



HARVEST
COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Family Handbook

Therefore, put on the full armor of God,
So that when the day of evil comes,
You may be able to stand your ground.
~ Ephesians 6:13

“But that you think clear, feel deep,
Bear fruit well, the Friend of man desires.”
~ Matthew Arnold

Harvest Community School

P.O.Box 121

(10 South DukesStreet)

Summerton, SC 29148

Phone (803)574-1004

info@harvestcommunityschool.org

<http://www.harvestcommunityschool.org>

Harvest Community School admits students of any protected class to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of protected class in administration of its educational policies, athletic and other school-administered programs.

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Our Core Values and Beliefs

“Our desire is to glorify God by training up children to delight in the Lord Jesus Christ, to develop virtuous habits, and to discover joy in learning by the power of the Holy Spirit.” ~ HCS Mission Statement

Our Core Values

Harvest Community School (HCS) is a small, Christian, non-profit private school based upon the philosophy of Charlotte Mason. HCS is a member of the South Carolina Association of Christian Schools (SCACS). We are undergoing the process of accreditation by SCACS.

At Harvest, we believe in three foundational keys to education: Jesus, habits, and academics. We desire that children delight in the Lord Jesus Christ, our trustworthy and loving Savior. Families of students and teachers can grow in the Christian faith as we learn more about Jesus, His Kingdom, and the Good News that He offers. The source of our understanding of Christ is grounded in the Bible. We also see His handprints throughout the world and in our relationship with Him and with others. We hope that the Harvest community finds joy, wonder, and rest in our fellowship together.

Jesus is the cornerstone to other parts of this foundation (habits and academics). We do not separate education from the spiritual life of children. Children long to know and love God. We help them seek constant access to the Continual Helper who cares about their interests, duties, and joys of life. This recognition gives us an Ally in training virtuous habits. The Spirit, who comes down to us like a dove, offers us self-control in becoming more like Christ.

Some habits of life and learning that we foster are:

- Attention — to bring the whole mind to focus on something — “All other habits depend on this one, and it is a key to regulating the thoughts of our hearts.”
- Listening and Seeing — to make an effort to hear and see something — “This quickness is natural in the young child, but can become a habit of seeing all that is to be seen, hearing all that is to be heard, and retaining this ability through life.”
- Remembering — to think of again — “In order to recollect on demand, the student must fix the entire gaze of his mind on the fact, picture, or idea to be remembered.”
- Neatness — to attend to work carefully and neatly the first time — “If children get in the habit of turning out inferior work, then as men and women they will keep that habit.”
- Service — to respect self and others in serving God — “The more of a person we succeed in making a child, the better will he both fulfill his own life and serve society.”

These habits of life and learning enable children to concentrate on their academics. Students who pay attention can listen and see fully. They retell what they observe to help them remember. We rely primarily on narratives because stories leave an imprint on the mind. Research shows that casual connections create a web of associations and forge strong memories. Children remember what inspires them to think. Because we encourage careful observation of living books, nature, art, music, etc., they have many opportunities to ponder and wonder. Our curriculum, which offers delightful living to children, builds broad background knowledge. Students who work carefully and neatly the first time have opportunities to learn

more. Finally, the three foundational keys enable them to find and fulfill God's calling and to serve others.

Our Beliefs about Education

Harvest is a Christian school reflecting a Charlotte Mason style of education. Our ultimate aim is the formation of a child's character through the three foundational keys (Jesus, habits, and academics). We welcome families who have not accepted Christ and we do not require a statement of faith of any family. However, we would like families to know our beliefs:

- All truths are God's truths. His Spirit guides us to know Him through His Word (the Bible) and His world. He is with us — the fount of wisdom for children, parents, teachers, and administrators — the source of knowledge. (Isaiah 28:23-29, Romans 1:20)
- The world God created is both spiritual and physical. He gave us soul, body, and mind united. We ought to offer knowledge of God, the world, and humanity to children as unified whole, not boxed into secular and divine subjects. (Mark 12:28-31)
- He sent His Son to save us and to lead us to God. Jesus is the perfect teacher. He taught through stories and enthralled those who listened with awe and wonder about the nature of God and our relationship with Him. Jesus encouraged the habit of attention for He often urged people to listen the first time and understand. (Matthew 13:1-17, Luke 8:8-14, Hebrews 2:1-4)
- The concepts of authority and obedience bind us all for we must ultimately submit to God. We ought to avoid wielding our authority by playing upon the emotions of children to force them to learn. Children long to know and do not need artificial rewards and prizes if we allow

them to think clear, feel deep, and bear fruit well. (Matthew 19:13-15, Ephesians 6:1-4, Philippians 2:5-12)

- We are all born with a sin nature and make choices for good or for ill. Children must learn that their reason may be flawed because of sin. Learning to direct their will toward God's will, their eyes toward His Son, and their ears toward whispers from the Holy Spirit will serve them well in life. (Romans 3:18-28, Romans 8:1-3, Matthew 13:9-19)
- Children are born persons — not products to be standardized, tested, graded — not percentiles. They are capable of learning far more than we imagine. We ought to offer a way of learning that allows them to ponder and wonder about things beyond the constraints of the three testable R's — the best of literature, art, music, poetry, etc. (Psalm 139:8-18, Matthew 11:25-30)

You may find some terms unfamiliar, so please check out the glossary in Appendix A. For a more extensive explanation of our principles, please read Appendix B of this handbook.

