



MONTESSORI

S C H O O L O F A N D E R S O N

Educating Joyful Scholars Since 1973

PARENT HANDBOOK – ALL LEVELS 2021-2022



CELEBRATING MORE THAN 48 YEARS OF MONTESSORI EDUCATION IN ANDERSON, SOUTH CAROLINA

A note about the formatting of this document:

All policies in this Handbook and all other Level Supplements utilize Tahoma, non-italicized font. *Italicized, Times New Roman* font indicates a recent change or addition from the previous year, and highlighted text indicates policy changes related to COVID mitigation measures.

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WELCOME!

The Montessori School of Anderson (MSA) faculty and administration welcome you to a new school year! Our goal is to continue our tradition of a close and nurturing environment. The interaction of students, parents, faculty, and administration is a key component to building community within our school. Research shows that students learn more effectively and are more actively interested in education when their parents are involved in their school.

Introduction:

We hope that this MSA Parent Handbook and Classroom Supplements will assist you in understanding the policies and procedures that affect the operation of our school. Our procedures have been incorporated into our program to:

- Give students a feeling of security by defining clear limits, providing a consistent setting for classroom activities, and establishing a peaceful, happy routine conducive to learning.
- Give parents the security of knowing the needs of their children are being met in a consistent and protective manner.

Generally, this handbook contains policies and procedures that affect students at all levels. However, due to the diverse ages present at Montessori School of Anderson, specific policies exist that may not apply universally. When such instances occur, this document will direct the parent to the appropriate resource so that no confusion or conflict arises. If at any time you have questions or concerns about the content of this document or have a school-related concern not covered in this document, please call the school or consult your classroom teacher for clarification.

MSA continues to evaluate its procedures and policies throughout the year in order to best meet the academic and structural requirements necessary for an effective learning environment. As such, the policies contained within this Parent Handbook and the Level Supplements located in the appendix are subject to change at any time. However, parents and students will be duly notified of these changes.

1.1 Overview and History of MSA

The job of education today must be to help students become responsible for their own learning; that is, to become people who know how to learn, and most importantly, people who are accustomed to being responsible for their own learning. In response to this need for a "new" kind of education and as a result of increased understanding of the psychology of child development, the Montessori School of Anderson was established in 1973. Our principles and philosophy are rooted in the educational developments pioneered by Dr. Maria Montessori.

With fourteen three to five-year-old students, the school was located in the basement of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church. Due to an enthusiastic response, construction began for a larger facility six months later on Sam McGee Road way out "in the country." As the years passed and numbers increased, several additional buildings were constructed on our 11-acre campus to educate children ages 6 weeks through 12th grade. The enrollment is currently approximately 92 students nurtured by approximately 32 full and part-time staff, including Montessori-certified faculty. We are a community working together to provide the best possible atmosphere for the optimum growth of the students.

Montessori School of Anderson Incorporated operates as a non-profit 501(c)(3) tax-exempt educational organization governed by a Board of Trustees who shall have general charge and supervision of the business of the Corporation, including educational programs. The Administrator is the representative of the Board of Trustees in the management of the school with authority and responsibility to operate the school in all its activities and departments including curriculum and day-to-day operations of the school.

We are an independent, non-sectarian organization, members of the South Carolina Independent School Association (SCISA), accredited by AdvancED, and are licensed by the Department of Social Services.

1.2 The Mission Statement

Our mission is to nurture the whole child physically, intellectually, emotionally, socially and spiritually, preparing students for academic excellence, confident, lifelong learning and responsible, caring lives.

1.3 Implementation of Philosophy

We continuously work to teach our students higher-order thinking skills: analysis, synthesis, and evaluation; not simply rote memorization of facts.

- Hands-on Learning: Learning at MSA takes place through hands-on “experiential” learning, whether through concrete manipulative learning materials, experimental discovery, computer simulations, seminar discussions, independent library research, or field investigation.
- Learning How to Learn: To facilitate this process, we consciously teach our students critical thinking skills, listening skills, task organization strategies, library skills, the steps in scientific investigation, and techniques for evaluating their own process toward a goal.
- The Passage to Abstraction: We begin by giving students the “big picture” (a sense of gestalt) and work toward increasing levels of detail. This creates a spiral curriculum in which skills and concepts are presented and reintroduced at increasing levels of complexity and abstraction over the years.

1.4 The Four Pillars

Our vision is to create, nurture, and sustain educational programs of excellence for our vital, growing community of students, families, staff, and alumni. Our program rests on four pillars:

- I. The cultivation within our students of a passion for excellence in everything they do.
- II. The development of a strongly held set of universal values, which include respect of self and others, honesty, integrity, responsibility, empathy, and a willingness to work out conflicts peacefully.
- III. The development of a global perspective and a sense of international understanding and environmental education.
- IV. A lifelong commitment to give back through service to others.

Business Operations:

2.1 Non-Discrimination Policy

Our school admits students without regard to sex, race, color, religion, or national origin. In fact, we celebrate these differences and try earnestly to cultivate a deep appreciation for all peoples. This is deeply ingrained in the Montessori philosophy.

2.2 Student Records and Confidentiality

All student records are kept confidential in a secure area and are accessible only to MSA faculty and staff, the Department of Social Services, SCISA, AdvancED/Cognia, and the child’s parents or legal guardians. Certified copies of any court orders provided by the custodial parent or guardian which restrict another parent or guardian’s access to the child’s records must be on file with the school. Copies of the child’s school records will not be released until all the student-related financial obligations to MSA have been met.

2.3 School Hours

(Normal school hours do not include Early Arrival or Extended Day programs. For additional fees that may apply for these programs, please refer to the **Extended Day** section 3.3 below.)

- **Infant Toddler Program (ages 0-3)**
 - Early Arrival: 7:30 am – 8:10 am _____ *see note 3.3*
 - (half day): 8:30 am – 11:30 am (classroom opens at 7:30)
 - (full day): 8:30 am – 2:30 pm (classroom opens at 7:30)
 - Dismissal: 2:30 pm – 2:45 pm
 - Extended Care: 2:45 pm – 5:30 pm _____ *see note 3.3*

- **Primary Program (ages 3-6)**
 - Early Arrival: 7:30 am – 8:10 am _____ *see note 3.3*
 - (half day): 8:30 am – 11:30 am (classroom opens at 8:10)
 - (full day): 8:30 am – 2:30 pm (classroom opens at 8:10)
 - Dismissal: 2:30 pm – 2:45 pm
 - Extended Care: 2:45 pm – 5:30 pm _____ *see note 3.3*

- **Lower Elementary Program (Grades 1-2)**
 - Early Arrival: 7:30 am – 8:00 am (Located in Lower El) _____ *see note 3.3*
 - Lower El.: 8:15 am – 3:00 pm (classroom opens at 8:00)
 - Dismissal: 3:00 pm – 3:15 pm
 - Extended Care: 3:15 pm – 5:30 pm _____ *see note 3.3*

- **Upper Elementary Program (Grades 3-6)**
 - Early Arrival: 7:30 am – 8:00 am (Located in Upper El) _____ *see note 3.3*
 - Upper El.: 8:15 am – 3:15 pm (classroom opens at 8:00)
 - Dismissal: 3:15 pm – 3:30 pm
 - Extended Care: 3:30 pm – 5:30 pm _____ *see note 3.3*

- **Upper School Program (Grades 7-12)**
 - Early Arrival: 7:30 am – 7:45 am (Located in Main Office) _____ *see note 3.3*
 - Upper School: 8:00 am – 3:30 pm (classroom opens at 7:45)
 - Dismissal: 3:40 pm – 3:45 pm
 - Extended Day: 3:45 pm – 5:30 pm _____ *see note 3.3*

2.4 School Holidays

All programs are closed during specified teacher in-service days as well as federally recognized holidays. For extended holidays all programs will be closed for several days. Please refer to the school calendar or summer program information for exact dates.

2.5 Snow Days/Weather Emergency/ COVID-19 Closings

Information regarding school closings or delays will be posted on the school website (www.msasc.org) and our Facebook Page (The Montessori School of Anderson). In the event of a delayed start, all programs will open at 10:00 a.m. and Early Arrival will not be available. In addition, you may also monitor TV News Channel 4 for announcements. When it is necessary to close school because of snow or inclement weather, we follow Anderson County School District 5. All announcements regarding closings and delays shall also be made through the Reverse Notification System. This system shall also be employed on the rare occasion when MSA deviates from closure/delay decisions made by District 5.

Financial Operations:

3.1 Tuition and Enrollment Agreements

Tuition schedules and Enrollment Agreements for each new academic year are mailed in February. Your Enrollment Agreement for the next academic year is due within 15 business days of the date of the agreement with a non-refundable enrollment fee. Your Enrollment Agreement is a commitment for a full year's tuition. (If the school determines that there are special circumstances, a 60-day notice is required to request a release from this agreement.) MSA families must also register with FACTS Tuition Management Co. to select a payment plan (see below). Families have the option of automatic payments from a checking account, savings account, or credit card. Tuition payments and incidental charges will be handled through FACTS.

This contract commits to Montessori School of Anderson the payment plan you want for the academic year. The choices are:

- One Annual Payment due June 5
- 10 Month Installment due the fifth day of the month from July through April
- 12 Month Installment due on the fifth day of the month from June through May

Application for financial assistance may be made through the F.A.S.T. program. A link to F.A.S.T. can be found at the bottom of the main page on the MSA website.

3.2 Collections Policy

If any payment for tuition becomes 60 days past due, the student may not return to school until his/her account is brought forward. After the account is brought current, if any payment for tuition thereafter becomes 30 days past due, the student may not return to school until his/her account is brought current.

Please note that a late fee may be charged on accounts with tuition and/or fees past due. Please refer to the "Tuition Payment Information and Options" letter or call the office for additional details.

3.3 Extended Care Program

On student holidays such as Martin Luther King Day, Presidents Day, fall break, spring break, conference days, etc., extended care will be available as a courtesy for the children currently enrolled in the I/T and Primary Extended Care Program. Parents of children who are not in the Extended Care Program, but who need care on these days must check with the Director in advance in order to ensure availability. Any available spaces will be given on a first-come, first-served basis. The hourly after-school rate will be charged and the invoice sent after the end of the month. Extended Care for elementary age children during holidays will depend on numbers meeting minimum attendance requirements.

Extended Care and Early Arrival

Fees associated with the Extended Care Plan are payable the first of each month, correlating with your payment plan. The Extended Care fee covers Early Arrival, designated early dismissal/school holidays and the time period from class dismissal (see schedule above for specific class schedules) until 5:30 pm on the days the child attends school.

For those not on the Extended Care Plan, the following rates will apply and will be billed at the end of each month:

- Early arrival \$5.00 / occasion
- After School \$10.00 / hour (or any part thereof)

Due to staffing requirements all drop-ins must be preapproved by the Program Director.

3.4 Late Pick-up

Children who have not been picked up during the 15 minute grace-period following their regular dismissal time will automatically be considered part of the Extended Care program and will be charged according to

the drop-in rates as listed above. An additional fee of \$5 will be incurred if the drop-in was not pre-approved.

The school closes promptly at 5:30 pm. All parents are expected to arrive by that time. There is a 5 minute grace period to gather belongings, speak to the teacher if necessary, etc. If a parent arrives after the school has closed, there is a \$15 charge for 5:35 p.m. - 5:45 pm and \$1 per minute thereafter.

3.5 Withdrawal from MSA

Parents are required to notify the Head of School 60 days in advance of withdrawing their student from MSA. Financial aspects of the withdrawal should be discussed with the Head of School and in concert with MSA's Accounts Manager. Please note that all financial obligations to MSA are to be met before the student's transcript/records can be released either to the parent or school to which the student is transferring.

Classroom and Academic Operations:

4.1 Classroom Placement

The Program Coordinators, collectively with the teachers, place children in classrooms and decide when each child will rise to a new level. Parents are welcome to provide input, but the Coordinators make the final decision based upon the dynamics of the classroom, the chemistry of all of the children in the classroom, classroom balance, and, if applicable, the academic readiness of the student.

4.2 Arrival Procedures (Elementary through Upper School)

Students arriving before the classroom opening time (see "School Hours" above) must go to our early arrival program and the family will be invoiced accordingly. (see early arrival rates above). When dropping your student off in the carpool line, please drive as close to the classroom as you can prior to letting your child out of your car. **Please do not park in the carpool lanes or linger unnecessarily.** It is important to keep traffic flowing as smoothly as possible. Students arriving after the official beginning of the school day must report to the office to receive an arrival slip. The children may be escorted to class by office personnel. Please understand how disruptive it is to the flow of classroom activities when a student arrives late. **COVID Change: Please refer to your child's program supplement for the specific arrival procedures this year.**

4.3 Arrival Procedures (Infant Toddler and Primary)

(Please refer to each level's individual supplement in the appendix of this document for specific policies regarding arrival and dismissal of students.)

4.4 Tardiness

An essential aspect of ensuring an orderly and productive learning environment is punctuality. It is, therefore, important for students to arrive at school on time (7:45-8:00 a.m. for High School and Middle School students / 8:00-8:15 a.m. for Elementary students). The only acceptable excuse for tardiness to school is an unusual emergency and when the school has been notified by the parent/guardian. Students who are tardy to school for any reason must check in at the Front Office where they will receive a tardy slip that will allow their admittance to class. **COVID Change: Students will be screened before being allowed to enter the classroom.**

4.5 Dismissal

Only authorized persons may take a child from the school. Authorized persons are custodial parents, guardians, and others that the custodial parent/guardian specifies. Names and addresses of authorized persons must be on file before the child may be released. A custodial parent or guardian may amend the list in writing at any time. Certified copies of any court orders provided by the custodial parent or guardian which restrict another parent or guardian's ability to seek the release of the child must be on file with the

school. When an authorized person picks up the child, the school may ask for picture identification to verify identity until that person is recognized by staff.

Parents and other visitors are required to sign in at the office when at the school for *reasons other than* arrival or dismissal.

When picking up your child, follow ***the procedures outlined in the program supplement.***

If you need to come to the office, park your car in a parking space to avoid halting the flow of traffic. Please note that we have staggered pick up times to keep the traffic moving. ***Be aware of those around you, social distance, and wear a face mask when interacting with others on campus.***

COVID Change: Please refer to each level's individual supplement in the appendix of this document for specific policies regarding arrival and dismissal of students.

4.6 Early Check-out

Early check-out for appointments or illness should be arranged prior to departure. A written note must contain a parent/guardian contact number as well as the name of the adult who is retrieving the student. Any student 15 years of age or younger must be picked up by a parent/guardian or other designated adult who has been pre-approved in writing from the parent/guardian. Adults **MUST** sign the student out at the Main Office, noting the time signed out and the reason for the departure. **Under no circumstances are students under the age of 16 allowed to leave the MSA campus without permission.**

An administrative office staff member will notify the appropriate classroom of the early check-out and the student will be brought to meet the parent/guardian. If the student is returning to campus following an appointment, the parent/guardian will need to return directly to the Main Office to sign the student into campus and the student will be escorted back to his/her classroom.

4.7 Field Trips (5K – HS)

COVID Change: Off-campus and on-campus field trips will be limited at this time in an effort to reduce the risk of student/faculty/staff exposure to COVID-19. Field trips will be considered on a case-by-case basis. More information about possible virtual field trips will be provided by each program and may also be found in the program supplement.

4.8 Special Guests

COVID Change: Special guests on campus will be limited at this time in an effort to reduce the risk of student/faculty/staff exposure to COVID-19. Virtual options may be arranged for special occasions, such as birthday celebrations. Please refer to your child's program supplement for more information.

4.9 Visitors

COVID Change: At this time, visitors to campus will be limited. We request that all visitors (including parents) enter MSA through the Front Office. For the health and safety of our students and school personnel, visitors will be screened (health questions and non-contact temperature check), required to wear a mask, and arrival and departure time will be logged.

4.10 Snacks and Lunches

We try very hard to establish, at an early age, the awareness of good nutrition. A healthy, satisfying lunch is an important part of your child's school day. Please avoid "junk food" when preparing lunches from home. No sodas or candy should be sent to school. Lunches brought from home should be in a well-marked lunch box or bag. If children forget their lunches, they will not go hungry. Food will be provided, and parents will be invoiced accordingly. Please refrain from bringing in "fast-food" lunches to your students.

The school offers a pizza lunch option on Fridays. For details and cost, please contact the school office.

Each level above Infant/Toddler has a fundraiser lunch and snack option that is also available. Please consult your level's supplement or teacher for more details. Money for these lunches should be given directly to the classroom. These are not associated with the "School Lunch" mentioned in the preceding paragraph.

4.11 Birthdays and Celebrations

We have the privilege of celebrating many milestones with your child as he/she attends Montessori School of Anderson. Each classroom will celebrate these events differently, so please consult your child's classroom supplement located in the appendix of this document to review the policies and procedures appropriate for that level.

