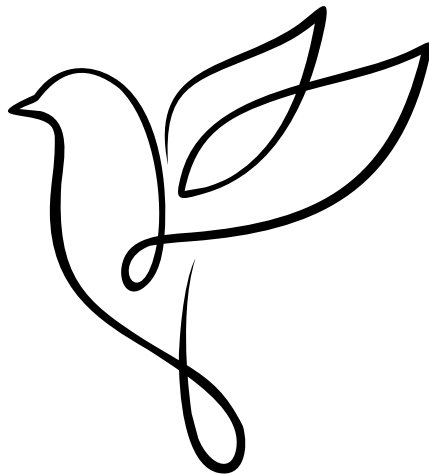


# MIDWEST CHRISTIAN MONTESSORI ACADEMY

## **Student Handbook School Year 2025-2026**



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*updated August 2025*

# MIDWEST CHRISTIAN MONTESSORI ACADEMY

## **Mission Statement:**

*To empower children:*

- *to grow in their understanding of the Christian faith*
- *to strive for academic excellence through the Montessori Method*
- *to reach out and serve*

***Your word is like the lamp that shows me the way. It is like a light that guides me.***  
***Psalms 119:105***

Midwest Christian Montessori Academy (MCMA) is a school that encompasses Pre-Primary, Kindergarten, Lower Elementary (1st – 3rd) and Upper Elementary (4th – 6th.) Our goal is to provide a Christian environment coupled with the Montessori Method of learning, which will allow for the spiritual, educational and developmental growth of our students. At Midwest Christian Montessori Academy our faith is interwoven into all that we do.

The Montessori philosophy of education is based on individual hands-on learning experiences. We provide a carefully planned environment which allows the child to learn and develop at their own pace. Like Dr. Maria Montessori, we believe the child's mind is like a sponge, which can absorb information from their environment, making them capable of learning math, language, science, etc. just as easily as they learned their own native language. The Montessori teacher is carefully trained to observe the needs and interests of each child so that she can guide them toward materials that will best serve those needs and interests. Midwest Christian Montessori Academy employs certified Montessori Teachers, Interns and Para-professionals.

We help the children learn and grow; we observe their interests and their abilities and direct them toward positive work. We prepare a learning environment where they are free to explore and discover new materials, new concepts and new friendships. In so doing, they lay the foundation for future relationships and learning. In the Montessori prepared environment each child has the opportunity to naturally develop their God-given gifts. Most of all, we provide a warm, loving Christian atmosphere where they feel secure and independent.

At Midwest Christian Montessori Academy we believe in the importance of gently nourishing the seeds of faith planted in these children's hearts by their parents and other loving family members from the time of their birth. Therefore, both aspects of our environment blend easily together, as the "sensitive periods" of the children in the Montessori environment are also the "sensitive periods" of the children in their Christian faith. As Christian teachers, we strive to give the children a firm foundation in the Bible, familiarizing them with God's word through scripture, stories, songs and drama. The Elementary classes build on biblical principles, applying scripture passages with application to their lives. We do not teach any particular doctrine, but rather basic Christian principles.

Your children are very important to us. We would like to work together with you as parents to help your children achieve their full potential. In keeping with the purpose and spirit of the Montessori approach to educating children, we want to help your children develop positive attitudes toward themselves and their activities.

The teacher's observations and guidance, coupled with the natural curiosity of the child and the attraction of the materials in the environment will help your child as they weave their way through the Montessori curriculum. Our goal will be to help your child discover ideas and concepts of their own with the help of Montessori materials.

Midwest Christian Montessori Academy is a not-for-profit, board-run school employing Montessori certified and non-certified staff with extensive experience. We are registered as a private school with the Illinois State Board of Education and comply with state and local standards of health and fire safety.

Midwest Christian Montessori Academy admits students of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at our school and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, and national or ethnic origin in administration of our educational policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

Please refer to our school's website for links to further information on the Montessori Method.

