



# Monticello Christian Academy Family Handbook

(Revised July 2024)

**School phone: (217) 762-3544**

**School Cell Phone (call or text): (217) 871-4655**

**School website: [www.mcad.org](http://www.mcad.org)**

## MCA Mission Statement

The purpose of Monticello Christian Academy (MCA) is to train young men and women spiritually, mentally, and physically in an environment of educational excellence that will preserve and promote the standards and the faith taught in a Christ-centered home.

## MCA Statement of Faith

We are a non-denominational Christian School that believes that God is the Creator and Sustainer of all living things, He sent His Son to die for the sins of all people, He gave us His Word through the prophets and with the help of the Holy Spirit, we are called to fulfill His great commission. MCA exists to serve the educational needs of Christian families, believing that God's purpose will be realized and accomplished through His people.

*“That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you.”*

Ephesians 1:17-18.

## MCA Programs Offered

- **Pre-school ~ Age 3\* by Sept 1<sup>st</sup>.** This class is offered in a choice of three schedules: Monday through Friday, Tuesday/Thursday, or Monday/Wednesday/Friday. Parents of children in these classes have the option of a Morning-Only Program or a Full-Day Program.
- **Pre-K ~ Age 4\* by Sept. 1<sup>st</sup>.** This class is offered on a Monday through Friday schedule. Parents of children in this class have the option of a Morning-Only Program or a Full-Day Program.
- **Before and After Care Program.** This program offers students in both the public school and at MCA care in the hours before and after school.
- **Summer Care Program.** Please see the Summer Care Handbook for more details about this program.

\*All children attending MCA must be toilet-trained. MCA defines toilet-trained as a child who dependably and willingly uses the toilet. We are not really set up to toilet train children. The teachers and staff do change clothes for those that have accidents, and everyone is very understanding that accidents happen. MCA defines occasional accidents as 1 to 2 times per month (or less). We ask that parents send an extra set of clothes in case of an accident. Please read the MCA Potty Training / Accident Policy which provides more information on this topic.

## **School Hours**

**Drop Off starts at 7:45 a.m.**

**Preschool & Pre-K Morning-Only Programs: 8:15 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.**

**Preschool, Pre-K, & Kindergarten Full-Day Programs: 8:15 a.m. – 2:45pm**

The Preschool, Pre-K, and Kindergarten programs will dismiss at 11:30 a.m. on the first Friday of each month during the school year. These early release days will allow for teacher/staff meetings and trainings. After Care WILL be provided.

Students will be received at school in the morning no earlier than 7:45 a.m., unless registered for the Before Care program or granted prior permission by the administrator.

## **Before and After School Programs**

Our Before Care and After Care programs are available to both MCA students and public school students from the age of 3 up through 5<sup>th</sup> grade. This structured program includes time for homework assistance, healthy snacks, play time, etc. Hours are from 6:45 a.m.-7:45 a.m. for the Before Care program and 3:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m. for the After Care program. Early release days are covered for both public and MCA school as long as release time is after 12:00 p.m.

## **Financial Information**

### **Scholarships**

Families experiencing financial hardship may qualify for tuition assistance. The administrator will help each family through the process. Each application will be reviewed by the Board of Education where the scholarship amount will be determined. MCA's tuition assistance funds are limited. Please complete and return the tuition assistance application as soon as possible for consideration.

### **Sibling Discount Policy**

Each sibling of an enrolled student in school, Before Care, and/or After Care receives a 10% discount. The discount applies to the youngest siblings.

### **Tuition Prepay Discount**

Those who choose to pay for the entire tuition prior to the start of the school year will receive a 10% discount on the amount owed.

## **Student Policies**

### **Attendance**

We request that parents send a message via the brightwheel app when their child will be absent, by/before 8:00 AM, if possible. If we do not hear from you and your child is not present by 8:15 AM, we will contact you.

### **Dress Code**

MCA students follow a dress code. Please refer to the current School Uniform Policy for appropriate dress.

### **Dressing for Inclement Weather**

Our desire is to take students outdoors daily during their recess time. Students are kept inside when the temperature is below 25° - either actual temperature or wind chill. Please dress students appropriately during cold weather including hats, gloves/mittens and warm coats, knowing that the administrator will make the final determination about recess locations based on weather and playground conditions.

### **Toys from Home**

Students are forbidden from bringing toys from home to school. MCA will not be responsible for theft or loss of personal items brought to school against school policy.

