

**Mount Hope Christian Academy (MHCA)  
Registration  
&  
Parent Handbook**



**Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it. Proverbs 22:6**

**6823 Harrison Road  
Fredericksburg, VA 22407  
Phone: (540) 785-4631  
Fax: (540) 548-2540**

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**MOUNT HOPE CHRISTIAN ACADEMY**  
**REGISTRATION & PARENT HANDBOOK**

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## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of Mount Hope Christian Academy is to provide a place where children will be nurtured and will participate in multi-sensory and multicultural activities to enhance spiritual, intellectual, emotional, and physical development.

## **MHCA PHILOSOPHY**

The philosophy of Mount Hope Christian Academy is to teach from a Christ-centered approach and to incorporate the belief that all things are possible with God. Our program includes daily Bible lessons and prayers. MHCA provides a stimulating, nurturing, and caring environment that encourages children to learn and play and instill in them excellence - God's expectation of them.

We believe each child is a unique individual. We are sensitive to each child's social, emotional, intellectual, physical, and spiritual needs. We provide developmentally appropriate programs that focus on the process of learning and helping children enjoy stimulating, unique, and ultimately successful educational experiences. We encourage and instill the love of learning.

We believe in positive methods of discipline. We establish consistent, age appropriate limits to help children function in their world based upon their unique character. Our programs are designed to develop in children a sense of independence, responsibility, and intellectual curiosity.

We desire to strengthen each child's own cultural identity, while instilling respect for others who are different.

We believe parents are the most significant adults in a child's life and that parents bear the primary role of training their children. While a child is at MHCA, the teacher is a representative of the parents. Therefore, the Academy teachers and the parents must work closely together in order to function as a successful partnership. We encourage daily communication between parents and the Academy staff. Our doors are always open.

## **OUR STAFF**

Our staff has been carefully chosen to ensure a quality program. Each staff member undergoes a background check required by Virginia law. They are required to be certified in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), Automated External Defibrillator (AED) and First Aid. Staff also are required to receive training to recognize child abuse and to complete Medication Administration Training (MAT). All staff members, with the exception of substitutes, are required to attend at least ten (10) hours of childcare

related workshops each year. Each staff member loves children and wants the best for each child in our program.

**Preschool Teacher Qualifications:** The teacher must have accepted Jesus Christ as his/her Lord and Savior, and have a Child Development Associate (CDA) credential or two-year or four-year degree in Early Childhood Education or related fields, or extensive experience working with children and willing to receive some classroom training in the education and development of young children. Documented experience working with groups of preschool age children is required. They must have the ability to relate well to children and adults (parents as well as other staff members). They also must have the ability to supervise one or more assistant teachers.

**Instructional Aide, Aftercare Coordinator, or Before/After Care Providers Qualifications:** These staff members must have accepted Jesus Christ as his/her Lord and Savior, must have a high school diploma or equivalent, and documented experience working with preschool children in a group setting. They must have received, be in the process of receiving, or be willing to receive some classroom training in the education and development of young children, must relate well to children, have a warm, friendly, and nurturing personality, and be able to work in harmony with other staff members. They must be willing to fulfill responsibilities in accordance with the Academy's philosophy.

**Before/Aftercare Assistants: These staff members** must have accepted Jesus Christ as his/her Lord and Savior, must have a high school diploma or in the process of receiving high school diploma. Must be at least 16 years of age, and be responsible and trustworthy. They must be willing to receive some classroom training in the education and development of young children, relate well to children, and have a warm, friendly, and nurturing personality, and be able to work in harmony with other staff members. They must also be willing to fulfill responsibilities in accordance with the Academy's philosophy. Staff members under 18 years of age are always under the direct supervision of an adult staff member.

