academy, but also that you will make friends, grow in spirit as well as in wisdom, and enjoy yourself.

Every year the BA Student/Parent Handbook is reviewed and revised to reflect those changes. So even if you're a returning BA student or parent, we encourage you to closely read this handbook again.

## **HISTORY**

Brandon Academy was established in 1970 as an independent school in a suburb east of Tampa, Florida. It remains the only school in the area accredited by the Florida Council of Independent Schools. Brandon Academy is a non-denominational school that serves the Brandon community. The school attracts a diverse population, including children from every religion, culture and ethnicity living in our region. In the fall of 2015, Brandon Academy created an upper school division and currently enrolls students in grades PreK3 through 12th grade. An IB program is offered for Grades 11 and 12. The school has a faculty-student ratio of 11:1. This makes it possible to best address the intellectual, social, emotional and physical needs of students.

## **MISSION**

The mission of Brandon Academy is to educate young people in an environment of respect coupled with a commitment to quality education in a challenging program for average to above average ability students.

The Mission of Brandon Academy is embraced by the school community and we incorporate these traits into the daily activities of the school, in the classroom and outside of it. These themes resonate throughout each student's time at BA and become a source of pride for all Scorpions.

## **PHILOSOPHY**

Brandon Academy is dedicated to quality education and developing well-rounded young people. Serving students in pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade, we seek to provide a challenging curriculum with flexibility to meet the individual needs of average to above average students. Our belief is that success in life is dependent on students being well-rounded. Brandon Academy places a strong emphasis on reading, mathematics and the sciences. The program is balanced with artistic creativity, Spanish, technology and innovation, physical education, writing, problem solving and community engagement and service. Program goals and objectives are carried out in an environment, which is friendly and vibrant, and enhanced by a speakers bureau and off-campus travel. Parents are encouraged to be an active part of their child's program. Newsletters, parent conferences, school functions, and volunteer time keep parents active in and informed about the school community. Brandon Academy's faculties have, at minimum, their B.A. or B.S. degrees. Continuous faculty development allows for teachers to prepare for the challenges facing our young people today. Students, parents, and faculty work together in an environment supported by open communication and community pride. Well-rounded respectful children with a positive attitude toward learning are the end result of the Brandon Academy school program.

## **HONOR CODE**

### Preamble

With the following policies and procedures, students attending Brandon Academy will feel a sense of responsibility for maintaining the high moral and ethical standards set forth in the student handbook. Such empowerment will promote a sense of school pride and spirit. This honor system, which promotes discipline and accountability, is based on self-respect and respect for others in the Brandon Academy community. This includes students, faculty, staff, parents, and alumni. The Honor Code provides individuals the opportunity to develop physically, emotionally and academically in an atmosphere of trust.

### Honor Code

*On my honor I will do my own work, uphold the ideals of Brandon Academy, protect the good name of the school and see that all others do the same, I vow to leave the school greater and better than it was given to me.*

*I will do my own work both in and out of school. I will not plagiarize the work or ideas of others, nor will I allow another student to use any part of my work as his or her own.*

*I will not lie. I will not forge the signature of another student, my parent, a teacher or authority on notes or school documents including reports, tests or other communication.*

*I will report myself to the Honor Board for any infringement of the above rules and regulations. I will ask another student to report him/herself to the Honor Board for any infringement of these rules and regulations. I will report to the Honor Board another student who fails to report himself when asked to do so.*

### **BA IS ACCREDITED BY:**

International Baccalaureate World School  
Florida Council of Independent Schools  
National Blue Ribbon School

## BA CONTACT INFORMATION



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## ADMISSIONS

Admission is open for average to above average students. Acceptance to Brandon Academy is based upon the results of a comprehensive testing program. For younger students particularly, emotional development and readiness are as important to a child's success in school as intellect and achievement. No student will be denied admission based on race, color, national origin, or sexual orientation.

All students are expected to meet the academic standards and follow all policies and regulations of the school. Brandon Academy reserves the right to dismiss a student whose presence in the school is considered to be detrimental to the best interest of the student or to their fellow students. Brandon Academy believes it is essential to the accomplishment of our mission that a positive working relationship exists between parent/guardian and the school. The school reserves the right to terminate or not renew a student's enrollment contract if the school reasonably concludes the actions of a parent or guardian makes such a positive relationship impossible or seriously interferes with the school's accomplishment of its educational purposes. Brandon Academy reserves the right to refuse readmission to any student at the beginning of any semester. A student whose tuition is more than 30 days in arrears may not return to school until the account is brought current.

### **REQUIREMENTS**

The admission-testing program covers developmental readiness, reading readiness, intellect, and achievement in subject matter areas. The results are used for instructional placement. Group placement is determined by developmental age, emotional maturity, and level of achievement. Testing for the fall begins in January. Since space and student enrollment are limited, our applications are processed on a "first come, first served" basis. Interested parents should contact the Academy as early as possible.

#### *New Students*

1. New students need to complete all registration forms and provide copies of all testing or report cards from previous school(s).
2. New students need to earn satisfactory scores on our "Entrance Testing". The Division Head will determine grade level placement.
3. Parents of new students need to provide a copy of the child's Birth Certificate.
  - a. Students must be four years old prior to October 1st of the current school year to be considered for entrance into Pre-Kindergarten.
  - b. Students must be five years old by October 1st to be considered for Kindergarten.

- c. Entrance into First grade requires successful completion of a Kindergarten program.
4. New students must have an updated record of immunization. These health records must be filed in the office prior to the start of school.
5. New students must submit their deposit, the enrollment contract, and book and lab fees prior to the first day of attendance. Deposits are non-refundable.
6. Enrollment is understood to be for the full school year.