Student Affairs:

5.1 Discipline (philosophy)

Montessori School of Anderson believes discipline is a process in which students at all levels are supported in developing respect, self-control, and making responsible choices. We offer a beautiful peace curriculum based on integrity, respect, honesty, and responsibility. Our classrooms provide many opportunities for the development of these universal values. Grace and courtesy lessons are part of classroom learning and are modeled, practiced, and discussed daily. Basic class rules are explained to students during orientation, and, when appropriate, students are involved in the formulation of class rules. This approach helps students learn responsibility for his/her own actions and that actions have resulting consequences.

All faculty and staff have been given the authority and responsibility to ensure compliance with properly adopted rules and regulations, even if violations to these rules occur outside of the classroom. The administration reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of behavior and dress. The administration also reserves the right to suspend or expel students as prescribed by the contents of this and related documents. As an independent, private school, MSA is under no obligation to follow state guidelines for due process required of public schools – especially when it is believed that the safety of others in the community may be compromised.

While the Montessori philosophy endeavors to meet the individual needs of student-learners, MSA's obligation to maintain the safety of each and every student is paramount.

The various levels at Montessori School of Anderson have different discipline requirements based on the ages of children represented at that level. Please refer to each level's individual supplement located in the appendix of this document for specific policies regarding discipline.

5.2 Protocol for Addressing Issues

All educational issues should first be addressed to the student's teacher who can best resolve the situation or questions. If, after that step, there are further questions, you may direct them to the *Program Coordinator*. The *Program Coordinator* and teacher might suggest a meeting to answer questions or concerns. If you feel these forums have not adequately addressed your concerns, we encourage you to schedule an appointment with the School Administrator, who shall serve as the final arbiter in each case.

5.3 Substitute Teachers

A substitute teacher has the same authority as a "regular" faculty member and should be treated with respect and courtesy. Any attempts to take advantage of substitutes will result in disciplinary action at the appropriate level.

5.4 MSA Policy on Harassment and Bullying

Harassment and Bullying of Students are strictly prohibited. MSA is committed to providing all students with a safe and civil educational environment in which all are treated with dignity and respect. The School

is also committed to promoting understanding and appreciation of the cultural diversity within our society. The School shall educate students about our diversity and shall promote tolerance of individual differences.

MSA shall promote procedures and practices to reduce and eliminate harassment and bullying. The School prohibits harassment and bullying of students by other students, by employees, and by volunteers while in school, on school property, and at any school function or school-sponsored activity. This includes harassment or bullying based on the student's actual or perceived trait or characteristic, including the student's actual or perceived race, color, creed, sex, age, religion, marital or familial status, ethnic background, national origin, ancestry, physical or mental ability or challenge, sexual orientation, physical attribute, political party preference, political belief, or socio-economic background. Acts of harassment or bullying may be treated as grounds for discipline which may include suspension and/or expulsion of a student.

Definition: Any electronic (such as emails or instant messages), written, verbal, or physical act or conduct toward a student that creates or could reasonably be expected to create an objectively hostile school environment is prohibited. An objectively hostile school environment is created if the act of conduct:

- places the student in reasonable fear of harm to the student's person or property;
- has a substantially detrimental effect on the student's physical, emotional or mental health;
- has the effect of substantially interfering with the student's academic performance; or
- has the effect of substantially interfering with the student's ability to participate in or benefit from MSA services, activities, or privileges.
- is detrimental or disruptive to the learning environment.

Sexual Harassment

In general: It is the policy of this School to maintain a learning environment that is free from sexual harassment. All employees, visitors, and students must avoid any action or conduct which could reasonably be perceived as sexual harassment. It shall be a violation of this policy for any person to harass a student through conduct or communication of a sexual nature as defined in this policy.

Definition: Sexual harassment shall consist of unwelcome sexual advances/images, requests for sexual acts or favors, and other verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

- Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of the student's educational opportunities or benefits; or
- Submission to or rejection of such conduct by a student is used as the basis for educational decisions affecting the student; or
- Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with a student's education by creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive educational environment.

Sexual Harassment may include, but is not limited to the following:

- requests and/or pressure for sexual activity
- unwelcome or inappropriate touching
- other verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature, such as inappropriate jokes, symbols, signs, or posters of a sexual nature (including images on the Internet)
- repeated remarks/images to or about a person with sexual or demeaning implications.

Notification of Complaint

The Administrator and/or the Director from each program involved must be notified in writing in the event of a bullying or harassment complaint in order for an investigation to begin. The complainant may be required to submit any evidence of discrimination, harassment, or bullying. This evidence may include but might not be limited to letters, emails, tapes, signs, and pictures. Both the complainant and the alleged perpetrator will be given an opportunity to give a statement. All MSA faculty, staff, students, and volunteers related to the complaint are expected to fully and fairly cooperate in the investigation. The accused is presumed innocent until proven otherwise.

Confidentiality

The right to confidentiality, both of the complainant and of the accused, will be respected consistent with MSA's legal obligations, and with the necessity to investigate allegations of misconduct and to take corrective action when this conduct has occurred.

No Retaliation

No person shall retaliate against a student or other person because the student or other person has filed a discrimination, bullying, or harassment complaint, assisted or participated in an investigation, or has engaged in conduct that violates this policy, as long as the participation or action was done in good faith. Persons who engage in retaliation or who knowingly file false complaints or give false statements in an investigation shall be subject to discipline up to and including suspension, exclusion from school-related activities, or expulsion.

Corrective Action

MSA will take action to halt any improper discrimination, harassment, or bullying and will take other appropriate, corrective actions, including disciplinary measures which may include suspension, exclusion from school-related activities, or expulsion.

5.5 Academic Dishonesty

MSA does not tolerate academic dishonesty in any form. This also means representing, in any manner, someone else's work as your own. Parents/guardians will be notified if a student is suspected/guilty of cheating or plagiarism. The student will be referred to the Administrator to determine appropriate disciplinary action which may include in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, or expulsion.

5.6 Suspensions

No student serving an academic suspension for any reason will be allowed to participate in any school-sponsored event or activity during the period of the suspension.

5.7 Dress Code (philosophy) – all levels

We believe that the general level of dress has a significant effect on the tone of the environment. Students are expected to be neat, clean, and appropriately dressed for school. Students must arrive at school dressed properly according to dress standards of his or her particular level and must remain in dress code until leaving campus. Clothing should not be too short, too big/long, or too tight. Nothing brought or worn to school should be disruptive to the learning environment. Any faculty member may recommend that an article of clothing or jewelry be removed if deemed inappropriate or disruptive. The general rule of thumb is, "when in doubt, don't!" Students who come to school inappropriately dressed will be instructed to call their parents and request that a change of clothing be brought to them. Repeat offenses may be subject to further disciplinary action. The school is not responsible for any jewelry worn to school.

Frequently, MSA students have an opportunity to engage in activities that take them off-campus during the day. While involved in these activities, each student serves as a representative of the high standards we strive to attain and should dress accordingly. Therefore, if a student is engaged in a school activity during school hours, he or she must abide by the MSA dress code as set forth in this handbook. This includes Upper School students who take classes at other campuses, even if that school does not have a dress code. If, however, the off-campus activity or class that the MSA student attends requires a specific dress code, he or she must abide by it.

Outerwear, such as jackets, coats, hats, caps, etc. must be removed upon entering the building. To avoid confusion and prevent the loss of clothing, all outer garments should be marked with the child's name. At the end of each school year, all unclaimed and unmarked clothing is donated to agencies serving families in need.

5.7.1 Infant/Toddler

In addition to being neat, comfortable, and appropriate to the weather, clothing should be conducive to movement and easy for the child to manage. (Fitted clothing for children learning to crawl and two-piece

outfits for toddlers with no overall clasps or snaps between the legs.) Also, since we provide many learning experiences for the child, clothing too good for stains should not be worn to school.

Older infants and all toddlers have outdoor playtime every day (weather permitting) and should dress accordingly. Some shoes, such as **crocs, clogs, and flip-flops**, are not appropriate for the range of daily activities on our campus. Therefore, for safety reasons, **these types of shoes may not be worn at school.**

For winter wear we recommend coats or jackets with zippers that unzip the garment completely, not sweatshirts or coats that unzip slightly and are pulled over the head. This allows the child to independently put on his/her coat.

It is the responsibility of the parent to be sure that the child has plenty of disposable diapers and wipes. **We do not use pull-ups in our program.** You will be notified when the supply is depleted. Be sure that your child always has at least one complete change of clothing including socks (and shoes for children who are toilet training). If the child does not have the proper clothing or diapers in the event a change is needed, the parent will be called to bring the necessary items. Due to a lack of storage space, please do not leave large diaper bags at school. A small one is sufficient for infants, and a lunchbox is all that is necessary for toddlers. (Everything else should be left at the school.)

5.7.2 Primary

Self-care is an important Montessori principle. Clothing should not only be comfortable but should allow the child to dress himself independently. Elastic waistbands are preferable to belts since unbuckling and buckling a belt can be very challenging for a young child and can lead to frustration and bathroom accidents. Drawstrings on clothing, necklaces, bracelets, and scarves are potentially dangerous on the playground. **COVID Change: A face mask is encouraged for students in the Primary program through High School, but not required. Students are asked to keep a mask in their cubby/locker for times when it may be needed. Masks will also be available in the classroom and the main office.**

Sneakers/tennis shoes are the safest and most appropriate choice for the variety of activities in which Primary students are engaged during the day. Please do not allow your child to wear **cowboy boots, crocs, clogs, flip-flops, high heel/party shoes or plastic soled shoes**. For safety reasons, **these types of shoes may not be worn at school.** Hats must be removed while indoors.

All Children must be completely toilet-trained before they enter the Primary Program.

5.7.3 Elementary and Upper School

Dress should allow children freedom to engage in a wide range of activities. Please help your child select clothing and shoes that allow for freedom of movement. All the children have outdoor recess every day (weather permitting) and should dress accordingly. Some shoes, such as **crocs, clogs, and flip-flops**, are not appropriate for the range of daily activities on our campus. Therefore, for safety reasons, **these types of shoes may not be worn at school.** For winter wear we recommend coats or jackets with zippers that are flexible and easy for the children to fasten. Hats must be removed while indoors.

COVID Change: A face mask is encouraged for students in the Primary program through High School, but not required. Students are asked to keep a mask in their cubby/locker for times when it may be needed. Masks will also be available in the classroom and the main office.

Elementary (specific requirements)

Acceptable Attire:

Elementary Boys

- Shorts provided they are not above mid-thigh.
- Pants or jeans
- T-shirts without inappropriate words, logos, messages, or pictures
- Woven shirts
- Sweatshirts
- Soft soled or tennis shoes

Elementary Girls

- Shorts provided they are not above mid-thigh.
- Skirts provided they are no more than two inches above the knee
- Pants or jeans
- T-shirts without inappropriate words, logos, messages, or pictures
- Dresses provided they are no more than two inches above the knee
- Leggings are only allowed if worn with a longer top (one that covers the rear end) like a tunic or a dress.
- Soft soled or tennis shoes

Unacceptable Attire: (boys and girls):

- Tank, tube, halter, camisole, strapless tops
- Any tops that expose the midriff, including midriffs exposed when arms are raised
- Cutoffs
- Pants with holes or large tears
- Oversized and/or excessively lengthy pants
- Low rise jeans so that skin shows
- Jellies, flip-flops, excessively high heels
- Athletic shoes with cleats (soccer, golf, or baseball shoes)
- Swimsuits
- Excessive makeup (judged by the teacher)
- Spiked bracelets or necklaces
- Hair color in a non-human hue
- Hats, bandanas, and other headwear
- Visible Tattoos
- Any piercing other than earlobe
- Sandals without heel straps

5.7.4 Upper School (specific requirements/guidelines)

Acceptable Attire (Upper School Boys):

- Shorts provided they are not above mid-thigh.
- Jeans are permissible so long as they are in good condition and without holes, patches, or tears. Cut-offs are not permissible.
- Pants (including tasteful cargo pants).
- Shirts or T-shirts with logos, words, and graphics as long as they are not inappropriate or offensive as deemed by administration.
- Soft-soled or tennis shoes (closed-toed) in science class – at other times an open-toe shoe is acceptable as long as it has a back or a back strap.
- Hoodies will be allowed but students may not wear the hood. Hoodies should be appropriate size (not sloppy and oversized).

Acceptable Attire (Upper School Girls):

- Shorts provided they are not above mid-thigh.
- Skirts provided they are two inches above the knee or longer.
- Pants (including tasteful cargo pants).
- Jeans are permissible so long as they are in good condition and without holes or tears. Cut-offs are not permissible.
- Simple, tasteful jewelry, such as earrings, necklace, watch, or class ring.
- Dresses two inches above the knee or longer.
- Shirts or T-shirts with logos, words, and graphics as long as they are not inappropriate or offensive as deemed by administration.
- Soft-soled or tennis shoes (closed-toed) in science class – at other times an open-toe shoe is acceptable as long as it has a back or a back strap.
- Leggings, yoga pants, etc. (defined at teacher/admin discretion) are allowed as long as they are neat and are worn with a top that covers the rear end even with arms raised vertically.
- Hoodies will be allowed but students may not wear the hood. Hoodies should be appropriate size (not sloppy and oversized).

Physical Education courses require a uniform. For more details, please see order form..

Science labs will require special attire which will be discussed prior to lab activities.

Unacceptable Attire:

Upper School Boys:

- Cut-offs, jogging, cycling, or athletic shorts
- Oversized pants and/or pants that are excessively lengthy
- Racer back or tank tops
- Swimsuits (except during swim instruction)
- Athletic shoes with cleats
- No visible piercings

Upper School Girls:

- Racer back, tank, tube, halter, camisole, spaghetti strap, strapless tops or dresses
- Any top that exposes the midriff or bare back with movement or as designed
- High heels (more than 2 inches) or shoes without a back
- Excessive make-up or jewelry
- No visible piercings other than on the ear

Upper School Girls and Boys:

- Spiked bracelets or necklaces
- Hair color in a non-human hue
- Hats, bandanas, and other headwear
- No visible tattoos
- No holes, tears, or open seams
- Flip-flops
- Students are prohibited from wearing clothing that displays offensive slogans or graphics. Additionally graphics that advertise products or services that are illegal/illicit or illegal for minors are prohibited. If any staff member finds the graphics on a student's t-shirt or hoodie offensive or otherwise inappropriate the student shall change attire without argument.

5.8 Dress Code for Community Service & Field Trips

COVID Change: Off-campus community service and field trips will be limited and considered on a case-by-case basis.

Students are expected to represent MSA in an impeccable manner. Therefore, unless the activity dictates otherwise, the students are expected to dress according to the guidelines listed below. Students who are not in appropriate off-campus attire will not be allowed to leave campus.

Elementary:

- Young Gentlemen: Khaki-style pants or shorts, collared shirt, and closed-toe shoes.
 Young Ladies: Dresses or skirts of appropriate length, or dress shirts and pants. Closed-toe shoes.

Upper School: (Students are asked to keep a set of dress code appropriate clothes in their lockers.)

- Young Gentlemen: Typical dress-code attire (see list above) is required unless otherwise instructed by a teacher. Closed-toe shoes are required unless otherwise specified by a teacher.
 Young Ladies: Typical dress-code attire (see list above) is required unless otherwise instructed by a teacher. Closed-toe shoes are required unless otherwise specified by a teacher.

5.9 Electronic Equipment

Radios, CD players, iPods, gaming electronics, and other types of electronic equipment are not appropriate in the academic setting and should not be brought to school at all. If necessary, however, cell phones may be brought to school provided that they are turned off and remain in the student's backpack or locker throughout the entire school day. If a student is found to have a cell phone or other electronic equipment in his or her possession during school hours and without permission, he or she will be required to forfeit such equipment to the teacher and the parents will be called to pick up the equipment.

(Note: the High School and Middle School have slightly different policies regarding electronics. Please refer to the Upper School Supplement for details.)

5.9.1 Email and Social Media Policy

The Montessori School of Anderson encourages courteous, open, and honest communication between parents, teachers, and students. We believe that open communication is essential to the academic success of our students.

Technological changes have resulted in an increasing number of ways to communicate. While MSA always encourages face-to-face and telephone communication, we also welcome the use of email as a quick and effective means of communication, keeping in mind that the goal is to enhance our communication with parents via technology, not replace in-person communication. Personal cell phone numbers or home numbers of staff will not be given out. Telephone communication should be through the school office.

COVID Change: At this time, email is the preferred method of communication in an effort to limit visitors on campus.

Teachers and administration may share information with parents through other means such as digital/print newsletters, digital portfolios, Facebook, and other forms of social media when communicating with their class or school-wide. Social media messaging and texting should not be used regularly by parents and teachers as a means of communication, except in an urgent situation or when teachers/students are off campus (field trips).

All electronic communications between faculty/staff and current students must be limited to email. Faculty and staff are not permitted to communicate with students through social media (Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, etc.) of any kind.

5.10 Transmission/Posting of Student Images

MSA includes student photos and videos in school newsletters and social media. In order to protect student privacy, however, we do not include identifying information without parental permission. We respectfully request that parents and students do not share (transmit or post) these photos and/or videos without the permission of the person(s) pictured, or the consent of the parent/guardian when the person pictured is a student under 18 years old.

