



Weekday Education Parent Handbook

For questions or concerns, please contact:

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<https://www.msbchurch.com/mscc>

Revised August 2024

Main Street Children’s Center

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Dear Parents,

Thank you for choosing Main Street Children's Center. We feel blessed that you have chosen to entrust your child to our Weekday Education Program!

Main Street Children's Center is a full time, Christian-based child development program. Our pre-school is recognized as an exemplary member of the Early Childhood Christian Network. Our purpose is to glorify God by serving parents in providing their children a Christ-centered education and to offer a place where children may grow as Jesus grew.

The goal of our program is to help children develop into individuals who feel good about themselves, feel confident about making decisions which please God, and understand how much God loves them. The staff is dedicated to making your child's experience at school a special time. The staff has been trained in the areas of early childhood education and development. They are prepared to do their best in making sure that your child is provided with age-appropriate activities.

This parent handbook has been designed to help you become familiar with our program and policies. It includes our operating policies and information that will help you understand the shared responsibilities we have between home and school. Our success in providing a quality program depends a great deal on your support and involvement.

The handbook can be found on the Main Street Baptist Church website at <https://www.msbchurch.com/mscc>.

You are always welcome at Main Street Children's Center! If you have any questions, comments and/or suggestions, please let us know.

Blessings,

Ruth Ann Godfrey

Main Street Children's Center, Director

ruthann@msbchurch.com

About Main Street Children's Center

School Contact Information

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Director: Ruth Ann Godfrey
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Mission Statement

To glorify God by serving parents in providing their children with a Christ-centered education and offering a place where children may grow as Jesus grew. "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature and favor with God and man." (Luke 2:52)

Goals and Objectives

Main Street Children's Center (MSCC) is a full time Christian based Weekday Education Program. We are licensed for fifty-three (53) children, ages 18 months to 5 years. Through our program, each child is encouraged to grow and develop spiritually, cognitively, physically, emotionally, and socially in a Christian atmosphere. The goal of our program is to help children develop into individuals who feel good about themselves, feel confident about making decisions which please God, and understand how much God loves them. By offering a wide variety of developmentally appropriate activities and materials, the center gives each child the opportunity for building self-esteem while experiencing challenges and success.

Licensing Information

MSCC is licensed and regulated by the Texas Health and Human Services Commission. As a licensed day care operation, we have the following requirements:

- comply with [Minimum Standards for Child-care Centers](#). A copy of the Minimum Standards is available online and is also available to review in the office, upon request.
- comply with reviews and onsite inspections conducted by Childcare Licensing. The most recent Licensing Inspection report is posted in the entry of MSCC.
- inform parents that MSCC is located within a gang-free zone. This means that certain gang related criminal activity or engaging in organized criminal activity within 1000 feet of our school is a violation of Texas law and is subject to increased penalty.
- establish an emergency evacuation & relocation plan for our center. See the section in this handbook titled Alternate Safe Location.
- report suspected child abuse to the [Texas Abuse Hotline](#) at 1-800-252-5400. All staff are required to take annual child abuse training so that they may better recognize and report any visible injuries, suspected abuse, or any signs of neglect. Employees are considered mandated

reporters and are required by law to report any concern of abuse or neglect to the authorities. Employees are not required to discuss their suspicions with parents prior to reporting the matter to authorities.

- provide a comfortable place with an adult sized seat in the center or within a classroom that enables a mother to breastfeed her child. You have the right to breastfeed or provide breast milk for your child while in care.
- inform you that you may contact the local Child Care Licensing Office at: 14000 Summit Drive, Suite 100, Austin, TX 78728; phone 512-834-3426.

Main Street Children's Center meets all state requirements regarding insurance coverage for children enrolled in a licensed facility.

Organizational Structure

MSCC is a self-supporting, non-profit organization. We receive no outside financial support, relying solely upon tuition and the donations of caring individuals. MSCC is a ministry of, and accountable to, Main Street Baptist Church.

Teacher Qualifications

The MSCC staff is prayerfully committed to each family as an extension of the child. They are competent and qualified teachers. All employees meet the licensing requirements to be able to teach in a licensed childcare facility in the State of Texas including background checks and FBI fingerprints. All teachers and assistants must receive at least 24 hours of in-service training yearly to work. For the Director, a minimum of 30 hours is required yearly. All staff at MSCC are certified in CPR, First Aid, and maintain a Food Handlers Certification.