Our Offering

“Education is a life. That life is sustained on ideas.... God has made us so that we get them chiefly as we convey them to one another, whether by word of mouth, written page, Scripture word, musical symphony; but we must sustain a child’s inner life with ideas as we sustain his body with food.” ~ Charlotte Mason

Our Classes

We currently serve students in Lower Primary through the twelfth grade. We do accept students in tenth grade and above on a case-by-case basis with the approval of the board of directors. We offer multi-age classrooms to allow more flexibility for students to work at their own level. Since most children excel in some subjects but struggle with others, they feel more competent. We strive to keep a small class size for individualized attention. The single-grade classes are Lower Primary and Primary A, while Primary B, Elementary, and Lower High School are multi-age. Since history is the pivot of the curriculum, each class focuses on a specific window of time. Every year, the classes study different periods of time to develop a deep knowledge of history.

Lower Primary

Lower Primary is a time before formal academics, which begin between the ages of six and eight. We help children discover the world through explorations outdoors and through real tasks at school. When a child shows an interest, we informally introduce gentle academics through playing with objects (for beginning math concepts) or playing with letters (for beginning reading). During the early years, children are ready to soak up literary language by hearing living books read aloud and by memorizing and reciting

poems, songs, and hymns, and to tell what they know as they are able. We lay a foundation of living books, nature, number sense, and good habits.

Primary

Primary A is the year when students take their first steps in the world of academics. They have formal lessons in letter: learning their sounds, writing them with multi-sensory methods, and discovering word families made from them. We teach them to sound out phonetic words and to recognize by sight those which cannot be sounded out. Children work on penmanship by neatly copying passages from living books. They continue to hear living books read aloud, to memorize and recite poems, songs, and hymns, and to tell what they know. Classic books, the best of children's literature, address early times, exploration, maps, animals, birds, biographies, fiction, etc. Primary A gets an overview of the Bible. They build a deep sense of the numbers 1 through 100 and the four number operations by paying attention to real things, describing them, manipulating them, keeping a math notebook, and building fluency with mental math. They use simple tools of geometry to make paper crafts of different shapes and sizes. Their foundation of science begins with gardening, nature study, and drawing their observations in the first of "the three pillars:" the nature notebook.

More foundation is laid in Primary B. Students continue to have short reading lessons in phonics and sight words. They neatly copy passages from living books for penmanship, hear living books read aloud, memorize and recite as before, and tell what they know. Those with excellent penmanship begin studied dictation and cursive: studying a sentence so that they can write it with correct spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and grammar as dictated by the teacher. Classic books, the best of children's literature, address their time in history, maps, animals, birds, insects, plants, biographies, fiction, etc. They read and narrate two books of the Bible. Depending on what they already know in math, they extend their number sense through 10,000, the four number operations, and fractions by paying

attention to real things, describing them, manipulating them, knowing place value and math facts, keeping a math notebook, and building fluency with mental math. They use simple tools of geometry to make paper crafts of different shapes and sizes. For science, they continue to garden, study nature, and draw observations in their nature notebook.

Elementary

The final pieces of foundation are laid in Elementary. They read and hear living books read aloud, memorize and recite as before, study speeches, tell and write what they know, and do more studied dictation. They add the last two pillars of notebooking: the book of centuries (for history and geography) and the commonplace book (copywork of their favorite passages). Classic books, the best of children's literature, address their time in history, maps, animals, birds, insects, plants, biographies, fiction, citizenship (Plutarch), etc. They read and narrate several books of the Bible. They begin reading aloud and acting out plays by Shakespeare. Depending on what they already know in math, they deepen their understanding of very large numbers, the four operations (facts and procedures), fractions, decimals, factoring, graphing, arrays, measurement (scaling, area, perimeter, and volume), and classification of by paying attention to real things and patterns, describing them, manipulating them, etc. They keep a math notebook, stay fluent in mental math, use simple tools of geometry to make paper crafts of different shapes and sizes, and begin practical geometry. They do simple experiments, study nature, and draw observations in their nature notebook and a science notebook with a special emphasis on observation and wonder (inquiry). They also read the biographies of great scientists from ancient time to today to follow the trail of investigation and discovery of new ideas. Because of their improved reading abilities, they read some books at home for homework and keep a planner.

Lower and Upper High School

With a solid foundation put into place, lower and upper high school classes begin the history cycle again, concentrating on one period each year. Their living books, written by literary giants, are more challenging and are found on lists of books students should read before entering college. Classic books address their time in history, geography, science, government, biographies, poetry, different genres of fiction, faith, citizenship (Plutarch), Shakespeare, etc. They read and narrate orally and in writing; memorize and recite; study speeches, logic, essays; begin formal grammar lessons, and do more studied dictation. In addition to keeping the three pillars (nature notebook, commonplace book, and book of centuries), they write narrations in composition books sorted by subject. They continue to read and narrate several books of the Bible. They do simple experiments, study nature, and draw observations. While science falls into a more traditional stream, they notebook experiments, diagrams, nature study, research, etc. They begin a textbook style of mathematics. As students draw closer to graduation, our guidance counselor helps them find opportunities to learn off campus: dual-enrollment, internships, technical classes, etc.

More information about high school is contained in the high school addendum to this handbook.