#### *Returning Students*

1. Deposits and a signed enrollment contract is due by the last day of February. The deposit assures your spot for the fall and it is non-refundable.
  2. Satisfactory completion of the previous grade in academics, conduct and work habits. Grade level placement will be determined by the administration, based on evaluation of test results and academic progress.
  3. Required health forms on file.
  4. Students entering Pre-Kindergarten through high school must have a current physical on file to comply with Florida State Law.
  5. Enrollment is understood to be for the full school year.
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## ACADEMICS

In keeping with our philosophy of Education, the instructional goal at Brandon Academy is to provide a challenging, quality curriculum, which encourages students to progress and maintain the highest standards of academic instruction. Instructional materials are selected to meet the scope, sequence and standards of excellence set for each course. The major emphasis is on basic skills at all levels, Pre-K – High School. Supplementary subjects such as art, computer, media skills, music, physical education and Spanish are enrichment areas. The curriculum is designed for the average and above average student with materials selected in light of a diagnostic approach to instruction.

### **LOWER SCHOOL DIVISION (GRADES PK 3 - 5)**

Language arts, math, science, and social studies take priority in Lower School with electives and specials enriching the program. The learning experience of Lower School is based on the level of development the child has reached. For example, in the first year of school, when the child's attention span is short, teaching periods are short. The teaching period is lengthened as attention spans lengthen. Brandon Academy emphasizes "success" and self esteem as an important part of the students' school experience. Reading is given the primary attention as BA considers it the basic key to future learning. Reading development is carefully planned, painstakingly carried out and faithfully evaluated to assure maximum progress.

Children also participate in art, music, computer and innovation, executive functioning skills, physical education and Spanish. This provides an interesting and well- rounded program for our Lower School students.

Academic excellence is stressed at Brandon Academy, but not at the expense of the child's physical and emotional growth. Children are encouraged to find acceptance within themselves as individuals. Lower School provides the foundation for the academic program of the Academy. A strong foundation is a prerequisite to the learning activities of Middle School.

#### *Lower School Grading/Evaluations*

A = 90-100

B = 80-89

C = 70-79

D = 60-69

F = 59 -0

There are four kinds of grades: class work, homework, quizzes and tests. Homework will be given daily, unless otherwise stated, it is due the following school day. All assignments must be completed, or a grade of "o" will be recorded.

*Lower School Homework Expectations*

- Primary (K-2): 30-45 minutes per evening, Monday through Thursday, can be expected. Exceptions to this may be make-up work or long-term projects.
- Intermediate (3-5): 45-60 minutes per evening, Monday through Thursday, can be expected. Exceptions to this may be make-up work or long-term projects.

**UPPER SCHOOL DIVISION - GRADES 6 - 12**

The Brandon Academy curriculum is specifically designed for average to above average students who have completed the basic skills of reading, language arts, and mathematics. Students are ready to expand and refine these skills as well as use them in other subject areas.

The learning experiences are based upon the student's level of development and needs. During the Middle/High School years the student develops an independent self-concept. While continuing to provide an environment for academic excellence, we strive to help nurture a positive self-image.

English grammar, literature, vocabulary, written composition, mathematics, physical education, science and social studies form the core of the curriculum. Our curriculum is open-ended so that the child's abilities and initiative are the only limits to learning.

*Upper School Grading/Evaluations (Grades 6-8)*

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

*Upper School Grading/Evaluations (Grades 9-12)*

A+ = 100-97	A = 96-93	A- = 92-90
B + = 89-87	B = 86-83	B- = 82-80
C + = 79- 77	C = 76-73	C - = 72-70
D += 69-67	D = 66-63	D- = 62-60
F = 59-0		

*Upper School Homework Expectations*

- Grades 6-8: 1-1.5 hours per evening, Monday through Thursday, can be expected. Exceptions to this may be make-up work or long-term projects. There are no tests or quizzes on Mondays or the first day after a holiday/extended weekend.
- Grades 9 -12: 2-2.5 hours per evening, Monday through Friday, can be expected. Exceptions to this may be make-up work or long-term projects.

NOTE: Homework is work, which a student is capable of doing independently. Students who spend more time than that specified may be completing daily class work. Parents should contact the teacher when there are concerns.

## **GENERAL ACADEMIC POLICIES**

### *Assignment Books*

Students will be provided a planning calendar. Teachers supervise the recording of assignments in primary grades through fifth. It is expected that older students will be able to use the planning calendar on their own. If your child has trouble with this requirement and needs supervision please speak to the teacher.

### *Class Assignments*

The school reserves the right to determine proper placement for students. Each child's "style of learning" is of paramount importance to how we place students. Class assignments are determined by many factors, some of the most important being academic achievement, motivation for learning, maturity, work habits, attention span, and social adjustment. Please do not overemphasize the importance of where your child is placed. There are chances for different groups to come together often for classes or activities such as field trips, physical education classes, lunch, recess, etc. The children in each grade level have opportunities to make friends with students in all of the different groups.

### *Cumulative Records*

Any records going to other schools must be channeled through the Division Head. Individual teachers are not to be directly contacted with records requests. All check sheets, which are requested for outside services, as well as teacher recommendations for receiving schools, will be sent directly to the school. We do not permit parents to hand carry these documents.

### *Elective Courses*

Upper School students will select their elective classes at the beginning of each semester. If a course is full, students will be placed on a waiting list for their first choice and be placed in their second choice elective. Once the semester starts, students have two weeks to change their elective course.

### *Grade Postings*

Grades are posted on RenWeb on a bi-weekly basis. The purpose is to allow parents and students to monitor their progress throughout the grading period. Academic updates are issued four times a year. All entries by the teacher on your child's report cards are the

result of careful evaluation. Upper School students will be given a progress report and semester ending grades. Report cards and transcripts will be held from families who are not in good financial standing with the Business Office.

### *Promotion Policy*

A student who fails one subject may be promoted to the next grade level on probation if...

1. The student's academic deficiencies in that subject are satisfactory remediated during summer tutoring (minimal of 30 hours.)
2. The student submits written verification of attendance and a report of satisfactory academic progress. This letter must be submitted one week prior to the beginning of the new school year or the student will be retained on the previous grade level.

Any student who fails two or more subjects could be automatically retained at his present grade level for the next school year.

### *Standardized Testing*

Brandon Academy gives a standardized test each spring to students in grades K-8. High School students do standardized testing in the Fall. This information is helpful to our faculty for placement, remediation and acceleration. Parents will receive the results following testing. There are no make-up days available. Please plan for your children to be present on all testing dates. See the school calendar for testing dates.