Enrollment & Fees

Enrollment

Enrollment at MSCC is open to children from 18 months (by September 1) through 5 years old. Enrollment shall be granted without discrimination regarding sex, race, creed, or political belief. Initial enrollment is based on space availability and payment of a **non-refundable** registration fee. A completed enrollment packet, including a current immunization record for the child, is required prior to admission. Enrollment into the program is according to the following order of priority, providing the program can meet the needs of that child:

- currently enrolled students
- children of Main Street Baptist Church/MSCC Staff
- siblings of currently enrolled students
- the general public

Parents are required to notify MSCC immediately should any of the information provided at the time of enrollment change. Keeping MSCC informed of persons authorized to pick up your child is critical for their safety. We must have current contact information to allow us to reach you in case of an emergency.

Class Assignments

The determination of class placement of children is the responsibility of the Director, who will receive input from the manager and teachers. Promotion to the Zebra class (Ages 3 & 4) requires that the child be completely potty trained. In the event your child is eligible to promote to that class level but is not potty trained, it will prevent them from promoting.

Children Who Need Special Accommodations

It is our desire to welcome and meet the needs of all children into our school to the best of our ability. To do that, we ask that parents inform the school if/when their child has been diagnosed with a condition or impairment that may impact the child's participation in the normal activities of the center. For children who have needs we feel we may not be meeting adequately, we may recommend a professional evaluation for a personalized educational assessment or as a last resort, alternate schooling. If an educational consultant or therapist needs access to a child during school hours, arrangements can be made through the Director and the child's teacher. For children three years and older, the local public school can provide services for children living in its attendance area at no cost to the family. For children younger than three, services are provided by Early Childhood Intervention.

Tuition/Fees

Tuition must be paid according to the signed payment agreement at the time of enrollment. A fee of \$25.00 will be added to tuition payments made after the 15th of the month. If the account is repeatedly delinquent, the child will not be able to attend until the account is paid in full and can result in dismissal from the program. Spaces will not be held for delinquent accounts.

All returned checks are subject to a \$35.00 returned check fee. The parent has 48 hours after notification of the returned check to submit the payment in full by cash or money order. Returned checks will not be resubmitted to the bank for payment. If two or more checks are returned, cash payments will be required for a period of six months.

Tuition is still due during periods of extended leave taken, such as summer months, vacations, public-school closures and in the event of an emergency closure. The monthly expenses of MSCC continue even when your child is absent. Since tuition is based upon twelve monthly periods instead of weekly, parents already receive an equivalent of four (4) weeks “free” per year. (Four months contain five (5) weeks).

The *Brightwheel* app (see section titled Brightwheel) also affords parents options for making tuition payments. You will be given the option, through *Brightwheel*, to have your account automatically drafted each month (ACH) or have a credit card charged each month without having to remember to make a payment (no more late fees!) There is a nominal charge through *Brightwheel* for this service. You will receive a statement once a month 5 days before the payment is due. You will have access to your year-end summary (or monthly summary) for tax purposes or reimbursement that you can print at your convenience.

If automatic payment does not appeal to you, you may also make an individual payment each month, by the 15th, with no late fees. However, if the payment is made after the 15th, a late fee will be applied to the balance due. You may pay by check, cash or money order by dropping it in our drop/lock box outside the office by the 15th of each month. If paying by cash, please get a receipt from the staff member in charge.

Supply Fee-MSCC has found it is most efficient to buy school supplies in bulk. A non-refundable supply fee for each child is due at the time of enrollment and every year in August thereafter.

Registration Fee-A non-refundable registration fee is due at the time of enrollment, and every year in September thereafter.

Extra fees for field trips, extra-curricular activities, portraits etc. may be charged.

Withdrawal

If at any time a parent chooses to withdraw their child, a two-week written notice must be given to the office. If a two-week notice is not given, the account will be charged tuition for two weeks. If a parent decides to withdraw a child in the middle of the month, the tuition will be prorated pending approval of the Director.

Dismissal From the Program

MSCC reserves the right to dismiss any child at any time, with or without cause. Removal is a last resort after all other means of working with the child and his/her parents is unsuccessful.

Situations that may cause MSCC to dismiss a child from the program are, but not limited to:

- the child’s health or educational needs become such that the center is unable to provide appropriate schooling/care
- parents are verbally disrespectful to teachers or other school employees
- the parents are consistently late in picking up the child

- nonpayment of tuition or fees
- parents' failure to complete and return required documentation in a timely fashion.
- custody arrangements between parents are such that MSCC cannot satisfy one or both parents' wishes. See Policy Regarding Child Custody Matters.
- behavior management strategies with the child have been unsuccessful.

Parents WILL NOT be reimbursed tuition for days when their child is refused admission to the program.

Students dismissed are not eligible for re- enrollment.

If dismissal is due to a parent's conduct, all children in the family are dismissed.

Grievance Procedures

It is in the best interests of children, families, teachers and the center for concerns and complaints to be addressed in a timely and professional manner. Please speak to your child's teacher first, and if the issue is not resolved, then contact the Director.