Charlotte Mason

Our core values and beliefs about education are rooted in the philosophy of Charlotte Mason, a British educator who devoted her life to improving the education of children. She believed that God set up natural laws for the development of children just as He set up physical laws that govern the universe. Her ideas about the laws of education emerged while she taught children and ran a school in the coal mining area of England. She wrote some geography books and began lecturing at a teacher training college. She offered a series of talks geared toward giving parents sound principles for

bringing up children. Parents interested in her ideas founded an educational union that expanded from early home education to public and private schools and correspondence courses for British families living abroad. She also wrote six books outlining her philosophy and six volumes of poetry about the life of Jesus and edited an educational journal for decades. Charlotte Mason's ideas did not leap "across the pond" to North America until fifty years after her death. While living in England, Susan Schaeffer MacAulay and her husband Ranald enrolled their daughters in a Charlotte Mason school. She published a groundbreaking book about their delightful experience in 1984. Her book, *For the Children's Sake: Foundations of Education for Home and School*, inspired parents to homeschool and teachers to found schools based on Mason's philosophy. Around that time, Bobby Scott founded the Perimeter Schools in Georgia, and, ten years later, Maryellen St. Cyr, founded Ambleside Schools International in Texas. Because of this resurgence, Mason's six volumes as well as many books about her life and ideas were published. More private schools and online communities were founded. Free and retail curriculum became available. Researchers set-up digital archives of her extensive records. In 2004, MacAulay, Scott, and St. Cyr collaborated with other teachers and professors in the book, *When Children Love to Learn: A Practical Application of Charlotte Mason's Philosophy for Today*. Today there are about thirty Charlotte Mason schools in the United States. In the past thirty years, generations of private school and homeschool students in Canada and the United States have flourished because of her philosophy. They have gone onto graduate from college, join the military, and pursue careers in a wide variety of fields.

Our Connection to Mason

Around 2010, several teachers and home educators in Clarendon County became interested in the Mason's methods. They studied her books and started an enrichment day called The Feast. They walked the trail at Santee National Wildlife Refuge in the morning and studied music, art, science,

Plutarch, and Shakespeare together in the afternoon. By the spring of 2013, a few felt led by God to start a private school rooted in her philosophy.

On June 6, 2013, the founders committed to launch Harvest Community School. God had put all the right pieces in place for doors of opportunity opened one by one. They filed articles of incorporation, applied for non-profit status, joined SCACS, and selected a curriculum. Over the summer, they purchased a former charter school, books, furnishings, and school supplies, got insurance coverage and inspections, and hired and trained two teachers for the primary and elementary class. Harvest opened its doors on August 26, 2013 and, by the end of the year, had expanded to three classes with twenty-five enrolled students and had called a board of directors. In the second year, the school added a junior high class, served over forty students, and the board wrote by-laws, approved of a budget, and began supervising the accreditation process.

Our Curriculum

The living books and resources we use at Harvest is based upon the work of the curriculum design team that helped launch Gillingham Charter School, the first of its kind in the United States, and Willow Tree Community School in 2011. One of Harvest's founders, Tammy Glaser, was part of that team of experienced Charlotte Mason educators. Rather than reinvent the wheel, they spent over two years adapting the AmblesideOnline (AO) curriculum to a school setting. AO, an online community of homeschoolers that began in 2000, has tested and tweaked their free K-12 Charlotte Mason curriculum for fifteen years. Our staff continues to collaborate with the AO community and with Melanie Malone, headmaster and founder of Red Mountain Community School, a Perimeter School that opened its doors in Alabama in 2005.

If the ideas of Charlotte Mason intrigue you and you would like to learn more, please look over the list of resources and opportunities in Appendix C of this handbook.

Our Symbols

We are the Harvest Community School Knights. The word knight derives from an Old German word for servant. Jesus, who modeled service in the Kingdom of God, said, “For who is the greater, one who reclines at table or one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at table? But I am among you as the one who serves” (Luke 22:27). Knights vow an oath of faith, loyalty, courage, and honor before their Almighty King. They live by a code of Christian principles that guide their service to others.



Our school colors are navy blue and gray as shown on our shield. The chi-rho symbol on our shield is the first two letters, *chi* (X) and *rho* (P) of the Greek word for Christ, *XPISTOS*. The first Christian Roman emperor Constantine put this symbol on his military standard. It evokes the death of Jesus on the cross as well as His standing as the Christ, or the Anointed One. We sell window decals of our shield (see the administrative assistant if you would like to buy one).

Our school verse, Ephesians 6:13, ties into the idea of knighthood.

“Therefore, put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground.” Knights do not depend upon their own strength. God gives them armor to wear: the belt of truth, breastplate of righteousness, shoes of readiness, and helmet of salvation. The shield of faith protects them from the flaming darts of evil while the only offensive weapon is the sword of the Spirit, which is the Bible. In every situation, Knights pray to the Spirit for the right words to say and the right things to do in the service of God. We sell shirts in our school colors with

the verse and shield (see the administrative assistant if you would like to buy one).

On August 26, 2013, we welcomed our new students and sang the hymn, “Great Is Thy Faithfulness.” During that first summer, God had supplied our needs in so many ways. He gave us the building at an unbelievably low price. He gave us volunteers — some of whom had no connection to children at Harvest — to clean up the school yard, paint the walls, and scrub floors. Others donated books, computers, furniture, playground benches, and equipment. The “paper fairy” dropped off paper towels and toilet tissue, always in the nick of time. As the school has cycled through “summer and winter and springtime and harvest,” we have witnessed God’s faithfulness. His Dear Presence has cheered and guided us through the easy times and through our challenges. He has given our school knightly strength for today and bright hope for our community’s tomorrow. The school hymn gives the Lord glory for how He has blessed our school.