[www.mcacademy.org](http://www.mcacademy.org)  
[office@mcacademy.org](mailto:office@mcacademy.org)

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## **SCHOOL POLICY INFORMATION**

### **Arrival** 8:30 - 8:40 AM

**Student drop-off begins promptly at 8:30 AM.** This allows time for students to change into their indoor shoes, situate their belongings at their cubbies, and use the restroom or minimally wash hands before entering the classroom. ***Parents / guardians will remain outside at drop-off, unless handling business in the office.***

**Preschool & Kindergarten**

**8:30 AM (Front Door)**

**Elementary**

**8:30 AM (Back Door)**

**Classes begin promptly at 8:45 AM.** A staff member will be on duty to greet children at the door from 8:30 am to 8:40 am. Please be punctual. Late arrivals are strongly discouraged as they are disruptive to classroom routines and may cause the late child to feel uncomfortable.

The goal, in order to foster independence, is for each student to walk to their class on their own. Parents are encouraged to say goodbye to their children at the car, on the sidewalk, or at the outside doors. Please see on webpage in the *Registration and Tuition* tab, our “Tips for Transition” for ideas on helping your child adjust to his/her new school.

**Students arriving after 8:45am must be accompanied to the front door by an adult to be checked in with staff.**

### **Tardiness**

Students arriving after 8:45 will be marked tardy in their school files. Repeated late arrivals may require a conference with parents to discuss the situation and possible solutions for improvement. Repeated tardiness not only adversely affects your child’s day, but it also causes them to miss early morning presentations and disturbs the class. Repeated tardiness may affect a student’s performance.

### **Dismissal**

After class dismissal students will be released to their parents or authorized adults at the doors:

**Preschool**

**12PM (Front Door)**

***\*\*\*Students must be in the pick-up line by 11:55am. Students picked up **after 12:10pm** will be charged for childcare at the non-contracted childcare rate of \$1 per minute.***

**Kindergarten**

**3PM (Front Door)**

**Elementary**

**3PM (Back Door)**

*\*\*\*Students not scheduled for extended childcare that are picked up after 3:10pm will be charged for childcare at the non-contracted childcare rate of \$13 per hour. **Please notify the teacher via Remind and the office by 2:45pm if your child needs to attend extended care for unforeseen circumstances.***

*Parents / guardians will remain outside at pick-up, unless handling business in the office.*

**Children will be released only to those listed as “authorized pick-up persons” or emergency contacts in student files.** Dismissal staff will ask for identification to verify authorized pick-up persons. **Upon the event the authorized person does not have their ID available, your child will not be allowed to depart with them.** If your child should *not* be released to a particular person, such as a non-custodial parent, **a copy of custodial papers, judge orders, or restraint orders must be provided to the office for the student’s file.**

*Note: Parents/ guardians are recommended to notify the office 24 hours in advance if someone is picking up their child that is not currently on the authorized pick-up list. This approved person will be required to show a Photo ID (Driver’s License, State ID, passport, etc) during dismissal.*

## **Extended Care Dismissal**

Preschool students staying for extended childcare after 12:00 pm, but before 3:10 pm will be released when the parent rings the doorbell at the front door. Preschool, Kindergarten, and Elementary students staying for extended childcare after 3:10 pm may be picked up at the Fellowship Hall Entrance at the back of the building.

## **Early Dismissal**

**We recommend notifying your child’s teacher via Remind and the school office 24 hours in advance if your child must leave class early** for medical appointments or other unavoidable circumstances. Repeated early dismissals are disruptive to your child’s classroom routine, so it is suggested that, when possible, appointments be scheduled after school hours.

## **Absences**

Please contact the school by 8:00 am if your child (any level) will be absent and **submit an absence on the school website through your account.** While sending a message via Remind is optional, it is often helpful for the teacher. In cases of communicable diseases, the office should be notified immediately. *Note: tuition will not be adjusted for general absences.* In the event of a long-term illness, a written tuition adjustment request may be sent to MCMA’s Board of Directors, who will determine if the adjustment is granted.