Parent Communication and Involvement

Brightwheel

At MSCC, we strive to be partners and communicate clearly with our parents to provide spiritual, emotional, and academic growth for each child. We use the *Brightwheel* app to record activities and document updates to keep you posted throughout the day. Changes to policies or guidelines will also be communicated to parents through *Brightwheel*. Most communication is through the app, so please use it regularly. For more information go to <https://mybrightwheel.com/>.

Once your child is enrolled, you will receive an invitation to join our school. Parents are enrolled using their cell phone numbers. Please wait for the invitation before you try to join! Only PARENTS will be invited to the join the billing portion of *Brightwheel*. You will be asked to give an emergency contact (other than the parents). This person is ONLY an emergency contact, they will not have authorization to pick up your child. You may also select family members to have access to the app. They will be allowed to see all the updates and feeds from your child's teacher; they will NOT see any billing. A pickup authorized individual will be allowed to pick up and drop off only.

Our general public website is <https://www.msbchurch.com/mscc>. The school calendar, forms and parent handbook are on the public website.

Parent Involvement

Parents are invited and encouraged to be involved in their child's school activities. There are many different ways in which parents can participate and volunteer at the MSCC. Parents may volunteer to attend field trips, read in the classroom, coordinate special events, etc. More information on volunteer opportunities is available at MSCC Open House in September. Parents not interested in volunteering directly in the classroom may donate items or assist in the resource area. Any parent who volunteers in the classroom on a regular basis will be required to pay for and secure all criminal background checks, as required by our licensing regulations. MSCC will determine all volunteer assignments. Please check with the Director or Manager for ways you can be involved.

Parent Conference

Because our teachers are supervising classes during pick up and drop off times, they are unable to have informal parent conferences at those times. Parents can schedule conversations of length in the following ways:

- ask questions/express concerns to your child's teacher in the Brightwheel app.
- ask the teacher to schedule a phone or in-person conference for a later time.
- arrange an appointment through the office for a before or after-school hours conference.

Pre-K Formal Parent Conference

A parent conference will be scheduled in May for all children in the Pre-K class. The teacher will meet with parents individually to discuss the child's progress. Together the teachers and parents can evaluate how the child has progressed through the year and discuss developmental goals and kindergarten readiness.

Parent Visitation

Parents are welcome to visit any area of the facility if the visit does not interrupt the child's ability to function with the class. The MSCC office must be notified when a non-custodial parent plans to visit.

Policy Regarding Child Custody Matters

It is the goal of MSCC to work in partnership with parents to implement our program in a safe and nurturing environment. In cases where the child is the subject of a court order (e.g., Custody Order, Restraining Order, or Protection from Abuse Order)

- MSCC must be provided with a copy of the most recent order and all amendments thereto. In the absence of a court order on file with MSCC, both parents shall be afforded equal access to their child as stipulated by law. MSCC cannot, without a court order, limit the access of one parent by request of the other parent, regardless of the reason.
- Parents are welcome to attend school functions if their presence follows court orders and if their presence is not disruptive to their child or the class.
- MSCC will not be used as a visitation site.
- Students will be released consistent with the terms of the court order- that is, they will be released only to those persons identified in the order. The MSCC release and emergency form information must be consistent with the court order. If the court order allows for a parent to designate another competent adult to pick up a child from school, such designation must be in writing and signed by the parent.
- If MSCC finds that it is impossible to work with the family due to parents' disagreement regarding the interpretation of court orders, or if either parent refuses to comply with court orders, MSCC may ask that family to leave the school.
- MSCC reserves the right to ban any person who causes a disruption or has no legitimate purpose for being on the campus.

Preparing for Daily Arrival & Dismissal

Attendance

Main Street Children's Center is a year-round, full-time Christian Weekday Educational Program. Operating hours are from 6:30 am to 6:00 pm, Monday through Friday. Parents are asked to notify the Center when your child will be absent from school, regardless of the reason. Since we are a pre-school and not a baby-sitting service, we do follow a structured routine and curriculum. **Children are expected to be here by 9:00 am each day so that they will receive the full benefit of the program. We do understand outside appointments are necessary at times. Please attempt to schedule your child's appointments in the afternoon. Naptime is 12:30 pm-3:00 pm. Thank you for your consideration.**

School Year Calendar

The school calendar is set by the Director. As a rule, our school year runs from mid-August until the end of May. The summer session runs from June to mid-August. At the beginning of each session families are provided a calendar with special activities and school closures.