## CURRICULUM

Mount Hope Christian Academy uses the ABEKA curriculum - a Christ-centered, academically challenging program. Bible, phonics, numbers, science, social studies, art, and music are taught in individual and group settings with emphasis on one-on-one interaction. Supplemental social, emotional, and Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) curriculums will also be taught. Students will learn through hands-on play every morning in the following learning centers: Art, Discovery or STEM, Literacy, Blocks, and Pretend Play. Supplemental social, emotional, and STEM curriculums will also be taught. Large as well as small motor skills are developed through manipulative, hands-on learning games and outdoor and classroom activities. The curriculum

ministers to the whole child; socially, spiritually, emotionally, intellectually, and physically. Through stories, songs, technology, and everyday interaction with teachers, your child will be taught from a Biblical perspective.

A brief outline of the basic structure of curriculum content is as follows:

**TODDLER (TWO YEAR OLDS):** Phonics: develop and increase vocabulary. Bible: bible stories. Play and Learning: centers and dramatic play. Multi-sensory: activities that develop curiosity and interests. Structure: daily routines and transitions.

**PRESCHOOL (THREE YEAR OLDS):** Phonics: alphabet recognition, and sounds. Numbers: concepts from 1-15, counting to 30. Bible: bible stories, and scripture memory. Art, health, manners, safety, nursery rhymes, physical education, and technology. Play and Learning: centers and dramatic play. Social Emotional Learning: regulating feelings and behaviors. Structure: daily routines and transitions.

**PRESCHOOL (FOUR YEAR OLDS):** Phonics: alphabet recognition, sounds, and blends, Reading: one and two vowel words, short sentences, reading words from the white board and booklets during reading groups. Writing: manuscript printing. Numbers: concepts from 1-20, counting to 100 by 1's and 10's. Poetry: enjoyment and memorization. Bible: bible stories and scripture memory. Art, social studies, science, music, technology, physical education, and community helpers. Play and Learning: centers and dramatic play. Social Emotional Learning: regulating feelings and behaviors. Structure: daily routines and transitions.

## **ASSESSMENTS**

All students will receive an age-appropriate assessment report at the beginning of the year, mid-year, and end of the year. Progress reports will be sent home weekly. Toddlers will be evaluated in the areas of cognitive and physical growth. PreK-3 and PreK-4 students will be evaluated in the areas of cognitive, academic, and physical growth. Parents will receive a copy of the assessment. Each child will also have a portfolio that can be reviewed with the child's teacher at parent conferences. This allows parents to see the student's progression over time, which specific skills need improvement, and gives very specific, concrete information on how they can help their child at home.

## **GRADING SYSTEM**

Our goal is to produce students who excel academically. We emphasize mastery of skills that provide a strong foundation on which later learning objectives depend and can be accomplished. Hence, a skills checklist system rather than a rigid numerical grading system will be utilized to give an accurate picture of the student and his/her performance, development, and preparation for Kindergarten.

## PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

Following each assessment, a parent/teacher conference will be scheduled. Parents will be given an opportunity to meet their child's teacher and gain insight into their child's progress. Every parent is requested to attend each meeting for the benefit of his/her child and to obtain pertinent information concerning the Academy's programs. In addition to scheduled parent/teacher conferences, parents and teachers may request conferences at any time during the academic year when deemed necessary.

## COMMUNICATING WITH PARENTS

The Academy will use the following avenues to communicate with parents and families:

- Primarily through Phone calls and texts utilizing voice and SMS services and the brightwheel app, but also may employ additional methods
- MHCA website ([www.mhcademyva.org](http://www.mhcademyva.org))
- MHCA Facebook
- Newsletters from the Director and each Teacher are posted at the beginning of each month or as needed
- Emails
- Letters and/or notes
- Flyers
- Family Information Boards located in each classroom
- Bulletin boards located in the preschool hallway
- Zoom
- Google Meets

## PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

Mount Hope Christian Academy firmly believes in parental involvement. There will be times and various ways parents can get involved in the child's education. Parents may attend weekly chapels and chaperone field trips. Parents are welcomed to drop in and observe their child in the classroom any time the Academy is in operation, but it must be pre-coordinated with the Academy Director. Because the Academy is a learning environment and a visitor could be a distraction for both the teacher and students, classroom observations are limited to 30 minutes. ***NOTE: All parental involvement within the Academy may be suspended at the Academy Director's discretion as a mitigation effort to reduce the spread of COVID-19.***

## TUITION AND FEES

Tuition and other fees received by Mount Hope Christian Academy must be paid by using the brightwheel app, check or money order. If a check is returned a \$35 *returned check* fee will be added to the student's account. After two returned check notices, parents will be required to pay using a cashier's check, money order, or brightwheel only. All tuition payments and fees made via check or money order should include a memo with the child's name and the name of the person making the payment when the parent/guardian does not make the payment. Parents also have the option of establishing automatic payments for recurring tuition payments.

**TUITION is DUE by close-of-business on Friday for the following week.** A \$30 *late fee* **will** be added to the student's account for late payments. Delinquent accounts **must** be paid-in-full by close of business the following business day (Monday). Students **will not** be permitted to attend the Academy until all delinquent tuition and late fees are paid in full. Tuition and fees are due weekly. Each family **is required** to pay the weekly fee, whether or not the child is in attendance. Tuition **is not adjusted** due to inclement weather and tuition is not prorated for holidays, Christmas/ New Year Break, or Spring Break. Payment of the weekly tuition ensures the child's uninterrupted enrollment.

The Academy's hours of operation are 6:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. If a child is picked up after the normal hours of operation, there will be a late fee charge of \$2.00 per minute per child and is **due at the time of pick-up**. We understand sometimes circumstances are beyond the control of parents, and therefore, the first time a child is picked up late, no late fee will be assessed if it is less than five (5) minutes after closing time. After the first late pick-up of a child, late fees will be assessed accordingly.

Policies regarding tuition and fees could change at the Academy Director's discretion, with the approval of the Academy's Board of Directors. Parents will be given a two-week written notice of any changes to policies related to tuition and fees that are deemed necessary before the new tuition or fees become effective.

For current tuition and fees check our website:

[https://www.mhcademyva.org/mt-content/uploads/2022/07/tuition-update\\_rev19july2022.docx.pdf](https://www.mhcademyva.org/mt-content/uploads/2022/07/tuition-update_rev19july2022.docx.pdf)

## ATTENDANCE

Mount Hope Christian Academy strives for consistent attendance in every classroom. Personal instruction by the teacher cannot be repeated if a child is not in the classroom. **All** students should be in the classroom by 8:00 a.m. in order to receive the maximum benefit of the morning instructional period. Timely arrival also helps to minimize class



interruptions. Parents are asked to please be considerate of our teachers and students by striving diligently to get students to school on time. If a child will be absent or late, parents should notify the school as soon as possible. Absences are excused for the following reasons: illness with a doctor's note, death in the family, medical appointments, or family trips that the teacher or Academy Director has been notified of in advance.

No student may leave the Academy without permission. Parents who wish to pick up a student early must write a note or communicate the need to pick-up a student early with the teacher and indicate the specific time of the early pick-up. School hours are as follows:

Before Care:	6:00 a.m.-8:00 a.m.
Preschool Only:	8:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m.
After Care:	3:00 p.m.-6:30 p.m.

