



MONTESSORI

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

Educating Joyful Scholars Since 1973

PARENT & STUDENT HANDBOOK

(including program supplements)

2025-2026



**CELEBRATING MORE THAN 50 YEARS
OF MONTESSORI EDUCATION IN
ANDERSON, SOUTH CAROLINA
Est. 1973**

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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.

1. Introduction

We hope that this MSA Parent & Student 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 & Student 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 now approximately 140 students nurtured by approximately 40 full and part-time staff, including Montessori-certified faculty, state-certified faculty, and faculty with advanced degrees in their subject area. 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 Head of Schools - Executive Director 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 SCISA and Cognia, affiliated with the South Carolina Montessori Alliance (SCMA) and are licensed by the Department of Social Services.

1.2 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 Four Pillars of MSA

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.

2. 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 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, Cognia, and the child’s parents or legal guardians per the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) guidelines. 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

The Montessori School of Anderson campus operates from 7:30 AM to 5:30 PM daily. Specific program start and end times, including drop-off and pick-up windows, vary by program level. Please refer to your child's individual program supplement for detailed daily schedules and procedures.

2.4 School Holidays

All programs are closed during specified teacher in-service days, professional development days, and 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 Emergencies

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 generally follow Anderson County School District 5 (ACSD 5). All announcements regarding closings and delays will 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 ACSD 5.

3. Financial Operations

3.1 Tuition and Enrollment Agreements

Tuition schedules and re-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.

The payment plan selected in FACTS is established for the entire academic year. After plan selection, you will need to contact the MSA business office to request any changes (i.e., draft date). The plan choices are:

- One Annual Payment due June 5 (or at time of enrollment if after June 5)
- Monthly Plan due on the 5th, 15th, or 25th day of the month

Application for financial assistance may also be made through the FACTS system. A link to FACTS 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, Fees, and Payment Plan Options" letter or call the office for additional details.

3.3 Extended Care Program

Our Extended Care program is designed to support families by providing a safe, nurturing, and engaging environment for children beyond the regular school day. Available before and after school, this program

offers flexible care options to accommodate a variety of family schedules.

Extended Care (Early Arrival & Stay Late)

Fees associated with the Extended Care Plan are payable monthly through FACTS, along with your tuition payment plan. The Extended Care fee covers Early Arrival and Stay Late on the days the child attends school, and designated early dismissal/school holidays as noted on the School Operations Calendar.

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

- \$10.00 / hour (or any part thereof)

Due to staffing requirements all drop-ins must be preapproved by the Preschool 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 a Drop-In to the Extended Care program (Stay Late) and will be charged according to the after-school drop-in rates as listed above. An additional fee of \$10 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 to negotiate out of the annual enrollment contract. No tuition/fee adjustments or refunds will be given for withdrawals during the fourth quarter. Financial aspects of the withdrawal should be discussed with the Head of School 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 may be released either to the parent or school to which the student is transferring.

4. Classroom and Campus Operations

4.1 Classroom Placement

The Program Leads, 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 Leads make the final decision based upon the dynamics of the classroom, the chemistry of all of the children in the classroom, classroom balance, and the academic readiness of the student.

4.2 Arrival & Tardiness Procedures

Timely arrival sets a positive tone for the day and ensures students are ready to engage fully in their learning. Families are expected to follow designated drop-off procedures to support student safety, maintain campus traffic flow, and provide a calm and consistent start to the day.

To preserve the integrity of the learning environment, we ask that all students arrive on time. Late arrivals can be disruptive to classroom routines and may cause children to miss valuable work or transition time. If tardiness is unavoidable, parents should follow the school's check-in procedures to ensure a smooth and respectful entry into the classroom. (Sign in at the Main Office for admittance to the classroom.)

We appreciate families partnering with us in fostering punctuality, safety, and respect for each child's learning experience.

Students arriving before the classroom opening time (see program supplement) are considered to be in Early Arrival. If dropping your student off in the carpool line, please wait until you are next to the classroom before letting your child out of the car. Please do not park in the carpool lanes or linger unnecessarily. It is important to keep traffic flowing as smoothly as possible.

Be aware of movement in the parking lot and around your vehicle at all times while on campus so that our students are safe during these transition times.

Please refer to the program supplement in the appendix of this document for program-specific arrival procedures.

4.3 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 that 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.

If you need to come to the office at dismissal time, park your car in a parking space to avoid halting the flow of traffic in the carpool line. Please note that we have staggered pick-up times to keep the traffic moving.

Be aware of movement in the parking lot and around your vehicle at all times while on campus so that our students are safe during these transition times.