5.11 Toys

Toys at school are a distraction; they may become lost or broken and are too often a source of disagreement or disappointment. Therefore, toys are not permitted at school.

5.12 Weapons

MSA has a zero-tolerance policy regarding the possession of weapons by anyone on campus or at any school event.

5.13 Tobacco, Alcohol and Other Controlled Substances

The use or possession of tobacco *or any tobacco products and smoking paraphernalia (including e-cigarettes/vapes)*, alcohol, or other controlled substances is strictly prohibited on campus, on field trips, and at all school events where students are present.

Health and Safety:

(For answers to health-related questions not covered in the paragraphs below, please contact either the school nurse or the Administration.)

6.1 Emergency Communications

MSA uses a Reverse Notification system to notify all of the school's families, teachers and staff should mass communication be needed within the MSA community. The information is sent from the MSA's safety coordinator and is disseminated quickly and concisely through the Reverse Notification System and is shared in the case of an emergency on campus, or within the community or state. The Reverse Notification system is only activated in emergent scenarios to provide mass notification and to help ensure the safety of our students and employees. This is not an opt-in program. Notifications will be sent via SMS text, landlines, and voice command. Examples of system usage would include power outages, school closures, school emergencies, local or state emergencies, school off-site evacuations, and weather-related emergencies or natural disasters. All families, staff, and teachers should maintain accurate phone numbers with the MSA office at all times.

6.2 Personal Injury/Medical Emergencies

Every effort is made to prevent personal injury; however, in case an accident occurs, first aid will be administered by school personnel. Parents will be contacted in all cases of serious injury. If parents cannot be reached, emergency numbers given to the school by parents will be used.

It is imperative that the school have current telephone numbers, emergency contact numbers, and medical information on each student so that the teachers, school nurse, and office staff may reach parents quickly and efficiently. Parents should notify the school office immediately if contact information changes.

6.3 Health Information

At the onset of each school year, parents are **required** to complete both a Student Data Sheet and a more comprehensive Student Health Form. These forms **must be completed and returned to the school office prior to the first day of school**. No student will be allowed to remain on campus unless a current Data Sheet is on file in the office. These documents provide specific information on the students' current health status so that the school may act consistently with the instructions provided by your child's health care provider. It will also serve to give the staff an opportunity to learn more about the potential health concerns and procedures that may arise while the student is at school. Should any medical information change during the school year, it is requested that you notify the school nurse. All information is kept in the school health room and is strictly confidential. **COVID Change: An MSA COVID Community Agreement and Waiver must also be signed and returned before the student starts school.**

6.4 Health and Safety of Students

MSA has a part-time Registered Nurse on staff. The Health Room is located in the Infant/Toddler building. The school nurse will assess any student who is injured while at school or who is feeling unwell. Should the school nurse not be on campus, office staff will contact the nurse for a virtual assessment or staff will assess the student's needs and act accordingly.

6.5 Illnesses

MSA students are prohibited from attending classes while ill. If your child is absent, please notify the school office. MSA is proactive in monitoring **all** illnesses and makes every effort to prevent illnesses from spreading. When you have verification that your child has a communicable disease, please notify the office immediately. It is preferable to bring your child in late or keep him/her out for another day in order to completely recuperate rather than risk exposing the student body to a potentially communicable illness. All students must be fever-, vomiting-, and diarrhea-free for 24 hours **without the aid of medications** before returning to school. **COVID Change: Students will be screened daily upon arrival to campus and non-contact temperatures will be taken before entering the classroom. Students with a fever of 100.4°F or greater will not be allowed to attend.**

At any point during the day, if any student experiences a fever greater than 100.4°F, vomiting, diarrhea **or simply feeling too poorly to focus or concentrate on classwork**, the parent will be called and the student will be dismissed early.

If your child has missed school due to an illness, he/she may not participate in any other school-related activity on that day or evening.

6.6 Head Lice

MSA has a no-lice policy. This policy follows current medical and health agencies' recommendations and is endorsed by the CDC, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the National Association of School Nurses, and pediatric healthcare providers in our community. The presence of live lice or nits within ½ inch of the scalp warrants home treatment before returning to school. All students who have had head lice must be checked by the school nurse or designated staff member prior to returning to school.

6.7 Immunizations

DHEC regulations require that each student have current immunization records on file. These records must be submitted using an official DHEC form (1148 or the new 2740). Those students who meet the criteria for special medical or religious exemptions from immunizations are also required to have on file documentation outlining the reason(s) for the exemption. Parents should update their student's immunization records following additional immunizations or boosters as soon as possible. Updated forms should be turned into the front office. Immunization forms may be faxed to Montessori School of Anderson to the attention of the School Nurse. The school's fax number is 864.231.6562.

New DHEC immunization requirement for all rising seventh-grade students:

SC DHEC has required additional immunizations for school admission that affects the Middle School rising seventh graders. The Tdap booster vaccine is now required for school admission. All SC DHEC forms (1148 or the new 2740) verifying compliance to the new immunization requirement must be on file in the health room prior to the first day of school.

6.8 Medication Policy

In general, MSA does not dispense medication to students; however, there are exceptions. **Every effort should be made to administer medication while at home.** If medication is given at home, please inform the school nurse or teacher so that we may monitor for potential side effects. MSA will not administer the first dose of any medication.

6.8.1 Primary - Upper School Protocol

(for important information regarding Medication Policy at the Infant/Toddler Level, please refer to the Infant/Toddler Supplement)

All medications must be brought to the front office by a parent/legal guardian with a completed Medication Request Form (MRF). The medication form specifies the dosage and time medication is to be given. Should the school nurse not be available at the time medication is to be given, it shall be administered by a designated staff member. A second staff member shall serve as a witness whenever this occurs.

MSA policy prohibits students from having any medications (prescription, over-the-counter, topical, or other) on them while at school. Under no circumstances is a student to have medication with him/her in a backpack, lunch box, or in personal clothing while on school property unless it is for emergency use. (see Emergency Medications paragraph below.)

All medication will be provided by the parent, be in the original container, and be clearly labeled with the child's name and dosage. Over-the-counter medications may only be given within the limits and according to the instructions printed on the container or the package insert. Prescription medication must have specific directions for the administration and care of the medication. Medications will be administered only to individuals for whom they are intended and prescribed.

Long Term Medications: Any student taking medication for longer than three weeks must have a physician's permission form and a parent's permission form on file.

Emergency Medications (Epi-pens, inhalers, insulin pumps, etc.): All students who need to self-administer an emergency medication must have a self-administering medication permission form on file in the Health Room. The form must be completed by the physician, parent, and student. These forms will be sent home after the school nurse has reviewed the completed Student Data Sheets and Student Health Forms, which must be on file prior to the first day of school. These documents will become part of the student's ICP (Individual Care Plan) and ECP (Emergency Care Plan).

MSA reserves the right to decline to administer medication.

6.8.2 Policy for Application of Insect Repellents

Montessori School of Anderson has adopted SC DHEC recommendations for the application of insect repellents in childcare/school settings. The parents will be required to sign a Permission for Administration of Over the Counter Medication Forms for any student needing application of any insect repellent products during the day. The parents will provide their own insect repellent and will label it with the child's name. The MSA staff will follow SC DHEC guidelines for the application of insect repellents. The MSA staff will not be allowed to apply any insect repellent on infants age 2 months or younger. MSA staff will follow safest practice guidelines for administration of Insect Repellent products, and therefore reserves the right to refuse application of any product containing 30% or more of DEET. In such cases, the parents will be notified so that a substitute product can be provided. The MSA staff will follow procedures for application and cleansing following outside play. MSA staff will avoid taking children on the playground during peak hours for mosquitoes – dawn and dusk.

6.9 Child Restraint Policy

In accordance with American Academy of Pediatrics guidelines, and in an effort to ensure compliance with the South Carolina Child Passenger Restraint Law and SC Code of Laws, Section 56-5-6420, all students who are not 4'9" or 80 lbs. need a car seat or booster seat in order to be safely transported on field trips if they are **traveling in a personal vehicle**. Please provide an appropriate child passenger safety restraint for your child if this law is applicable to your child. Parents may submit a written waiver for booster seat use for students in grades 4 and above who do not meet the recommended height and weight guidelines. Parents who sign this waiver are acknowledging that they are going against the safest practice and safety standards. **Students who do not meet the above height/weight requirements and who do not have a signed waiver on file may be prevented from participating in field trips or outings.**

At no time may a child ride unrestrained in a moving vehicle while that vehicle is on any part of the MSA campus.

6.10 Extreme Weather Policy

Occasionally, outside temperatures may preclude students from recess or limit time spent outdoors. MSA has adopted an Extreme Weather policy to serve as a guide in such cases when it is excessively hot or cold.

6.11 Emergency Drills

Emergency drills are held in accordance with MSA policy and state law. The school participates in fire, tornado, earthquake, bus evacuation and intruder drills, both announced and unannounced. Teachers are responsible for instructing students on the manner and route of exit during each drill. Emergency exit maps are posted in each classroom. Teachers will accompany each class and will take roll after safely exiting the building. These drills are held to allow students to practice their reactions and responsibilities in emergencies.

6.12 Civil Emergencies

In the event of an emergency or emergency drill, students will evacuate buildings under the direction of their supervising teacher and will remain under that teacher's supervision until such time as the drill or crisis ends. In case of an emergency, please refrain from phoning the school office. It is imperative for safety and mandatory by South Carolina law that the phone lines remain open for emergency communication. The safety of all students, visitors, faculty, and staff remains our highest priority. In the event of a campus evacuation, we will relocate to the **Concord Baptist Church** on the corner of Concord Road and Reed Road.

6.13 Off-Site Evacuation

In the case of an extreme emergency, an off-site evacuation may be deemed appropriate and necessary. Montessori School of Anderson's off-site location is Concord Baptist Church Childcare Center (1012 Concord Road/Anderson, SC 29621). Parents will be notified via a reverse notification system (**see 6.1 for an explanation of "reverse notification system"**) if an evacuation of this nature is necessary. A reunification plan has been developed in the case of such an emergency. Only parents or pre-approved guardians (those listed on the emergency contact list) will be allowed to pick up students from the off-site evacuation location and a photo ID may be required prior to releasing children to their care. Please follow directions from emergency responders and school personnel. Montessori School of Anderson is committed to ensuring the safety of our students, staff, and visitors.

6.14 Student Accident Insurance

As part of a student's tuition, MSA provides each student with student accident insurance. Benefits and claims information is available in the Main Office.

6.15 Child Abuse Laws

MSA abides by the Child Abuse Laws of the state of South Carolina.

6.16 Security

The MSA campus is under video surveillance and all campus doors are locked for the security of our students. No unescorted individuals (students or visitors) will be admitted to a classroom after normal arrival time. Please do not knock on the door or window of a classroom to gain access after arrival time. Students arriving after normal arrival time (Primary-High School) must report to the front office and be escorted to their classroom. Refer to the particular level supplement for more details about arrival and dismissal policies.

Communications:

7.1 Messages and Phone calls

The teachers are not available for phone calls when teaching, but they will return calls as soon as possible. Messages for the teachers should be left with the office or on the teacher's voicemail extension. Please make an appointment if extended communication with the office or teaching staff is required.

7.2 Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled twice a year. As we approach conference time, you will be notified as to the schedule for your child's level and the sign-up procedure. Every effort should be made to participate in these meetings so that parents are fully apprised of the progress of their student. Please do not ask teachers to discuss details of your child's progress during arrivals or dismissals. You are welcome to schedule a conference at any other time as well. Simply call for an appointment. **COVID Change: Virtual options will be available this year for conferences.**

Consistent with Montessori philosophy, teachers at MSA work hard to be available to answer questions, address concerns and share experiences. Communications between teachers and parents may be handled in a variety of ways: email, phone calls, handwritten notes, and other electronic means. Please consult with the teacher at your child's level to find the means of communication that are the most expedient and convenient for you.

7.3 Montessori Matters

Please read the school newsletters for important reminders and calendar updates. These are our primary means of communication with you.

7.4 Changes in the Home

Changes in the home can have a profound impact on your child's attitude, behavior, and performance at school. Please inform your child's teacher promptly of changes such as the birth of a sibling, a death in the family, divorce or separation, the absence of a parent, the inability to sleep for several consecutive nights, the death of a pet, alteration of medicine (or its dosage) or any matter which might affect his/her sense of well-being. Any unobserved incident in school that has upset your child should be reported to the teacher.

7.5 Party Invitations

Invitations to outside parties or events may be distributed at school provided they are given to every child in the classroom. Invitations for fewer than this are not to be given out at school. Please be sensitive to the feelings of all your children's classmates. Check with your child's classroom teacher for a list of students or refer to your school directory.

COVID Change: MSA respectfully requests that families not participate in events that would increase the risk of COVID-19 exposure to our community. Families are expected to honor the community agreement signed at the start of school.

Athletics:

8.1 Awarding of Varsity Letters

Preface: The criteria for earning the Montessori School of Anderson Varsity Letter have been established by the members of the Montessori School of Anderson Upper School Administration & Related Arts staff. The staff believes that, for students at our school, earning a varsity letter should require evidence of commitment to a team and expertise in the particular activity. We have established well-defined standards for the sake of uniform decision-making. The criteria are set according to standards the staff believe are high, yet reasonable. The policies are intended to encourage students to persevere toward the goal of earning the varsity letter rather than to discourage or belittle anyone who fails to attain the standards. The coach of each activity will go over the requirements for receiving a Varsity Letter prior to the first practice.

First-time Varsity letter recipients will receive a chenille "MSA" letter and a pin representative of the activity in which the letter was earned. Students will receive the letter only once during their Montessori career.

The student will receive a gold bar for every year after the first that a letter is earned. The letters will be distributed at Awards Day.

To earn a varsity letter at the Montessori School of Anderson the following minimum requirements must be met by the student:

1. Be a student with a 3.5 or above GPA and in grades 9-12
2. Must meet and maintain athletic and academic eligibility requirements set forth by the Montessori School of Anderson and the South Carolina Independent School Association throughout the entire season
3. Must participate in the varsity level activity for the entire season
4. Conduct themselves as a varsity participant both in and out of the activity by being:
 - a. Respectful to their fellow players at all skill levels
 - b. Supportive of their teammates
 - c. Supportive of their fellow students, no matter what the endeavor
 - d. Gracious winners and good losers
 - e. Respectful to the referees and game officials and follows correct game protocol
 - f. Being well prepared and attentive at practice
 - g. Making good use of practice time
5. Must participate in all fundraisers and/or community service projects required by the Coach
6. Attend all practices and competitions unless excused by the coach prior to the practice or competition
7. Must complete the team job assignment at each practice and/or competition that is assigned to them at the beginning of the season by their coach
8. Attend the end of the season celebration unless excused by the coach prior to the event

The coach reserves the right to make an exception to these requirements if there is just cause.

An athlete who would have qualified for a letter had it not been for an injury is eligible to receive a letter.

UPPER SCHOOL SUPPLEMENT

(grades 7 thru 12)

Welcome to Upper School! As teachers, we look forward to the opportunity to guide your children through this exciting stage in their education.

The following document is not intended to replace or supersede the Montessori School of Anderson Parent Handbook but is meant to be used as a supplement to address certain requirements specific to this level.

MSA continues to evaluate its procedures and policies throughout the year in order to best meet the academic and structural requirements necessary for an effective learning environment. As such, the policies contained within the preceding Parent Handbook and the Upper School Supplement are subject to change at any time. However, parents and students will be duly notified of these changes.

About Montessori Upper School

The Montessori High School is the first (*and only private*) Montessori high school in South Carolina and only one of a handful in the United States. A co-educational school for students in grades 9-12, the school offers a rigorous academic foundation, including the opportunity to take courses for Honors credit as well as opportunities for students in Grades 11 and 12 to take college courses through Anderson University and Tri-County Technical College for dual credit.

Along with the High School, the Montessori Middle School honors the work and thinking of Dr. Maria Montessori, who believed that adolescents should have opportunities to engage in meaningful work that stimulates the mind, body, and spirit - the 'whole' person. The school clearly respects the adolescent's growing need for individual autonomy within a well-prepared learning environment.

The Students' Bill of Rights

We believe every student has a right to ...

- Receive a quality, college preparatory education. Teachers should be free to teach and students should be free to learn without unnecessary disruptions
- Do interesting work that is useful, challenging, and intriguing
- Be safe in school environments
- Be free from physically and/or verbally abusive situations that result from individual differences or challenges
- Be free to express ideas and develop one's own personality, as long as it does not interfere with the rights of others, without disrespectful criticism or pressure from peers
- Work collaboratively with the teacher and each other to make learning meaningful
- Have plenty of opportunities to do work of which he or she can be proud.