### **DROP OFF & PICK UP**

Each day upon arrival of the child to the Academy, the parent/guardian **is required** to electronically sign-in the child/children using brightwheel. The same is required when the child departs. No one under 16 years of age will be allowed to sign a child in or out. Brightwheel provides the Academy staff and parents a legal record of the child's attendance, hours, and who dropped-off or picked-up a child. **NOTE: *Anyone who drops off a child or is authorized to pick-up a child MUST have the brightwheel app to comply with the Academy's sign-in/check-out procedures.***

Parents ***must bring their child into the fellowship hall or appropriate classroom,*** and ensure a staff member has accepted the child before leaving the child. Staff members are not allowed to go outside the Academy to accept children from parents who are running late, or for any other reason. It is the parent's responsibility to ensure the student/students are properly accounted for, and accepted by the appropriate staff member. **NOTE: *At any time, the Academy Director may limit the access of parents into the Academy as a mitigation measure to reduce the possible spread of COVID-19. When COVID-19 mitigation measures are in effect, a staff member will meet parents at the Academy's entrance and confirm the child is signed-in/out appropriately using the brightwheel app.***

Parents ***must provide a written notice*** to the Academy in advance when someone other than the parent or individual designated on the student's enrollment application to pick-up the child will pick-up the student.

After 7:00 P.M., if a child has not been picked up, and the Academy Staff has not been notified, a member of the staff is required by the Virginia Department of Social Services to have Child Protective Services pick-up your child. Academy staff will make every

effort to contact the parents or the persons on the emergency contact list. However, contacting Academy staff immediately will minimize such situations. Per VA code 63.2-1509, any suspicion of neglect and/or child abuse **MUST** be reported by our Academy. Repeated failure to pick up a child and our inability to contact parents may be considered neglect. Parents must contact Academy staff as soon as possible to avoid any miscommunication if they or a documented person authorized to pick-up the child is unable to pick up a child in a timely manner.

## **WITHDRAWALS**

### **Parent Initial Withdrawal**

A minimum of two (2) weeks written notice is required if parents/guardians decide to withdraw a child from Mount Hope Christian Academy. This allows the Academy time to fill the vacancy created by the withdrawal. Payment **is due** for the two (2) weeks notice period **whether or not the child/children attend the Academy during that period**. Before any academic records are released from the Academy, all outstanding fees **must** be paid. Failure to pay all outstanding fees could result in legal action to collect the fees and parents will also be responsible for legal fees incurred on behalf of Mount Hope Christian Academy.

### **School Initial Withdrawal**

If for any reason the Academy Director determines a child is not in compliance with the Policies and Procedures of the Academy or other extenuating circumstances dictate a child may be subject to administrative withdrawal by the Director from the Academy. The Academy reserves the right to refuse services to a child once that determination has been made and the parents/guardians have been informed of the decision to withdraw the child. Mount Hope Christian Academy Director will make every effort to give at least two (2) weeks notice of the decision to discontinue services for a child. Listed below are some reasons Mount Hope Christian Academy may discontinue services for a child:

- School closure
- Failure of parent to pay
- Failure to complete required forms
- Lack of parental cooperation
- Failure of child to adjust to the Academy after a reasonable amount of time
- Our inability to meet the child's needs without additional staff

## COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Mount Hope Christian Academy desires to maintain a healthy school environment by instituting controls designed to prevent the spread of communicable diseases. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) the term *communicable disease* means an illness caused by an infectious agent or its toxins that occurs through the direct or indirect transmission of the infectious agent or its products from an infected individual or via an animal, vector or the inanimate environment to a susceptible animal or human host.

Any child or employee with a communicable disease for which immunization is required by law or is available shall be temporarily excluded from the Academy while ill, and during recognized periods of communicability. Children and employees with communicable diseases for which immunization is not available shall not attend the Academy while ill. Parents and employees must notify the Academy within 24 hours or the next business day after a child or the employee has developed a communicable disease. Parents and employees must notify the Academy within 24 hours or the next business day after a child or the employee, or any member of their immediate household has developed any **reportable** communicable disease. If the nature of the disease and circumstances warrant, an independent physician's examination of the student or employee to verify the diagnosis of communicable disease may be required. The Mount Hope Christian Academy Director reserves the right to make all final decisions necessary to enforce its communicable disease policy and take all necessary action to control the spread of communicable diseases within the school.