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

4.4 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 by 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 may be escorted back to his/her classroom.

4.5 Field Trips (5K – HS)

Field trips are an important extension of classroom learning and provide students with meaningful, real-world experiences. The number and type of field trips will vary by program and grade level, with opportunities thoughtfully designed to enrich the curriculum for students in Kindergarten through 12th grade.

Participation in field trips requires signed parental permission, adherence to all school rules and behavioral expectations, and compliance with safety protocols. All trips are supervised by school staff and may include parent chaperones. To ensure student safety, all chaperones must complete a background check and follow the school's guidelines for supervision and conduct.

We appreciate the partnership of families in helping to make these experiences safe, enjoyable, and educational for all students.

More information about field trips will be provided by each program and may also be found in the respective program supplement.

4.6 Special Guests

Special guests on campus will be limited. Please refer to your child's program supplement for more information.

4.7 Visitors

All visitors (including parents) must check in and check out at the Main Office and be escorted by office personnel to the respective classroom or area of campus.

4.8 Snacks & 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. Lunch 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 **school-wide catered lunch** option on **Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays**. School lunches will be invoiced through FACTS. For details and cost, please log in to the FACTS Family Portal or contact the Main Office.

The Toddler program through Upper Elementary also offer a classroom lunch on Wednesdays and Thursdays and daily snack. Upper School prepares a classroom lunch on Wednesdays only. Classroom lunches and snack fees will be invoiced through FACTS. Please consult the program supplement or contact your child's teacher for more details about the classroom lunch offerings. Orders may be placed through the FACTS Family Portal.

4.9 Birthdays and Celebrations

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

5. Student Affairs

5.1 Discipline (philosophy)

Montessori School of Anderson (MSA) is committed to fostering an environment where students develop self-control, personal responsibility, and respect for themselves and others. Our approach to student discipline is rooted in the principles of Positive Discipline, focusing on teaching and guiding students toward constructive choices. MSA prohibits any form of corporal punishment.

Principles of Positive Discipline

Positive Discipline at MSA is based on the following core tenets:

- **Kindness and Firmness:** Discipline is delivered with respect and empathy, while also maintaining clear boundaries and expectations.
- **Logical Consequences:** Consequences are directly related to the misbehavior, respectful of the child, reasonable, and revealed in advance. They aim to help children understand the impact of their actions.

- **Focus on Solutions:** The emphasis is on helping children learn from mistakes and develop problem-solving skills for future challenges.
- **Encouragement:** Fostering a sense of belonging and significance in students, which motivates positive behavior.
- **Teaching Life Skills:** Discipline is viewed as an opportunity to teach valuable social and emotional life skills, such as self-regulation, empathy, and conflict resolution.

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 their classroom. The administration reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of student 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.

Please refer to each program supplement located in the appendix of this document for age-specific policies regarding discipline.

5.2 Protocol for Addressing Student 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 Executive Director, 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 Policy on Bullying, Harassment, & Sexual Abuse

Bullying, harassment, and sexual abuse 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 prevent bullying, harassment, and sexual abuse. *Employees and volunteers must complete Abuse Prevention training and undergo background checks.* The School prohibits bullying, harassment, and abuse 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 bullying, harassment, and abuse based on a student's actual or perceived trait or characteristic, including, but not limited to, 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 bullying, harassment, and abuse 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/Abuse

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

Definition: Sexual Harassment/Abuse 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/Abuse 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 Executive Director and/or the Coordinator from each program involved must be notified in writing in the event of a bullying, harassment, or abuse complaint in order for an investigation to begin. The complainant may be required to submit any evidence of abuse, 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, harassment, or abuse 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 behavior, abuse, 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 Executive Director 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

At our Montessori school, we believe that student dress should support a focused, respectful, and developmentally appropriate learning environment. Our dress code is designed to promote safety, minimize distractions, and reflect the purposeful nature of the Montessori classroom from infancy through adolescence.

We encourage clothing that allows for freedom of movement, independence, and active participation in hands-on work, both indoors and outdoors. Students should come to school dressed in a manner that is clean, neat, and appropriate for the day's activities, including outdoor activities, practical life tasks, and physical movement. There may be specific dress codes for community service, field trips, and job shadowing experiences.

Clothing that is overly distracting, unsafe, or inconsistent with our learning values may be addressed by staff in partnership with families. Our goal is to support children in making responsible choices while maintaining a consistent environment that nurtures focus, confidence, and community peacefulness.

Questions regarding appropriateness of specific clothing items or accessories should be directed to your child's teacher first. Students who come to school inappropriately dressed will be required to change into their "spare" clothing that is kept at school or parents will be called to bring a change of clothing to them.