Academic Philosophy

We believe that educating and nurturing the whole individual – physically, intellectually, emotionally, culturally, and spiritually – is a requirement for successful 21st century life. It is also our belief that our students should know how to design solutions to stimulating problems, participate fully in a democracy, and successfully implement entrepreneurial projects that make social contributions. The curriculum, designed to prepare students for college admissions, culminates in an intensive, year-long research project and presentation in the senior year. During their *Upper School* years and through the curriculum, students gain vital life skills in decision-making, effective communication, and conflict resolution. Students and teachers engage in a variety of assessments that promote meaningful knowledge acquisition and academic

portfolios. In this setting, students succeed in learning and decision-making situations that minimize rote learning and promote critical understanding. This approach cultivates student ownership in his or her education and works toward the goal of academic independence and self-reliance. The school's well-designed academic program challenges students to work responsibly and perform to their best on standardized tests such as the Stanford 10, MAPS, PSAT, SAT, and ACT.

Expected Academic Outcomes

Our *Upper School* curriculum nurtures a commitment to independent thought and lifelong learning. By providing students with a broad exposure to the liberal arts, it seeks to produce graduates grounded in the traditional sources of knowledge yet capable of devising new solutions to real problems. To this end, graduates of the Montessori School of Anderson's Upper School program should have:

- The ability to read and listen with comprehension and to write and speak with clarity and precision
- An understanding of the central themes and ideas of Western civilization and an appreciation of cultures from outside that tradition
- The ability to make informed moral judgments and to appreciate the ambiguities around those judgments
- An appreciation for the aesthetic dimension of human expression through art, drama, creative writing, and music
- An exposure to the methods and insights of the social sciences
- Knowledge of the basic principles and procedures of one or more of the natural sciences
- A demonstrated proficiency in mathematics
- The understanding of and ability to use information technology with informed judgment
- The capacity for continuing self-education and improvement necessary to deal with change.

General Operating Information

Upper School Hours

- For Upper School students, classes begin at 8:00 a.m. Community Meeting is held weekly on Friday. This is a mandatory meeting for all students, unless otherwise announced. Dismissal time varies according to the daily schedule (1:40-3:30). Students who remain on campus after dismissal must be under the supervision of a faculty member.
- Students who have late arrival and/or early dismissal may still be asked to participate in school activities between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. These students will be given 24 hours notice of activities that require attendance during these times when they would not normally be on campus.
- For fees associated with Early Arrival and/or Extended Care, please refer to section 3.3 in the MSA Campus Handbook.

Dress Code

We believe that the general level of dress has a significant effect on the tone of the learning environment. Students are expected to be neat, clean, and appropriately dressed for school. Clothing should not be too short, too big/long, or too tight. Anything brought or worn to school should not impede the learning process. Any faculty member may recommend that an article of clothing or jewelry be removed if deemed disruptive. The general rule of thumb here is "when in doubt, don't." Outwear such as jackets, coats, hats, caps, etc., should be removed upon entering the building. Students must arrive at school dressed properly according to dress standards and must remain in dress code until leaving campus. This includes students taking coursework for dual credit in classes that meet prior to 3:40 p.m. **COVID Change: Students are encouraged, but not required, to wear a face mask. Students are asked to keep a face mask in their locker for times when it may be needed. Masks will also be available in the classroom and the main office.**

Student Drivers and Parking Regulations

Only students who have attained junior or senior standing and who are legally licensed to operate a vehicle are allowed to drive a vehicle to school. Remember that this is a privilege, not a right. A student driving form which requires proof of insurance, description of the vehicle being driven, and the tag number must be on file in the main office.

Violation of any of the following regulations will result in disciplinary referral. Repeated failure to abide by these rules will result in the revocation of the student's driving privileges at MSA.

1. MSA High School students must park in the designated area for students immediately upon arrival at school. This area is the parking lot beside Upper Elementary.
2. UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES should a student remain in the parking lot in a car after the vehicle has been parked. Windows should be closed, doors locked, all needed books and other items taken from the vehicle upon arrival on campus. Students are expected to drive and behave responsibly upon arrival and departure from the campus in any vehicle.
3. Students should only re-enter the parking lot when it is time for them to leave campus. Any other trips a student must make to his or her vehicle must be with the express permission of teachers/administration.
4. Students are only permitted to leave campus during school hours if they are a junior or senior in good standing and do not have a regularly scheduled on-campus class or activity. Any time a student leaves campus or returns to campus during the school day, he or she must sign in or out at the front desk.
5. Illegal drugs, unauthorized medications, alcoholic beverages, and weapons (including but not limited to guns and knives) whether in sight, discovered, or confiscated as the result of a search by school or law enforcement officials, will result in immediate recommendation for expulsion of the student. All items in automobiles driven to MSA are the responsibility of the student. All items are subject to search and seizure by MSA school personnel – without notice.
6. No vehicle will be operated in a manner deemed to be reckless while on the MSA campus.

The Grading Scale

MSA Middle School uses a traditional Skills Rating System (SRS) for reporting scholastic performance on student quarterly progress reports and semester report cards. The SRS includes the following range of scholastic performance:

<i>E</i>	<i>Excellent</i>
<i>S</i>	<i>Satisfactory</i>
<i>N</i>	<i>Needs Improvement</i>
<i>U</i>	<i>Unsatisfactory</i>
<i>F</i>	<i>Fail</i>

MSA follows the SC Uniform Grading Scale (SCUGS) when computing Grade Point Averages. The *High School* uses a traditional (A, B, C, D and F) ten point grading system, which includes the following ranges of scholastic performance:

A	100 - 90
B	80 - 89
C	70 - 79
D	60 - 69
F	< 60

Grades for Middle School students enrolled in High School level courses for graduation credit will also be computed using the above SC Uniform Grading Scale.

Homework

Homework is an integral part of a quality education. It not only provides excellent opportunities for developing good study habits, but also offers the student the opportunity to progress beyond the constraints of class time. It provides a framework for the student to apply what is being learned on an individual basis. Homework should be structured to complete, supplement, and enrich regular class work. It also provides review and reinforcement of a particular skill, topic, or concept.

Parents/guardians and students must be aware that completion of outside school work may be complicated by participation in extracurricular activities, part-time jobs, and other commitments. The school's expectation is that the completion of assignments be a high priority for each student.

Grading Periods

Our academic year consists of two semesters, each lasting 18 weeks. Each major grading period is nine weeks in duration. Information regarding student progress is issued mid-point of each reporting period as well as at the end of each nine weeks. Progress reports are distributed to students by the Guidance Counselor on the dates indicated on the MSA calendar.

GRADELINK

GRADELINK is the Student Information System that we use in the Upper School to record attendance, post assignments, record grades, etc. All Upper School students will have a login to access this information for each of their MSA classes. Parents will also be given a login to view information about student attendance, assignments, and grades. GRADELINK does allow users to set alerts to be notified immediately when absences/tardies or grades of a certain level are recorded.

Conferences

Student-led conferences are held at the conclusion of the first and third quarters. In addition, parents/guardians may initiate a conference by calling the Upper School Coordinator(s) who will make an appointment with the teacher team. Conferences are planned around the team's schedule and will not interfere with instructional time. Conferences may not include all team members. Conferences with specific team members should be requested at the time of the call. If a parent/guardian cannot attend a scheduled conference, the school must be notified as far in advance as possible so that another conference time can be arranged.

HS Drop/Add Policy

Please note the following guidelines for course drop/add:

- Students have **two class periods from the start of a course** to:
 - Add a course to their schedule
 - Choose the honors level of a course
- Students have **two academic weeks from the start of a course** to:
 - Drop an elective course without consequence
 - Drop the honors level of a course
- **After two academic weeks from the start of a course**, any withdrawals will be listed on the transcript as WP or WF depending on the student's class average.
- Students must petition the curriculum committee (HS Program Lead, Guidance Counselor, course teacher) to drop or withdraw from any course required for graduation regardless of timing.
- It should be noted that the appropriate documents (Drop/Add form, Academic Petition) must be submitted and approved by the curriculum committee for any of the above changes to be official.
- **Full-time students must be enrolled in a minimum of 5 classes (including dual credit) to maintain their full-time status.**

HS Academic Petition

Any request to vary the stated curriculum requirements of the Montessori School of Anderson must commence with the filing of an Academic Petition completed by the student requesting the variation and his or her parent or guardian. (See Guidance Counselor for form). The parent or guardian may request a meeting with the curriculum committee prior to the Committee convening to take action on the petition. Upon receipt of a completed academic petition, the curriculum committee shall meet and take appropriate action. The final decision of the curriculum committee shall be e-mailed to the student and his or her parents and the original form shall be retained in the student's file.

HS Honors for All Program

Highly motivated students are welcome to challenge themselves in our Honors for All program. Instructors will offer semester-long research projects/problems and presentations or special examinations – the successful completion of which results in a higher Grade Point Average posted to the student's transcript at the conclusion of each academic year. Teachers will provide honors contracts for students to sign that include the specific requirements for their particular class. Students who fail to complete honors coursework will see a reduction in their overall grade. Students may only drop the honors portion of a class before the drop/add day for that school year.

HS Dual Credit Eligibility

A student's program of study may include additional courses not offered through MSA. Through a dual credit arrangement with Anderson University and Tri-County Technical College, academic programs and courses may be identified as an appropriate part of the student's program of study. These college courses are offered to academically eligible students in grades 11 and 12 as an alternative to high school-level academic courses at MSA. Students taking dual credit courses are automatically entitled to the grade equivalency rating points for AP and IB-level courses that will be computed as such on their high school transcripts. Eligibility for enrollment in these courses is determined by the faculty, working in concert with the student and the student's parent/guardian. Other eligibility guidelines for taking dual credit courses through Anderson University and Tri-County Technical College include:

- MSA students must meet the appropriate pre-requisites for any course offered through Anderson University (AU) and Tri-County Technical College (TCTC).
- Students must be proficient in all of their MSA courses (a minimum GPA of 3.5)
- If a student does not maintain a C or better in every AU or TCTC course (a minimum GPA of 3.5), he or she may not be allowed to continue in the dual credit program, at the discretion of the administration. If the administration determines it is in the best interest of the student to continue in the dual credit program, the student will be required to retake the class. The grade received in the original class will be on the student's transcript but will not be computed in the student's GPA. The grade received in the class that is retaken will be computed as a part of his or her GPA.
- MSA students must demonstrate other areas of responsibility. Indicators include: good initiative, determination, commitment, discipline, attendance, and punctuality, as well as grades.
- Students must take the SAT by June 30th, the summer before their junior year for attendance at AU and must take a placement test offered through TCTC to attend TCTC.
- MSA will be responsible for the cost of Anderson University or Tri-County Technical College Classes that are necessary for graduation if MSA does not offer a course that meets the requirement. MSA will not be responsible for other costs, such as textbooks.

Students who meet eligibility guidelines will be strongly encouraged to enroll in AU and/or TCTC courses. It is our sincere desire that all students have the opportunity to take college courses during their high school tenure at MSA. In their discretion, the MSA Upper School Director, TCTC and/or AU may limit the number and types of courses allowed. Additionally, should a student decide not to enroll in AU and/or TCTC classes, he or she may be required to take additional classes or engage in an equivalent activity such as, but not limited to, an internship or community service at the discretion of the administration to meet minimum enrollment requirements.

Other Guidelines for Students taking AU/TCTC Courses

- When students are enrolled in an AU/TCTC course, all rules of MSA still apply.
- If an MSA student withdraws from an AU/TCTC course after the designated drop date, he/she will receive a "W" and will lose the opportunity to take additional college classes for one semester.
- If an MSA student earns an "F" in an AU/TCTC course, the student loses the opportunity to enroll in any dual enrollment courses for one year.

HS Academic Probation

At the end of each quarter, any High School student with a grade below 70, two or more grades below 73, or a quarter/semester average below 75 will be on Academic Probation (AP) for the subsequent quarter. Parents and students will be officially notified of this status. HS students on Academic Probation will be issued an academic contract that will be signed by the student and Guidance Counselor/Program Leader. Students will also be responsible to meet weekly with and have their progress monitored by the Guidance Counselor/Program Leader. A conference attended by the student, parents, Guidance Counselor/Program Leader and one or more teachers may be called to discuss an improvement plan. If a student's academic standing does not improve during the subsequent quarter, or if a student fails two or more classes, he/she will be unable to participate in extracurricular activities, unable to hold a student leadership position, and consideration may be given to the appropriateness of continuation at the Montessori School of Anderson.

MSA Graduation Requirements

To receive a Montessori School of Anderson diploma, students are required to complete at least 29 Carnegie units of study – a requirement that exceeds our accrediting body's standards as well as those of the S.C. State Department of Education.

In order to participate in the Graduation ceremony, the Director of the Upper School, the Administrator, and the Board of Trustees must certify that the student has met the diploma requirements as set forth in the Montessori School of Anderson High School Profile. Please refer to it for a list of specific courses.

Community Service

In addition to completing the minimum requirements as set forth in the High School Profile, students must also complete a minimum of 100 hours of community service from the time they begin the 9th grade and the time they complete the 12th grade. Students who transfer in from other schools will be responsible for 25 hours for every year they attend MSA High School.

Students must complete community service forms documenting their volunteer hours and may not complete more than 25% of their total hours on the MSA campus. **COVID CHANGE: On-campus community service hours in excess of 25% of a student's total hours will be allowed during COVID restrictions. In fact, more on-campus community service opportunities will be made available to students so that they may meet their requirements during this time.** (Parents/Legal Guardians may not sign a form as the Service Supervisor.) Forms must be submitted to the Guidance Counselor during the semester in which the volunteer hours are performed in order to receive credit. Summer hours must be submitted within the first quarter of the following school year to receive credit.

Service hours will be approved at the discretion of administration. For this reason, students are encouraged to get their community service pre-approved by the Guidance Counselor.

Graduation Honors Policy

MSA desires to honor its graduates by recognizing special accomplishments of students at Graduation. Since MSA provides opportunities for its qualified students to attend college courses at AU/TCTC, it is the desire of the Administration to establish the following honors categories which will be awarded to students meeting the requisite criteria upon completion of their high school careers:

Cum Laude – “With Praise” _____ 4.375 – 4.675 / 5.0 scale equivalent
 Magna Cum Laude – “With Great Praise” _____ 4.6875 – 4.975 / 5.0 scale equivalent
 Summa Cum Laude – “With Highest Praise” _____ 4.9875 – 5.0+ / 5.0 scale equivalent

To be considered for these honors, each student shall be enrolled at MSA during their fifth semester of high school (first semester of their Junior year) for continuous enrollment until graduation.

College Guidance

Preparation for college life is one of the most exciting aspects of the high school experience, and our guidance counselor has designed a comprehensive college preparatory curriculum that will fully prepare students for admission to, and success in, the college environment.

During the course of their high school years at MSA, students will have completed a series of college preparatory activities that include:

- Real-life experiences through the required internships each year
- Interviewing techniques
- Standardized testing
- Visits to area/regional colleges and university
- Actual interaction with AU and TCTC admissions staff and faculty as concurrent students at AU and TCTC
- Direct college placement support

For further information on our College Guidance program, please consult the MSA College Guidance Handbook.

Attendance

Attendance Policies and Procedures

Daily attendance and active participation in class is a critical part of the learning process. Policies and procedures established at MSA are designed to help students learn responsibly and increase their potential for success. A significant role of today’s school is to help students learn to understand and appreciate the importance of punctuality and regular attendance. Evidence shows that regular attendance has a positive carry-over to the world of work. Attendance is the responsibility of the students and parents/guardians.

All students are expected to be in class during their scheduled class times, including study hall or virtual coursework. **COVID CHANGE: Upperclassmen who are enrolled in dual credit courses or who have completed their classes for the day may leave at the end of their last class. Also, Friday will be an early dismissal day for all upper school students.** Absences from study hall are also considered when determining the need for Attendance Recovery and/or an Attendance Intervention Plan.

Absences – An Overview

Pursuant to South Carolina State Law, truancy is defined as follows:

A. Truant:

A child, at least 6 but not yet 17 years old, who has accumulated three consecutive unlawful absences or a total of five unlawful absences.

B. Habitual Truant:

A child, at least 12 but not yet 17 years old, who (1) fails to comply with the intervention plan developed by the school, the child, and the parents or guardians, and (2) accumulates two or more additional unlawful absences.

C. Chronic Truant:

A child, at least 12 but not yet 17 years old, who (1) has been through the school intervention process; (2) has reached the level of a habitual truant and has been referred to family court and placed under an order to attend school; and (3) continues to accumulate unlawful absences.

Pursuant to South Carolina State Law, lawful and unlawful absences are defined as follows:

A. Lawful absences include but are not limited to:

1. Absences caused by a student's own illness and whose attendance in school would endanger his or her health or the health of others,
2. Absences due to an illness or death in the student's immediate family,
3. Absences due to a recognized religious holiday of the student's faith, and
4. Absences due to activities that are approved in advance by the principal.
5. Pre – arranged absences (Must be approved in writing by the Director of the Upper School)
6. Internships or school related and approved activities
7. Short term suspensions

B. Unlawful absences include but are not limited to:

1. Absences of a student without the knowledge of his or her parents, or
2. Absences of a student without acceptable cause with the knowledge of his or her parents.

