



Godly Influenced Fine Arts Training (G.I.F.T.)

Family Handbook

Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. 1 Peter 4:10

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Purpose

G.I.F.T. is a Christian co-op enrichment program that offers fine arts classes to homeschoolers of all ages, pre-school through adult.

Our mission is to come alongside homeschooling families with a variety of enrichment classes, supporting the education they already provide.

Overview

G.I.F.T. meets on Thursdays for 24 weeks, from September to December (12 weeks) and January to April (12 weeks). Classes are offered from 8:30am until 3:00pm. Families have the freedom to set their own schedule and determine the length of their day at G.I.F.T.

Private lessons will extend to 6:00pm as needed.

A parent/guardian is required to be on site with children at all times. However, you and your student are free to come and go throughout the day. A nursery is available for use with children ages 2 and under. Parents are required to remain in the nursery with their child the entire time.

Statement of Faith

Our Statement of Faith includes only those truths upon which all true Christians agree. I believe in the Person and Work of Jesus Christ (the Gospel) as revealed in Scripture. I believe in the faith once delivered to the saints (Jude 3, Eph. 4:5) which distinguishes believers from nonbelievers. I believe that the Holy Spirit dwells within us, guides, instructs and empowers us as believers for godly living and service. I believe the direction to “accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.” (Romans 15:7) I believe in the spiritual unity of believers through the above beliefs and faith in Jesus Christ. Other individual doctrinal differences which may exist should not hinder this unity. This statement is not a statement of all that is important to believe, but of all that is essential to believe for Christian Fellowship and unity. This article may only be amended by unanimous vote of all Directors.

Management Structure

G.I.F.T. is managed by a volunteer board. All board members sign a Statement of Faith. Board positions require a passing vote of confidence by the current board members. There is no compensation for services.



Parental Involvement at G.I.F.T.

Parental involvement is foundational to the success of G.I.F.T. and is one of the requirements to join the co-op. Without a cooperative effort on the part of parents/guardians, their children and teachers, G.I.F.T. would not be possible.

Parents/Guardians are responsible to adhere to the code of conduct and all policies. In addition, parents/guardians are responsible for the following:

1. Onsite Presence

- While your children are in the building and grounds, a parent/guardian must be present the entire time. However, you and your student are free to come and go throughout the day.

2. Supervision of Children

- Parent/guardian needs to be aware of where their children are at all times.
- Children that are not in class must be supervised at all times by their parent/guardian.
- Parents are responsible for picking up their child/children from any 6 and under classroom.
- If a parent/guardian is teaching, volunteering in a class, or unable to supervise their child, they must arrange for another adult to be responsible for their child(ren). There is a Temporary Guardian form that must be signed in these instances.
- A nursery is available for use with children ages 2 and under. Parents are required to remain in the nursery with their child the entire time.

3. Service Requirement

- Families are required to fulfill a minimum of two volunteer positions (2 hours during the G.I.F.T. day).
- All families with enrolled children must fulfill their volunteer requirements to maintain membership in G.I.F.T. (Teaching a class does fulfill one hour of this requirement).



Family Definition for Registration

Each Family needs to register. Family is defined as those that have permanent residence in your household. Every family needs to pay the yearly fees and be responsible for class payments as registered. The child(ren)'s legal guardian must be registered and be listed for contact through G.I.F.T. regardless of whom is bringing the child(ren).

A Co-op Guardian is defined as the person(s) in charge of the non-resident child(ren) that wishes to attend G.I.F.T. without their parent or legal guardian. A Co-op Guardian must do one extra volunteer hour per family that they are guardians over.

Steps to Become a Member of G.I.F.T. – New Families

1. Review the information, policies, and family handbook available on the G.I.F.T. website.
2. Attend our annual Open House to meet the leadership team, teachers, and families. This is a great way to see if the G.I.F.T. community is a good fit for your family - *Highly Recommended*. Tours are also available while G.I.F.T. is in session.
3. Request membership on the G.I.F.T. website. This login will be used for the duration of your time at G.I.F.T.
4. Pay the New Family registration fee and complete all required online forms. These will be emailed to you after your membership request is submitted and can also be accessed by clicking 'Resources' then 'Forms' on the website.
5. Complete your family profile on the G.I.F.T. website. Please be sure to include any allergies, health conditions, developmental or behavioral information. This information is shared with teachers to help support your child(ren). Additionally, you are encouraged to speak directly with teachers about any specific needs.
6. Once steps 3-5 are verified by the G.I.F.T. Registrar, your account will be manually updated to allow class registration. Please allow up to 48 hours.
7. Register for classes and select your volunteer positions.
8. Attend orientation in early September. This is required for all families joining before the start of the G.I.F.T. year.



Steps to Renew Membership to G.I.F.T. – Current Families

1. Ensure all teacher payments are up to date.
2. Pay the Current Family registration fee and complete all required online forms. These can also be found on the website under 'Resources' then 'Forms'.
3. Review and update your family profile on the G.I.F.T. website, if needed. Please include any allergies, health conditions, developmental concerns or behavioral issues. This information is shared with teachers to help support your child(ren). You are also welcome to speak directly with teachers about any specific needs.
4. Once steps 1-3 are complete, the G.I.F.T. Registrar will manually update your account to allow class registration once registration opens. Please allow up to 48 hours.
5. Register for classes and select your volunteer positions.
6. Attend orientation in early September.