Please see the program supplement for specific dress code guidelines by level.

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.

5.8 Dress Code for Community Service & Field Trips

MSA students may have an opportunity to occasionally engage in activities that take them off-campus during the day. (Off-campus community service and field trips will be considered on a case-by-case basis.) While involved in these activities, each student serves as a representative of the high standards we strive to attain and must abide by the MSA dress code as set forth in this handbook and classroom level supplements. Students are expected to represent MSA in an impeccable manner. Students who are not in appropriate off-campus attire will not be allowed to leave campus.

5.9 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.

5.10 Technology & Communication

To maintain a focused and respectful learning environment, students are generally not permitted to bring electronic equipment (i.e., radios, CD players, iPods, gaming devices, etc.) to school. In addition, students are not permitted to use cell phones during the school day. Phones must remain off and stored out of sight unless explicitly authorized by a teacher for educational purposes. If a student is found to have a cell phone or other electronic equipment in his or her possession during school hours without permission, he or

she will be required to forfeit such equipment to the teacher/administration and the parents will be notified to pick up the equipment from the main office.

Parents are asked to communicate with the school through official channels, including the school's main office, staff email, and designated platforms. This ensures timely and appropriate communication while minimizing classroom disruptions.

Inappropriate or disruptive electronic communication-whether on or off campus-is prohibited and may result in disciplinary action. We expect all members of our community to use technology in a respectful, responsible and school-aligned manner.

Please refer to Program Supplements for level-specific technology/communication policies.

5.11 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. Email is the preferred method of communication during the school day to limit classroom disruptions. Email is best used 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. Telephone communication during the school day should be through the school office. Personal cell phone numbers of staff will not be given out.

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.

5.12 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.

5.13 Weapons

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

5.14 Tobacco, Alcohol & 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.

6. Health and Safety

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

6.1 Emergency Communications

MSA uses a Reverse Notification system to notify all families, teachers, and staff should mass communication be needed within the MSA community. The information is sent from MSA's safety coordinator and is disseminated quickly and concisely 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 Main 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 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. This information will also make staff aware of 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 (schoolnurse@msasc.org). All information is kept securely in the school health room.

6.4 Health and Safety of Students

MSA has a part-time Registered Nurse on staff. The Health Room is located in the main office 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 as to the reason. 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. Students may be screened upon arrival to campus and 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 Policy

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

SC DPH 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 provide updated student immunization records following additional immunizations or boosters as soon as possible. Updated forms should be turned into the Main 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 DPH immunization requirement for all rising seventh-grade students:

SC DPH has required additional immunizations for school admission that affects rising seventh graders. The Tdap booster vaccine is now required for school admission. All SC DPH 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 Main Office by a parent/legal guardian with a completed MSA Medication Form located on our website (www.msasc.org/nurses-forms). 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 section 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 (MSA Permission for School Administration of Prescription Medication - located on website: www.msasc.org/nurses-forms) and a parent's permission form (MSA Permission for School Administration of Non-Prescription Medication - located on website: www.msasc.org/nurses-forms) 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. A form must be completed by the physician, parent, and student (Self Medicating and/or Self-Monitoring forms - located on website: www.msasc.org/nurses-forms). 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 Insect Repellent Policy

Montessori School of Anderson has adopted SC DPH recommendations for the application of insect repellents in childcare/school settings. The parents will be required to sign a Permission for School Administration of Non-Prescription Medication form (located on website: www.msasc.org/nurses-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 aged 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 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 should a child ride unrestrained in a moving vehicle while that vehicle is on any part of 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. If assistance is needed to provide the appropriate child passenger restraint, please contact the school nurse.

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 regularly 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 **Concord Baptist Church** on the corner of Concord Road and Reed Road.

6.13 Off-Site Evacuation & Reunification Point

In the case of an extreme emergency, an off-site evacuation may be deemed appropriate and necessary. **Montessori School of Anderson's off-site rendezvous 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 reunification point and a photo ID may be required prior to releasing children. 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 students (K3-12) with catastrophic accident insurance through SCISA. Benefits and claims information is available in the Main Office or by contacting schoolnurse@msasc.org.

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 (Toddler-High School) must report to the main office to be admitted late. Refer to the particular level supplement for more details about arrival and dismissal policies.

We request that all visitors (including parents) enter MSA through the Main Office.

7. 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 main office. Please make an appointment if extended communication with 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. You are welcome to schedule a conference at any other time as well. Simply call for an appointment. Please do not ask teachers to discuss details of your child's progress during arrivals or dismissals.