Suspension is not to be counted as an unlawful absence for truancy purposes.

The Montessori School of Anderson Upper School adopts the State of South Carolina's definition of lawful and unlawful absences.

Policy of MSA Upper School regarding lawful absences:

After three consecutive absences or five absences (during one semester), written documentation is required to inform of the reason for the absence. Said documentation shall be signed by the parent/guardian or a health care professional and submitted to the Upper School Director within three school days of the absence. After ten absences, for any reason, all absences must be verified by a healthcare professional, *notes from parents will not be accepted*. All written excuses shall be kept on file. Failure to provide excuses in compliance with this policy shall result in an unlawful absence.

If a student has more than five unexcused absences, even in a study hall class, the parent or guardian of the student shall be contacted to meet with the Program Lead and relevant faculty to formulate a written intervention plan which shall address ways to encourage attendance and complete academic work. Options may include but are not limited to attendance recovery during the summer or on weekends, at the expense of the parent/guardian. This plan shall be signed by all participants. Should the student or his or her parent or guardian be unwilling to cooperate with the formulation of an Attendance Intervention Plan, or violate the plan once formulated, the school, may, in the discretion of the School Administrator, expel the student from school and/or report the non-compliance to relevant law enforcement or child welfare agencies.

The Attendance clerk shall notify the Program Lead when a student has three consecutive unexcused absences or a total of five unexcused absences. At such time the above procedures shall be implemented.

When a student arrives late for school, the late arrival constitutes a "tardy." Three tardy marks in any academic class will equal one absence in that class. (See tardiness policy below).

In order to maintain the integrity of each and every diploma awarded through the MSA High School, MSA will require that students who miss more than 10 days of instruction participate in an MSA Approved credit recovery program at the cost of the parent or guardian, whether or not the student is passing the course. The length and involvement of the credit recovery program depends on the number of absences that exceed the maximum number of 10 and/or the level of performance in the course. The Guidance Counselor and the Administrator must approve the source of credit recovery instruction. There are no exceptions to this regulation.

Upon successful completion of the credit recovery program the credit recovery grade will be averaged into the student's MSA course grade to derive the final course average. In extreme cases, a student with more than 10 absences per year may, at the discretion of administration, be withdrawn from MSA, be retained in the current grade, or be asked not to return.

For students taking dual credit courses at AU and TCTC, the individual professor's attendance policy for course credit applies, and MSA can in no way intervene on the student's behalf in this regard.

Pre-Arranged Absences

If the student anticipates an extended absence, a written note by the parent/guardian indicating the dates the student will be absent must accompany the request for approval of the extended absence. Then, the Administrator and the Program Lead will develop an Absence Contract to be signed by the parents. Absences have a detrimental effect on student accomplishment and progress. This negative effect should be considered prior to requesting an Absence Contract. Extended absences could result in loss of credit for classes. Failure to abide by the Absence Contract may be grounds for credit loss or suspension. THIS CONTRACT WILL NOT APPLY TO ANY ANDERSON UNIVERSITY/TRI-COUNTY TECHNICAL COLLEGE COURSES. ABSENCES FROM THOSE COURSES ARE AT THE DISCRETION OF THE PROFESSOR.

PLEASE NOTE: Regardless of the reason for the absence, it is the student's responsibility to request all make-up assignments from teachers on the day the student returns to class following an absence. Work should be submitted and tests made up no later than one week after the absence. After that, it is at the discretion of the faculty member whether or not to allow the student to make up the work missed.

Student Behavior

Montessori School of Anderson believes discipline is a process in which students at all levels are supported in developing respect, self-control, and making responsible choices. We offer a beautiful peace curriculum based on integrity, respect, honesty, and responsibility. Our classrooms provide many opportunities for the development of these universal values. Grace and courtesy are part of the classroom learning and are modeled, practiced and discussed daily. Basic class rules are explained to students during orientation, and, when appropriate, students are involved in the formulation of class rules. This approach helps students learn responsibility for his/her own actions and that actions have resulting consequences.

All faculty and staff have been given the authority and responsibility to insure compliance with properly adopted rules and regulations, even if violations to these rules occur outside of the classroom. The administration reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of behavior and dress. The administration also reserves the right to suspend or expel students as prescribed by the contents of this and related documents.

While the Montessori philosophy endeavors to meet the individual needs of student learners, MSA's obligation to maintain the safety for each and every student is paramount. Therefore, the following behavior violations will apply to each and every MSA student – the consequences of which will be determined by the Administration.

- Chronic tardiness
- Cutting classes
- Cutting school
- Disrespect
- Disruptive acts which interfere with the educational process
- Distribution of unauthorized materials on school grounds
- Dress code violations
- Fighting
- Forgery
- Gambling or possessing gambling devices and materials

- Inappropriate behavior
- Insubordination (refusing to obey faculty, staff, and administration)
- Intimidation of others
- Leaving campus
- Making threats
- Being in off-limits areas
- Parking lot violations
- Physical and verbal abuse of others
- Possession of a weapon (gun, knife, club, etc.)
- Possession of fireworks
- Possession, use, distribution, or being under the influence of illegal drugs, alcoholic beverages, or controlled substances
- Selling any unauthorized items at school
- Sexual harassment
- Smoking
- Use of obscene/inappropriate language or gesturing
- Willful destruction of school or private property on school grounds
- Unlawful, inappropriate, or unethical use of computer technology (regardless of whether or not the computer belongs to you or your family)

Electronics Policy

It is our obligation to prepare students for a technologically savvy world. To meet this challenge, students in the Montessori Upper School classes may bring their own technology to use as a tool for learning.

Middle School

Students may bring devices such as cell phones, smart watches, computers, or tablets to use for academic purposes. Upon arrival at school, cell phones must be placed in their assigned spot in the wall hanger, which will be located next to the Middle School Office. Smart watches, computers and tablets must be put in lockers or remain in book-bags. Students may use any of the above mentioned technology with permission from their supervising teacher.

High School

Students may bring devices such as cell phones, smart watches, computers, or tablets to use for academic purposes. Students may use these devices during class with teacher permission. Otherwise, they should remain in a backpack or locker. Students will be allowed to use computers during lunch as long as they do not become a distraction.

Definition of “Technology”

At the Montessori Upper School, “technology” means a privately owned wireless, portable electronic equipment that includes, but is not limited to, existing and emerging mobile communication systems and smart technologies, portable internet devices, hand-held entertainment systems or portable information technology systems that can be used for word processing, wireless Internet access, image capture/recording, sound recording and information transmitting/receiving/storing, etc. (Technology including but not limited to: iPad or other tablets; Nook, Kindle or other electronic book readers; Laptop or Chromebook; Smartphone – iPhone/Android; Gaming systems)

Computers/Electronic Devices

A Computer Acceptable Use policy, procedures, and permission form must be signed by students and parents/guardians and be on file before computer access is given to MSA students. This training is provided at the beginning of each school year during Student Orientation. Computer resources include hardware, software, and the Internet. Such resources are to be used as learning tools for academic research and growth only. Inappropriate, illegal, or unethical use of computer resources and the Internet is prohibited and will be dealt with accordingly. This includes using “chat” functions during class time. Violation of these rules will result in immediate disciplinary action.

Internet

Use of the internet is a privilege which must be used responsibly. Any inappropriate or unauthorized use of the internet including but not limited to: bullying, threatening or accessing unsuitable sites is strictly prohibited and will result in immediate disciplinary action.

Headphones/Earbuds

Students may not use headphones or earbuds during instructional time unless specifically authorized by the teacher. Use of headphones at other **appropriate** times is permitted only in the classroom and not in the halls, parking lot or while engaging in other campus activities.

Security and Damages

Responsibility to keep *personal* devices secure rests with the individual owner. **The Montessori School of Anderson, its staff or employees, will not be liable for any device stolen or damages to any personal device on campus.** It is recommended that **appropriate** skins (decals) and other custom touches be used to physically identify your device from others. Additionally, protective cases for technology are encouraged.

Students will be held responsible for damages to school equipment due to misuse. Parents will be responsible for costs associated with repair or replacement of the damaged equipment.

Other Matters relating to Technology

The use of technology to provide educational material is not a necessity but a privilege. When abused, privileges will be taken away and disciplinary action will ensue. When respected, the learning environment will be enhanced. Students and parents/guardians must adhere to the Student Code of Conduct. Additionally, technology:

- Must be in silent mode while on school campus.
- Shall not be used to cheat on assignments or tests.
- Shall not be used for non-instructional purposes such as texting, instant messaging, social media or telephone calls during the school day (From 8:00 – 3:40) .
- Shall not be used to record, transmit or post photographic images or video of a person, or persons on campus during school activities and/or hours unless related to an academic assignment and with the specific permission of a teacher or administrator.
- May only be used to access files on the computer or internet sites which are relevant to the classroom curriculum.
- Communications between parent and student shall be made through the Main Office. Emergency messages will be sent to the student as soon as possible.
- If your child is ill and needs to be picked up from school, a member of the faculty/staff will contact the parent/guardian. The nurse will not ask a student to text/call his or her parents from a cell phone.
- Parents and students are asked not to share (transmit or post) photos and/or videos of a person or persons on school property, at school events, or during school activities without permission of the person(s) pictured, or the consent of the parent/guardian when the person pictured is a student under 18 years old.

Please note that students who cannot bring in outside technology will be able to use the school's equipment or be given an alternative means of completing assignments. No student will be left out of our instruction.

School Activities

Attending MSA-sponsored activities is a privilege that can be revoked either for the remainder of the event or for all future events. Students must abide by the rules of appropriate conduct and behavior during these social events. All disciplinary procedures normally followed at school are in effect at these events.

Field Trips and Internship Experiences

Any student participating in a field trip or similar activity must comply with the dress code, behavioral standards, and parent/guardian permission requirements as outlined by the supervising faculty member. In addition, all transportation for field trips and related activities must be on the MSA bus or in approved faculty/parent vehicles. No student is allowed to drive a vehicle on field trips. **COVID CHANGE: Off-campus activities will be limited and considered on a case-by-case basis. The internship experience may take a different form this year, including virtual aspects and independent research.**

Food and Refreshments

Food is not allowed in classrooms for reasons other than those that are medically excused. Drinks in resealable containers are allowed; however, they may not be taken into computer or science labs.

Junior and Senior students eligible to drive and with parent permission to leave campus may go off-campus for lunch. Students may not transport younger students off-campus for lunch without specific, written parent permission for each occasion.

Public Conduct on School Grounds

MSA expects a high standard of conduct from its students, faculty, and support staff. No less is expected from its visitors. MSA teachers, staff, and administration will enforce the Code of Conduct, which governs the conduct of ALL persons authorized upon any premises or property that is under the control of the school for use in its teaching as well as at other locations where MSA students and employees are participating in administrative, cultural, recreational, athletic, and any other programs and activities. Any person who is not authorized by the school is trespassing and subject to state and local legal action.

Student Fundraising

The Upper School Coordinator(s) and the Administrator must approve all Upper School student fund-raising activities.

Forgery and Plagiarism

Theft is not limited to physical property, but also includes the ideas of others.

Forgery is a form of theft. The forging of a parent/guardian or another student's signature on any letter to the school or on any school document will result in disciplinary action. Falsely representing a parent/guardian in any way will result in disciplinary action.

Plagiarism is also a form of theft. Using another person's works either in part or as a whole without proper bibliographic citation is plagiarism. Submitting a computer-generated file or document either in part or as a whole without proper references is a form of plagiarism. Students who use plagiarized papers or projects, or who "cut and paste" from the Internet are subject to disciplinary action.

Honor Code

Students are expected to uphold the values of honesty and integrity in all that they do as students of MSA. Cheating, whether during in-person, on-campus learning or during remote learning, will not be tolerated. A student will be subject to disciplinary action, including suspension or expulsion, if his/her behavior is in violation of the honor code.

Search and Seizure

Students' personal property – including cell phones, computers, backpacks, vehicles, and/or other electronic devices, may be searched and seized by the MSA faculty and administration at any time and without probable cause.

Suspension

Suspension means that a student has temporarily lost the right to attend classes at MSA during a set period of time as determined by the school Administration, according to the offense.

To avoid a grade of Incomplete for any projects, tests, or assignments missed, the student must make up the work missed. The work must be submitted to the appropriate faculty member upon the student's return to school from suspension. Failure to submit work due will result in a grade of 0.

Extra-Curricular Activities –

To be eligible to participate in MSA-sponsored extra-curricular activities, a student is required to:

- Students must have a passing grade in all MSA courses and (if applicable) the academic requirements of the organization governing the sport, activity or program AND
- Have and maintain a record of acceptable and appropriate citizenship, character, and personal conduct, both inside and outside the school.
- Be in compliance with the attendance policy

This detailed list of the rules and regulations of the Montessori School of Anderson Upper School is a necessary part of school administration. Because of the nature of our students, who are respectful and mature, and the atmosphere of our program, infractions are uncommon.

Responsibility for lost or damaged property

Responsibility for technology, electronic devices, musical instruments and any and all personal property belonging to a student rests solely with the owner of the property. **The Montessori School of Anderson, its staff and/or employees, are not liable for any device or personal property which is stolen, damaged or destroyed while on school grounds, or at or during school sanctioned field trips or activities.** It is recommended that devices and personal property be appropriately labeled to show ownership and protective cases, if appropriate, are encouraged.

UPPER ELEMENTARY SUPPLEMENT

(grades 4 - 6)

Welcome to Upper Elementary! As teachers we look forward to the opportunity to guide your children along this exciting stage in their education.

The following document is not intended to replace or supersede the Montessori School of Anderson Parent Handbook, but is meant to be used as a supplement to address certain requirements specific to this level.

MSA continues to evaluate its procedures and policies throughout the year in order to best meet the academic and structural requirements necessary for an effective learning environment. As such, the policies contained within the preceding Parent Handbook and the Upper Elementary Supplement are subject to change at any time. However, parents and students will be duly notified of these changes.

Arrival

Children may enter our classroom at 8:00 a.m. By arriving early and before work begins, this allows children to prepare for the morning work cycle. Many children need time to come in, greet friends, and settle before beginning work. Lessons, group or individual, begin promptly at 8:15 a.m. When children arrive late, they miss an important part of their morning routine, so please make it a priority to get children here on time. After 8:15 a.m., the door is locked and children must visit the office before coming to the classroom. Children will be signed in as tardy and will be walked to our classroom by our staff.

Early Arrival

The Doors to Upper Elementary will open at 7:30 for Upper El Early Arrival. For guidelines, times, and fees associated with Early Arrival and/or Extended Day, please refer to section 3.3 in the MSA Campus Handbook. *Children participating in Early Arrival are expected to enter the classroom and choose work independently. The time between 7:30 and 8:00 is an important preparation time for the Montessori Guide.*

Arrival Safety

Please do not park along the front of Upper Elementary because this creates a traffic hazard at a very busy time.

Dismissal Safety

The Upper Elementary classroom is situated at the entrance to the MSA campus. This is a potential source of traffic problems, especially at dismissal time. *Please do not park under the porte cochere in front of the main office during or between dismissal times. If you are waiting for Upper School dismissal, please park in a parking space.*

COVID-19 Change: Academic Year Arrival and Dismissal

Early Arrival - 7:30 AM

School starts - 8:15 AM

School ends - 3:15 PM

Extended Care - 3:30-5:30 PM (See below for more details.)

- **Upper Elementary students will enter and exit only from the main UE door.**
- **UE students are encouraged to wear a mask each day. (See attached safety protocols.)**
- **UE students are encouraged to bring their own (labeled) water bottles because water fountains will not be operating.**

General Notes:

- **Only students will be allowed to enter classrooms.**
- **Children's temperatures will be checked each morning before entering any building and just before departure. (See attached safety protocols for details.)**
- **Lunches should be sent from home daily unless provided by the school or classrooms. More information regarding in-school meals will be shared by levels.**

Extended Care Notes:

- **Elementary Extended Care begins daily at 3:30 PM. Students in classrooms at this time will be signed into the Extended Care Program, which will be held in the round room near the second parking lot exit.**
- **If circumstances require schools to "go remote," our elementary students will have the option to remain on campus under our DSS childcare license.**
- **During such a remote period, on-campus elementary students will be housed in the round room instead of their usual classrooms per DSS requirements.**
- **During any remote learning period, elementary students who choose to remain on campus will participate in their individual level learning programs while on campus.**

Tardiness

Please refer to section 4.4 in the Parent Handbook on tardiness. Please make every effort to have your child at school on or before academic time begins. We understand that from time to time it is difficult to get to school on time. As our policy dictates, the classroom door is locked at 8:15 a.m. each morning. If you arrive with your child after 8:15 a.m., please go to the main office to check-in. Door knocking interrupts the classroom and pulls children out of their work. Children who are tardy will be escorted from the office by a staff member who has a key and can make a quiet entry into the classroom. Thank you so much for your consideration and cooperation in this matter.