Our school motto, “But that you think clear, feel deep, bear fruit well, the Friend of man desires,” comes at the end of a poem called “Progress.” The author, Matthew Arnold, was a British school inspector, who spent his free time writing poetry and social criticism. Ray Bradbury included Arnold’s most famous poem “Dover Beach” in his book *Fahrenheit 451* to illustrate why books should never be burned. “Progress” encourages us to live a deeper life by walking the new road laid down for us by Jesus. The three phrases, “think clear,” “feel deep,” and “bear fruit well” tie into Mason’s three instruments of education, life, atmosphere, and discipline.

If you would like to read our school hymn and motto, please go to Appendix D.

School Rhythms

“But that you think clear, feel deep, bear fruit well, the Friend of man desires.” ~ Matthew Arnold

Our Year (Calendar, Terms, Absences)

At Harvest, we value your precious time at home. We have walked away from the kind of education that overwhelms the family. We focus our activities on the most vital to learning because multi-tasking hinders the habit of attention. Less is more when too much fragments the mind and doing less invites curiosity, imagination, and creativity. We recognize that children master different skills at different times, and we watch for readiness and guide them toward the next step.

Our method of education is mindful of time as well as persons. We want our children to be aware of time, whether we are studying persons throughout the centuries, the changing of seasons, or the movement of sun and moon. We seek an unhurried pace to give them time to pay attention, observe, ponder, and wonder. We limit random days off to get them into a rhythm of learning in the fall, winter, and spring terms. As a result, your summer lasts two weeks longer.

School Calendar - HCS has important dates listed on the school calendar. Please see the administrative assistant for a copy. We take off a few of the traditional Monday holidays to avoid interrupting the rhythm of learning. Because we set aside time for weekly lesson planning and training, we do not take off half-days for teacher in-service. The three major breaks are at Thanksgiving (three days), Christmas (two weeks), and Easter (a full week).

Terms - We split up our year into three terms that last eleven to twelve weeks. We hold term finales to assess progress. Term finales are exams with

open-ended questions to allow children to express what they have learned. The primary classes orally tell what they know, while the elementary and above classes write their responses in full paragraphs.

Absences - Students are allowed no more than ten unexcused absences a year. Excused absences require a doctor's note when the student returns. Families need to seek advanced approval from the headmaster for non-medical absences.

Our Week (Academic Days, Friday Feast)

We open every school day with prayer, Bible, music, and Spanish. We fill our days with short, but memorable lessons. We scaffold a child's understanding by forging a chain of memory: children recall what they remember of the prior lesson, read a passage, share what they learned, and have a conversation about the text. The teacher's role is to introduce the material, monitor the flow of the lesson, and make comments only when required.

Academic Days - On Mondays through Thursdays, we head to our classrooms and read in short time blocks organized around faith, history, literature, geography, and science. Lessons are short to encourage their habit of attention. At some point in the day, independent readers read books from their classroom library alone or in groups while children who need reading instruction receive it. They make discoveries in math with manipulatives, notebook what they learn, and practice mental math using living teaching methods. When a change of pace is needed, teachers shift to something different: memory work, gardening, nature study, etc. Teachers assess what children learn through their oral narration or notebooking. Children orally tell what they know or draw or write what they understand in sketchbooks, composition books, and especially dedicated notebooks.

The Friday Feast - Minds looking forward to the weekend wander on Fridays. We offer a banquet of ideas — nourishing and inspiring but

completely different — to grab their attention. The Feast includes a walk at Santee National Wildlife Refuge, nature notebooking, lunch at the school, and an afternoon of delight: picture study, composer study, handwork, and citizenship. On Fridays, we invite volunteers from school families to join us in the morning and/or afternoon. We also welcome homeschooling families to join our community for fellowship and enrichment.

Our Day (Drop-Off, Food, Pick-Up, Homework)

The school day runs from 8:30 AM to 2:10 AM. We have a couple of procedures in place to ensure that dropping off and picking up your children goes smoothly. Keep the following in mind.

Drop-Off - Please do not drop your student off earlier than 8:10 AM. If you plan to come into the building, please park in the public lot across the street from Baucom's (at the intersection of Highway 301 and Dukes Street). The only entrance into the building is at the door near the wheelchair ramp.

Snack - Please send a healthy snack that does not require any heating. Students stay more focused when they eat something light half way through the morning.

Lunch - Because we do not provide meals, students must bring lunch or order it from Linda's Pizza. Please ask the guidance counselor for information about ordering meals. We have three microwaves to heat up food and refrigerators to keep foods cold. We encourage families to send nutritious meals with their children who work hard mentally and physically and play actively during recess. To help them appreciate whole foods, young students tend a garden in science and grow vegetables.

Pick-Up - We do not permit students to leave until 2:10 PM even if their rides arrive early. Because the school driveway backs up quickly at this time

of day, we have a couple of strict policies. We cannot allow Duke Street to become backed up for any reason.

- Park in the public lot across the street from Baucom's (at the intersection of Highway 301 and Dukes Street) if you plan to walk to the building for pickup.
- Drive around the block or park in the public lot if the school driveway is full.
- Be prepared to circle around the block and let full cars leave if your student has not arrived.
- Follow the instructions of the adults escorting students and directing traffic.