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 your child's teacher to determine 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 for school-wide events and information.**

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 to fewer students 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.

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 & Student 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 & Student 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 MSA High School was the first 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. This is a mandatory meeting for all students, unless otherwise announced. Dismissal time is 3:40, but may vary according to personal schedules for senior high students. Students who remain on campus after dismissal must be under the supervision of a faculty member.
- **Arrival & Dismissal areas:** Students should enter in the morning at the FRONT door of the main office between 7:45-7:55am. Students should be picked up at the SIDE door (just before the Peace Garden at the left side of the main office building) between 3:30p-3:35pm. Student drivers will use the front door for dismissal and sign-out. *Please do not park under the porte cochere in front of the main office during or between dismissal times.*
- **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.

Dress Code

We believe that the general level of dress does have an effect on the tone of the learning 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 their particular level and must remain in dress code until leaving campus. Clothing should not be too short/small, too big/long, or too tight and restrictive. Nothing brought or worn to school should be disruptive or unsafe to the learning environment. Any faculty member may recommend that an article of clothing be changed or jewelry removed if deemed inappropriate or disruptive.

If a student is unsure about whether specific clothing meets dress code, the general rule is "Ask first." Students who come to school inappropriately dressed will either be required to change into their standard "spare" attire that is to be kept at school or 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.

Safety is also a primary concern with attire. Loose and dangling jewelry can cause serious damage to students. Earrings, rings, bracelets, or necklaces that can catch or snag on clothing, objects, or others, can cause safety problems. The school is not responsible for any jewelry worn to school.

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.

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 but will include soft soled or tennis shoes (closed-toed) in science class.

Acceptable Attire:

- Pants or jeans, appropriately sized that are not ripped or have visible holes.
- Shorts and skorts provided they are at least mid thigh.
- Dresses and skirts should be 1 inch above the knee or longer.
- T-shirts without inappropriate or offensive words, logos, messages, or pictures.
- Woven or knit shirts OR sweaters and cardigans.
- Sweatshirts.
- Hoodies are allowed but students may not wear the hood up. Hoodies should be appropriate size (not sloppy and oversized).
- Leggings, jeggings, dance, and yoga pants, etc are allowed as long as they are neat and are worn with a top that covers the rear end, even with arms raised vertically.
- Soft-soled or tennis shoes. Closed toed or athletic shoes will be required for PE, horticulture, and science classes, and other outdoor activities.
- Simple, low-profile jewelry that minimizes the risk of snagging such as stud earrings, necklace, watch, or class ring.
- Attire that ensures that undergarments are appropriately covered, regardless of a student's activity such as stretching, bending, lifting, etc.

Unacceptable Attire:

- Tank, tube, halter, camisole, strapless, off shoulder, and sheer tops that expose the chest, including low cut tops or tops with elongated arm holes.
- Any tops that expose the midriff, including midriffs exposed when arms are fully raised and extended.
- Cutoffs or pants with visible holes or tears.
- Oversized and/or excessively lengthy pants.
- Jellies, flip-flops, heels (over 1 inch).
- Athletic shoes with cleats (soccer, golf, or baseball shoes).
- Excessive makeup (judged by the teacher).
- Spiked bracelets or necklaces.
- Hair color in a non-human hue.
- Hats, bandanas, and other headwear.
- Visible tattoos.
- Visible piercings other than the earlobe.
- Any attire that allows inappropriate exposure of undergarments in any instance.
- 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.

Dress Code for Community Service & Field Trips

Occasionally, MSA students have an opportunity to engage in activities that take them off-campus during the day. Off-campus community service and field trips will be considered on a case-by-case basis. While involved in these activities, each student serves as a representative of the high standards we strive to attain and must abide by the MSA dress code as set forth in this handbook. Students are expected to represent MSA in an impeccable manner. Therefore, unless the activity dictates otherwise and a teacher has instructed accordingly, the students are expected to dress in standard school attire as listed below. Students who are not in appropriate off-campus attire will not be allowed to leave campus.

Standard School Attire (SSA) for field trips: Solid-colored pants or shorts, MSA logo shirt or a nice blue or white button-up or collared shirt. Closed toe shoes.

Spare Pair of SSA to be kept at school: In order to ensure MSA students always serve as exemplary ambassadors of the school when off campus, **an extra set of clothes, as listed directly above, should be kept on campus in student lockers** so they are available should a last minute field trip arise or any student

Student Drivers and Parking Regulations

Only students who are legally licensed to operate a vehicle are allowed to drive and park a vehicle on the school campus. 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. Such behavior will result in losing the privilege to drive and park on 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>Exceeding Expectations</i>
<i>M</i>	<i>Meeting Expectations</i>
<i>P</i>	<i>Partially Meeting Expectations</i>
<i>N</i>	<i>No Expectations Met</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.