## **Vacation**

Removing students from class during the regular school schedule for vacation is strongly discouraged. The Montessori Method requires “hands-on” work and class participation. It can be very difficult for a child to complete the necessary work to prepare for the next grade level if they take vacations while classes are in session. Please see the school website for scheduled closings and the best days to schedule your family events. We appreciate your cooperation in helping your child achieve success in school.

## **Illnesses**

In the interest of the health and well-being of our students and staff, **children cannot be allowed in school with any communicable illness, disease, or highly contagious infections.**

Please keep your child at home if they are exhibiting any of the following signs of illness:

- Fever (over 100.4 degrees)
- Vomiting
- Severe cough
- Sore throat
- Diarrhea

**A child must be free of symptoms for a minimum of 24 hours without the aid of medication before returning to school.** After an absence of five (5) consecutive days due to illness, a doctor’s note is required for continued absence.

If a student becomes ill during the school day, contact with a parent or guardian will be attempted immediately. *Please remember to update the office every time your emergency contact information changes.* **Please make sure you have MCMA (630) 783-844 saved to your contacts and have download the Remind App and joined your child’s class.**

*Note: If a student is sent home due to vomiting,  
the student may not return for a minimum of 24 hours.*

For the health and wellbeing of everyone, staff will clean/disinfect materials and surfaces in the classroom regularly throughout the day and at the end/beginning of each day. Bathrooms, high traffic, and common areas will be cleaned regularly and sanitized daily. Additionally, staff will stay home if ill or are showing symptoms of possible illness.

## **Dispensing of Medication**

**Medicines, either prescription or over-the-counter, must be delivered to staff by a parent or guardian, along with a completed signed release form.** All *prescription medicines must be labeled by the pharmacy* with your child’s name, dosage, and

instructions for use. Over-the-counter medicines **must be in the manufacturer's labeled container and must be labeled with your child's name**. All medications will be stored in the office and administered by staff; with the exception of inhalers, which may be stored in the student's backpack *when parental permission is on file*.

*Note: If instructions on when and how to administer the medication are not received, staff will not administer. Please make sure your release form is complete.*

**Sunscreen and bug spray must be labeled with student's name and must be delivered to staff by a parent or guardian.** Sunscreen and bug spray will be stored in the office and upon student request or parent/guardian direction, application will be supervised by a staff member.

### **Weather Related Closings**

MCMA will send an **email and group Remind App message** to inform families of a school closure. The decision to close will be made by the Director after taking into consideration weather predictions, snowfall, wind chill, travel hazards, etc.

In the event that unexpected, severe weather arrives or power/water outages occur after your child is at school, we will notify you to come pick-up your child. **Every child must have an emergency pick-up person on file authorized to pick them up in the event that you cannot arrive promptly.** *Please update the office with current phone numbers and e-mail addresses immediately when changed.*

### **Withdrawal**

By enrolling at MCMA, parents agree to a ten-month commitment for the school year. Students are expected to remain through the end of the school in May. If unforeseen or significant circumstances require withdrawal, we ask for one month's written notice.

**Tuition is non-refundable. Tuition deposits may only be used as credit towards the child's last month's tuition.** Parents are responsible for full payment of any balance on account.

### **Assessment and Evaluation**

At MCMA all teachers are trained in the fundamentals of child development. However, there are some situations when we may, in consultation with the parent, refer students for a professional evaluation. We will be happy to direct parents/guardians to the appropriate resources for services.

### **Eight-Week Probation for New Students**

As much as we believe that Montessori is the best educational method and is able to meet the needs of most children, there are occasions or circumstances where we may be



concerned about the suitability of our program for an individual child. In those cases, after consulting with parents, teachers, and key staff, we may decide that MCMA is not able to successfully meet the needs of a particular student and we may ask the parents to withdraw their child. A refund of current tuition may be issued at that time, providing the decision is made by MCMA during the eight-week probation period.