On Thursday and Friday mornings we celebrate student birthdays at 8:30 a.m. If there is a celebration happening, it will be indicated on the classroom door with a sign. Please do not enter the classroom, but instead, follow the instructions on the sign and drop your child off in the office. As soon as the birthday celebration is complete, your child will be picked up from the office by an Upper Elementary community member.

Birthday Celebrations

Birthdays are very important in our Upper Elementary classroom. We celebrate them regularly on Thursday and Friday mornings. Celebrations begin at 8:30 a.m. and last about 20-30 minutes. Parents are invited to these special ceremonies and will be notified by email to save the date. We welcome donations

in honor of your child in the form of strategy games or scholarly books for research and enjoyment. Children prepare their own special birthday snack at school with a friend. We support your child in the planning and preparation of birthday snacks. **COVID-19 Change: We will continue to honor our students by celebrating birthdays in an intimate and special way for our students. At this time, parents will have the option to attend virtually.**

Snacks and Lunches

Lunches

Upper Elementary offers a lunch option on Wednesday and Thursday as a fundraiser for our classroom. Our students participate in the planning and preparation of lunch on Thursdays. (This is for the Upper Elementary class only and is not associated with the "School Lunch" as mentioned in the MSA Parent Handbook.)

If you choose not to purchase the school or classroom lunches, your child will need to bring a lunchbox on those days. We strongly encourage parents to support their children in planning and preparing their own lunches. This is perfectly ideal for children in the second plane of development.

If you want to bring a purchased lunch to school, we respectfully ask that you bring a lunch that is not fast-food. All grocery stores nearby have excellent choices in sandwiches, salad bars, soups, and more. Please use these options if you bring a purchased lunch to school.

Sometimes, lunches get left behind at home. Again, children this age are ready to assume the responsibility of remembering to bring necessary items to school. If children forget their lunches, we will support them in preparing lunch at school. We always have plenty of food on hand to offer several choices. Please allow this to be a learning opportunity for your child.

Classroom Snack

As part of our Practical Life curriculum, our children prepare their own snacks in our classroom. They receive nutrition and food preparation lessons in the classroom. *In order for us to provide healthy snacks for the entire class, we charge a snack fee of \$135.00 per year to be paid in two installments: \$60.00 in August and \$75.00 in January. This fee is to be turned in to the classroom teacher. Checks should be made out to the Montessori School of Anderson. Students may not bring snacks from home. Participation in snack is optional.*

Single Use Plastics

Single use plastic items are a detriment to our world environment. We ask that you partner with us in reducing the use of these items as much as possible. Therefore, we ask that you refrain from sending Ziploc bags, straws, plastic grocery bags, and other similar items to school. We recognize that to go fully plastic free may be unattainable for your family, but we ask that you make efforts to comply as much as reasonably possible. The Upper Elementary classroom will be as diligent in this respect as possible and will not use Ziploc bags, straws, plastic grocery bags, and other similar items in our community. There are many great resources to support your efforts in this challenge. A few resources that you can use to learn more about this challenge are: www.plasticfreechallenge.org and https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/25496/singleUsePlastic_sustainability.pdf?isAllowed=y&sequence=1.

Community Service

Community service is a vital component of our curriculum. We believe that it is just as vital as any other academic subject. Students are expected to dress appropriately (see MSA Parent Handbook) for community service when we travel off campus.

COVID-19 Change: Elementary students will not participate in community service cross-level in other classrooms. We will, however, incorporate opportunities to provide community service in other ways.

Field Trips & Going Out

Students in Upper Elementary will participate in field trips regularly throughout the school year. We make our best efforts to communicate these dates at the beginning of the year. However, things come up, and we will have other shorter-notice opportunities during the year for outings. These will be communicated with as much time as possible before the event.

Going Out is a term used to describe student driven outings. These may or may not involve the entire community. Going Out trips are the result of student interest, collaboration, research, and planning and are planned in their entirety by student members of the classroom community.

All outings, regardless of type, will have permission forms. Any student who does not have a permission form returned by *the deadline on the form* will miss the opportunity to attend the trip. *Children who miss a field trip for this reason will be placed in another classroom for the day if it is not possible to stay home.*

COVID-19 Change: For the 2021 – 2022 academic year, field trips will be limited and considered on a case-by-case basis.

Classroom Behavior and Discipline

We have the highest expectations of our children for behavior. We will provide the support and guidance to empower your child to use problem solving techniques and conflict management strategies. All disciplinary actions will be handled on a child-by-child, incident-by-incident basis. We honor the strengths and differences in all children. We use a logical consequence approach to discipline *rooted in “rights & responsibilities” philosophy*. Any student who needs more than redirection as discipline will be involved in an appropriate exercise that encourages reflection, communication, and proactive planning. This experience gives the child an opportunity to express his or her view of what the problem is and how it can be avoided in the future. Children are expected to behave respectfully toward teachers, peers, and classroom materials. At the beginning of the year, we establish rights and responsibilities for all persons in our classroom and in our school.

Montessori philosophy is one of positive discipline - fair, consistent, and natural consequences rather than punishment. Children learn many important life lessons through mistakes and this classroom is a safe place for these types of learning experiences. Children learn that all choices have consequences, positive and negative. This aspect of our program is just one component in learning to be a responsible individual. In the event of repeated disruptive behavior or physical aggression, actions will be documented and appropriate steps will be taken including loss of freedom, communication with parents and administration, and creation of a plan to move forward successfully. A meeting with parents, staff and the School Administrator will be necessary to explore possible solutions. The safety and best interest of the child is always at the heart of our actions.

Montessori School of Anderson has an absolute zero policy regarding violence in action or words. Students who are violent against others will be removed from the classroom until such behaviors can be addressed with parent and child.

Classroom Attire

Please refer to the MSA Parent Handbook for a general description of acceptable and unacceptable attire. Students wearing skirts must wear leggings or shorts to allow for freedom of movement without exposing the upper thigh area. Students wearing open-toed shoes will not be allowed to play on the playground at recess, and will be required to remain at the top of the hill near the UE classroom or in the amphitheater.

Class Work

Your child's work is done in notebooks and folders that are kept in the classroom. In addition to making an appointment to visit as an observer, we invite you to experience your child's work in progress during our visit mornings. These are times when you may spend part of a morning working with or shadowing your child. We also compile portfolios of student work which are sent home regularly throughout the school year for sharing at home. Portfolios are returned to the classroom after being shared at home. We welcome you to come in and observe the work going on in the classroom. Simply go to the main office to make your plans to observe and receive your Visitor's Pass.

COVID-19 Change: Visitors and In-class observations will be limited this academic year.

Homework

In keeping with Montessori theory and practice, students in the Upper Elementary program do not receive supplemental homework as a part of the weekly academic routine beyond practicing Khan Academy mathematics and regular reading. Instead we employ a model that more realistically reflects our adult lives. This means that there may be times when students need to complete work at home to meet expectations, to promote growth, or to pursue further information related to their in-class work.

Projects in Upper Elementary

Students in Upper Elementary will participate in several curriculum related or inquiry based projects throughout the school year. Some of these projects will be "at home work", and some will be completed at school over a period of several weeks. In the case of "in class projects", students will need to communicate material needs to parents in the event that we do not supply materials. Projects with these needs will have information regarding this included in the original assignment.

Related Arts Enrichment

In addition to our regular class work, various related arts enrichment opportunities are offered throughout the year.

- **Fiber Arts**
- **Horticulture**
- **Suzuki Violin**
- **Music & Drama**
- **P.E.**
- **Spanish**
- **S.T.E.A.M.**

Student Email Accounts

Students in the Upper Elementary Classroom use email accounts. This is a part of our Practical Life curriculum. Student accounts are not ever to be used for social purposes, and are for academic communications only. Students who do not comply with this policy will lose access to their email accounts.

Accountability, Responsibility, & Independence

As much as possible, we are striving to prepare children for life. As a parent of a child this age, it is your job to recognize and remove yourself from the seat of accountability so that your child may grow to fully understand boundaries and expectations.

In the event that a student forgets to bring a needed item to school, the child will not be allowed to communicate with home in order to retrieve the item. This can relate to lunches, assignments, permission forms, folders, and more. Please honor this boundary by waiting it out until the next day, even if you realize that your child has forgotten something. The only exceptions are medications and lunches. If you recognize that your child's lunch is in the car and want to return to school to drop it off, we are happy for you to do that. We always have food on hand for those days when lunch is forgotten. If you do want to bring a purchased lunch to school, we ask respectfully that you bring a lunch that is not fast-food. All grocery stores nearby have excellent choices in sandwiches, salad bars, soups, and more. Please use these options if you bring lunch to school for your child.

Communications

We use both email and weekly newsletters/updates as tools for communication. You can expect to receive Upper Elementary curriculum updates, Montessori Matters, and important reminders via email. We try to send all notices home with your child after discussing the information with the children. You should always feel free to ask questions, offer suggestions, and address concerns. Teachers are available to answer questions via email and phone during the week. Email and phone messages are checked before school, the middle of the day, and after school. These are times to check, but may not allow sufficient time to respond. Please allow 24 hours for responses in this manner. If you are communicating on the weekend, expect communication to be returned by the end of the next school day. Many questions can be easily addressed through email and notes. In the event that there is an item of greater concern that needs to be discussed face-to-face, please set an appointment with your child's teacher. One of the greatest benefits of attending our school is the accessibility to teachers. We are partners in supplying the best possible educational, social, and emotional environment for our children.

COVID-19 Specific Guidelines:

Students are encouraged, but not required, to wear masks on a daily basis. Under certain circumstances they may be asked to wear a mask temporarily - for example, until they are picked up if they become symptomatic during the school day. Masks will be available in the classroom if needed. Students are encouraged to bring a mask from home to keep in their cubby.

Students should stay home if they are not feeling well or have been exposed to someone who has COVID. Remote learning options are available for students who miss school for health-related reasons. This will be arranged individually between families and elementary faculty.

We will not use our water fountains that are currently installed in the classrooms. Children are encouraged to bring water bottles to school. There is also glassware available in the classroom for student use.

LOWER ELEMENTARY SUPPLEMENT

(grades 1 - 3)

Welcome to Lower Elementary! As teachers we look forward to the opportunity to guide your children along this exciting stage in their education.

The following document is not intended to replace or supersede the Montessori School of Anderson Parent Handbook, but is meant to be used as a supplement to address certain requirements specific to this level.

MSA continues to evaluate its procedures and policies throughout the year in order to best meet the academic and structural requirements necessary for an effective learning environment. As such, the policies contained within the preceding Parent Handbook and the Lower Elementary Supplement are subject to change at any time. However, parents and students will be duly notified of these changes.

Early Arrival and Extended Day

The door to Lower Elementary will open at 7:30am for Lower Elementary Early Arrival. Extended Care for Lower Elementary students will begin at 3:15. For questions about guidelines, times, and fees associated with Early Arrival and/or Extended Day, please refer to section 3.3 in the MSA Campus Handbook.

Arrival

Children may enter our classroom at 8:00 a.m. By arriving early and before work begins, this allows children to prepare for the morning work cycle. Many children need time to come in, greet friends, and settle before beginning work. Lessons, group or individual, begin promptly at 8:15. When children arrive late, they may miss an important part of their morning routine. Please make it a priority to have children here on time.

After 8:15, the door is locked and children must visit the office before coming to the classroom. Children will be signed in as tardy and will be walked to our classroom by our staff.

Dismissal

Dismissal begins at 3:00 PM. Children go to our Extended Day Program at 3:15 PM. Please remember that we will not let your child leave with anyone other than a parent or guardian without written permission.

Drop-off/Pick-up Procedures

When dropping off your child in the morning, please pull to the curb in front of your child's elementary classroom. Allow your child to exit the vehicle safely from the passenger side and continue on in order to keep traffic flowing smoothly. Afternoon pick-up follows the same procedure. If you need to park or leave your vehicle, please find a space in the parking lot to do so.

COVID-19 Change: Academic Year Arrival and Dismissal

Early Arrival - 7:30 AM

School starts -8:15 AM**School ends - 3:00 PM Extended Care - 3:15 -5:30 PM (See below for more details.)**

- Lower Elementary children will enter and exit only from the main LE door.
- LE students are encouraged, but not required, to wear a mask each day. (See attached safety protocols.)
- LE students are encouraged to bring their own (labeled) water bottles because water fountains will not be operating.

General Notes:

- Only students will be allowed to enter classrooms.
- Children's temperatures will be checked each morning before entering any building and just before departure. (See attached safety protocols for details.)
- Lunches should be sent from home daily unless provided by the school or classrooms. More information regarding in-school meals will be shared by levels.

Extended Care Notes:

- Lower Elementary Extended Care begins daily at 3:15 PM. Students in classrooms at this time will be signed into the Extended Care Program, which will be held in the round room near the second parking lot exit.
- If circumstances require schools to "go remote," our elementary students will have the option to remain on campus under our DSS childcare license.
- During such a remote period, on-campus elementary students will be housed in the round room instead of their usual classrooms per DSS requirements.
- During any remote learning period, elementary students who choose to remain on campus will participate in their individual level learning programs while on campus.

Tardiness (refer to item 4.4 in the Parent Handbook)

Please make every effort to have your child at school on or before the time that academic time begins. We understand that from time to time it is difficult to get to school on time. If you arrive with your child after 8:15, please go to the office instead of our classroom. As our policy dictates, our door is locked at 8:15 each morning. Door knocking interrupts the classroom and pulls children out of their work. Children will be escorted from the office by a staff member who has a key and can make a quiet entry into the classroom. Thank you so much for your consideration and cooperation in this matter.

Discipline

Children are expected to behave respectfully toward teachers, peers, and classroom materials. At the beginning of the year, we establish rights and responsibilities for all persons in our classroom and in our school. Montessori philosophy is one of positive discipline – fair, consistent, and natural consequences rather than punishment. Children learn many important life lessons through mistakes and this classroom is a safe place for these types of learning experiences. Children learn that all choices have consequences,

positive and negative. This aspect of our program is just one component in learning to be a responsible individual.

We have the highest expectations of our children for behavior. We will provide the support and guidance to empower your child to use problem solving techniques and conflict management strategies. We honor the strengths and differences in all children, so all disciplinary actions will be handled on a child-by-child, incident-by-incident basis.

In the event of repeated disruptive behavior or physical aggression, actions will be documented and appropriate steps will be taken including loss of freedoms, communication with parents and administration, and creation of a plan to move forward successfully. A meeting with parents, staff, and an administrator will be necessary to explore possible solutions. The safety and best interest of your child is always at the heart of our actions.

Class Work

Your child's work is done in notebooks and folders that are kept in the classroom. In addition to making an appointment to visit as an observer, we invite you to experience your child's work in progress during our visit mornings. These are times when you may spend part of a morning working with or shadowing your child. We welcome you to come in and observe the work going on in the classroom. Simply go to the office to make your plans to observe and receive your Visitor's Pass.

COVID-19 Change: Visitors and In-class observations will be limited this academic year.

Classroom Lunches

Our students participate in the planning and preparation of lunch each Wednesday and Thursday. (This is for the Lower Elementary class only and is not associated with the "School Lunch" as mentioned in the MSA Parent Handbook.) If you choose not to purchase the school or classroom lunches, your child will need to bring a lunchbox on those days.

We strongly encourage parents to support their children in planning and preparing their own lunches. This is perfectly ideal for children in the second plane of development. Sometimes, lunches get left behind at home. Again, children this age are ready to assume the responsibility of remembering to bring necessary items to school. If children forget their lunches, we will support them in preparing lunch at school. We always have plenty of food on hand to offer several choices. Please allow this to be a learning opportunity for your child.

Classroom Snack

As part of our Practical Life curriculum, our children prepare their own snacks in our classroom. They receive nutrition and food preparation lessons in the classroom. *In order for us to provide healthy snacks for the entire class, we charge a snack fee of \$135.00 per year to be paid in two installments: \$60.00 in August and \$75.00 in January. This fee is to be turned in to the classroom teacher. Checks should be made payable to the Montessori School of Anderson. Students may not bring snacks from home. Participation in snack is optional.*

Birthday Celebrations

Birthdays are very important in our Lower Elementary Classroom and we celebrate them regularly throughout the year. Celebrations begin at 8:15 and last about 20-30 minutes. Parents are invited to these special ceremonies and will be notified by email to save the date. We welcome donations in honor of your child's birth in the form of strategy games and scholarly books for research and enjoyment. Children prepare their own special birthday snack at school with a friend. We support your child in the planning and preparation of birthday snacks.

COVID-19 Change: We will continue to honor our students by celebrating birthdays in an intimate and special way for our students. At this time, parents will have the option to attend virtually.

At-Home Work Activities

At-Home Work Activities are sent home on Friday in your child's *communication* folder. The folder should be returned by the following Thursday. Help your child become more independent by establishing a place for his/her folder in order to help foster routine and responsibility. This is just as important as completing the activities.