### *Teacher/ Parent Conferences*

Two specific conference days are scheduled during the school year, one in the fall and one in the spring. Should a parent require a conference at another time, an appointment may be scheduled through the teacher.

### *Teacher Grading*

All written assignments should be corrected and returned to the students in a timely fashion. Tests should be corrected and returned no more than two days after they are given. Term papers should be corrected and returned within ten days of the date they are received by the teacher.

### *Teacher Request by Parents*

We do not accept parental requests for teachers.

## STUDENT LIFE

Student Life is all of the activities, events that occur outside of the classroom. We focus on the education our students receive outside the classroom. Though we are mindful that academic life will be the core of the enterprise at BA, we are dedicated to the idea that learning continues, is enhanced and is made meaningful beyond the threshold of the conventional classroom. Another word for this crucial “classroom outside the classroom” that we create is community. The community we build together here is critical to the training students receive to become the leaders each are expected to be upon graduation from BA. Therefore, your engagement and participation in community is an expectation rather than a mere afterthought.

### **ATTENDANCE**

Parents are requested to call the school if possible to report their child’s absence. Absences should be reported to the Main Office by calling 813-689-1952 extension 0. Make-up work that cannot be sent electronically may be picked up after 3 pm in the Main Office.

#### *Excess Absences*

A student who is absent more than 30 days during the school year will be required to repeat the entire school year at the same level. (Section 1003.24 FL Standards) A conference with the Homeroom teacher will be held after 10 absences.

#### *Field Trip Absences*

Students’ schoolwork may be assigned beforehand if possible. Students will not be penalized for missed assignments and tests; they will be accountable for the completion of these upon their return to school. The teacher will determine a reasonable time for completion.

#### *Middle/High School Absences*

In the event of an absence, the student will be responsible for getting their assignments. Check the *Remind* text, Google Classroom, email instructor or call a classmate. If the text needed is not at home, the teachers will be understanding and will make accommodations so students can complete their assignments. Students are encouraged to handle the arrangements themselves – remember, as middle school and high students it is important to accept responsibility. It is the responsibility of the student to schedule a time for make-up quizzes and tests or arranging any additional help from the teacher. An absence the day before an announced test does not excuse a student from that test.

### *Make-up Work*

All assignments missed during absences are required to be completed. Parents should request work to be sent home for extended absences. All make-up work is due within a reasonable time frame determined by the teacher. Make-up work that cannot be sent electronically may be picked up after 3 pm in the Main Office.

### **BIKE RIDERS**

Bike riders are to lock their bikes. Bike riders will be dismissed after the car line is complete and students have been moved to aftercare. Parents of bike riders should review safety issues with the children. All students are expected to abide by safety and road rules. Any student not following the rules for safe riding will not be allowed to ride a bicycle to school. Helmets should be worn. A permission form for riding the bike should be written and signed by the parent/guardian and will be filed in the student's cumulative file.

### **BOOKBAGS**

Bags should be of a manageable size and fit beneath the student desk. Parents are urged to check bookbags daily for notices and other important information. Rolling book bags are not permitted at Brandon Academy. Students in grades PK3 – K are required to use a Brandon Academy tote. For the 2020-2021 school year, BA is strongly recommending that students in grades 1– 2 also use a tote to minimize class crowding. Starting with grade 3, all students are encouraged to use a bookbag or backpack as a means of protection for textbooks, binders, computers, and other school materials.

### **BUSINESS OFFICE**

Any parent having business in the Business Office should park and come inside. Please do not leave your car running or park in the driveway. The business office may be reached by telephone at extension #115.

### **CARPOOLS**

Please form carpools if possible. Carpools help our traffic situation greatly by cutting down on the number of cars in the car line.

### **CELL PHONE USE**

Brandon Academy has a cell phone usage policy that is stated in our Educational Technology Responsible Usage Policy (eTRUP). This is signed by both parents and students at the beginning of the school year. Students not adhering to this policy will have their phone confiscated where it can be picked up in the School Office by a parent

during school hours. Students who need to use the phone during the school day, may use the phone in the Main Office with teacher permission.

### **CLASSROOM VISITS BY PARENTS**

Parents are encouraged to visit classrooms, however, this is to be done after a parent requests an appointment prior to the visit. Teachers are directed to refer parents, who make unscheduled visits to the office so that appointments can be made as required. We ask parents to cooperate with this policy, so that our teachers' attention is not taken from their students.

### **CLINIC**

The clinic is housed in the Administration Office that may be reached by calling 689-1952, ext. 0.

### **CLUBS**

Brandon Academy encourages students to participate in clubs, as these are activities that often extend and apply the ideas that they learn in academic classes. The benefits of such involvement is substantial. Students learn interpersonal skills that help develop leadership, confidence, determination, and responsibility. Students may wish to coordinate their co-curricular activities with their academic program to build on areas of strength. Students will be provided with a list of clubs at the start of the fall semester and clubs meet for the year on the first Friday of every month.

Students are encouraged to be involved in extracurricular activities. However, students on campus outside of regular school hours must be supervised by an adult or placed in our aftercare program. This is a safety issue and exceptions will not be allowed.

### **COMMUNICATION**

Parents are encouraged to keep open lines of communication with teachers. Our faculty has many opportunities to keep you informed on behalf of the students at Brandon Academy. Orientation, ParentsWeb, Remind texts, parent/teacher conferences, our website ([www.brandon-academy.com](http://www.brandon-academy.com)), phone calls, emails, informal notes, and classroom newsletters are some of the tools we use to communicate with families.

If you have a concern, please share it! Take the problems to the person involved in the matter or an administrator. As problems arise, it is best to take care of the situation as soon as possible. If you allow the problem to sit until a later time or share it with someone who cannot remedy the problem it only becomes worse.

Classroom issues must go to the teacher prior to contacting an administrator. If you are not satisfied with the resolution to the matter at the immediate level, please take the matter to the next level, and then to the Head of School.