### **Discretionary Dismissal Policy**

The Montessori Method has a long successful history of educating children of various backgrounds and abilities. As a private school, however, MCMA reserves the right to make a decision to not include a child in our program. In the rare instance that we find a child is not thriving in our environment or is disrupting other students' education, we will take the following steps:

- notify parents in writing of our concerns
- set up a meeting with parents to determine an Individual Student Plan
- schedule a follow-up meeting to assess the student's progress
- make a decision at that time regarding the student's continuance in our program
- If it is determined by MCMA that your child would be better served in another school environment, then your deposit will be credited/refunded

### **School Records**

It is vital that we keep our records up to date at all times. **Birth Certificates are required to be on file for all students.** Any changes in a student's address, phone number, emergency information, medical, or other pertinent information such as food allergies, should be presented promptly to the school office in writing. Records will be released only upon written consent from the parents.

### **Release of Directory Information**

Personal contact information will only be released with a parent's written consent. Please consult the school directory for student contact information. The directory is intended to be helpful for planning play dates, parties, and carpooling.

### **Health Insurance:**

It is recommended that families secure their own private health insurance coverage for students enrolled at MCMA.

## **Health Requirements**

According to state regulations, the following physical, dental, and eye exams are required for the listed grade levels:

<b>Preschool (New)</b>	<b>Kindergarten</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Grade</b>	<b>6<sup>th</sup> Grade</b>	<b>New Students</b>
Physical	Physical	Dental	Physical	Physical
	Dental		Dental	Dental
	Eye			Eye

## **Student Safety:**

In keeping with the State of Illinois' guidelines for the safety of children and staff in our school, MCMA follows daily procedures and has an emergency plan in place. MCMA complies with local and state fire department regulations, inspections and required periodic safety drills. Fire Drills, Weather Drills, and Intruder (active shooter) Drills are completed minimally bi-annually per school year with students.

The exterior doors to our school and hallway are closed and locked. Exceptions include front and back entrances during arrival and dismissal and hallway door during lunch-hour, only when they are attended by staff.

## **Snack**

Personal daily snacks need to be brought by the students each day. Snacks should be ready-to-eat and stored in sealable containers. Please provide necessary utensils if required. Please make sure your child's snack container is labeled with their name. Students should bring their own **sealable filled water bottles** and we will provide bottled water refills. Water bottles need to be labeled with your child's name. **No candy or sweet treats (such as cookies, brownies, etc)** may be included in your child's daily snack. Only water will be allowed during snack. This helps keep our classrooms neat and beautiful. Children who stay for after-school care may bring an extra snack.

## **Lunch**

"Ready to eat" lunches are preferred and are to be provided by their parents each day. Warm-ups are allowed, but may cause a delay in eating. We encourage children to eat a nutritionally balanced lunch. **Candy and soda pop are not allowed.** We request that children take leftovers home so that parents can better gauge what their child will or will not eat, as well as how much. Please provide necessary utensils if required.

We encourage our students to be responsible for remembering to bring their lunches to school. In the event a lunch is forgotten, teachers will send a message via Remind and if no response is received the office will call a parent to bring it to school by the scheduled lunch break. We discourage food delivery for students as it is disruptive. In the rare occurrence that a food delivery is necessary, please notify the office and teacher via Remind prior to the arrival of the delivery. We recommend food arrives 30 minutes before your child's lunch period. Food delivery personnel are not allowed in the building.

### **Lunch Schedule:**

Early Childhood Students (Preschool - Kindergarten) have lunch from 12-12:30pm

Elementary Students (1st-6th Grade) have lunch from 12:30-1pm

### **Preschool Extended Care**

Preschool students who are staying for extended care will take a rest. We supply cots, a sheet, blanket and small pillow. **Bedding will be sent home weekly to be laundered.**

**Please remember to return these promptly.** Your child may bring *one* stuffed animal, which will be available only during rest time and must be small enough to fit in their cubby box or backpack. (Any hard toys, such as: Barbie, trucks, etc are permitted during rest time.)

MCMA offers before and after school childcare to students enrolled in the school, as a DCFS License Exempt facility.

### **School Supplies**

School supplies lists can be found on the MCMA website under the *Registration & Tuition* section. **School supplies is due no later than the first school day in September for those beginning in August.** New MCMA students who begin during the school year, have one month from their start date to bring in their school supplies.