School Closures

MSCC will observe the following closings (additions or changes to this schedule may be made at the discretion of the Director). The current list of MSCC closings include:

- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King Day
- Thursday and Friday of GISD Spring Break
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day (2 days)
- Labor Day
- Columbus Day
- Thanksgiving (3 days)
- Christmas (close at 4 p.m. Dec. 23rd and remain closed through December 31)
- 6 Staff Training/Workdays (July, August & Winter Break).

If any designated holiday falls on a Saturday, the Friday prior will be observed. If a holiday falls on a Sunday, the following Monday will be observed.

Closures Due to Inclement Weather/Emergencies

When the Georgetown Independent School District (GISD) cancels school due to inclement weather, (generally announced on local radio/television) MSCC will be closed as well. Information on MSCC closing will be posted on *Brightwheel*, or you may email the MSCC Director at ruthann@msbchurch.com if uncertain about a possible closure due to inclement weather. When (GISD) has a two-hour delay in opening schools, MSCC will open at 9:00 a.m. (*Cont'd next page*)

In the event that an emergency closure of the school is warranted, parents will be notified on Brightwheel. Should the school need to close in the middle of the day, the school staff will attempt to reach the child's parents first to arrange for pick up. Should the staff be unable to reach the parents, the persons listed on the emergency contact form will be called so pick up arrangements can be made.

Tuition will not be refunded for school closures.

Daily Drop Off and Pick Up

MSCC hours of operation are 6:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. It is important that parents adhere to the hours of operation when dropping off and picking up children.

Children must be signed in/out each day on *Brightwheel*. **It is the responsibility of the parent to sign their children in/out each day.**

Parents are to walk children to class and pick them up from class each day. If someone other than those who are designated on the enrollment form are to pick up a child, parents should notify the teacher through *Brightwheel* and update the Release Authorization form in the office. The individual will be required to show a picture ID at the time of pick-up.

Parents are asked to inform MSCC via *Brightwheel* if a child will not be at the center on a scheduled day. This will enable the center to maintain appropriate student:teacher ratios and help the classroom teacher better plan for the day more effectively.

Saying Goodbye

Good-byes are a part of normal, everyday routines. To help us achieve the goal of allowing your child to become independent, emotionally healthy, and well-adjusted, we recommend the following practices with children two and older:

- if possible, please allow your child to walk into the classroom daily.
- present your child to the teacher and allow the teacher to have the opportunity to greet the child and welcome them to school.
- separation should be sweet and brief, with reassurance about the planned pick-up time.
- parents should encourage the child to make friends with other students and the teacher and to look forward to being at school.
- discussing what the day's activities will be beforehand will help.

Late Arrival

Prompt arrival before 9 a.m. is expected so that class may start on time, without unnecessary disruptions. If a child arrives after 9:00 a.m. and the classroom door is closed, parents are to drop the child off with a staff member in the office. The staff member will transition the child to the classroom at the appropriate time.

Late Dismissal

Any parent who leaves a child at school past 6:00 p.m. will pay a late pick up fee **per child** according to the following schedule.

6:00pm-6:05pm	\$10.00 per child
6:06pm and later	An additional \$1.00 per minute per child

A child's services may be terminated should the child be picked up late on three occasions in one school year regardless of the reasons for the late pick-up. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure that someone (either a parent or Emergency/Alternate pick-up person) is available to pick up the child on time.

Parents are asked to not drop off or pick up their child while on the phone. Sometimes teachers have things they need to address with you, and your child needs your attention at the end of the day.

Parents are not to leave unattended children in a vehicle.

School Attire

Please send:

- 2 -3 pairs of clothing
- 1 pair of shoes that can get wet outside
- appropriate outerwear for the daily weather (coats, shorts, etc.)

Children should be dressed in clean, comfortable attire when attending school. **We play outside year round, and the children will have activities indoors and outdoors that may cause them to get dirty; please dress them in clothes that you will not mind getting soiled.** If they are dirty... they are learning!!! It is recommended all children wear closed toe shoes such as sneakers or tennis shoes. Sandals, flip-flops, or slippery-soled shoes can pose a safety hazard. Also, if you would like your child to wear sunscreen or bug repellent, please apply at home before school. Staff may re-apply with a permission form completed by the parent.

Toys From Home

Due to the risk of damage, sharing issues, and loss, children are NOT permitted to bring in toys from home, unless specifically requested by the classroom teacher for use as part of the curriculum. Parents are responsible for enforcing this policy with their child. Parents are encouraged to consult the classroom teacher should they find their child is having difficulty with this policy. MSCC is not responsible for lost or damaged items. Children are permitted to have one plush/non-musical/non-mechanical toy to have at nap/rest time.