In keeping with Montessori theory and best practice, students in the Lower Elementary program do not receive supplemental homework as a part of the weekly academic routine beyond practicing Khan Academy mathematics and regular reading. Instead, we employ the model that more realistically reflects our adult lives. This means that there may be times when students need to complete work at home to meet expectations, to promote growth, or to pursue further information related to their in-class work.

Related Arts Enrichment

In addition to our regular class work, various related arts enrichment opportunities are offered throughout the year.

- **Fiber Arts**
- **Horticulture**
- **Suzuki Violin**
- **Music & Drama**
- **P.E.**
- **Spanish**
- **S.T.E.A.M.**

Field Trips

We schedule various field trips throughout the year. You will always receive advance notice and permission forms. Parents are always welcome as chaperones and drivers.

COVID-19 Change: For the 2021 – 2022 academic year, field trips will be limited and considered on a case-by-case basis.

Communications

We use email, weekly newsletters/updates, and the Friday Communication Folders as tools for communication. You can expect to receive Lower Elementary curriculum updates, Montessori Matters, and important reminders via email. We attempt to send all notices home in your child's Friday folder after discussing the information with the children. *Field trip permission forms, special project notices, and other school-wide information will be sent to you this way.*

You should always feel free to ask questions, offer suggestions, and address concerns. Teachers are available to answer questions via email and phone during the week. Email and phone messages are checked before school, the middle of the day and after school. These are times to check, but may not allow sufficient time to respond. Please allow 24 hours for responses in this manner. If you are communicating on the weekend, expect communication to be returned by the end of the next school day.

Many questions can be easily addressed through email and notes. In the event that there is an item of greater concern that needs to be discussed face to face, please set an appointment with your child's

teacher. Perhaps one of the greatest benefits of attending our school is the accessibility to teachers. We are partners in providing the best possible educational, social, and emotional environment for our children.

Student Email Accounts

Students in the Lower Elementary Classroom will be given and begin using school email accounts. This is a part of our Practical Life Curriculum. Student accounts are not ever to be used for social purposes and are for academic communications only. Students who do not comply with this policy will lose access to their email accounts.

Accountability, Responsibility, & Independence

As much as possible, we are striving to prepare children for life. As a parent, it is your job to recognize and remove yourself from the seat of accountability so that your child may grow to fully understand boundaries and expectations.

In the event that a student forgets to bring a needed item to school, the child will not be allowed to communicate with home in order to retrieve the item. This can relate to lunches, assignments, permission forms, folders, and more. Please honor this boundary by waiting it out until the next day, even if you realize that your child has forgotten something. The only exceptions are medications and lunches. If you recognize that your child's lunch is in the car and want to return to school to drop it off, we are happy for you to do that. We always have food on hand for those days when lunch is forgotten. If you do want to bring a purchased lunch to school, we ask respectfully that you bring a lunch that is not a fast food. All grocery stores nearby have excellent choices in sandwiches, salad bars, soups, and more. Please use these options if you bring a lunch to school to drop off for your child.

COVID-19 Specific Guidelines:

Students are encouraged, but not required, to wear masks on a daily basis. Under certain circumstances they may be asked to wear a mask temporarily - for example, until they are picked up if they become symptomatic during the school day. Masks will be available in the classroom if needed. Students are encouraged to bring a mask from home to keep in their cubby.

Students should stay home if they are not feeling well or have been exposed to someone who has COVID. Remote learning options are available for students who miss school for health-related reasons. This will be arranged individually between families and elementary faculty.

We will not use our water fountains that are currently installed in the classrooms. Children are encouraged to bring water bottles to school. There is also glassware available in the classroom for student use.

PRIMARY SUPPLEMENT

(ages 3 thru 6 years)

Welcome to Primary! As teachers we look forward to the opportunity to guide your children along this exciting stage in their education.

The following document is not intended to replace or supersede the Montessori School of Anderson Parent Handbook, but is meant to be used as a supplement to address certain requirements specific to this level.

MSA continues to evaluate its procedures and policies throughout the year in order to best meet the academic and structural requirements necessary for an effective learning environment. As such, the policies contained within the preceding Parent Handbook and the Primary Supplement are subject to change at any time. However, parents and students will be duly notified of these changes.

We hope the following information will answer most of your questions. We believe that you will find it helpful to use as a reference during the school year.

Early Arrival

Families who need child care before school may bring Primary children in for Early Arrival from **7:30 AM – 8:10 AM**. Families will drop children off in the Early Arrival classroom located between Primary 1 and the Infant/Toddler building; follow the blue ramp. **COVID CHANGE: Each child's temperature will be checked before entering the classroom. A temperature of 100.4°F or higher will result in the child being sent back home.** Early Arrival ends promptly at 8:10 AM. If you arrive at that time, you will need to drop your child off at his classroom. **Neither toys, food nor drinks are allowed in Early Arrival.** As morning drop-off can be a very busy time, we ask that important messages and information be sent to teachers via written notes or school e-mails. Please do not ask the Early Arrival teacher to pass on information to Primary teachers.

For fees associated with Early Arrival and/or Extended Day, please refer to section 3.3 in the MSA Campus Handbook.

Arrival

The Primary classrooms open at 8:10 AM and work time begins at 8:30 AM. Parents will need to park and walk their child to his/her classroom door.

Late Arrivals

Our classroom doors are locked at 8:30 AM. All arrivals after 8:30 AM will need to obtain a late arrival slip from the office before being admitted to class. Late arrivals, with the late pass, must be accompanied to the classroom door by a parent or office personnel. Please understand how disruptive it is to the flow of classroom activities when a student arrives late. Please make every effort to get your child to school on time. Unless there are extenuating circumstances such as a doctor's appointment, please do not bring children to school after 9:00 AM.

Carpool

Morning (arrival) carpool begins at 8:10 AM and ends at 8:30 AM. *COVID CHANGE: Parents will need to park and walk their child to her classroom. Each child's temperature will be checked before entering the classroom. A temperature of 100.4°F or higher will result in the child being sent back home.*

Dismissal

Morning (dismissal) carpool begins at 11:30 AM and ends promptly at 11:35 AM.

Parents should form a line in their cars and students will be dismissed to you from their classrooms. Teachers will assist children to their vehicles and help with buckling, when necessary. Due to the nature of our schedule, it is very important that dismissal time be strictly observed. We respectfully ask that you arrive for dismissal as close to 11:30 AM as possible. This allows us time to escort children to your car. For matters of safety and efficiency, we also ask that you remain in your car while in the carpool line. If you arrive after 11:35 AM, you will need to park your car and come to the classroom to pick up your child. Late charges will apply after 11:35 AM. Parents will be invoiced according to the rate described in the MSA Parent Handbook.

Afternoon (dismissal) carpool begins at 2:30 PM and ends at 2:45 PM. Primary teachers will assist children to their vehicles and help with buckling, when necessary. Children who are not picked up by 2:45 PM will be taken to the Extended Care program and late charges will incur. Parents will be invoiced according to the rate described in the MSA Parent Handbook.

When picking up your child, please pull up to the first orange cone before stopping. Children must exit and enter their vehicles from the passenger side only. For safety reasons, we will not walk in front of or between cars. Please do not text or talk on cell phones while you are in the carpool line. In order to keep traffic flowing during these drop-off and pick-up times, **please do not park or exit your car in the carpool lane.** If it is necessary to park during carpool times, please use one of the parking spaces closest to the Primary building. We respectfully ask that you not "conference" with your child's teacher during drop off and pick up times. Although we understand the occasional need to ask a quick question or two, please remember that the teachers need to focus on the safety of the children during this time and that others are waiting in the line behind you.

Under no circumstances, should a child be allowed to stand in his vehicle with his head extending through the sunroof, hang his head out an open car window, or walk down the sidewalk unaccompanied by an adult. We greatly appreciate your cooperation in these matters of safety.

Each family will receive 2 colored car tags to hang on their rear view mirror, which will assist teachers with vehicle identification. Tag colors are as follows:

P1 - blue

P2 - yellow

Extended Care

Our Primary after school program is known as Extended Care and is housed in the *Primary 3 classroom located on the Primary playground.* Extended Care hours are 2:30 PM - 5:30 PM. Children who have not been picked up during the 15 minute grace-period following their regular dismissal time will automatically be considered part of the Extended Care program and will be charged according to the drop-in rates (see section 3.3). An additional fee of \$5 will be incurred if the drop-in was not pre-approved.

Tote Bag Only

Primary will provide each student with a canvas tote bag to be used in lieu of a book bag or backpack. Use of these canvas tote bags is mandatory and exceptions will not be made. The bags will be handed out during orientation and the children may decorate their bags however they wish. Please do not dye or wash the bags because it causes shrinking. If a bag is lost, you may purchase an additional bag from your child's teacher at the cost of \$5.00. **Most importantly, the children need to bring their bags to school every day.**

Communications

Most school information will be sent to you via email. However, occasionally we do have various types of classroom and school information that is sent home in classroom folders. **Please be sure to return the folder on Monday.** A classroom newsletter shall be sent periodically to inform you of our areas of study and updates on special classroom activities.

Communication Apps

We use a photo sharing app called Seesaw. We upload pictures and videos to your child's individual account, however, you may not share or repost any photos that include other children.

Observations

COVID CHANGE: At this time, visitors and classroom observations will be limited.

Clothing

Self-care is an important Montessori principle. Clothing should not only be comfortable, but should allow the child to dress himself independently. Elastic waistbands are preferable to belts since unbuckling and buckling a belt can be very challenging for a young child and can lead to frustration and bathroom accidents. Drawstrings on clothing, necklaces, bracelets and scarves are potentially dangerous on the playground.

Please do not allow your child to wear **cowboy boots, crocs, clogs, flip-flops, high heel/party shoes or plastic soled shoes.** For safety reasons, **these types of shoes may not be worn at school.** *We also ask that only students who can independently tie their shoes wear shoes that tie to school.* Hats must be removed while indoors.

Extra Clothing

You will be provided two labeled gallon-sized baggies at the Parent Orientation Meeting. Please return one bag to your child's classroom with a complete change of clothing (pants, shirt, underwear, and socks) to be used in case a change is needed. If your child is in the Extended Care program, please provide an additional set of clothes in the second bag. If soiled clothes are sent home, please replace them promptly. In the event that a child needs clothing and doesn't have extras at school, parents will be called.

Personal Belongings

Toys are not allowed at school. Any other items too valuable to risk damage or loss should also be kept at home. Sometimes young children do not recognize their own belongings, so **all items of outerwear need to be labeled with your child's name.** In a Montessori classroom, there are lots of pocket sized and attractive materials. If you happen to find an item such as a small cube, peg, tile, bead, numeral, animal, or any other unfamiliar object in a pocket or tote bag, we always appreciate its return to our classroom.

Naptime (12:30 PM – 2:30PM)

All students enrolled as a three year old in our full day program will nap or *rest after lunch for the entire school year.* Students enrolled as a four year old may or may not nap depending on many factors. Parents

and lead teachers, with input from the nap room monitor, will collectively decide when it is appropriate for a child to stop napping. All nappers will need a **child-sized sleeping bag** and a blanket for naptime clearly labeled with their name. The blanket must be one that can remain at school. Sleeping bags and blankets will be sent home each Friday for laundering and need to be returned to school on Monday. Parents are asked to provide a large tote bag with handles for the transporting of the sleeping bag to and from school. **Please do not send adult sized sleeping bags** as they take up extra space in the nap room, and they are very difficult for some of the younger children to transport back and forth.

Grace & Courtesy Reminder

We encourage our students to cherish a peaceful environment both inside and outside our classroom. To help establish this goal, we ask that you remember to enter our classrooms quietly and speak in a quiet voice. When speaking to teachers, please do so away from children.

Snack

In order for us to provide healthy snacks for the entire class, we charge a snack fee of \$100.00 per year to be paid in two installments: \$50.00 in August and \$50.00 in January. This fee is to be turned in to the classroom teacher. Checks should be made out to the Montessori School of Anderson.

Lunch

Lunchtime is 11:45 AM – 12:30 PM. Lunch options for full day students are as follows:

Bring a healthy **lunch from home** in a labeled lunch box with an ice pack. Hot food should be sent in a thermos. Due to food allergies, **we are a PEANUT and TREE NUT FREE ZONE.**

Please check the labels on food you send from home. Many foods that do not contain nuts have been processed on equipment where peanut or tree nut foods have been prepared. Be cautious of prepared lunches, such as Lunchables, which often contain candy made in a facility that deals with peanuts or tree nuts. Lunches will be checked every day for peanut contamination and any foods with possible peanut contamination will not be served. Please do not send junk food or fast food with your child. Foods such as wieners and grapes should be cut into small pieces.

DO NOT SEND FROZEN FOODS/MEALS or foods that need to be heated as we are unable to cook or heat them due to time constraints.

We will provide milk for all Primary students at no additional cost as well as water.

School lunches are made available on Fridays. Please see section 4.10 for additional details.

Classroom lunches may be purchased on **Wednesdays and Thursdays.** Class menus/order forms are sent home monthly and are handled through the classroom. The cost of the classroom lunch is \$5.00 per meal, which covers the cost of food items and also serves as a fundraiser for the classroom. Checks for classroom lunches should be made payable to Montessori School of Anderson. In an attempt to limit waste, food will be prepared based on these reservations. Therefore, we cannot give credit for classroom lunches missed unless it is the result of a school closing. ***COVID CHANGE: We will continue to offer our classroom lunches on Wednesday and Thursday. However, the students will not participate in the preparation of the food at this time.***

Children in the morning program that wish to purchase the classroom lunches on Wednesdays and Thursdays are welcome to join us. Dismissal time will then be 12:30 PM with a five-minute grace period. Late charges will incur after 12:35 PM.

Field Trips

COVID CHANGE: Field trips will be limited, considered on a case-by-case basis. Virtual field trips may be offered. More information will be provided at your parent orientation.

Sharing Calendar

A sharing calendar will go out monthly to identify one child each day as our "sharing friend". On this day, our "sharing friend" will share a show and tell with the class and be our class leader/helper. We welcome books, nature items, cultural items, special collections, and photos. **Please do not send toys.** If, for some reason, your child forgets to bring his sharing on his day, he will be invited to share a work he has done or a favorite book or material from the classroom. Children's birthdays will be recognized on their sharing day. Summer birthdays will be celebrated in May.

Birthdays and Celebrations

Birthdays are celebrated by our traditional "Walk Around the Sun". **COVID CHANGE: Parents will be invited to virtually attend the celebration. We encourage you to send in pictures of your child showing how he has grown with each passing year. Instead of sending in a birthday snack, we will work with your child on choosing what snack option she would like to have served on her special day.** Your child may bring one sharing item (no toys, please) as well as one photo from each year of his life. If you would like to do something in honor of your child's birthday, you might consider donating a book to the classroom.

Discipline

Montessori School of Anderson believes discipline is a process in which students are supported in developing self-control and making responsible choices. We offer a beautiful Peace curriculum based on respect, honesty, and responsibility. Our classroom provides many opportunities for the development of these universal values. Grace and courtesy lessons are part of the classroom learning and are role modeled, practiced and discussed daily. Basic class rules are explained to children during orientation, and children are involved in the formulation of classroom rules.

Children are expected to behave respectfully toward teachers, peers, and classroom materials. Re-direction and logical consequences, accompanied by an explanation, are the discipline methods used throughout our Primary program. Our specific steps are as follows: (1) re-direction, (2) warning, (3) time out (one minute per year of child's age), and (4) parent notification of student behavior and teacher concerns. After parent notification, the student is given the opportunity to improve his behavior within an appropriate time frame agreed upon by parents and teacher. If the agreed upon deadline is reached and the misbehavior or disrespect continues, the situation will be turned over to the administrator.

Biting and Spitting: By the time a child reaches the 3-6 year old environment he should be aware that biting and spitting are never appropriate and are not tolerated. Our policy is to notify a parent immediately if a child bites or spits at another child or teacher and caution the parents that any future incidents will result in the child being sent home for the day. The second incident is handled by sending the child home. If there are further incidents, the child is sent home and eventually this behavior may result in loss of attendance privileges.

Hitting an adult or child will be handled immediately at the discretion of the teacher.

Please remember that the safety and best interests of all our students is always at the heart of our actions.

Toilet Training

All children in the Primary program **must be completely toilet trained (no pull-ups) before entering the program.** *Being completely potty trained requires the child to be able to clean up after him/herself once done toileting and/or if an accident occurs. Students should also be pull-up free at home as well.*

Related Arts Program

All children receive music, Suzuki, and Spanish weekly. Kindergartners receive P.E., fiber arts, and Spanish weekly and S.T.E.A.M. workshops quarterly. **COVID Change: The music and art curriculum will be adapted during this time.**

INFANT/TODDLER SUPPLEMENT

(ages birth thru 3 years)

Welcome to Infant/Toddler! As teachers we look forward to the opportunity to guide your children along this exciting stage in their education.

The following document is not intended to replace or supersede the Montessori School of Anderson Parent Handbook, but is meant to be used as a supplement to address certain requirements specific to this level.