Homework - We require very little homework of students because this style of education is rigorous. Your children should come home excited to talk about their day, play imaginatively, and spend time outdoors. We encourage you to ask open-ended questions about their favorite book, character, person in history, or object in nature. We hope you can set aside half an hour every day for your children to read books. You may need to read aloud to younger ones. All students have memory work every week (a Bible verse or poem). Students in Primary B and Elementary may have math facts to practice.

Students in fifth grade and above may have books to read at home. All required homework for those grades will be listed in their planner. High school homework and the study hall policy are addressed in the addendum to this handbook for high school.

School Atmosphere

“The question is not, — how much does the youth know? when he has finished his education — but how much does he care? and about how many orders of things does he care? In fact, how large is the room in which he finds his feet set? and, therefore, how full is the life he has before him?” ~ Charlotte Mason

Environment (Clothes, Electronics, Chores, Grades)

We desire a home-like atmosphere that promotes learning. We simplify the classroom environment to what students need most: maps, timelines, meaningful pictures, etc. We want children to wear comfortable clothing for learning indoors and outdoors. We limit distractions that interfere with the habit of attention. We expect our students to take care of their classroom and school through chores. We offer meaningful assessment that fosters a love of learning.

Clothing - While we have no formal dress code, we would like our students to wear comfortable clothing that is modest, wholesome, and respectful of others. The headmaster makes the final decision on whether an article of clothing is questionable. Students in the elementary classes and younger may get their clothes dirty or wet during recess, gardening, or nature study. Please send a change of clothes in a bag labeled with the child's name. They need to wear proper outer garments to school, even on cold, soggy days, because classes go outside in all kinds of weather. Please include rain gear, hats, scarves, gloves or mittens, and warm coats as appropriate. The school provides a rack to store rain boots.

Electronic Devices - At Harvest, we strive to offer a distraction-free environment to build the habit of attention. Research shows that students

taking notes by manual writing remember more than those who type on a laptop. Thus, we have a strict policy for electronic devices. We do not allow students to have cell phones in class. Those who show good judgment may bring small devices or cameras on nature walks to take photographs. Please call the headmaster at (803) 574-1004 if you need to contact your student for an emergency. Some teachers permit e-reader devices for reading books on a case-by-case basis. To encourage students to interact with each other before and after school, we do not permit playing electronic games at those times.

Chores - Our school values personal responsibility. Chores offer opportunities for students to serve others, work together as a team, and practice habits such as attention and neatness. We expect them to clean up after themselves in the classroom. They also take ten minutes after lunch to perform a specific indoor or outdoor chore. We pair older students to guide younger students in doing the task. Students are more careful in how they treat their environment when they are required to keep the school clean.

Grading - At Harvest, we believe that a traditional grading system for students in eighth grade and below causes them to work for the wrong reasons. They are capable of learning far more than we imagine without artificial motivation systems. While we assess their efforts every day, we do hold term finales (exams with open-ended questions) to record their knowledge three times a year. Since we want our high school transcripts to be competitive for scholarships and entrance into college, we grade students in ninth grade and above according to the South Carolina Uniform Grading Scale (UGS). Grading policy for high schoolers is addressed in the addendum.

Assessment Methods - Narration is the primary method of assessment at Harvest. It is an active retelling of what the student has learned. Such retelling requires the child to use the whole mind and memory and demands careful attention to a single reading of the material. Each student keeps

language arts, mathematics, and nature notebooks. Elementary students keep a book of centuries (timeline and map notebook) and a science notebook for drawing and recording observations.

Reading materials include fiction, fables, tales, poetry, biographies, the Bible, historical narratives, etc. They study nature first hand. We offer standardized testing to interested families every spring.

Assessment Key - We assign four levels of progress in an area: novice (N), apprentice (A), practitioner (P), and expert (E). A novice is a beginner who is new at learning a habit or narrating a particular subject. Most children who transfer to Harvest are novices at some habits. Even straight-A students need a month or two to learn how to pay attention well enough to retell a passage orally after a single reading. Those who excel at multiple choice, true or false, and fill-in-the-blank questions may take a term or two to write their thoughts in complete sentences and full paragraphs. A novice seeks affirmation regularly and needs constant guidance in their work. An apprentice, who can do some tasks independently, begins to make connections and to apply skills. A practitioner, who is well-versed in narration, habits, and/or academics, handles multiple concepts (making connections between subject areas), synthesizes (combines ideas and knowledge into greater meaning), and generalizes (extracts big picture ideas from different details). An expert, who possesses the highest degree of knowledge and ability, is self-directed in seeking new opportunities and creating.

Assessment Profiles - At the end of each term, we send home assessment profiles (report cards) to show student progress in three areas: narration, habits, and academics. We assess oral narration for all students and written narration for students in fourth grade and above. We review their work habits, citizenship and social responsibility, habits of mind, and self regulation. We share their progress in language acquisition, second language, literature, science, mathematics, history, geography, Bible, citizenship (third

grade and above), art, handicrafts, music, and nature study. Because students are persons born with innate strengths and weaknesses, we do not expect any student to receive expert results in every area. A copy of our assessment profile is in Appendix E.

Relationships (Character, Persons, Problems, Behavior)

We desire an atmosphere for children to forge relationships with their Creator, community, and world. We guide our students in developing strong relationships with the adults at Harvest and with one another. We cherish what people in Clarendon County have to offer and seek collaboration with the community.