### **Head Lice**

If MCA staff find head lice or nits on a child, staff will call pick-up contacts as listed and ask for the child to be picked up immediately to begin the treatment process. All students sent home from school because of head lice or nits will be checked by the administrator or office staff in the office before being allowed to return to their classroom. MCA will conduct all-school head lice checks and classroom wide head lice checks at the administrator's and the teacher's discretion.

### **Health Requirements**

Pursuant to Illinois Law and Article 27, Section 8 of the School Code of Illinois, all students must meet state requirements for vision, hearing, dental, and medical examination and vaccination schedules. We provide medical checklists for each grade prior to the start of school. Blank official state medical, dental, and eye forms may be picked up in the school office though most health providers keep these forms on hand in their offices. Completed health examination forms and a current immunization record must be on file in the school office prior to the first day of school.

### **Illness**

Please do not send your child to school with an active fever, vomiting, or diarrhea. We ask that your child has been fever free, vomiting free, and diarrhea free for 24 hours before coming back to school. If your child has pink eye (conjunctivitis), we will follow the Illinois Department of Public Health guidelines that state students are not to attend school until 24 hours after treatment begins, or the student is examined and cleared to attend school by a physician. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends keeping your child at home if they are running a fever, are not well enough to participate in class, or may be contagious to other children. Please use your best judgement as a parent.

### **Safety Drills**

To prepare your child for an emergency, MCA conducts tornado, fire, and intruder drills on a regular basis. (Intruder drills are done with staff only.)

### **Leaving School Grounds**

Once a student arrives, he/she is to remain on the school property until the end of the school day. If a parent needs to take their child out of school early, the teacher should be notified by a note. The note should indicate the reason the child will be leaving early as well as the planned time of departure. The teacher and office staff need to be notified if someone other than the parent/guardian will be picking up a child. Please be prepared to provide the person's name and relationship to the child. To ensure safety, this information will need to be verified with office staff before the child is released. Staff will ask to see the pick-up person's driver's license or other photo identification to verify identity if they do not recognize the person picking up the child.

### **Non-Discriminatory Policy**

MCA admits students regardless of sex, race, color, nationality, and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities made available to MCA students. MCA does not discriminate in admission procedures, financial aid awards, or any other school administered programs.

### **Planned Absences**

Some absences are unforeseen, such as in the case of an illness. Other absences, however, are planned. If a trip is unavoidable, please notify the school office and the teacher at least one week in advance.

### **School Closings**

MCA follows the Monticello School District for weather cancellations. If the Monticello School District cancels school, MCA cancels school, as we have many families with children at MCA and older children at the public school. \* Please watch WCIA-TV or check their web page at [www.wcia.com](http://www.wcia.com) . When school is released early for weather, please come to pick up your child as soon as possible. After Care will continue if absolutely necessary. Your child will be safe until you get to the school, but timely pick up will help ensure that everyone gets home safely. Also, if we are in-session but you deem it too dangerous to make it to school, please let common sense prevail.

\*Exceptions to this are dismissals for excessive heat and building malfunctions. If public school dismisses early for excessive heat, MCA will remain in session until the normal dismissal time. If public school announces closure for a building malfunction (such as frozen pipes), MCA will offer school and Before Care, but no After Care.

### **Student Discipline and Code of Conduct**

At MCA, the following will be dealt with thorough disciplinary measures:

- A. Any act of physical aggression, or the use of words that are threatening. Please note that any act of physical aggression will result in suspension. We will call the child's contacts for the child to be picked up immediately.
- B. Disrespectful words, gestures, or verbal "putdowns" toward faculty, staff, volunteers, or students.
- C. Refusal to comply with a request from faculty members, staff, or volunteers.
- D. Bullying in any form will not be tolerated at MCA.

A student when possible will be given (1) a chance to make right a wrong through the use of a warning. The faculty, staff, or volunteer will use the phrase "this is your warning." If the student continues with the undesirable behavior, they will (2) lose a privilege such as recess. If the behavior continues, the student will (3) be referred to the office where formal action will be taken by the principal. This will include documentation to be placed in the student's file and a call to the student's parents. Again, our goal is to use these opportunities to redirect the student toward self-government in Christ, and to empower the student to take control of and responsibility for their own actions. We do not subscribe to the use of corporal punishment. We believe that discipline should always be done in a loving, caring way that seeks to bring restitution to the injured person.