In the Classroom

Curriculum

MSCC uses the *Wee Learn Curriculum* and the *Handwriting Without Tears Curriculum* for all ages. The Wee Learn curriculum is a faith-based curriculum that includes all required components for school readiness. The curriculum is developed around themes which provide opportunities for children to learn about God's world and how to live in it. Activities which embrace physical, mental, social, emotional, and spiritual development are included within each theme topic. The themes are designed to help lay a foundation for understanding God, Jesus, Bible, church, self, family, others, and our world. Children are exposed daily to Bible stories and prayer times. Classroom teachers are permitted to incorporate additional activities to enhance learning. Children attend chapel weekly, and music bi-weekly, led by MSBC staff. The children love these special times and learning new stories and songs.

The Handwriting Without Tears Curriculum uses fun, engaging, and developmentally appropriate instructional methods to enable children to master handwriting as an automatic and comfortable skill through playing, singing, and building letters.

Lesson plans with the daily activities are posted in each classroom at the beginning of each month. Please take time to look at the calendar and discuss the activities with your children.

Assessments

Student assessments are ongoing throughout the year. The purpose of the assessment is to help us determine whether our curriculum is meeting our goals and to help the teacher ensure we are meeting the needs of each individual child. A criterion-referenced assessment is used to measure mastery of specific objectives in all domains. Together the teachers and parents can evaluate how the child has progressed through the year.

Schedules

MSCC opens each morning, Monday – Friday at 6:30 a.m. All children are combined in one class until around 7:30 a.m. At that time, they will transition to outside play, weather permitting, or if needed, split into rooms according to age. Most lead teachers arrive by 8:30 a.m., and then children will be with their assigned class. As children leave at the end of the day, classes may be combined to allow staff to clean and reset their rooms for the following day.

The lead teacher is responsible for posting and maintaining a daily schedule of events for the classroom. The daily schedule is posted in a prominent location for parents to view when entering and leaving the classroom.

Indoor/Outdoor Play

Children are provided indoor and outdoor play times as recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics in [Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards; 4th Edition](#). An essential part of our program is outdoor play. We recognize the benefits of outdoor play in all weather; research shows that this generation of children plays outside significantly less than their parents did. Research from the CDC also shows children can build their immune system by escaping indoor germs

and/or bacteria by going into the fresh air. Please remember children go outside each day, so dress them appropriately according to the weather, including appropriate outerwear. Parents are requested to apply insect repellent and sunscreen to their child, as needed, before arriving at school. This will be at the complete discretion and responsibility of the parents.

Lunch

Parents are required to provide a full, healthy lunch for their children each day they are in attendance. **A bento box type covered container is recommended to pack the child's lunch in. Please use this container daily.** Each child is to bring a water bottle with their name on it daily.

MSCC prohibits any food item in glass containers, as well as aluminum cans. These can be safety hazards for the children and staff. **All hot dogs, corn dogs, cherry tomatoes, grapes, etc. need to be cut up horizontally to reduce choking risks, per Child Care Licensing guidelines.**

MSCC does not have a microwave and refrigerator in every room. It is recommended lunch items do not need to be heated or refrigerated. Lunches containing milk, cheese, yogurt, and/or other food items should have an ice pack in the lunch box, provided by the parent. Any food items intended to be eaten warm should be sent in a thermos or insulated container.

Guidelines state that a school lunch should consist of protein, vegetables, fruit, and grains. Parents should provide enough food so that their child is satisfied, but not so much that food is wasted. All uneaten food will be placed back in the child's lunch so parents can see what items and how much their child consumed during the day.

Parents should limit junk foods to a minimum in their child's lunch. MSCC does not allow full size candy bars, sodas, or full-size candy treats such as Skittles, Starbursts, or gum, in a child's lunch. One miniature sized candy is permitted in a child's lunch as a treat. Candy and junk food will be reserved for a "dessert" when an adequate amount of their lunch has been eaten. However, MSCC staff will prohibit a child from consuming these treats if the child is having a particularly overactive, excitable day. Also, please do not send carbonated beverages for drinks.

As a special event, MSCC does provide lunch for the children on the first and third Fridays of each month. This is provided at no cost to the parents. Please check the menu posted in *Brightwheel* and if your child has allergies to the food being served, please provide an alternate meal for your child.

Parents are required to provide written notification of any food/dietary restrictions. (i.e., lactose intolerance, vegetarian diets, wheat free/gluten free diets). **Classrooms with a child that has a nut allergy will be designated nut free.**

Snacks

MSCC will provide two (2) snacks daily for your child: one in the morning and one in the afternoon. A copy of the monthly snack calendar will be in *Brightwheel* at the beginning of each month. The calendar is also posted on the bulletin board near the office. Please review it for any food items you do not want your child to have and make plans to send an alternate snack on that day. Please make sure your child's teacher is aware of the alternate snack.