Character - Character training involves the development of virtuous habits. It takes time to “sow an act, reap a habit; sow a habit, reap a character; sow a character, reap a destiny.” We connect habit training to the life of the mind by taking a step back to sow ideas to make an act worthwhile. The living books in our curriculum give students opportunities to gather a code of principles to guide their actions. The study of the Bible and Plutarch (a Greek historian interested in character) touches the conscience and judgment of readers to see how character influences decisions that change lives.

We ask that students be attentive and obey teachers or staff when asked. We look for courtesy, consideration, and respect for others. We encourage students to treat one another with kindness and dignity. We see honesty as the road to integrity. When appropriate, the teacher will address the child in private, being careful to honor the child, and avoid public shaming.

Whole Person - We see children as born persons who have various strengths, needs, and weaknesses. We see outward behavior as a way to communicate inward thoughts without words. We strive to assess their

internal motivations, and we wonder how the Holy Spirit is working in their lives. We tailor our guidance to what will help each student to grow in maturity. We encourage a positive attitude when dealing with frustrations and problems. We offer them different strategies in learning to regulate their emotions and check their behavior. We may address similar behaviors differently, tailored to the individual child.

Problem Solving - When disagreements between students arise, we guide them in finding a shared understanding of what happened. We come alongside and encourage those involved to share and to listen to other perspectives. We show them how their actions and words affect others. We let them solve their problems in a way that teaches them to respect self and others. We foster an attitude of responding positively to their point of view, keeping in mind the golden rule.

Challenging Behavior - Depending upon the situation, we encourage teachers to contact the parent(s)/guardian(s) and/or headmaster about recurring challenging behavior. This communication should begin when a pattern is observed. In some cases, the headmaster and teacher may need to meet with families to work out an individualized behavior plan. Harvest encourages changed behavior by assessing the circumstances, having a conversation with the student, changing the environment, natural consequences, training a more suitable habit to replace the unsuitable one, etc.

Community (Contact, Students, Volunteers, Board)

Contact - Harvest posts information on the website and Facebook page. The school is small enough for the headmaster to send text messages to communicate important information (delayed openings or snow days) to all families. If you have any concerns, please make your child's teacher aware of them. If you need to contact headmaster, who also teaches a class, please call

the administrative assistant (803) 574-1004 and the headmaster will contact you when she can. The chairman of the board, Cathy Gilbert, is also available to answer questions.

Students - Students have come to Harvest from different educational settings: public, private, Montessori, and home school. They run the gamut of abilities, everything from special needs to gifted and talented and everything in between. The demographics of our student population are similar to that of schools in the county. Students with special needs can thrive in the same classroom as their peers because the method is easy to scaffold. For copywork, a child with dysgraphia (writing challenges) only needs to copy one word while a peer might copy a whole sentence. During narration, a low verbal student starts off with a couple of scattered words. Then, the more talkative classmates take turns adding on what they learned. When a child needs individualized attention or a short break, one of the teacher assistants can help out.

Volunteers - Friends and families of Harvest can volunteer in many ways: drivers and walkers for Friday mornings, field trip chaperones, classroom assistants on Friday afternoons, maintenance on the inside and outside of the building, scribes to hear the narrations of primary students, fundraising, furniture repair, etc. We appreciate book donations, in particular unabridged books listed at AmblesideOnline, cleaning supplies, copy paper, wild bird seed, etc. Please contact the headmaster if you would like to serve.

Board of Directors - Our board of directors is made of people who care about education. They bring various perspectives, gifts, and talents to the table. Chairman of the board Cathy Gilbert leads the other board members, Janet Mora, Patti Johnston, and Tammy Glaser in following the by-laws of Harvest and laws governing non-profit (501(3)c) organizations. The board meets the second Tuesday of every month and welcomes parent/guardian(s) to attend and ask questions. Please contact the headmaster or chairman if you have questions about the school, board, or key documents.

Appendix A

Glossary

Book of Centuries - one of three important notebooks in which a student draws artifacts from history in order of time. Every other page has a grid to reflect what happened year by year in history. It stores sketches of maps and of objects seen in museums and on field trips.

Commonplace Book - one of three important notebooks in which a student copies favorite passages from living books. It becomes a record of a person's literary journey and encourages them to ponder what they are reading.

Composer Study - the careful hearing of a great musical composition done so carefully that a student can describe details noticed about the music (instruments, pace, volume, dynamics, mood, pitch, etc.) Three composers are studied each year, beginning in first grade, so that a student who spends their entire school career at Harvest will know in depth the work of thirty-six composers.

Copywork - the daily habit of copying words, sentences, or paragraphs from living books, depending on the readiness of the student, to practice neat penmanship, spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and other mechanics

Friday Feast - a day to celebrate the end of a week by enjoying a rich feast of enrichment. The Feast is so vital to our curriculum that questions about these activities are included in the term finale. The Feast includes a walk at Santee National Wildlife Refuge, nature notebooking, picture study, composer study, handwork, and Plutarch.

Handwork (Handiwork, Handicraft) - the neat and careful use of hands, materials, and tools to make some beautiful thing that benefits another. The aim is for a student to develop a skill through slow, careful instruction.