Families Personal Information

It is our commitment to handle all personal and confidential information in a professional manner. Contact the Registrar if you have specific requests regarding your family's personal information.

All families, guardians and teachers will be background checked.

Details on family profiles are only viewable by G.I.F.T. board members and teachers.



Register for a Class & Volunteer Position

Visit our website and click on 'Classes' to view the current Class Matrix, Private Music Lessons and Volunteer Matrix. Click on any class name to see the full description, pricing, and available student spots. To register, select the desired class then choose the name(s) from the right-hand side and click 'Register'.

To sign up for volunteer positions, check the Class Matrix for classroom aide positions or the available positions in the Volunteer Matrix. Select the adult volunteer's name from the right-hand side and click 'Register'.

If a class shows "Parent Full", the parent volunteer role for that class has already been filled.

If a class shows "Student Waitlist", the class is currently full, but you may add your child(ren) to the waitlist in case a spot becomes available.

G.I.F.T. reserves the right to refuse admission or revoke membership at the discretion of the Board, at any time.

Drop a Class

1. Please notify the teacher directly and let them know when your child's last week of class will be.
2. The class must be dropped online using the G.I.F.T. website, under the 'Manage Class Registrations' tab.



G.I.F.T. Fees

Registration Fee : \$200 per new family and \$170 per returning family

- Due at the time of registration and is non-refundable
- Please note that you cannot register for classes until your registration fee is paid.
- This fee is per family, not per child
- This fee can be paid via G.I.F.T. website or a check paid in person or by mail to P.O. Box 1055, Elgin, IL 60121

NewTek Merchant Fees (G.I.F.T. website payments)

- Families will be charged a 3% processing fee when using this service.



G.I.F.T. Teacher Fees

Supply Fees / Deposit

- Each class you choose to register for will have its own supply fee / deposit. Please note that the full supply fee / deposit is due regardless of enrollment date. These fees cover the cost of materials that the teacher will purchase for use in the class. Any additional supplies needed, but not included in the supply fee will be outlined in the course description. You will need to cover the cost of these additional supplies.
- The amount and due date are determined by each individual teacher. It is recommended to be paid no later than June 1st to hold your child's place in the class.
- These fees are non-refundable unless the class is cancelled before classes start.
- Checks for supply fees should be made out to each teacher directly.

Each teacher will have a preferred method of payment stated. Please contact the teacher directly for payments if G.I.F.T. is not in session.

Class Tuition

- Each class you choose to register for will have its own monthly, semester or yearly fee. Tuition is set by each individual teacher based on a 24-week school year. Monthly tuition payments are calculated by dividing the total class fee into monthly equal payments.
- Teachers are independent contractors and are not employed by G.I.F.T. You, as the family, are contracting a specific teacher to teach your child a specified class. As such, tuition must be made payable to the teachers.
- Teacher folders, to place tuition payments in, are available at the Board table. The Board table is located in the Hub.



G.I.F.T.'s Financial Policies

Tuition payments are made directly to the teacher. Teachers request payments by the first Thursday of each month, semester or year depending on the individual teacher's payment schedule. Teachers may have late fees in their individual policy. If paying by check, please make it payable directly to the teacher. Post-dated checks cannot be accepted.

Families will reimburse G.I.F.T. for any bank fees incurred as a direct result of a returned check for registration and semester fees.

- G.I.F.T. and teachers reserve the right to request alternate forms of payments after a returned check.

The \$200 registration fee will be assessed in full for all new families, regardless of date of enrollment.

There are no tuition adjustments for family absences.

Disputed Charges

Charges can be voided without incurring any fees if G.I.F.T. treasurer is notified by 10:00pm on the day of the disputed charge. Families will incur the following charges for disputes that are not able to be resolved by 10:00 PM, on the day of the charge. These charges are assessed to G.I.F.T. by NewTek.

- Chargeback Fee (disputed fee with NewTek) - \$30.00
- Retrieval Fee (disputed fee with NewTek) - \$15.00
- ACH Reject Fee (ex: rejected due to lack of funds) - \$25.00

G.I.F.T. does not store or use any cardholder data. All transactions are through the Homeschool Life website link and processed by Newtek.



G.I.F.T. Class Cancellation

G.I.F.T. may cancel all or some scheduled classes due to weather or other unforeseen circumstances. Closure will be determined as soon as possible by the Board Members.

Cancellation of classes will be posted on the G.I.F.T. Forum and Facebook page by 7:00am. Direct contact with families and teachers will be made by email to the primary email provided during registration.

In the case of a G.I.F.T. cancellation, the G.I.F.T. year will be extended one week per the G.I.F.T. Calendar.

Steps to Follow in an Absence from G.I.F.T.