## **Anti-Bullying Policy**

MCMA believes that all students have the right to a safe and healthy school environment. As stated in our Discipline Policy, we have an obligation to promote mutual respect, tolerance and acceptance. We will not tolerate behavior that infringes on the safety of any student. Intimidation, harassment, or bullying of others through words or actions are not allowed. MCMA staff is trained to immediately take steps to intervene when any act of bullying is witnessed or reported. Staff and administration will investigate all incidents and discuss the policy with students in an age-appropriate manner to assure them that bullying will not be tolerated. Any student who engages in bullying may be subject to disciplinary action, up to, and including expulsion. Students are expected to immediately report incidents of bullying to a staff member, teacher, or director. In an effort to prevent bullying, all students are encouraged to resolve conflicts at the "Peace Table." Students may rely on staff to intervene if a dispute cannot be resolved peacefully.

In accordance with Illinois state law, Midwest Christian Montessori Academy and its Board of Directors has adopted an anti-bullying policy which defines 'bullying', including "cyber-bullying" as any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including written or electronic communications toward a student(s) that can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of any of the following:

- 1) Placing the student(s) in reasonable fear of harm to the student('s) person or property;
- 2) Causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student's or students' physical or mental health;
- 3) Substantially interfering with the student's or students' academic performance;
- 4) Substantially interfering with the student's or students' ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities or privileges provided by the school.

Bullying may take various forms, such as harassment, threats, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, sexual harassment, sexual violence, theft, public humiliation, destruction of property or retaliation for asserting or alleging an act of bullying.

Incidence of bullying should be promptly reported to the immediate supervisor and the school director in person, by school telephone (listed) and/or may be emailed (address listed). Anonymous reporting may be delivered in writing to the school office.

Parents/guardians of all students involved in an alleged bullying incident will be promptly informed and invited to discuss interventions, restorative measures and the availability of counseling services with the school director and appropriate staff. All parties will be invited to meet with the school director to discuss the findings of the investigation and actions taken to address the reported incident.

The school will make all reasonable efforts to complete an investigation within ten (10) school days after the date of the report of the incident of bullying was received. The investigation process will include the appropriate school staff with knowledge, experience and/or training in bullying prevention.

Interventions may include, but are not limited to restorative measures, social-emotional skill building and referrals for counseling, psychological services and community-based services, and possible expulsion. Retaliation against any person who reports an alleged act of bullying, and also any person falsely accusing another of bullying is prohibited and will be addressed with the same procedures, including possible expulsion.

The evaluation process shall include, but is not limited to assessing:

- The frequency of incidents
- Student, staff and family observations of safety in school
- Identification of areas of school where bullying incidents occur
- The types of bullying that are common or may be occurring
- Bystander intervention or participation
- Information developed as part of the evaluation process will be provided to the school director, school board members, the appropriate staff, parents, guardians and students

A team consisting of the school director, board members and staff will investigate whether a reported act of bullying is within the permissible scope of the school's jurisdiction. The victim and family will be provided with referrals to support services available in the community.

## **General Information**

### **Friday Praise & Worship**

Every Friday morning the students and staff meet for Praise and Worship. Students are allowed but not required to bring in small amounts of money for the Money Jar as an offering. Offerings will later be donated to our chosen charities. *Families are welcome to attend Praise & Worship, please arrive between 9:05-9:10am in order to sign-in, as Praise & Worship begins at 9:15am.*

### **Parent Meetings/Conferences**

If you have a particular question not pertinent to the given day, please email or send a Remind app message to your child's teacher, or leave a message with the office staff. Teachers will be happy to sit down and talk or perhaps answer your questions over the telephone. Please be assured that concerns will be addressed as soon as possible, but not during class time, as that must be devoted to the children.

Parent/teacher conferences are scheduled in the fall and spring. Progress reports are provided at the conclusion of conferences and final reports for the academic year are sent home in May.