General communication between parent/parent, school/parent, and community/parent is very important to the survival of Brandon Academy. Any concerns that arise should be discussed with the appropriate parties rather than other parents or friends within the community. Going to the proper place for information will many times keep misinformation from becoming rumor.

### **COMMUNITY SERVICE**

Community service is strongly encouraged for all lower and middle school students. This is a requirement for candidates who wish to join the National Elementary Honor Society and National Junior Honor Society. Community service is required for all high school students. Students in the IB Diploma Program are required to have 100 service hours.

### **DELINQUENCY**

Parents are reminded that the school will hold report cards if charges, book debts, etc. have not been paid at the time of their distribution. These records are also held if the parent becomes delinquent with the Extended Day fees or tuition.

### **DISCIPLINE POLICY**

Discipline is an important part of school life. Students are expected to maintain control and a positive relationship with their peers and faculty. It is the aim of the administration and faculty to promote, through policy and regulations, high moral standards and self-respect in an atmosphere conducive to learning.

#### *Honor Board Procedures*

A student will report him/herself to the Honor Board for infractions of the Honor Code. This reporting by the individual(s) involved at the request of a peer or teacher. The student will appear before the Honor Board for a hearing that will include the Honor Board and the faculty sponsor/principal. The student will fulfill the decision of the Honor Board fully. A second appearance before the Honor Board within the same school year will result in a meeting with the teacher/principal/parent as well as the normal Honor Board appearance. The result of this meeting will be decided by the principal and could include suspension. A third offense will result in a meeting of the Principal/Head of School/parents. The result of this meeting will be decided by the Head of School and could include dismissal from Brandon Academy.



### *Bullying, Harassment, and Hazing Policies*

Brandon Academy is dedicated to fostering an environment that promotes kindness, acceptance, and embraces differences among individuals. Therefore, BA will not tolerate any type of bullying, harassment, or hazing. However, there is a distinction between intimidating behavior and normal social interaction. From primary grades and through high school, students go through various stages of social development. Among these would include learning to relate with others and testing boundaries. The forming of these social skills is important in childhood development. Realizing this difference and its importance, the administration will determine the appropriate distinction.

### *What is bullying?*

Conscious, repeated, hostile, aggressive behavior of an individual or a group of individuals with the intention to harm others or gain real (or perceived) power.

### *Types of Bullying*

1. Verbal bullying is saying or writing mean things. Verbal bullying includes teasing, name-calling, inappropriate sexual comments, taunting, threatening to cause harm or encouraging harm to others
2. Social bullying, sometimes referred to as relational bullying, involves hurting someone's reputation or relationships. Social bullying includes leaving someone out on purpose, telling other children not to be friends with someone, spreading rumors about someone, embarrassing someone in public
3. Physical bullying involves hurting a person's body or possessions. Physical bullying includes hitting/kicking/pinching, spitting, tripping/pushing, making or breaking someone's things, making mean or rude hand gestures
4. Cyber bullying is done through use of a computer or smartphone and may include creating websites, instant messaging, email, using camera phones, or other forms of technology to engage in harassment or bullying). Any of these types of offensive conduct can create an uncomfortable school environment, regardless of where such conduct occurs, and regardless of whether the device used is school property, the property of the student, or the property of another person. Cyber bullying includes sending, posting, or sharing harmful, false, or mean content about someone, sharing personal information about someone that could cause embarrassment, unkind or degrading comments, including graphics (pictures or emojis), creating a social media account, website, or signing up an individual in the name of someone other than yourself.

<b>Examples of Bullying Behavior</b>	<b>Examples of Behavior NOT Considered Bullying</b>
Not inviting someone to your parties with the intent of socially isolating him/her. (social)	Not inviting someone to your party because you're not friends.
Repeatedly and purposefully running into someone in the hallway with the intent of maintaining social power. (physical)	Running into someone in the hallway on accident.
Unwelcome teasing or name calling that continues after asked to stop. (verbal)	Teasing a friend.
Sharing an inappropriate picture of someone without their permission or knowledge. (cyber)	Sharing a picture of a friend

*What is harassment?*

To annoy persistently. To create an unpleasant or hostile situation, especially by uninvited and unwelcome verbal or physical conduct. Harassment includes, but is not limited to, slurs, jokes, and other verbal, graphic, or offensive conduct intended to make a student feel uncomfortable on the basis of a person's race, religion, color, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, citizenship, or disability.

*What is sexual harassment?*

Uninvited and unwelcome verbal or physical behavior of a sexual nature especially, but not exclusively, by a person in a position of power.

All instances of sexual harassment share in common that they are unwanted and occur against the victim's will. Except in serious cases of sexual harassment that involve assault or other highly threatening behavior, sexual harassment also has to be part of a long-standing pattern. For example, if you compliment someone once and s/he asks you to stop, you've not engaged in sexual harassment unless the compliments continue or you have reason to know those compliments are unwelcome.

Although the law doesn't prohibit simple teasing, offhand comments, or isolated incidents that are not very serious, harassment is illegal when it is so frequent or severe that it creates a hostile or offensive environment.

Harassment does not have to be of a sexual nature, and can include offensive remarks about a person's sex as a whole. For example, it is illegal to harass a woman by making offensive comments about women in general. Both victim and the harasser can be either a woman or a man, and the victim and harasser can be the same sex.

<b>Some Examples of Harassment Behavior</b>	<b>Some Examples of Behavior NOT Considered Harassment</b>
A slur or joke about a classmate's race, religion, background, or physical characteristics	Joking with a classmate about a comment they made in class
Sexually touching someone against his/her will. This behavior includes everything from patting someone on the behind to sexual assault.	Engaging in flirtatious banter with someone. As long as the behavior is consensual, it's not harassment.
Asking inappropriate questions about a someone's private or sex life. Persistently asking about someone's date, what he/she likes sexually, or the status of someone's relationship.	Sharing details of your private life with someone with whom you feel comfortable discussing such topics when that person has indicated s/he is comfortable with your sharing.
Making comments that draw attention to another's private body parts or appearance. Further, making any comments on a person's appearance can be considered harassment if you've been asked to stop.	Paying a non offensive compliment to someone.