FACTS

FACTS is the Student Information System (SIS) 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. Google Classroom will be integrated with the FACTS Student Information System.

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. Parent attendance at the two student-led conferences is required.

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:
 - o Add a course to their schedule
 - o Choose the honors level of a course
- Students have **two academic weeks from the start of a course** to:
 - o Drop an elective course without consequence
 - o 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 after electing honors 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 30, the summer before their junior year for attendance at AU and must take a placement test offered through TCTC to attend TCTC.
- MSA will provide a tuition discount of 10% for each dual credit course taken at Anderson University or Tri-County Technical College. This discount does not apply to repeat courses at AU or TCTC.

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 - and be enrolled full-time the semester before graduating.

In order to participate in the Graduation ceremony, the Director of the Upper School/Guidance Counselor, the Executive Director, 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 course offerings and graduation requirements.

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 was allowed during COVID restrictions.*) 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. Parents/Legal Guardians may not sign a form as the Service Supervisor.

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 college fairs and/or 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. **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.** 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.

MSA Upper School Absence Policy:

- After **three consecutive absences or five absences of any class or of any full day (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 in any 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.
- **Attendance Recovery and Attendance Intervention Plan:** 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 Executive Director, 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.

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 Executive Director 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 Executive Director and the Program Lead will develop an Absence Contract to be signed by the parent/guardian and the student. 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 missed work.

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 intersection between home and school is sometimes considered a gray area. When students engage in text groups or other social media platforms that are populated by classmates, these interactions impact interactions and relationships in the classroom. In the spirit of partnership with parents, we request that parents inform teachers of any incident of threats, harmful or inappropriate behavior/words exchanged between and among MSA students if and when they become aware of it. The student(s) involved may be subject to disciplinary measures. 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
- Cheating or Forgery
- Gambling or possessing gambling devices and materials
- Inappropriate behavior (including PDA)
- 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 and smartwatches to school. Upon arrival at school, cell phones and smart watches must be placed in their assigned spot in the wall hanger, which will be located in the MS Office. Students may only use any of the above mentioned technology with permission from their supervising teacher or the MS Coordinator.

High School

Students may bring devices such as cell phones, smartwatches, computers, or tablets to use for academic purposes. Students may use these devices during class with teacher permission. Otherwise, they should remain in the student's locker or backpack.

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 Responsible 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. 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.

All middle school students will be assigned an MSA owned chromebook for use while at school during the school year. Chromebooks will also be available and can be assigned to high school students as needed. Students may opt to take their assigned Chromebook home with them for at home learning purposes or for after school hours study, in accordance with the policies and fees outlined in the "Responsible Use Agreement." Middle School students will not be allowed to use personal computers or tablets at school unless express permission is provided by the MS coordinator.

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 should remove headphones or earbuds during instructional time unless use of such is authorized by the current classroom 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.

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 – 3:30) .
- 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 Executive Director.
- 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.

Protecting Personal Electronic Equipment

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.

Responsibility for Any Lost or Damaged 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.

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.

Off-Campus Activities

Off-campus activities will be considered on a case-by-case basis. 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.

Food and Refreshments

Food is not allowed in classrooms for reasons other than those that are medically excused or permitted by the teacher. 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 Middle and High School Coordinators and the Executive Director 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 an AI or computer-generated file or document, including AI programs such as ChatGPT, 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.

The school recognizes that AI tools (such as ChatGPT) may be useful as a resource for background material. If a student uses AI tools in the process of completing an assignment the student must disclose that they used it, note the specific tool used, and provide proper attribution and not claim the AI work as their own. A student's failure to disclose the use of AI in the completion of an assignment will be in violation of the school's policy against cheating, plagiarism, and academic dishonesty.

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

Athletics:

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.

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.

ELEMENTARY SUPPLEMENT

(Grades 1-6)

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

Elementary Extended Day

Extended care begins daily at 3:15 p.m. for Lower Elementary and 3:30 p.m. for Upper Elementary. For further information regarding fees and other details, refer to section 3.3 in the MSA Parent & Student Handbook.

ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE

Lower Elementary

Early Arrival - 7:30 AM
 School Day Begins - 8:15 AM
 School Day Ends - 3:00 PM
 Elem Ext. Day Begins - 3:00 PM

Upper Elementary

Early Arrival - 7:30 AM
 School Day Begins - 8:15 AM
 School Day Ends - 3:15 PM
 Elem Ext. Day Begins - 3:15 PM

Arrival and Dismissal Safety

All vehicles in the lane in front of the elementary classrooms must have a driver present at all times inside the vehicle. If it is necessary to exit the vehicle, park in the designated spaces and check in at the office. Children must exit and enter vehicles from the passenger side.

During arrival and dismissal times, faculty have their focus on the safe arrival and departure of children. Please do not engage faculty in conversations about concerns, information about your child, or other details

during these times. Faculty are available for meetings after school daily; check with your child's teacher to determine availability. Information regarding communication is reviewed at the parent orientation meeting at the beginning of the school year.

General Notes:

- Children should enter and exit through their main classroom door.
- Only students and MSA staff are expressly permitted to enter the classrooms during the hours of operations. All guests must report to the office before being admitted to the classrooms.
- Children will only be released to authorized persons listed on the MSA Data Sheet. If another driver will be picking up a child their faculty member releasing the child must be informed ahead of time with the driver name and car description. Faculty will check ID's before releasing the child.
- Children will not be released to any classmate's parent/guardian for a play date or other reason without written permission/notification from both families.

Tardiness

Please refer to section 4.2 in the Parent & Student 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 so that they 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 a child is tardy on these days they will not be permitted into the classroom until 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. Parents/Guardians are invited to these special ceremonies and will be notified by email to save the date. (In some cases, a virtual option may be offered.) We welcome donations in honor of your child in the form of strategy games or scholarly books for research and enjoyment.

Snacks and Lunches**Lunches**

The Elementary classes offer a lunch option on Wednesdays and Thursdays. Our students participate in the planning and preparation of these lunches. (This is for the Elementary classrooms only and is separate from and not associated with the "School Lunch" as mentioned in the MSA Parent & Student Handbook.) The cost of the classroom lunch is \$7.00 per meal, which covers the cost of food items and also serves as a fundraiser for the classroom. Lunch orders will be placed through the FACTS Family Portal.

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. Snack fees are billed each semester through FACTS. The Lower Elementary fee is \$70 for each semester and the Upper Elementary fee is \$80 for each semester. Children may not bring personal snacks to school unless under special circumstances which must be part of an agreement between school and family.

Drinks in the Classrooms

Children may bring water and dye free herbal teas to drink during the school day. Children are encouraged to bring their own personal **reusable** water bottle daily. Milk will be provided at school as a part of snack and lunch.

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. 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 [UN Statement on Single-Use Plastics](#).

Community Service

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

Field Trips & Going Out

Students in Elementary will participate in field trips when possible 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.

Field trips will be considered on a case-by-case basis, but 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.

Parent Chaperones for Field Trips & Outings

Parents who are interested in attending open field trips as drivers and chaperones must participate in a comprehensive screening and education process in order to attend or drive. Please be sure to complete this process as soon as possible so that all steps are completed before trips begin.

Classroom Behavior and Discipline

We have the highest expectations of our children in regard to 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 others, themselves, and the environment. 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, temporary removal from the classroom, communication with parents and administration, and creation of a plan to move forward successfully. A meeting with parents, relevant faculty/staff and the Executive Director will be necessary to explore possible solutions. The safety and best interest of the child is always at the heart of our actions.

Violence, Threats, and Discussions of a Violent Nature

At MSA, we have an absolute zero violence policy. Students who are violent against others will be removed from the classroom until such behaviors can be addressed with parent and child. This policy includes violence that is "play" as well as violence that stems from anger, maliciousness or frustration. If a student makes threats it will be addressed promptly by the teacher or Executive Director and the student may be subject to disciplinary action as described in the "Classroom Behavior" section above.

The intersection between home and school is sometimes considered a gray area. When children engage in text groups that are populated by classmates, these interactions impact interactions and relationships in the classroom. In the spirit of partnership with parents, we request that parents inform teachers of any incident of threats, hurtful behavior, or words exchanged between and among MSA students on social media or other digital means if and when they become aware of it. The student(s) involved may be subject to disciplinary measures.

Real World Violence and Tragic Events

Children will not be allowed to discuss real world tragedies without adult supervision. If a student discusses violence in any regard, or talks about violence or tragic real world events with their peers without an adult present, it will be addressed promptly by the teacher or Executive Director. We have many children in our community who are protected from the news by parent choices and we want to honor those choices at school. Please make sure that children who are allowed to watch the news understand that they do not have the right or option to bring these topics up for discussion with their friends at school.