Living Book - a whole book written by a firsthand source or by someone with a passion for the topic. A living book is often a classic that has stood the test of time. Marks of a living book include imagination, originality, a human touch, fit and beautiful expression, tales well-told, and pictures of life. A living book connects a student to the mind of a great thinker and feeds the mind with worthy thoughts and inspiring ideas.

Narration - the daily habit in which a student retells what is read or observed. Oral narration trains a person to compose thoughts (sequence, give the main idea, share related details) and communicate in words. Once the mechanics of writing are mastered, a student writes their narrations. Written narration never completely replaces oral narration in the upper years.

Nature Notebook - one of three important notebooks in which a student records and dates what is observed during nature study

Nature Study - the careful observation of nature done so carefully by sketching, drawing, or painting what is seen. Nature study lays the foundation of science because observation is the key habit of the scientific method. Before they reach high school, students have firsthand knowledge of living things, processes of nature, and nonliving things.

Picture Study - the careful observation of a great work of art, usually a painting, done so carefully that a student can describe it vividly from memory when put away. Three artists are studied each year, beginning in first grade, so that a student who spends their entire school career at Harvest will know in depth the work of thirty-six artists.

Plutarch - a Greek historian (46 to 120 AD) who was best known for his parallel lives, which paired biographies of famous Greeks and Romans and focused on the study of their character. Shakespeare used Plutarch as the source for his Roman history plays. His work inspired political thinkers who lived during the founding of the United States.

Recitation - the act of reciting a memorized passage (poem, song, hymn, Bible verse, speech, play) with clear, simple expression

Studied Dictation - the studying and visualizing of words from a passage in order to write the passage properly when dictated by the teacher. This process helps the teacher assess what lessons in spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and other mechanics are needed by the class.

Term - another way to say trimester. A term lasts eleven to twelve weeks and there are three terms per school year (fall, winter, and spring).

Term Finale - the last few days of a term in which a student orally narrates or writes what was learned about a topic. They respond to open-ended questions to express what they know..

Appendix B

Our Principles

We apply educational methods derived from the God-given nature of a child to connect students to God and His revelation in Scripture, Nature, and Providence. We hope that they will love Him with heart, soul, mind, and strength and love their neighbors. We base our philosophy of education on Charlotte Mason's twenty principles.

The Nature of Children - Children are born persons — they are not blank slates or embryonic oysters who have the potential of becoming persons. They already are persons. (Psalm 139:13-16)

Although children are born with a sin nature, they are neither all bad, nor all good. Children from all walks of life and backgrounds make choices for good or evil. [All children are created in God's image and are within the reach of God's grace therefore educating every child is worthwhile.] (Galatians 6:7-8)

The Authority of Teachers - The concepts of authority and obedience are true for all people whether they accept it or not. Submission to authority is necessary for any society or group or family to run smoothly. [God has structured the universe so that blessing flows through authority therefore we believe that teachers have God-given authority and that authority must be respected for learning to take place.] (Ephesians 6:1-9, James 3:1)

Authority is not a license to abuse children, or to play upon their emotions or other desires, and adults are not free to limit a child's education or use fear, love, power of suggestion, or their own influence over a child to make a child learn. (Psalm 1:2, Psalm 32:8-9, Colossians 3:23-24)

Atmosphere, Discipline, and Life - The only means a teacher may use to educate children are the child's natural environment, the training of good habits and exposure to living ideas and concepts. This is what CM's motto "Education is an atmosphere, a discipline, a life" means. "Education is an atmosphere" doesn't mean that we should create an artificial environment for children, but that we use the opportunities in the environment he already lives in to educate him. Children learn from real things in the real world. (Psalms 19:1-4, Romans 1:20) "Education is a discipline" means that we train a child to have good habits and self-control. (1 Timothy 4:7, Hebrews 12:11) "Education is a life" means that education should apply to body, soul and spirit. The mind needs ideas of all kinds, so the child's curriculum should be varied and generous with many subjects included. (Isaiah 28:23-24, 28-29, Genesis 2:7)

The Mind - The child's mind is not a blank slate, or a bucket to be filled. It is a living thing and needs knowledge to grow. As the stomach was designed to digest food, the mind is designed to digest knowledge and needs no special training or exercises to make it ready to learn. Herbart's philosophy that the mind is like an empty stage waiting for bits of information to be inserted puts too much responsibility on the teacher to prepare detailed lessons that the children, for all the teacher's effort, don't learn from anyway.

Instead, we believe that children's minds are capable of digesting real knowledge, so we provide a rich, generous curriculum that exposes children to many interesting, living ideas and concepts. (Mark 10:13-15, 2 Peter 1:5)

The Science of Relations - "Education is the science of relations" means that children have minds capable of making their own connections with knowledge and experiences, so we make sure the child learns about nature, science and art, knows how to make things, reads many living books and that they are physically fit. (Genesis 2:26-27)

The Habit of Attention - In devising a curriculum, we provide a vast amount of ideas to ensure that the mind has enough brain food, knowledge about a variety of things to prevent boredom, and subjects are taught with high-quality literary language since that is what a child's attention responds to best.

Since one doesn't really "own" knowledge until he can express it, children are required to narrate, or tell back (or write down), what they have read or heard.

Children must narrate after one reading or hearing. Children naturally have good focus of attention, but allowing a second reading makes them lazy and weakens their ability to pay attention the first time. Teachers summarizing and asking comprehension questions are other ways of giving children a second chance and making the need to focus the first time less urgent. By getting it the first time, less time is wasted on repeated readings, and more time is available during school hours for more knowledge. A child educated this way learns more than children using other methods, and this is true for all children regardless of their IQ or background. (Proverbs 2:1-8)

Guides to Moral and Intellectual Growth - Children have two guides to help them in their moral and intellectual growth — "the way of the will" and "the way of reason."