1. Please contact the Volunteer Coordinator as soon as possible to arrange coverage for your volunteer position. If it's during G.I.F.T. hours, please post your coverage needs to the G.I.F.T. forum.
2. Please contact all your children's teachers (including music lesson teachers, if applicable) so they will be aware of your child's absence.
3. If you volunteer in a classroom, notify the teacher of your absence.

Visitor G.I.F.T. Policy

G.I.F.T. welcomes visitors of our families to visit our co-op. The G.I.F.T. family must notify the board 48 hours prior to the day the visitor will be present. A board member will meet the visitor at the door when contacted by the door monitor on the walkie-talkie. They will be given a visitor lanyard that must be worn the entire duration at G.I.F.T. Visitors should stay with their G.I.F.T. family member, a board member or teacher. Visitors are welcomed to observe classes, and they must use the upstairs bathroom.



Teachers

Teachers are independent contractors, and all payments will be made payable directly to the teachers.

Teachers need to be 18 years of age to teach a class at G.I.F.T.

Teachers will notify the G.I.F.T. Teacher Liaison and families in their classes directly if unable to hold class.

- Please see each individual teacher for their policies for their class. This includes late enrollment, absence policies, tuition payments and any late fees.

Communication to Families

The Board utilizes various communication tools such as the website, emails, Facebook, written notifications, G.I.F.T. forum postings and in person.

The board may not always be able to effectively communicate to families who do not have an email address, or a phone number listed with G.I.F.T.

- It is your responsibility to keep your profile up-to-date in order to receive communications.

Private Lesson Policies

Parents must sit in on private lessons, as volunteer assistants are not present for these lessons. It is not the responsibility of the GIFT board, or the private lesson teacher to provide supervision for a child in this setting.

Private lesson teachers have their own policies regarding missed lessons and cancellations. Please follow up with individual teachers.



Safety and Security Policies and Procedures

The safety of G.I.F.T. families is of the utmost importance to our organization. As such, the policies and procedures have been put in place to best ensure the safety and security of our families. Please refer to the [Safety and Security Policies and Procedures Form](#) you filled out at registration.

For the safety of our allergic students, NO foods containing tree nuts, peanuts, or their oils or milks are permitted.

G.I.F.T.'s Code of Conduct

All parents and students are required to electronically review and sign a [Code of Conduct Form](#) before registering for classes. If you would like, please print a copy for your records.

- We encourage students, parents and teachers to first communicate with each other regarding concerns or behavior issues. More details about the handling of conflict between students and teachers is located in the [G.I.F.T. Code of Conduct](#).
- The Board is here to assist the teachers and families with resolving conflicts in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

Dress Code

We ask that all attendees at GIFT be modest, neat, and appropriate in how they present themselves. This provides our community with lots of choice and opportunities to wear stylish and comfortable clothing while maintaining a standard of respect for self and others in our environment. The purpose of a dress code is to provide our community with guidelines that will be life-giving to all who attend and develop the character trait of self-discipline. Parents are the best partners in the dress code process. We ask that you have conversations with your child before they head out the door to GIFT. If there is a question of whether something meets the dress code or not, err on the side of choosing to not wear it to G.I.F.T. and save the outfit or clothing for a non-GIFT time.



Expectations for Property Usage at the Church on the Rock

G.I.F.T. rents the property from the Church on the Rock. The church has made the following requests as a condition of our rental agreement. We ask our families to follow these requests:

- The common area, located on the lower level, can be used by all families for work, games, and conversation. This area should remain free of any running, roughhousing or other activity that can pose safety concerns or could be distracting to the rest of the community using the space.
- All food and drinks need to stay in the common area.
 - Only water may be brought in the other areas of the building, unless approved by a board member.
- Adult presence is required in the kitchen when in use. Children are NOT allowed in the kitchen unsupervised.
- The nursery is available for children ages 2 and under. A parent/guardian must be present in the nursery with their child and must clean up after use.
- Do not climb trees, break tree branches, or otherwise harm any landscaping
- The church grounds and pavilion can be used by G.I.F.T. families with an adult present at all times.
- Please do not use the soccer fields, grill or fire pit in the pavilion.
- Bathrooms usage at COTR
 - **Lower Level Bathroom** usage is for children. Adults are not to use this bathroom unless with their child/children.
 - **First Floor Bathroom** usage is for adults. Children are not to use this bathroom unless with their parent.
 - Our homeschool co-op is a Christian organization that seeks to honor God in all that we do. As a tenant of Church on the Rock, an Assemblies of God church, we operate in accordance with the church's core biblical beliefs. In alignment with these beliefs, we affirm that gender is biblically understood as male and female, as assigned at birth. Therefore, restroom facilities are designated for



Continued - Expectations for Property Usage at the Church on the Rock

- use by males and females accordingly. We ask all families and students to respect these guidelines while participating in our co-op. We are committed to fostering an environment of kindness, respect, and love toward all individuals. *(Questions or concerns regarding this policy should be directed to the Board and will be addressed with discretion and respect.)*
- The elevator is available for special needs only. It is not to be used instead of the stairs.

End of day clean up responsibilities are listed in the clean up manual located in the Hub.