Nap Time

Nap or rest time is a part of each child's day. Providing children with a rest time is a licensing regulation for all children who are in care more than 5 hours a day. If your child does not nap, he/she may be provided with a quiet activity while the other children rest ([Texas Administrative Code 746.2907](#)). Any child who does not nap must remain quiet so that other children who are napping can do so without disruption.

Nap mats will be provided for each child by MSCC. Parents are asked to bring a cover for the mat (a king size pillowcase works well) and a small blanket. All nap items will be sent home weekly to be laundered. The child may bring one other small item (i.e., stuffed animal, "lovie") for nap, as long as it does not cause disruption in the class. All items are to be labeled with the child's name.

Potty Training

The teacher and the aide will work diligently to assist with children that are potty training. It is important that the teacher and parent communicate regularly to maintain as much consistency as possible between the home and school environment during this phase. Once a child is successfully potty trained (to be determined by the teacher and Director), then there will be a monthly decrease in tuition.

Promotion to the Zebra class (ages 3 & 4) requires that the child be completely potty trained. In the event your child is eligible to promote to that class level but is not potty trained, it will prevent them from promoting.

Classroom Parties and Celebrations

It is the responsibility of the Director to set policy regarding classroom parties and celebrations. Class parties may be held on campus at Christmas, Valentines, Easter, end of the traditional school term in May, and student birthdays.

Children's Birthday Parties

Parents may bring **purchased** refreshments to share with the class to celebrate the child's birthday. Refreshments cannot be homemade due to possible contamination. Please coordinate with your child's teacher on birthday celebrations. What is appropriate at a child's personal birthday party in his home may not be appropriate for a school setting. For classes under age 3, it is recommended that cookies instead of cupcakes are served as refreshment.

School Traditions

The following traditions have been customary for students and parents. Special circumstances may create the need to modify these traditions.

- **Open House/Book Fair**

This event is held in September. This is a time for you to come and see your child's classroom, meet the teacher, and talk with them about planned activities for the classroom.

- **School Pictures**

Professional individual portraits are taken during the school in the fall and in the spring. Parents have the option of purchasing the photos.

- **Fall Festival/Costume Parade**

In addition to fall activities, MSCC has a costume parade. Scary costumes and costumes inappropriate in a church setting are unacceptable. The costume parade is held in the morning, so children come to school dressed in their costume. Teachers may change children out of their costume into school clothes, according to schedule. In addition, the pumpkin patch is available for exploring.

- **Grandparent's Day**

This is an event held in September to coincide with National Grandparents Day. It is a special time of fellowship with the grandparents of our students. Grandparents are encouraged to come and enjoy some time with their grandchild and visit with other grandparents.

- **Muffins with Moms**

Held the Friday before Mother's Day, this is a special time for honoring our mothers. Mothers are invited to enjoy breakfast with their child in the fellowship hall before class time starts.

- **Donuts with Dads**

A special time for honoring our dads. This event is held the Friday before Father's Day. Fathers are invited to enjoy breakfast with their child in the fellowship hall before class time starts.

- **Pre-K Graduation**

The graduation ceremony for Pre-K students is held the end of May on the MSCC campus. Graduates are permitted to invite a specified number of guests to the graduation. Parents are required to purchase caps, gowns, and tassels for their graduate. These items belong to the student following graduation.

Behavior Management/Discipline

Children are expected to behave appropriately in order to develop self control and accomplish the social and academic goals of the program. Our teachers know that a large part of early learning allows that children will make mistakes. Children are encouraged to talk through their inappropriate behaviors with adult guidance and prompting. If children are unable to manage themselves in an activity or classroom center, teachers may remove them from that area and provide them with something else to do. A staff member may only use positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction. Positive guidance techniques utilized may include redirection, setting limits and consequences, giving choices, problem-solving and giving the child a safe place to regroup. Under no circumstances will teachers use physical or psychological punishment with a child, nor will they withhold food as punishment. It is the responsibility of the teachers and the parents to help children learn appropriate social behaviors and self-control.

If no improvement is seen after notifying the parents of the unacceptable behavior, then the Director may dismiss a student. Dismissal is immediate.

The dismissal of children due to behavior concerns is based on the following guidelines:

- the child's behavior is a danger to himself
- the child's behavior is a danger to others or to school environment
- the child's behavior is destructive to school equipment
- the child's behavior is hampering the learning and/or safety of others in the class.

Biting

Biting is a behavior often seen in toddlers but can also be seen in other age groups. While our approach to biting is consistent and universal, there are circumstances that cause us to treat each incident with an understanding of development and possible causes. Children bite for many reasons: frustration, lack of language, oral-motor stimulation, excitement and even happiness. Teachers and administration work closely together to develop a plan to stop a child from biting. We will communicate each scenario to the parent via *Brightwheel* and an incident report. We will work with parents to discuss possible solutions.