MSA continues to evaluate its procedures and policies throughout the year in order to best meet the academic and structural requirements necessary for an effective learning environment. As such, the policies contained within the preceding Parent Handbook and the Infant/Toddler Supplement are subject to change at any time. However, parents and students will be duly notified of these changes.

Phase-In Process for New Students

Our goal is for the child to leave the parent, not for the parent to leave the child. The phase in process helps facilitate the child's success. The first day the parent and child visit briefly, for approximately one hour, to ensure that everyone has a positive experience. The second day is longer, from approximately 8:30 until 11:00 am. When the children leave the classroom to go to the playground, the parent should remain seated as they leave. This allows the child to remain independent but still have the security of knowing the parent is in the building. The same parent, preferably the one who will bring the child to school most often, should attend the phase-in both days. Most children are capable of separating the third day. We recommend that your child stay for only half a day initially, and work into a full day by the end of the week. This process has proven to be a successful beginning for most children.

During the phase-in, the parent should enter the classroom with the child and sit in an adult specified chair. The child is allowed to freely explore the environment, stay near the parent or return to the parent as frequently and as naturally as needed. The parent should remain **seated, quiet and passive**, while still acknowledging the child's presence. This enables the child to build trust with the teachers and the new environment. The parent should not speak to the other parents during class or across the room to the child, as voices will attract the children's attention. Please hold all questions until after class. Also, please silence cell phones.

COVID CHANGE: During phase-in, the parent will also be screened before entering the classroom. This includes a non-contact temperature check and questions regarding any symptoms and exposure to COVID-19. Parents will be expected to wear masks when in the building.

Arrival

School starts at 8:30 am. Children arriving before 8:10 am will be considered early arrival students and the family will be invoiced appropriately. **Before utilizing our early arrival program, please check with the Director in advance to ensure that appropriate staffing is available.**

Unless there are extenuating circumstances such as a doctor's appointment, *we prefer that children in the Infant or Toddler classes are brought to school before 9:00 am. There should be no drop-off between 11:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m.* Please understand how disruptive it is to the flow of classroom activities when a student arrives late.

Toddlers should arrive at school completely dressed and ready to begin their day. This includes wearing shoes into the classroom. Teachers should be able to assume the child has been fed and changed before arrival.

COVID CHANGE: Families should wait in the car until the Director/teacher indicates you may approach the door. The Director/teacher will ask screening questions including whether the child has been ill, had fever, received any fever-reducing medication, has been coughing, vomiting, had shortness of breath, or diarrhea. Also, a no-contact temperature will be obtained before the child enters the building. Any student with a temperature of 100.4°F or greater will be excused from attending. The Director/teacher will document the child's arrival time and accompany the child to the classroom. If possible, infants should remain in their car seats during arrival. Once inside, car seats will be stored until the end of the day in a secure location. Parents will not be allowed to enter the building. Ideally, the same parent or designated person should drop off and pick up the child every day.

Dismissal and Release of Children

COVID CHANGE: Parents should call the school number (864-226-5344) to indicate that they have arrived for pick-up. The Director/teacher will bring the child and his/her belongings to the door. The Director/teacher will document the child's departure time. All communications with the teacher will need to be made via email and not during dismissal time.

Only authorized persons may take a child from the school. Authorized persons are custodial parents, guardians, and others that the custodial parent/guardian specifies. Names and addresses of authorized persons must be on file before the child may be released. A custodial parent or guardian may amend the list in writing at any time. Certified copies of any court orders provided by the custodial parent or guardian which restrict another parent or guardian's ability to seek the release of the child must be on file with the school. When an authorized person picks up the child, the school will ask for picture identification to verify identity until that person is recognized by staff.

Parents and other visitors are required to sign in at the main office when at the school other than arrival or dismissal.

Discipline

MSA believes discipline is a process in which students are supported in developing self-control, responsible choice making, and respect. This approach helps the child learn he/she is responsible for his/her actions and that those actions have consequences. **No corporal punishment shall be used against children.** Redirection and logical consequences are the only means of discipline used at the toddler level. Serious discipline problems may require a team approach between the school and parents. The privilege of attending the school may be denied a child who cannot adapt to a group care situation.

Clothing

In addition to being neat, comfortable, and appropriate to the weather, clothing should be conducive to movement and easy for the child to manage. (Fitted clothing for children learning to crawl and two-piece outfits for toddlers with no overall clasps or snaps between the legs.) Also, since we provide many learning experiences for the child, clothing too good for stains should not be worn to school.

Older infants and all toddlers have outdoor playtime every day (weather permitting) and should dress accordingly. Some shoes, such as **crocs, clogs and flip-flops**, are not appropriate for the range of daily

activities on our campus. Therefore, for safety reasons, **these types of shoes may not be worn at school.**

For winter wear we recommend coats or jackets with zippers that unzip the garment completely, not sweatshirts or coats that unzip slightly and are pulled over the head. This allows the child to independently put on his/her coat.

Toilet Training

It is the responsibility of the parent to be sure that the child has plenty of disposable diapers and wipes. You will be notified when supply is depleted. Be sure that your child always has at least one complete change of clothing including socks (and shoes for children who are toilet training). If the child does not have the proper clothing or diapers in the event a change is needed, the parent will be called to bring the necessary items. Due to a lack of storage space, please do not leave large diaper bags at school. A small one is sufficient for infants and a lunchbox is all that is necessary for toddlers. (Everything else should be left at the school.)

We do not use pull-ups in our program.

Naptime

Infant beds/naptime:

Young infants will have their own individual crib/low bed. The low beds in our infant rooms are not approved by the Consumer Products Safety Commission but are considered to be developmentally appropriate according to Montessori educational philosophy. The sheets and blankets are provided by the school and are laundered regularly. Infants are placed on their backs to sleep unless the parent provides a note from a physician specifying otherwise.

Recent changes in DSS regulations prohibit MSA from the practice of swaddling children. However, parents may provide a "sleep sack."

Parents of napping toddlers should provide a child-sized sleeping bag and blanket for naptime and launder them weekly. The sleeping bag should be clearly labeled with the child's name.

Bottles and Pacifiers

All bottles must be capped. Both bottle and cap must be labeled with the child's name and date when it was prepared. All formula, juice and food which is served from a bottle must be prepared by a parent/guardian and be ready for use. DSS regulations prohibit school personnel from preparing formula. Bottles of formula or breast milk are heated using warm water.

Children in our Infant class may have pacifiers only as needed for napping. The children in the toddler classrooms do not have pacifiers.

Snacks and Lunches

Nutritious snacks are served to the children daily. *In order for us to provide healthy snacks for the entire class, we charge a snack fee of \$100.00 per year to be paid in two installments: \$50.00 in August and \$50.00 in January. This fee is to be turned in to the classroom teacher. Checks should be made out to the Montessori School of Anderson.*

A healthy, satisfying lunch is an important part of your child's school day. Please avoid "junk food," "fast food," and any food containing nuts and nut products when preparing lunches from home. Please cut the food into bite size pieces for your child and clearly mark the child's name on all containers. Since the children in the Toddler program all eat at the same time and are responsible for helping prepare their own lunches, please include an ice pack in your child's lunchbox and do not send frozen foods or foods that

have to be warmed (such as easy mac). If children forget their lunches, they will not go hungry. Food will be provided and parents will be invoiced accordingly.

On Wednesdays and Thursdays, toddler classes prepare their own meals. The cost of these lunches is \$5.00/meal and should be paid directly to the teacher. Children in the morning program that wish to purchase the classroom lunch on Wednesdays and Thursdays are invited to join us and should be picked up at 12:00 PM instead of 11:30 AM. The school offers a pizza lunch option on Fridays. For details and cost for the school lunch option, please contact the main office.

We will provide all beverages for children who are no longer using bottles. We only serve hormone-free whole milk and water.

Communications

Consistent with Montessori philosophy, teachers at MSA work hard to be available to answer questions, address concerns, and share experiences, however, I/T teachers are not usually available for phone calls during school hours. Most communications will be handled through email. (Pictures will be sent through email as well.) Please do not text or I.M. teachers. You may email them or call the I/T Director's Office and she will get your message to the teacher. Teachers will return calls as soon as possible. Please make an appointment if extended communication with the I/T Director or teaching staff is necessary.

Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences for toddlers are scheduled twice a year. As we approach conference time, you will be notified as to the schedule for your child's program and the sign-up procedure. Every effort should be made to attend these meetings so that you are fully apprised of your child's progress.

Montessori Matters

Please read the school newsletters for important reminders and calendar updates. These are our primary means of communication with you.

Seesaw

We use a photo sharing app called Seesaw. We upload pictures and videos to your child's individual account, however, you may not share or repost any photos that include other children.

Security

The doors to Infant-Toddler remain locked at all times. When bringing your child to school, come to the blue door. **COVID CHANGE: Please call 864-226-5344 to notify the Director that you have arrived or you may ring the bell. Do not knock on the door or window.**

Health Information

At the onset of each school year, parents are **required** to complete both a Student Data Sheet and a more comprehensive Student Health Form. These forms **must be completed and returned to the school office prior to the first day of school**. No student will be allowed to remain on campus unless a current Data Sheet is on file in the office. These documents provide specific information on the students' current health status so that the school may act consistently with the instructions provided by your child's health care provider. It will also serve to give the staff an opportunity to learn more about the potential health concerns and procedures that may arise while the student is at school. Should any medical information change during the school year, it is requested that you notify the school nurse. All information is kept in the school health room and is strictly confidential.

Illnesses

MSA students are prohibited from attending classes while ill. If your child is absent, please notify the school office. MSA is proactive in monitoring **all** illnesses and makes every effort to prevent illnesses from

spreading. When you have verification that your child has a communicable disease, please notify the office immediately. It is preferable to keep your child out for another day in order to completely recuperate rather than risk exposing the student body to a potentially communicable illness. All students must be fever-, vomiting-, and diarrhea-free for 24 hours **without the aid of medications** before returning to school. ***COVID CHANGE: Please see 2021-20212 Safety Procedures and Protocols for COVID-19 related illness. SC DHEC guidelines will be followed.***

For any student experiencing a fever greater than 100.4°F, vomiting, having diarrhea **or simply feeling too poorly to focus or concentrate**, the parent will be called and the student will be dismissed early.

Head Lice

MSA has a no-lice policy. This policy follows current medical and health agencies' recommendations and is endorsed by the CDC, American Academy of Pediatrics, the National Association of School Nurses and pediatric healthcare providers in our community. The presence of live lice or nits within ½ inch of the scalp warrants home treatment before returning to school. All students who have had head lice must be checked by the school nurse or designated staff member prior to returning to school.

Immunizations

DHEC regulations require that each student have current immunization records on file. These records must be submitted using an official SC DHEC Certificate of Immunization form. Those students who meet the criteria for special medical or religious exemptions from immunizations are also required to have on file documentation outlining the reason(s) for the exemption. Parents should update their student's immunization records following additional immunizations or boosters as soon as possible. Updated forms should be turned into the I/T Director. Immunization forms may be faxed to Montessori School of Anderson. The school's fax number is: 864.231.6562.

Medication Policy

In general, MSA does not dispense medication to students; however, there are exceptions. **Every effort should be made to administer medication while at home.** If medication is given at home, please inform the school nurse or teacher so that we may monitor for potential side effects. MSA will not administer the first dose of any medication.

In the event that a medication must be administered during school, the medication must be brought in by the parent/legal guardian with a completed Medication Request Form. The medication form specifies dosage and time medication is to be given. All medication shall be provided in the original container and clearly labeled with the child's name and dosage. Prescription medication must have specific directions for the administration and care of the medication. Medications will be administered only to individuals for whom they are intended and prescribed. Over-the-counter medications may only be given within the limits and according to the instructions printed on the container or the package insert.

Long Term Medications: Any student taking medication for longer than three weeks must have a physician's permission form and a parent's permission form on file.

Policy for Application of Insect Repellents

Montessori School of Anderson has adopted SC DHEC recommendations for application of insect repellents in childcare/school settings. The parents will be required to sign a Permission for Administration of Over the Counter Medication Forms for any student needing application of any insect repellent products during the day. The parents will provide their own insect repellent and will label it with the child's name. The MSA staff will follow SC DHEC guidelines for application of insect repellents. The MSA staff will not be allowed to apply any insect repellent on infants age 2 months or younger. MSA staff will follow safest practice guidelines for administration of Insect Repellent products, and therefore reserves the right to

refuse application of any product containing 30% or more of DEET. In such cases, the parents will be notified so that a substitute product can be provided. The MSA staff will follow procedures for application and cleansing following outside play. MSA staff will avoid taking children on the playground during peak hours for mosquitoes – dawn and dusk.

Child Restraint Policy

In accordance with American Academy of Pediatrics guidelines, and in an effort to ensure compliance with the South Carolina Child Passenger Restraint Law and SC Code of Laws, Section 56-5-6420, at no time may a child under 4'9" or 80 lbs. ride unrestrained in a moving vehicle on the MSA campus. Please provide an appropriate child passenger safety restraint for your child in compliance with this law. MSA teachers and administration are required to report non-compliance.

Off-Site Evacuation

In the case of an extreme emergency, an off-site evacuation may be deemed appropriate and necessary. Montessori School of Anderson's off-site location is Concord Baptist Church Childcare Center (1012 Concord Road/Anderson, SC 29621). Parents will be notified via a reverse notification system (**see 6.1 for explanation of "reverse notification system"**) if an evacuation of this nature is necessary. A reunification plan has been developed in the case of such an emergency. Only parents or pre-approved guardians (those listed on the emergency contact list) will be allowed to pick up students from the off-site evacuation location and a photo ID may be required prior to releasing children to their care. Please follow directions from emergency responders and school personnel. Montessori School of Anderson is committed to ensuring the safety of our students, staff and visitors.

Important scheduling notes:

Please be aware that the Infant/Toddler program calendar may vary slightly from the MSA calendar. A schedule of program closure dates will be available at the opening orientation session.

Infant-Toddler will be closed on the following days:

In-Service (Aug. 11-13)

Labor Day

Wed. – Fri. of Thanksgiving week

Dec. 24-31

Jan. 1

April 15

Memorial Day

Out-Service (May 31-June 1)

Week of July 4

Montessori School of Anderson

Signature Page

2021-2022

The policies of Montessori School of Anderson are designed to inform parents and students to the high level of expectations needed to ensure a safe learning environment, a community of cooperative learners, and that a quality education is available to all who choose to study with us. In order to achieve these goals, it is vital that students and parents understand and follow the guidelines as set forth in these documents. As a private institution, MSA is not subject to the stipulations imposed on federal and state educational institutions. The contents of this handbook, as determined by the Administration, are fully enforceable as stated herein. Please indicate below that you have read the Montessori School of Anderson Parent Handbook as well as each additional Classroom Supplement that is appropriate for your child(ren)'s level.

Complete both sections below and return to the school office prior to your child's first day of class.

1. Montessori School of Anderson Parent Handbook

Please indicate by your signature that you have read and understood the policies contained therein.

Parent/Guardian Name: print

Parent/Guardian Name: print

Parent/Guardian Signature

Parent/Guardian Signature

Student Signature (required of US students)

Student Signature (required of US students)

2. Level-Specific Supplement

Initial below beside the specific Level Supplement that applies to your child(ren)'s program(s). List your child in the blank beside the respective supplement. You are indicating by your initials that you have read and understood the policies contained therein.

Initials Infant/Toddler Supplement: _____
Child(ren)'s name(s)

Initials Primary Supplement: _____
Child(ren)'s name(s)

Initials Lower Elementary Supplement: _____
Child(ren)'s name(s)

Initials Upper Elementary Supplement: _____
Child(ren)'s name(s)

Initials Upper School Supplement: _____
Child(ren)'s name(s)

For internal use only -

Date document submitted: _____/_____/_____

**Student/Parent
Upper Elementary and Upper School Electronics Pledge**

- I have read the student handbook regarding acceptable uses of technology and will obey those rules.
- I understand that each teacher will specify how devices may be used in his/her classroom and I will respect and obey those rules.
- I will only access and use content from my device that is directly related to our instructional objectives.
- I will NOT download ANYTHING at school, including but not limited to copyrighted materials, without the specific authorization of a teacher. Further, if my actions result in legal expenses or charges for MSA I understand that my parents/guardians will be responsible for said expenses/charges.
- I will not infect the Montessori School of Anderson Network with a Virus, Trojan, or program designed to damage, alter, destroy, or provide access to unauthorized data or information.
- I will not access information on school property related to "hacking," altering, or bypassing network security policies.
- I understand that I will be subject to disciplinary action which may include suspension of technology use as well as possible suspension or expulsion from school if I violate this pledge in whole or part.
- I understand that MSA has the right to collect and examine any device that is suspected of causing problems or was the source of an attack or virus infection.
- I understand that my personal device must be charged prior to bringing it to school and will run off its own battery while at school.

Student signature
(required of Upper School students)

Date

Student signature
(required of Upper School students)

Date

Parent/Guardian signature
(required of parents of Upper School students)

Date

Parent/Guardian signature

Date

(required of parents of Upper School students)