Children must learn the difference between "I want" and "I will." They must learn to distract their thoughts when tempted to do what they may want but know is not right, and think of something else, or do something else, interesting enough to occupy their mind. After a short diversion, their mind will be refreshed and able to will with renewed strength.

Children must learn not to lean too heavily on their own reasoning. Reasoning is good for logically demonstrating mathematical truth, but

unreliable when judging ideas because our reasoning will justify all kinds of erroneous ideas if we really want to believe them.

Knowing that reason is not to be trusted as the final authority in forming opinions, children must learn that their greatest responsibility is choosing which ideas to accept or reject. Good habits of behavior and lots of knowledge will provide the discipline and experience to help them do this. (Romans 7:15-20, 12:2, 2 Corinthians 10:5)

The Nature of Truth - We teach children that all truths are God's truths, and that secular subjects are just as divine as religious ones. Children don't go back and forth between two worlds when they focus on God and then their school subjects; there is unity among both because both are of God and, whatever children study or do, God is always with them. (John 1:9, 16:7)

The paraphrase of Charlotte Mason's twenty principles is used with the express permission of Leslie Laurio, founder of AmblesideOnline. We added the information in brackets and Bible verses in parentheses.

Appendix C

Recommended Resources

If you would like to learn more, we recommend you review the following resources:

For the Children's Sake: Foundations of Education for Home and School by Susan Schaeffer MacAulay

When Children Love to Learn: A Practical Application of Charlotte Mason's Philosophy for Today edited by Elaine Cooper

The Living Page: Keeping Notebooks with Charlotte Mason by Laurie Bestvater

AmblesideOnline <http://www.amblesideonline.org>

We also encourage you to attend the Large Room meetings for our teachers, families, and anyone interested learning more about Charlotte Mason. We meet once a month at Harvest to immerse ourselves in how our students are learning what they learn.

Appendix D

Our School Hymn

“Great Is Thy Faithfulness”

Great is thy faithfulness, O God my Father;
There is no shadow of turning with thee;
Thou changest not, thy compassions, they fail not;
As thou hast been thou forever will be.

Refrain:

Great is thy faithfulness! Great is thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see;
All I have needed thy hand hath provided;
Great is thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!

Summer and winter and springtime and harvest,
Sun, moon and stars in their courses above
Join with all nature in manifold witness
To thy great faithfulness, mercy and love. Refrain

Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth
Thy own dear presence to cheer and to guide;
Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow,
Blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside! Refrain

Words by Thomas O. Chisholm

Source of Our School Motto

“Progress”

The Master stood upon the mount, and taught.
He saw a fire in his disciples' eyes;
'The old law', they said, 'is wholly come to naught!
Behold the new world rise!

'Was it', the Lord then said, 'with scorn ye saw
The old law observed by Scribes and Pharisees?
I say unto you, see ye keep that law
More faithfully than these!

'Too hasty heads for ordering worlds, alas!
Think not that I to annul the law have will'd;
No jot, no tittle from the law shall pass,
Till all hath been fulfill'd.'

So Christ said eighteen hundred years ago.
And what then shall be said to those to-day,
Who cry aloud to lay the old world low
To clear the new world's way?

'Religious fervours! ardour misapplied!
Hence, hence,' they cry, 'ye do but keep man blind!
But keep him self-immersed, preoccupied,
And lame the active mind!'

Ah! from the old world let some one answer give:
'Scorn ye this world, their tears, their inward cares?
I say unto you, see that your souls live
A deeper life than theirs!

'Say ye: The spirit of man has found new roads,
And we must leave the old faiths, and walk therein?—
Leave then the Cross as ye have left carved gods,
But guard the fire within!

'Bright, else, and fast the stream of life may roll,
And no man may the other's hurt behold;
Yet each will have one anguish—his own soul
Which perishes of cold.'

Here let that voice make end; then let a strain,
From a far lonelier distance, like the wind
Be heard, floating through heaven, and fill again
These men's profoundest mind:

'Children of men! the unseen Power, whose eye
For ever doth accompany mankind,
Hath looked on no religion scornfully
That men did ever find.

'Which has not taught weak wills how much they can?
Which has not fall'n on the dry heart like rain?
Which has not cried to sunk, self-weary man:
Thou must be born again!

'Children of men! not that your age excel
In pride of life the ages of your sires,
But that you think clear, feel deep, bear fruit well,
The Friend of man desires.'

By Matthew Arnold

Appendix E

Our Assessment Profile

Our assessment profile considers the whole person. We report how a student is doing in oral narration and written narration (composition), keeping in mind their ability to grasp the main idea and details, sequence the narrative, use literary language, and apply proper grammar and punctuation. We observe how they are doing in their work habits, citizenship and social responsibility, habits of mind, and self-regulation. We address their progress in language arts (phonetic awareness, penmanship, copywork, recitation, studied dictation), Spanish, literature, science, mathematics (mental calculations, work on paper, accuracy, understanding and application of concepts, correct reasoning, and problem solving), history, geography, Bible, citizenship, art, handicraft, music, and nature study.

If you would like a sample of our assessment profile, please see the administrative assistant.

NOTES