### **Discipline**

We strive to help the children develop self-esteem by practicing self-control and accepting responsibility for their actions. We prefer that they learn and understand right from wrong and develop a desire in their hearts to choose to do what is right. To limit the need for adult disciplinary action, simple ground rules are established that set limits of behavior for the safety and protection of all children. The teacher's approach is firm and supportive, while taking into consideration each child's developmental level. We expect all children to show respect for their teachers, fellow classmates, the materials, and the environment. If basic rules are broken, teachers strive to find the reason for the difficulty and help the child understand why it was wrong and what other options there might have been. Students are encouraged to use their words to resolve conflicts, but also may be redirected to alternative activities as necessary. They should learn acceptable group behavior and develop positive problem-solving techniques. In some cases, the child might be asked to sit separately for a short time until they feel able to return to the group and act appropriately.

Parents will be notified of continuous disciplinary problems. If a child is involved in a physical altercation, parents will be notified and the child may be suspended for a period of time appropriate to their age and the action. These incidents are extremely rare in our school, but parents should be aware that we are serious about providing a safe learning environment.

## **Personal Belongings**

Personal toys are not allowed at school as they are a distraction. MCMA will not assume responsibility for lost or broken toys or personal items (including technology and devices). Throughout the school year, with approval from the teacher, children may occasionally bring “treasures” to share with the class. These items could be a special book, photo, keepsake, an object from nature, etc *but not toys*.

***Cell phones and electronic devices are not to be used in school. If a student brings a cell phone or other electronic device to school, it must remain in the backpack and be turned off during school hours.*** If discovered in a student’s possession during school hours, the item will be held in the office and released to the parent at the end of the day. Necessary phone calls from students to parents during the school day may be made in the school office.

## **Visiting the Classroom**

Parents are allowed to visit in classrooms; however, we ask that arrangements be made in advance with your child’s teacher in order to visit at the most appropriate time. This enables us to limit the number of visitors on any given day, and if necessary, we may suggest a better time. When you visit, please do so quietly and with a purpose; such as to see how your child interacts with other children, how they use their time, what kind of materials they are interested in, etc. Unless requested by the teacher, we do not recommend helping your child or others with their work. Children are generally proud to show their parents what they can accomplish on their own.

## **Volunteers**

We appreciate help offered by parents! Please ask your child’s teacher, or the Parent Teacher Organization, for what may be needed in their classroom. There will be a Parent Volunteer Form provided at the beginning of the school year. Whether you donate an hour to listen to children read, laminate and cut works, help organize - we are very grateful! This is your child’s school. We are all here to do God’s work and to provide a good environment and pleasant learning experiences for your children. *Volunteers need to sign in and out and wear a visitor’s badge, which are available in the office. Our insurance requires that we keep a copy of all volunteers’ drivers’ licenses on file. If it is your first time volunteering for the school year, we will request to take a photo copy of your photo ID. **Volunteers are expected to wear MCMA Spirit Wear.***

## **Student Attire**

We encourage students to wear Spirit Wear to school. We expect children to *dress modestly* – crop tops, short skirts/shorts/dresses, or low cut tops are not allowed. **Clothing with**

**pictures depicting violence, weapons, characters, or words that may be offensive to others are not allowed.** The indoor temperature may be very unpredictable, so we suggest that your children dress in layers which may be removed if the classroom is too warm for their comfort.

### **Preschool and Kindergarten Attire**

- Children should be encouraged to pick out their own clothing and dress themselves.
- Comfortable clothing which allows freedom of movement, and non-marking, rubber-soled indoor shoes are required. Indoor shoes should be stored at school. **Slippers are not allowed.**
- Shorts are encouraged to be worn under skirts and dresses.
- Fitness shoes are recommended for outdoor shoes, due to recess, Guided Play, and classroom activities taking place outdoors.
- **Children are encouraged to be as independent as possible. Clothing should be easy to get on and off.** Elastic waistbands are ideal unless your child is proficient with zippers, snaps, buttons, and buckles.
- Avoid good clothing that cannot get dirty or spotted by paint, etc. We want the children to be free to explore activities without the fear of ruining their clothing.
- Please note that our policy does not allow clothing, backpacks, lunchboxes, etc. which depict characters and/or words that may be offensive to others.
- All Preschool and Kindergarten students must have a complete change of clothing stored at school (top, bottom, underwear, socks). Parents are responsible for making sure store clothing is weather appropriate.