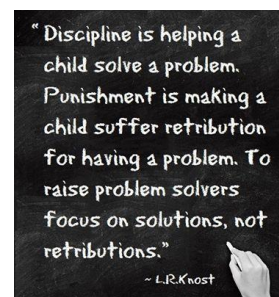
For students who have moved through these disciplinary steps and continue to repeat the same type of misconduct, the teacher, administrator and/or board will meet to discuss the possibility of removal from school.

During the 2018-2019 school year, MCA school staff began the process of training in and implementing a discipline model/curriculum called Conscious Discipline. We continue to learn and implement this program in new ways each month, and plan to continue to do so in the foreseeable future.

Conscious Discipline definition: “Discipline does not equal punishment. It is emotional education: a way of teaching your child to handle her feelings and reminding her how to behave. This is Conscious Discipline. The ultimate goal is to help your child gain self-control. It is making life predictable for your child. They know what to expect and what’s expected of them.”

“Conscious Discipline is a comprehensive classroom management program and a social-emotional curriculum. It is based on current brain research, child development information, and developmentally appropriate practices.

Conscious Discipline has been specifically designed to make changes in the lives of adults first. The adults, in turn, change the lives of children. Conscious Discipline is a way of organizing schools and classrooms around the concept of a School Family. Each member of the family—both adult and child—learns the skills needed to successfully manage life tasks such as learning, forming relationships, communicating effectively, being sensitive to others’ needs and getting along with others.”



## **Student Medication and Prescriptions**

Medication may not be kept in the classroom with the exception of inhalers and insulin. When medication (prescription or over the counter) must be taken during school hours, we ask that it be dropped off in the front office for safekeeping. We keep medications secure in a locked drawer. Please put each medication in a sealed baggie and label it with the child’s name and date. Please fill out a Medication Permission Form in the office for your child to take any prescription or non-prescription medication. Parents are required to provide all medications that children may need to take during the course of their school day.

## **Parent Policies**

### **Conferences**

Clear communication between teachers and parents is essential. If at any time you have questions or concerns, parents are encouraged to contact teachers by phone, email, or note. If necessary, you may request a conference. We want to do whatever we can to keep the lines of communication open. Parent-teacher conferences for kindergarten students are held after the first and third quarters, after report cards have been sent home. Preschool and PreK families will be offered conferences after the semester one progress reports are sent home (January). These conferences are a great opportunity for the teacher and parent to discuss the physical, emotional, academic, and spiritual development of your child.

### **PIP Hours**

MCA only succeeds with a generous amount of parental involvement and volunteers. MCA asks parents of full time students to donate 20 hours of Parental Involvement Program (PIP) hours per year. Parents of half day or partial week students need to donate 10 PIP hours per year. PIP hours can include painting, cleaning, and laundry, cutting out items at home, assisting with summer programs and activities, building maintenance, baking, disinfecting toys, plus many more. The first letter notifying you of your completed and/or unfulfilled PIP hours will go out in early February. The second letter notifying you of your completed and/or unfulfilled PIP hours will go out to you in early April. Any unfulfilled PIP hour requirements will be billed to your account at the end of April at the rate of \$20 per unfulfilled PIP hour.

### **Resolving Conflict between Parent and MCA Faculty or Staff**

Should a conflict arise with a teacher or staff member, please use the Biblical method of conflict resolution as described in Matthew 18:15-16. Specifically, you should go directly and privately to the person in question. Do not share your concerns with others. If at the end of this meeting all concerns have not been resolved, you are both encouraged to share these concerns with the administrator.

### **Tuition Payment Policy**

A completed application and paid registration fee are prerequisites for enrollment at MCA. Tuition is due by the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month for those who choose the monthly payment option. If we have not received your payment by the 6<sup>th</sup> of the month, we will send you an overdue tuition notice. If we have not received your payment by the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month, we will assess a \$20 late payment fee and send you another notice. Accounts still unpaid by the 1<sup>st</sup> of the next month will be referred to the board for action. The board will meet to decide appropriate action up to and including removal of the child from school.

### **School Visitors**

All parents and visitors are asked to come to the school office and sign in before going elsewhere in the school. Also, please remember to sign out before leaving. This log allows us to know who is present in the building in case of an emergency.

We welcome any questions that you may have during the enrollment process. Please feel free to contact us at (217) 762-3544 or [mcaoffice.1109@gmail.com](mailto:mcaoffice.1109@gmail.com). Thank you for partnering with us for a successful year for your child.