### *What is Hazing?*

Although we encourage students to participate in school-related athletics, clubs, associations, organizations and other groups, BA prohibits all forms of hazing. Hazing refers to any activity expected of a student to join or to continue membership or participation in any group where the activity produces or could be expected to produce mental, emotional or physical discomfort, humiliation, embarrassment, harassment, or ridicule to the student, regardless of the student's willingness to participate. Hazing activities include, but are not limited to, acts of personal servitude, sleep deprivation, restrictions on personal hygiene, yelling, swearing, insulting or demeaning verbal abuse, being forced to wear embarrassing attire, consumption of vile or other non-food substances, consumption of alcohol, brandings, writing or marking on one's skin or clothes, physical abuse, stunts or dares that could result in physical injury or harm to a person's mental, emotional or social well-being, any act in violation of the law or school policy, and any other activity that could fall within the definition of hazing. If an individual is not sure if an activity is hazing, he or she needs to contact the upper school

administration and ask. A student violates this policy whenever he or she engages, assists, or attempts to engage or assist in the planning or committing of any hazing activity.

*What a student should do if s/he feels bullied, harassed, or hazed.*

- Look at the person bullying you and tell him or her to stop in a calm, clear voice.
- If speaking up seems too hard or not safe, walk away and stay away.
- Stay away from places where bullying happens.
- Stay near adults and other kids. Most bullying happens when adults aren't around.
- **Promptly talk to an adult you trust. Don't keep your feelings inside. Telling someone can help you feel less alone. The adult, especially an adult you trust at school, can help you make a plan to stop the bullying.**

*Stand Up for Others*

When you see bullying, there are safe things you can do to make it stop.

- Talk to a parent, teacher, or another adult you trust. Adults need to know when bad things happen so they can help.
- Be kind to the student being bullied. Show him/her that you care by trying to include him/her. Sit with him/her at lunch or on the bus, talk to him/her at school, or invite him/her to do something. Just hanging out with him/her will help them know him/her isn't alone.
- Not saying anything could make it worse. The student who is bullying will think it is ok to keep treating others that way.

*What parents should do if they think their child is being bullied, harassed, or hazed.*

Talk to a division director and/or a BA teacher right away. We CAN help. Often kids understandably worry about being considered a “tattle tale.” There are many ways the school can help without others knowing you shared information. Those who know about bullying and do not report it are unintentionally sending messages that adults don't know how to help or that it isn't important. It is true that dealing with bullying behavior is difficult and sometimes risky. However, it is our goal at BA to create a culture where we deal directly, yet carefully, with these situations so that all involved are empowered and prepared for college and life.

*Reporting*

All concerns relating to bullying, harassment, or hazing should be reported immediately to school officials. We also expect that anyone, whether student, faculty, staff or family

member who witnesses, or has knowledge of an incident of bullying, harassment, or hazing, will report the incident to administration immediately. When the school administration becomes aware of bullying, harassment, or hazing, the situation will be promptly investigated. Any student found to have violated this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from school for serious violations. No adverse action will be taken against any person who makes a good faith report of bullying, harassment, or hazing. Retaliation in any form against anyone for making a good faith complaint under this policy or for participating in an investigation is strictly prohibited. Any retaliation should also be reported pursuant to this policy and is itself a cause for disciplinary action.

### *Specific Behaviors Expected at Brandon Academy*

- Students are to respect faculty, staff and peers.
- Students are expected to have high moral standards; therefore, physical or non-physical intimidation, fighting, profane language, inappropriate behavior and cheating are not tolerated.
- Care of school property is expected. Parents and students are responsible for the replacement, repair of, or payment for malicious damage to such.
- Students are expected to keep the school facilities and grounds in an orderly state.
- Spitting and other such ill-mannered behavior are unacceptable.
- Dangerous items are not permitted on campus.
- For all electronic devices see eTRUP policy for specific details in Grades 4-12
- Students are not to leave school grounds, until dismissal at 3:15pm, without permission from their parents or teacher.

### **DRESS CODE**

Appropriate dress is a sign of respect to those with whom one interacts. It is also a sign of respect for excellence in education for which we are all striving. The Dress Code Policy was developed in accordance with the following guidelines:

- To provide an environment that enhances academic excellence and builds pride and respect;
- To take into account cost to parents, ease of enforcement, and appropriateness;
- To take into account different physical, emotional, and social developmental needs of each age level, providing increasing opportunities for individual choice and responsibility.

In general, students must arrive at school well groomed and in clean, neat, modest, and in appropriate attire. Clothing should be in good repair and of appropriate fit for normal school activities and movement. Clothing, jewelry, or grooming that is distracting or suggestive (such as too long or too short) is not permitted. Brandon Academy reserves the right to determine what is appropriate dress and appearance for its students. Brandon Academy expects parents and guardians to cooperate fully in upholding the requirements of the Dress Policy. On Fridays, Spirit Day is observed and students may wear jeans and any shirt that has a BA logo on it, including the Friday Shirt. On designated field trips, students should wear shirts with a BA logo.

### *Expectations for All Divisions*

- All clothing with a waistline is to be worn at the waist. No clothing may be worn that exposes any undergarments.
- Hats and caps may not be worn inside buildings unless it is for religious purposes or designated special dress days.
- All hair must be kept clean, neatly groomed, and out of the eyes. No style, color, or hair wear should be distracting to the students or others.
- Leggings are permitted only when worn with a top that covers the entire bottom such as tunics, skirts, dresses.
- No sweatpants.
- No frayed hems are allowed.

All students will wear a school uniform. No substitutions are made for any part of the uniform. Non-uniform days are determined by the Administration. The Faculty and Administration interpret appropriate dress. It is encouraged that students' names should be on the inside of all uniforms. All uniforms are to be in good repair, the appropriate size, and fit without being baggy or tight. Shorts, pants and skirts are to be worn at waist level.