### **Elementary Attire**

- Comfortable clothing which allows freedom of movement, and non-marking rubber-soled indoor shoes are encouraged. Indoor shoes should be stored at school.
- **Short skirts or shorts are inappropriate** since some work is done on the floor.
- Shorts are encouraged to be worn under skirts and dresses.
- Elementary students will require fitness shoes for P.E. class. Additionally, tennis shoes are recommended for outdoor shoes, due to recess and classroom activities taking place outdoors.
- **Slippers are not permitted for indoor shoes.**
- **All students must be able to take shoes on and off independently.** Therefore, if your child is not proficient in tying shoes, we prefer they do not wear shoes that need tying to school.
- Please note that our policy does not allow clothing, backpacks, lunchboxes, etc. which depict characters and/or words that may be offensive to others.



## **Winter Attire**

Students go outside during winter for recess, providing it is not extremely cold. In general if the temperature is *below 15 degrees with or without windchill, we will have indoor recess.* Anything between 15-32 degrees is at the Director's Discretion. **All students should have hats, mittens, scarves, boots and snow pants.** During snowy weather, students without boots and snow pants will be restricted to playing on the blacktop. Non-marking, rubber-soled indoor shoes are needed for when they take their boots off or if their shoes get muddy or wet. It is suggested that all students have a change of clothing stored at school. Please make sure everything is labeled with your child's name in a gallon zip-lock bag, as the school cannot be responsible for lost clothing.

## **Recess**

For safety and supervision purposes, all students must remain with their class group during recess, snack, lunch, and other scheduled break times—whether these activities take place indoors or outdoors. Separate indoor supervision is not available during these times. If your child is not well enough to participate with the group during recess, we recommend keeping them home for the day. Please help your child prepare for outdoor time by ensuring they have appropriate weather-related clothing so they can fully enjoy this important part of their school day.

Please stress with your child the **wearing of appropriate weather-related clothing** so that they can enjoy this important outdoor time.

## **Birthdays**

At Midwest Christian Montessori, we celebrate birthdays in a special way that helps children gain a deeper understanding of the passage of time. Our birthday celebrations focus on each child's timeline of life, offering a meaningful and respectful experience. We invite you to help your child prepare a poster board or digital presentation that showcases their personal timeline. This should include photos and key milestones from their life, which will be shared with the class during their birthday celebration. The celebration begins with a "birthday walk," where your child will walk around a sun replica while holding a small globe.

After the birthday walk, we will sing "Happy Birthday," and pray. **Your child can share single-serve treats such as fruit bowls, yogurt, cupcakes, popcorn, cheese and crackers, or all-fruit popsicles with their classmates. Please check with your child's teacher regarding bringing in treats to share; in particular, due to possible food allergies, nuts/related items are not allowed.** MCMA prefers that frosted items be food dye-free, as some students are not able to eat items with food dye. **Please refrain from bringing balloons, decorations, goodie bags, gifts, or candy, as these are best saved**

**for personal birthday parties.** If you wish, you may also bring a class gift, such as an educational puzzle, board game, small plant, or special book. Please check with your child's teacher for helpful suggestions or see their Amazon wish list for ideas.

**We ask that birthday invitations be distributed outside of school by parents. The school directory (located on the school webpage once logged in) may be used for contact and mailing purposes. Teachers and students will not be responsible for distributing birthday invitations.**

## **Financial Information**

### **Tuition**

It is imperative that tuition be paid on time to allow the school sufficient operating funds. Tuition will not be adjusted for absences, family vacations, school holidays or closings. In the event of a long-term illness, tuition may be adjusted at the discretion of the MCMA Board of Directors.