We wish we could guarantee that biting would never happen in our program, but we know there is no such guarantee. You can count on us to deal appropriately with biting, in hopes that it will end as quickly as possible. We will support your child to the best of our abilities whether they bite or are the victim of the bite. Children who continue to bite after all options are exhausted, may be asked to leave MSCC for the safety of other children.

Health And Safety

Illness

Precautions will be taken to safeguard the health of all children enrolled. This includes excluding children from attending who are sick or become sick at school. All families are expected to openly share information about their child's behavior, symptoms, or exposure to illness. Families must have a backup plan for care of their children when the child is unable to be in the facility due to illness or injury. It is the responsibility of the staff to assess the child at the time of drop off if the child appears to be ill.

Your child will not be able to attend if he/she has any of the following conditions:

- **a fever** OR has run a fever during the previous 24 hours. If your child is sent home due to a fever, he/she is not permitted to return to the program the following day at a minimum. A fever is defined as a temperature reading on a thermometer of at least 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit.
- **diarrhea** or has had diarrhea during the past 24 hours. Any child who has two or more loose bowels or diarrhea within an hour during the day will be sent home. Children may return to the program when normal bowel movements resume.
- **vomited** in the past 24 hours.

- **eye/ nose drainage:** If thick mucus or pus is draining from the child's eye the child may not attend until the drainage is resolved. Thick green or yellow mucus draining from the nose for a period of a week or more may indicate an infection. MSCC may require you to have a note from your doctor, for the child to return to school. We do realize that we live in an area where allergies may be severe at times. If your doctor indicates that the mucus is due to allergy and not contagious, the child will be allowed to attend with a doctor's statement that the child is not contagious. It is our goal to keep the other children and families as healthy as possible and free from an unhealthy environment.
- **respiratory symptoms such as** difficult or rapid breathing, shallow breathing, or severe coughing. If the child makes a high-pitched croup or whooping sound after he/she coughs, and the child is unable to be in a classroom setting due to continuous cough, the child is prevented from attending school.
- **a headache combined with a stiff neck.**
- **Covid/SARS symptoms:** Any child or staff member that has a positive Covid test will be required to quarantine for a minimum of 5 days or until symptoms have subsided without any fever reducing medication. We rely on the parents to make sure that children are symptom free before returning. If staff are out sick, there may be a possibility of closure for the entire class or the school if we cannot maintain staff to child ratios required by Child Care Licensing.
- **skin rash, open sores, persistent itching of skin or scalp, or any indicators of head lice.** The child must be free of nits before returning to school.
- **appearance/behavior changes** or unusually tired, pale, lacking in appetite, or exhibits any other sign that might indicate the child is becoming ill.

If a child becomes ill while at school, parents are required to pick up an ill child within 45 minutes of notification. If a parent is reached but cannot pick their child up within 45 minutes, it becomes the parent's responsibility to arrange for alternate pick up with someone listed on the child's emergency contact form. If a parent cannot be reached, the staff will begin to call the people listed on the form, until arrangements can be made for the child to be picked up. Children will be excluded from participation in the program if they exhibit symptoms of any communicable disease. They will be permitted to return to the program when they are no longer contagious. MSCC reserves the right to refuse to allow a child to return if the Director or designee believes the child to be too ill to participate in the program.

If your child will be absent due to illness, we request that you notify your teacher through *Brightwheel*. This enables our staff to keep track of any illnesses, which may occur at our school. If your child has a communicable disease, we ask that you share the diagnosis with the Director, so that the parents of the children in the school may be notified that a communicable disease is present. Your child's identity will remain confidential.

For the safety of your child, parents are required to provide notification, in the form of a doctor's note of any allergies (food or otherwise) with instructions for treatment should a child have an allergic reaction. MSCC reserves the right to request a doctor's note at our discretion.

Medication Dosage and Administration

Teachers are permitted by state law to administer prescription and non-prescription medication to children if authorized by the parent. The parent must sign the Medication Authorization form. All medication must be in the original container, labeled with the child's name and with directions to

administer the medication. Prescribed medication must also include the date and name of physician. The staff member administering the medication will complete the medication form.

EXCEPTION: Parent authorization is not required to administer a medication (such as an Epi-Pen) to a child in a medical emergency to prevent the death or serious bodily injury of the child, provided that the medication is administered as prescribed, directed, or intended. Epi-Pens are stored in the classroom and should accompany the child to different destinations.

All non-emergency medications are stored in the office, out of the reach of children. The parent should supply a measuring spoon when the medication is checked into the MSCC office. Medication will not be dispensed by staff during drop off and pick up times.