### *Lower School Dress Code for Girls*

- a. Plaid jumper, navy, or grey jumper or skirt. Skirt and short lengths should be to the end of the child's hand or longer
- b. Navy blue or grey shorts, pants, or capris.
- c. Navy blue polo dress.
- d. Navy blue, grey or white short or long sleeve polo shirt with school monogram. Polo shirts must be purchased at Brandon Academy. All others may be purchased through Land's End. See website for details.
- e. Navy blue, or grey cardigan.
- f. Black, brown, or navy closed toe shoes or saddle oxfords or sneakers.

- g. Flip-flops or sandals are not permitted.
- h. White, navy, or black socks or leotard tights.
- i. BA uniform sweatshirts are permitted.

#### *Upper School Dress Code for Girls*

- a. Navy blue or grey skirt, skorts, shorts, pants, or capris.
- b. Navy blue, grey, or white short or long sleeve polo shirt with school monogram. High School students are permitted to wear black uniform shirts. Polo shirts must be purchased at Brandon Academy. All others may be purchased through Land's End. See website for details.
- c. Navy blue or grey cardigan.
- d. BA uniform sweatshirts will be permitted.
- e. Black, brown, or navy closed toe shoes or saddle oxfords or sneakers. Flip-flops or sandals are not permitted
- f. Solid white, navy or black socks or white, navy or black tights.
- g. Students should be clean and neatly groomed
- h. Excessive jewelry is not appropriate.
- i. Make-up (light) may be worn.

#### *Lower and Upper School Dress Code for Boys*

- a. Navy blue or grey pants or shorts (Cargo shorts or pants are not permitted).
- b. Navy blue, grey or white short or long sleeve polo shirt with school logo. High School students are allowed to wear black uniform shirts. Polo shirts must be purchased at Brandon Academy. All others may be purchased through Land's End. See website for details.
- c. BA uniform sweatshirts will be permitted. Hoodies: Must be a BA Hoodie -Seniors can wear a college logo hoodie (All hoods must be removed while in any school building).
- d. Shoes must be closed toe, no flip-flops, slides, crocs or sandals.
- e. Students should be clean and neatly groomed.
- f. Facial hair - students in grades 9-11 must be clean shaven. Seniors can have a well trimmed beard or mustache.

#### *Field Trip Dress Code*

For all off-campus enrichment trips, the dress code is as follows: BA Polo, uniform style pants or shorts, and proper shoes.

### *PE Dress Code*

All students must dress out for PE. There is a standard P.E. uniform for grades 4 and above. This will consist of navy Brandon Academy shorts and a Brandon Academy t-shirt. These uniforms must be purchased at the school store. Hats/Sunglasses can be worn during PE, and/or outside activities.

### *Friday “Spirit Day” Dress*

On such designated days students may wear their Friday Shirts or shirts that specifically promote a recognized BA team, club, etc. Friday shirts are sold in the Business Office and may be worn every Friday with appropriate bottoms. Brandon Academy club, athletic team, and class shirts may also be worn on Fridays.

### *Consequences for Dress Code Violations*

Teachers will speak with students who are dressed inappropriately and continued violations could affect conduct grades. Students in violation of the dress code (as determined by administration) will be sent to the Office. At that time they will be asked to either call home for a delivery of clothes OR will be sent to the campus bookstore to purchase (charged to the parents) clothes that conform to the dress code. Students will not be permitted to return to class until they are properly dressed. An absence to class due to violation of the dress code will count toward the maximum permissible number of missed classes.

Certain activities (i.e. science labs) may require special footwear. In such instances students must follow the directions of the teacher.

### *Unacceptable Dress*

- Athletic pants, shorts, sweatpants, warm-ups or other gym clothes, including designer brands made of terry cloth or velour, are not permitted.
- Spandex (i.e. Lululemon, Under Armor), leggings, ski pants, yoga pants or similar “clinging” clothing is not permitted.
- None of the aforementioned clothing may have holes, paint, fraying, fringe, ragged edges or patches.
- Suggestive or other inappropriate writing, including shirts advertising alcohol/tobacco products, those promoting drugs/drug paraphernalia, ones with sexual connotations are not permitted.
- Shirts may be worn untucked with no midriff exposure through-out normal range of motion. All shirts must comfortably cover the waistline of the pants, shorts, or skirts being worn.



- Tank tops, spaghetti straps, low cut, scoop, or v-neck tops, sheer see-through tops/bottoms, or halter-tops are not permitted.
- Changing of hair to unnatural shades, such as pink or green is not permitted.
- No board shorts or other swimwear.
- Bandanas, hats including baseball caps, visors, pocket chains, dog collars, and the like are not permitted. Note: the above list of prohibited dress and accessories is not all-inclusive. Any articles and/or accessories deemed to be inappropriate and/or a distraction to the educational atmosphere will be prohibited.

### **DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP OF STUDENTS**

Brandon Academy cannot assume responsibility for students who are delivered to school before 7:45am due to our inability to provide adult supervision in the classrooms and on the playground. Students may be dropped off starting at 7:00 am and they will be required to attend the *Extended Day Program* at a cost to the parents.

Parents are reminded that in order to prevent traffic back-ups on Bates Avenue in the mornings, students should be ready to depart the cars immediately. Parents should then move off of the school grounds. Parents are to pick-up and deliver their children to the assigned area of the Traffic Plan and follow all the procedures involved in the Traffic Plan. Safety Patrols (A.M.) and teachers (P.M.) will be on hand to assist with the loading/unloading of the students.

Please do not block driveways or use our neighbors' yards for turning around. They deserve to have access to the roads and have their yards maintained. Please be courteous and considerate – we must respect their wishes. Finally, do not park in the reserved spots from 7:45-3:15.

We worked closely with the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office to develop the safest plan for our campus. Our student's safety is extremely important to us; therefore, we ask that you follow the following at pick-up/dismissal:

1. Always follow the direction of the patrols. Remember you may be the parent of a patrol someday.
2. Always pull as far into the driveway as possible and stay with your vehicle.
3. When parking on Bates, please be certain to use the crosswalk at the end of our driveway.
4. The speed of your vehicle should not exceed 5 MPH.
5. Please do not park and wait outside the classroom doors or windows, as it is distracting to students and teachers.