### **Non-sufficient Funds / Returned Checks**

Accounts with checks returned to MCMA for non-sufficient funds or any other reason will be charged a \$30.00 fee. Those accounts must be settled with the Business Office within ten (10) business days of notification. The account will be flagged with the date of the returned check. If two (2) checks are returned within a twelve (12) month period, future payments must be in the form of cash, credit card, certified cashier's check or money order. This will be in effect for one year from the date of the last flagged non-sufficient funds/returned check.

### **Late Fees**

All tuition payments must be made in a timely manner. Monthly payments are due on the first of each month.

- Any payment ten (10) days in arrears will be assessed a late fee of 5% per invoice
- Any payment thirty (30) days in arrears may result in your child being excluded from classes until your account is current.

Frequent late payments will require a meeting with the Business Office and may result in the removal of your child from MCMA. Payment plans may be discussed with the Business Office.

### **Extended Childcare Cost and Overtime Charges**

MCMA offers extended childcare before school starting at 7:00 AM and after school until 5:30 PM (possibly 6PM upon request – must speak to the office).

**Contracted childcare** can be arranged for students who require before or after-school care consistently. Families will be billed on the first of the month at \$10.00 per hour based on the contracted drop-off/pick-up times.

- Unused contracted hours will not be credited
- Additional hours of care beyond the contracted times will be granted the contracted care rate
- Billed to the nearest quarter hour

**Unscheduled childcare** is available to all students as needed. Families will be billed monthly for the hours accrued at \$13.00 per hour.

- Unscheduled childcare includes students not picked up by 10 minutes after dismissal
- Billed to the nearest quarter hour

**MCMA CLOSSES PROMPTLY AT 5:30 PM.** A Late pick-up charge will be applied to any student picked up after 5:30 PM regardless of contract at \$1.00 PER MINUTE. This also applies to preschool students that are not expected to stay past 12:00 PM and will be charged \$1.00 PER MINUTE past 12:10 PM unless we are notified and they are arranged to stay for lunch.

*Note: If aftercare is needed till 6PM, parents must discuss with the Business Office to see if this is possible.*

### **Parent Teacher Organization**

Our Parent/Teacher Organization (PTO) contributes a great deal to our children's learning experience. The PTO assists with field trips and supports our special events such as the Christmas program, fundraisers, special guest performances, presentations, and other school events. We encourage you to get involved in our fundraising programs and activities, which help to support your children and their school.

Volunteers are needed in many areas for school events. We appreciate your help! Please check for the PTO Weekly Connection e-mails and the website for scheduled events and updates. Please contact the office if emails are not being received or to update our records with address changes.

### **PTO Fees**

Each registered student is required to pay a \$25.00 fee for PTO dues annually. These dues are used to subsidize field trips, activities, and special events. The annual activity fee charged to families contributes to special activity expenses incurred within the classroom setting.

Families are **encouraged** to participate in school fundraising, special events, and classroom parties. If unable to participate for some reason, please inquire about other ways you are able to support the school.

### **Field Trips/Activities**

Activity fees for trips and events may be required beyond what was collected during registration. A general permission inquiry was obtained during registration. Additionally, individual permission slips will be collected for each specified field trip. We may travel by

walking, chartered bus, or parent vehicles. Trips and in-school presentations are announced on the website calendar and the weekly MCMA Newsletter email and PTO Weekly Connection.

***Students, Staff, and Chaperones must wear a school T-shirt or sweatshirt on off-campus school field trips.*** School spirit wear may be ordered online via *The Shop* (<https://theshopbb.store/collections/mcma-midwest-christian-montessori-academy-1>) at any time.

Parent volunteers are usually welcome to accompany us on field trips, though in some situations this may not be possible. **Non-enrolled siblings are not allowed to attend field trips.** Our insurance requires that we keep a copy of all volunteers' drivers' licenses in our files. **Siblings are not allowed to attend classroom parties or in-school presentations with volunteering parent.** The PTO hosts a beginning and end of the school year celebration, in which siblings are welcome to attend. Additionally, siblings are welcomed to attend school programs such as the Christmas Program and Spring Program.