If the medication is not administered on time and is more than an hour past the administration time, the parents will be contacted for further advice. All medication forms will remain in the classroom so the parent can update the information daily. After completing the medication cycle, the empty bottle or container will be turned in to the MSCC office until the parent can retrieve it.

Please do not leave any medication in your child's cubby, lunch box, or in their "take-home" bag.

Severe Allergies

MSCC will make every reasonable effort to meet the needs of children with severe allergies. Teachers will be notified by the office if a child has severe food allergies that require specific protocols such as antihistamine and/or an Epi-Pen. Parents must have doctor's orders that accompany the medication as well as have completed the school's Allergy Action Plan and Medication Authorization form for treatment to be administered. All Epi-Pens are placed in the classroom with the child, and teachers are informed as to how to administer Epi-Pens. Every effort is taken to safeguard children with food allergies from other's snacks, but unknown additives may be present in some products. MSCC reserves the right to deny admission if a child's allergies are more severe than what MSCC is equipped to deal with.

Immunizations

Each child enrolled or admitted to a child-care center must meet and continue to meet applicable immunization requirements specified by the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS). A child may be exempt from immunization requirements for a medical reason or reason of conscience, including a religious belief. To claim an exemption, the person applying for the child's admission must meet criteria specified by the Department of State Health Services and provide the required affidavit or medical exemption forms.

Vision and Hearing Screenings

All enrolled children who are four years of age by September 1 must be screened for possible vision and hearing problems. These are conducted yearly at MSCC by a certified screener (at no charge to parents). Parents will be notified of any concerns. MSCC must have on file the individual visual acuity and sweep check results, or an affidavit stating that the vision or hearing screening conflicts with the tenets or practices of a church or religious denomination of which the affiant is an adherent or member.

Supervision

Your child's safety is always the utmost priority at MSCC. Teachers are trained to always position themselves to see as many children as possible. Teachers who are with toddlers must always have children in their line of sight and sound. Teachers who work with older children supervise primarily by sight and short intervals by sound if a child is independent enough to use the toilet on their own. Teachers use the *Brightwheel* app to document movement to other areas of the center and count the children during transitions. All teachers receive annual training for supervising in the classroom and playground environments.

Playground Safety

Our playground complies with licensing regulations. Playgrounds are inspected daily, and any deficiencies are documented and reported to the Director or Manager to be corrected immediately.

If Your Child Is Injured at School

If a child receives a minor injury at school, the teacher will treat the injury and notify the parent via *Brightwheel*. In the case of a more significant injury, the appropriate first aid measures will be taken immediately to care for the child, and an incident/injury report form requiring the parent's acknowledgement will be provided. Emergencies will result in a call to 911, and the parents will be notified immediately. It is very important that all telephone numbers and emergency information are kept current and up to date so that parents can always be reached. If you have provided us with a cell phone number, please make sure the cell phone is turned on and that you are able to always answer it when your child is in the care of MSCC.

Live Pets and Animals

Because they play such a valuable role in children's development, from time to time, classrooms might have live, safe pets. Per Child Care Licensing standards, children in the school may not have direct contact with chickens, ducks, reptiles (turtles, snakes, lizards), frogs or toads. Children may not bring their live pets from home to the school unless approved by the Director/Manager. Parents will be notified when we are expecting a visit from any furry friend.

Fire/Weather/Lockdown Drills

The safety of children at MSCC is of the utmost importance. Procedures are in place for required fire safety, severe weather, toxic fumes, intruders, injury to a child, release of children, and playground safety. All employees are trained in emergency response protocols. If the center is amid a fire/emergency drill, parents will be required to wait until the drill is completed and the staff and children are returned to the building to sign their child out of the program.

Alternate Safe Location

In the unlikely event that children must be immediately evacuated from the church building for any reason, Georgetown Recreation Center, 1003 N. Austin Avenue, Georgetown, Texas will be the place of relocation. The phone number is 512-930-3596. The staff and children will be taken to the alternate location in the church van and/or private automobiles belonging to the staff and other church employees as directed by emergency personnel. Once the children are assembled there, the staff will begin contacting parents or emergency contact persons for pick up. As stated before, children must be picked up within 45 minutes of the telephone call. The Director will notify the state licensing representative as soon as possible after any occurrence that renders all or part of the program unsafe or unsanitary for a child.

Release of Children Following Relocation

All persons who are authorized to pick up a child must be listed on the Authorize to Release form and will be kept on file in the center office. The persons on the "Authorize to Release Form" will be required to provide a government issued photo ID prior to the agency releasing the child. There will be no exceptions to this rule. Any changes to the forms must be dated and initialed.