6. No parking on street sidewalks. The county has informed us they will ticket or remove your automobile.
7. Please make certain that all adults who will be picking up your child(ren) know our procedures.
8. For the safety of our community, please do not talk on your cell phone while in the carline.

### *High School Student Parking*

Students who are able to drive to school must register their vehicle with the Front Office and fill out the appropriate form associated with it.

### **EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION**

In case of an emergency situation where we need to close the school or disseminate information quickly, please check the website, Remind text and school wide emails.

### **EXTENDED DAY PROGRAM**

You may choose to enroll your child in supervised care before and after school. The hours for this program are as follows:

- Before School Care: 7:00 – 7:45am for Lower School students and 7:00 - 8:15am for Middle School students.
- After School Care for all lower and middle school students is from 3:30 – 6:00pm.

Students must be picked up by 6:00PM or a fine of \$1.00 per minute will be imposed. This must be paid in cash at pickup. Phone 689-1952, ext. 115.

BA provides supervision until 3:45pm daily. High School students will need to be in a supervised club/activity/sport or be picked up by 4 pm.

### **FAMILY PROFILE**

Each family will complete a family profile form that contains emergency contact numbers, medical profile, field trip permission slips and other important information for their children who attend Brandon Academy.

### **FIELD TRIPS**

Visits to local museums, theaters, libraries, places of business, etc., are an integral part of our program. Parents help to chaperone and may also be asked to drive on these trips. Dress for field trips is the Brandon Academy uniform unless otherwise specified by the teacher. We are sorry that we cannot permit any non-enrolled children on Brandon

Academy field trips, with prom as the exception. This is an insurance issue so please do not ask for us to make exceptions.

Parents who wish to be considered as drivers should have their driver's license and insurance card on file in the front office. Families are required to pay an Activity Fee to cover all local/non-overnight field trips.

### *Field Trip Guidelines for Parents*

Parents volunteering as drivers on field trips should consider the following points prior to volunteering.

1. Supervision is the key to safety. Count heads! Parents must help out by supervising the students in their care. Any student who becomes a problem during a field trip should be immediately reported to the teacher.
2. The teacher in charge should handle all discipline.
3. Once students are in the vehicle, buckle all seatbelts. Students are not permitted to sit in the front sets without parent permission.
4. Under no circumstances is a child to change carpools, leave early, or alter tour groups without the permission of the supervising teacher.
5. An adult must supervise students needing to use the restroom when on a trip. Please take your entire group or have another chaperone take the child to the restroom for you.
6. When driving, unauthorized or unscheduled stops are not permitted.

### *Out of Town Field Trips*

The school reserves the right to group students for field trips. Chaperones are expected to follow the grouping rules the teacher designates. Out of town field trips are often expensive. All fees for these trips must be paid in full for the child or parent to attend.

If a student is unable to participate in a field trip, for any reason, he or she is still required to complete the same academic work or project required of students participating in the trip. Students who are not going on the field trip are required to attend school. Field trips are considered an important part of the Brandon Academy curriculum and count as regular school days.

### **FIRE/ SAFETY DRILLS**

Fire drills will be held monthly.

## **FUNDRAISERS**

Participation in fundraisers at Brandon Academy is by your choice only! When we do plan a fundraiser, you have our assurance that we will always attempt to offer quality products for family and friends in return for your kind donations.

## **GUEST SIGN-IN**

Anyone not employed by the school should check in at the front office. Visitor badges are visible clues that you have been “OK’d” in the front office. Parents and students can help us to be a safer campus by steering “strangers” to the front office.

## **INCLEMENT WEATHER**

Phone lines must remain available during an emergency situation, such as tornadoes, hurricanes or severe weather. Come to the MAIN OFFICE and your child will be dismissed to your care. No one leaves the school unless they are signed out. If school has been cancelled or an early dismissal is called, radio and TV stations will be advised. Please check the website, social media and Remind texts for alerts.

Brandon Academy follows the Hillsborough County School District Plan for closing of schools due to weather. If the county closes for weather related reasons, we will close. If we are able to reopen before the public schools, you will be notified by phone tree or local news.

## **LABELING OF CLOTHING**

Our uniforms should be labeled with your child’s name, first and last. Any exterior garments such as jackets and sweaters should also be labeled.

## **LOCKERS**

Students in grades 4 to 8 will be responsible for his/her locker. A MASTER combination lock must be purchased by the student and the combination must be given to the homeroom teacher the first day of locker issue. Students will be able to use their lockers during specific times each day, as well as before and after school. Lockers are the property of Brandon Academy and may be searched at any time.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

Books, homework, etc., which your child has forgotten are not to be brought to their classroom. Bring such items to the office and the office staff will see that these items are delivered to your child. Lost and Found is located in the Business Office. Items will be held for one nine week period only. Items not claimed at the end of the month will be donated to charity.

## **LUNCHES**

Students may bring a lunch or order from our monthly menu. Those bringing a lunch may also bring a drink or purchase one from the vending machine.

### *How to Order a School Lunch*

1. At the end of each month, parents will be emailed a calendar of the lunch schedule for the upcoming month.
2. Parents will decide which days of the month they wish to order lunch for their child(ren).
3. Parents will mark the calendar with an X on the days they would like to order lunch from BA.
4. At the bottom of the page, parents will total the number of X's and send a check for each X to Dawn in the Business Office.

If a child is absent on a day he/she bought lunch that lunch is lost with no refund. If we are aware that your child does not have lunch, they will be provided a sandwich. This is given as an extra cost determined by the school. All peanut allergies should be reported to the clinic and front office.

Lunch deliveries from outside services to the school are prohibited.

## **MEDICATION**

In accordance with the State of Florida Health Department's regulations, Brandon Academy is not allowed to dispense medication without parental permission. Parents must register their child's medication with the school office. Medication will be dispensed to the child in accordance with the written directions of the prescribing physician. The office has forms on file in order for school officials to dispense medication. All prescription medication must be in prescription bottles from the drugstore. Parents are asked to send a spoon with liquid prescriptions in a labeled bag.