Social Media Content, Movies, Urban Myths, and other Inappropriate Content

Children should not be discussing at school inappropriate content that they have discovered on social media, seen in movies or TV, or heard in stories such as urban myths. These stories can be frightening and upsetting to children. The general rule is that any content of conversations must be suitable for children of elementary ages. If a student disregards this guideline and shares inappropriate content with their peers at school, they will be counseled and reminded of this policy by the teacher and may face disciplinary action.

Elementary Guidelines for Daily Dress

Daily attire in the elementary classroom should be comfortable, age-appropriate, and suitable for the learning environment. Please see the general guidelines for dress in the Dress Code section in the main part of this guide.

Specific Guidelines Regarding Attire for Elementary Students

- **Attire should ensure that undergarments and skin are appropriately covered, regardless of student activity such as sitting or working on the floor, kneeling, stretching, or playing outdoors.**
- **Shorts and skirts** are not to allow for exposed skin above the mid-thigh.
- **Skirts** that fall above the knee should be worn with leggings or athletic shorts underneath that fully cover to the mid-thigh.
- **Upper Elementary** children may wear leggings, yoga pants, spandex-type shorts, and athletic pants as long as their shirt or top fully covers the rear and front even with arms fully raised above the head; only the mid-thigh should be visible from the front or back view.
- **Lower Elementary** children may wear **tops** with a minimum of a 1" wide shoulder (tank top style).
- **Upper Elementary** children may wear **tops** that are sleeveless-style or fully cover the shoulder.
- Children should wear comfortable, soft soled **shoes** for general daily dress.
- **Shoe heel height** on non-athletic shoes may not exceed 1".
- Flip Flops are not allowed.
- Children need **athletic style shoes** for playground and recess time.
- **Shoes worn outdoors** must fully cover toes and heels and should be designed for participating in active play.
- No **head wear** (hats of any kind) or hoods may be worn in the classroom and must be removed before entering the classroom.

Class Work

Your child's work is completed 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. Appointments for classroom visits can be made with the lead classroom teacher. All visitors must check in at the main office before visiting classrooms. 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.

Elementary Homework

In keeping with Montessori theory and practice, students in the Elementary program do not receive supplemental homework outside of regular reading practice, practice of math facts, and practice in Khan Academy. 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 in order to meet expectations, to promote growth, or to pursue further information related to their in-class work. The goal and expectation is that children will begin to take on this responsibility for themselves as a measure of personal responsibility and accountability.

At-Home-Work Activities are sent home in your child's communication folder. The folder should be returned on the day designated by the Lower or Upper Elementary guide. Help your child become more successful by establishing a place of their own for working while at home.

Children who demonstrate a need for supplemental practice or have a need for additional academic practice may have homework in the areas of need in order to support their progress.

Related Arts Enrichment

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

- **Drama**
- **Fiber & Visual Arts**
- **Horticulture**
- **Music**
- **P.E.**
- **Spanish**
- **STEM**

Student Email Accounts

Students in the Elementary Classrooms 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 task 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 is not delivered in the spirit of punitive action, but more of motivation to spur the development of personal responsibility. 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.

Children in elementary (grades 3-6) are expected to post communication to families through Seesaw weekly. These posts are of an academic nature and are meant to inform and be a conversation starter for families about the student's academic progress.

Communications

We use both email, digital platforms, and newsletters/updates as tools for communication. You can expect to receive Elementary newsletters, Montessori Matters, and important reminders via email. 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 (when possible), and after school. Please allow 24 hours for responses. 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.

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 & Student 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 & Student 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 at the door of their child's classroom. Early Arrival ends promptly at 8:10 AM. If you arrive at that time or later, you will need to get into the carpool line as we follow DSS tracking guidelines and need to keep morning arrival flowing smoothly. **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 Parent & Student Handbook.

Arrival

The Primary classrooms open at 8:10 AM and work time begins at 8:30 AM.

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 (Arrival)

When dropping off or picking up your child, please pull up to the orange cone closest to the Primary building 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**. 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 line behind you.

Morning (arrival) carpool begins at 8:10 AM and ends at 8:30 AM. Primary teachers will greet and assist children out of vehicles and into their classrooms each morning. **Children should remain buckled in their car seats until their teachers arrive to assist them.**

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.

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 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 & Student 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 & Student Handbook.

Carpool (Dismissal)

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 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 rearview mirror, which will assist teachers with vehicle identification. Tag colors are as follows:

P1 - blue

P2 - yellow

P3 - red

Extended Care

Our Primary after-school program is known as Extended Care or “Stay Late” and is housed in the Primary 3 classroom - the round room. 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 in “Stay Late” and will be charged according to the drop-in rates (see section 3.3). An additional fee of \$10 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

Visitors and classroom observations will be handled on a case-by-case basis. Observations and visits will need to be scheduled with the classroom teacher. Visitors/Observers will need to check-in at the Main Office before entering the classroom.