## **NON-CUSTODIAL PARENT POLICIES**

All communications generated by the school will be available to the custodial parent, step-parent(s) and the non-custodial parent alike. Similarly, both natural (as well as step-parents) will be granted permission to schedule a visit at BA or schedule to participate in school sponsored trips regardless of who is paying the fees.

Given the unique legal situations of families, the school may make exceptions to the policy, particularly in the case of removal of the student from the school campus by the non-custodial parent. This issue should be addressed to the administration at the time

of the signing of the enrollment contract. Should there be court orders limiting the non-custodial parent's access to the student or student information, Brandon Academy requires a copy of the court order to become part of the student's permanent file.

### **PARKING**

Parallel parking on Bates is acceptable if you do not block the sidewalk. Any cars that are blocking the sidewalks risk being ticketed by the county. There is plenty of parking in the lot on Telfair.

### **PARTY INVITATIONS**

Party invitations should not be sent to school for distribution unless all students in your child's class have been invited.

### **PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION**

The Brandon Academy Parent Teacher Organization plays a vital role in connecting our school community. The BA Parent Teacher Organization is dedicated to being a resource: to volunteer organizations, to families at the school, and to BA leadership. By facilitating volunteer support and creating meaningful opportunities for education and connection, the PTO seeks to enhance and enrich the parent experience. Positive school culture is sustained through thoughtfully organized acts of appreciation, service, and wholehearted support of school activities. Please contact: [info@brandon-academy.com](mailto:info@brandon-academy.com) for more information.

### **PROTECTION OF CHILDREN WHILE AT SCHOOL**

At Brandon Academy, we believe student safety is of prime importance. We know that our school's parents feel strongly about safety, as well. Therefore we ask that you always follow our rules. They were created with the safety of all on campus in mind.

The gates in the front and back of the school are locked from 8-3 daily. Parents should enter the school through the Main Office to check in. At no time will a child be released to anyone other than his custodial parent or guardian unless a written request is sent to the school. Students must be picked up in the front office by parents for an early dismissal or medical appointment. Employ caution when entering or leaving the drive at Brandon Academy as often students are passing or changing classes. The speed limit on the driveway is 5mph.

## **SCHOOL NOTICIES**

Bulletins, calendars, and announcements are placed on our website. At times it may be sent home during the school year. In Lower School, check your child's folder. In Middle & High School, check your child's book bag.

## **SICK CHILDREN**

The school will notify the parents when a child becomes ill at school. Please do not send your children to school if they are not feeling well, have thrown up in the last 24 hours or have a fever. Children may be signed out in the Front Office.

## **TARDINESS**

Tardiness is detrimental to the student and disruptive to the educational process. Students should be in their classrooms by 8:00am for lower school students, 8:30 am for upper school students, and at the beginning of any class period. The procedures for tardiness are as follows:

### *Late to School*

Students should report to the office to obtain a tardy pass in order to enter the classroom after 8:00am for Lower School, 8:30 for Upper School.

### *Medical Appointment*

A student should report to the office with his/her parent or with a written excuse to obtain a Tardy Pass.

### *Tardiness between classes – Middle/High School*

The student must receive a Tardy Pass from the previous teacher. The pass is given to the receiving teacher.

## **TECHNOLOGY**

Computer Labs are not available to students without direct adult supervision. A supervising adult monitors all Internet access. Students will be asked to sign an Acceptable Use Policy (eTRUP) before using the Internet. Parents will also be expected to read over this information, discuss it with your child and return the Agreement to school. Internet privileges may be revoked if misuse is found. Serious violation of the Internet Policy can result in your child being dismissed.

## **TUTORING**

Occasionally, private tutoring will be recommended. Many of our staff members tutor after school. Your child's principal will be happy to assist any family in arranging for an appropriate tutor.

## **VOLUNTEERS**

Volunteers are a welcome addition to our school. There are many opportunities for parents and grandparents to volunteer. You may contact the classroom teachers and specialists to see how you can volunteer your time. Children love to see their parents on campus. If you are volunteering on campus or for field trips, please help us with your confidentiality. It has happened that a parent helping in a class reported another child's (not their own) behavior or progress to that child's parent. We know that you, like us, would not want a child to be hurt or a parent disappointed by such unprofessionally given information. The school and its staff strive to present such information to parents about their children in a timely and professional manner.

## **WEBSITE**

We are very proud of our website. Please be certain to explore our school at, [www.brandon-academy.com](http://www.brandon-academy.com). Look for the new links to all forms, important dates and directions to events. Be sure you have activated your ParentsWeb account in order to have access to the above information.

## **YEARBOOKS**

Yearbooks are included in the Book/Lab fees. Information flyers about advertising opportunities will be sent out the first semester.

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## COVID-19

As always, the health and safety of our community is our top priority. Our goal is to reduce risk as much as possible by introducing multiple layers of protection and asking each member of our community to remember their obligation to help protect the health of all members of our community. As we developed our plans to deliver the highest quality educational experience for our students in these uncertain and fluid times, we looked to federal and local health agencies, as well as expert recommendations of physicians serving on our health and safety task force, for assistance and guidance. Developing this plan was a key step in preparing to re-open campus. Please take the time to review the details of our health and safety procedures below.

### *Attendance*

Families should email the division assistants to report absences per regular expectations. Attendance will be taken in each course.

### *Honor Code and Responsible Use*

The Brandon Academy Honor Code and Responsible Use Plan apply to the Distance Learning plan.

### *Online Classes- Behavior & Etiquette*

Students should follow the handbook with regards to dress code and discipline expectations. Students will be required to use mute during parts of a lesson or the “raise hand” feature of Zoom. Students will follow expectations communicated by teachers, including not using cell phones during classes.

### *Parents/Caregivers*

Brandon Academy understands that a shift to a distance learning approach will require our students and families to make adjustments. Yet a continued partnership with parents and guardians can play a vital part of ensuring the success of the plan. Division Directors, learning support staff, the technology department, and teachers are all available to support and guide students (and parents/guardians/caregivers) should they need help. Below are some guidelines for parents/guardians/caregivers to help students achieve success with distance learning. Overall, we encourage you to embrace this time at home as a new adventure with great possibilities.