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. Hats must be removed while indoors.

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.** In addition, children should not wear laced-shoes unless they are able to tie their shoe laces. It is best that children wear shoes that they can manage independently and that do not potentially pose a hazard.

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.

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 three-year-olds in our full-day program will nap or rest after lunch for the entire school year. Students enrolled as four-year-olds may or may not nap depending on many factors. (Based on teacher assessment for readiness, non-napping four-year-olds will participate in the mid-day program.) 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 \$60.00 per semester that is invoiced through FACTS.

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 the 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. **Lunch orders are placed through the FACTS Family Portal.** The cost of the classroom lunch is \$7.00 per meal, which covers the cost of food items and also serves as a fundraiser for

the classroom. 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.

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.

School lunch options are available **Monday, Tuesday, and Friday**. Please see section 4.10 of the MSA Parent & Student Handbook for additional details. School lunch orders may be placed through the FACTS Family Portal.

Field Trips

Off-campus field trips will be considered on a case-by-case basis and 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". Parents will be invited to attend the celebration. (A virtual option may be offered in certain circumstances.) Your child may bring one sharing item (no toys, please) as well as one photo from each year of his life. We encourage you to send in pictures of your child showing how he has grown with each passing year. **Treat bags, birthday cakes, and cupcakes are not allowed.** If you would like to do something in honor of your child's birthday, you might consider donating a book to the classroom. You may also provide a special snack, however, it must be pre-approved by the lead teacher.

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 Executive Director.

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.

Related Arts Program

All children receive music and Spanish weekly. In addition, kindergartners participate in Friday afternoon enrichment activities that include P.E., fiber arts, drama, Spanish and S.T.E.M.

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 & Student 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 & Student 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. (The parent will be health-screened before entering the classroom.)

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.

Arrival

School starts at 8:30 am. Children arriving before 8:10 am will be considered early arrival students.

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, **children in the Infant or Toddler classes should arrive at school by 8:30 a.m. Those arriving after 8:30 need to check-in at the Main Office before being admitted to the classroom. In no case should drop-off occur after 10:00 a.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.

Families should ring the bell at the blue Toddler door or white Infant door upon arrival. The Director/teacher answering the door 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 do not accompany the child to their classroom. Ideally, the same parent or designated person should drop off and pick up the child every day.

Dismissal and Release of Children

Parents may ring the Infant/Toddler doorbell 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.** We also recommend that toddlers not wear laced shoes.

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.)

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 currently 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. We do not accept glass bottles to be used in the bottle warmer.

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 \$50.00 per semester which will be invoiced through FACTS.

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 \$7.00/meal. Lunch orders should be placed through the FACTS Family Portal. 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 additional lunch options on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Fridays. For details and cost for the school lunch options, please log into the FACTS Family Portal or 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 and ring the doorbell, or call 864-226-5344 to notify the Director that you have arrived.

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. This information will also make staff aware of 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 (schoolnurse@msasc.org). All information is kept securely in the school health room.

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.

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 **MSA Medication Form** located on our website (www.msasc.org/nurses-forms). 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 (MSA Permission for School Administration of Prescription Medication - located on website: www.msasc.org/nurses-forms) and a parent's permission form (MSA Permission for School Administration of Non-Prescription Medication - located on website: www.msasc.org/nurses-forms) 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 aged 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. If assistance is needed to provide the appropriate child passenger restraint, please contact the school nurse.

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 rendezvous 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 school calendar. A schedule of program closure dates will be available at the opening orientation session.

Infant-Toddler will be CLOSED on the following days:

Teacher In-Service Days, July 28 - August 1

Labor Day, September 1

Wed. – Fri. of Thanksgiving week, Nov. 26-28

Dec. 22-31

Jan. 1 & 5

Good Friday, April 3

Memorial Day, May 25

Teacher Out-Service Days, May 20-22

Week of July 4 (6/29-7/3)

Montessori School of Anderson

Signature Page - ALL LEVELS

2025-2026

The policies of Montessori School of Anderson are designed to inform parents and students of 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 & Student 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 & Student Handbook

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

Parent/Guardian 1 Name: print

Parent/Guardian 2 Name: print

Parent/Guardian 1 Signature

Parent/Guardian 2 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)

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
(required of parents of Upper School students)

Date

For internal use

Date document submitted: _____/_____/_____