### Communicable Diseases

Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS)	Measles
Amebiasis	Mumps
Arboviral infection	Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning
Animal Bite of Humans only by a potentially rabid animal	Pertussis
Anthrax	Pesticide Poisoning
Botulism	Brucellosis
Plague	Poliomyelitis
Campylobacteriosis	Pediculosis (Head Lice)
Chancroid	Pinworms
Chicken pox	Psittacosis
Conjunctivitis (Pink eye)	Rabies
COVID-19	Relapsing Fever
Dengue	(Tinea) Ring Worm
Diarrheal Diseases	Rocky Mountain Spotted
Diphtheria	
Fever	

Encephalitis	Rubella including congenital
Fifth Disease (Erythema Infectiosum)	Salmonellosis
Giardiasis (acute)	Scabies
Gonorrhea	Schistosomiasis
Granuloma Inguinale	Shigellosis
Hemorrhagic Fevers	Smallpox
Hepatitis A and B	Streptococcal infections (including streptococcal sore throat)
Histoplasmosis	Scarlet Fever
Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)	Tetanus
Impetigo	Toxoplasmosis acute
Influenza	Trichinosis
Legionnaires' Disease	Tuberculosis
Leptospirosis	Typhoid Fever
Lymphogranuloma	Yellow Fever
Malaria	
Measles (rubeola)	
Meningitis	
Meningococcal Disease	

### ILLNESSES

For the health and welfare of all children and staff at the Academy, any child who is sick must be kept at home. Mount Hope Christian Academy continually strives to maintain a safe environment, free of health hazards. If a child becomes ill (vomiting, diarrhea, fever, signs of contagious illness, unexplained rash, etc.) during the school day, the parent **will be** notified to pick-up the child. It is **imperative and expected** that the parent or designee will arrive at the Academy within **1 hour** of notification to pick up the child. Parents must ensure the child's enrollment records are up-to-date to facilitate prompt notification when a child becomes ill. If a child has a temperature of 99 degrees or above they must be kept at home for a 24-hour period. The child **must be** fever and symptom free for 24 hours (this means no fever reducing medication during these 24 hours) before returning to the Academy after an illness.

If a child has vomited two or more times in 24 hours, they also must be kept at home. This is to ensure germs and possible viruses are not passed to other children and staff.

When a child is ill for an extended period (one (1) week or more), the tuition payment cannot be lifted. The payment of tuition/fees is to reserve the child's place in the Academy. If payment is not kept current during the student's illness and remains delinquent for two weeks, the child must be re-enrolled and the re-enrollment will require payment of the \$100.00 registration fee. A slot cannot be guaranteed if this process is not followed.

## CLOSURE DUE TO PANDEMIC

When there is a declared pandemic that results in the unforeseen closure of the Academy for public health and safety reasons, the Tuition will be 50% of the full rate if the Academy is closed for an entire week (Monday - Friday consecutive days) in order to support operating costs for virtual learning and the Academy's utilities.

## INCLEMENT WEATHER

Mount Hope Christian Academy will be closed due to hazardous weather conditions as determined by the **Academy Director**. Decisions regarding closings or late openings are usually made by 5:00 a.m., if not sooner. After a decision is made, parents will be notified using the following methods:

- 1) Brightwheel app
- 2) Text message
- 3) Recorded message on the Academy's answering service at (540)785-4631
- 4) On its website at [www.mhcacademyva.org](http://www.mhcacademyva.org)
- 5) On the Academy's Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/mhcacademy>).
- 6) Radio station **B101.5 WBQB, 1230AM WFVA**
- 7) Television **Channel 9 (WUSA 9)**

Due to the Academy's operating hours for all programs, a status of opening 2 hours late means the Academy will open at 8:00 a.m. and all classes will begin at the regular time of 8:00 a.m., not 10:00 a.m.

## HOLIDAYS

The following holidays will be observed during the Academic Program and the Academy will be closed. Holidays falling on a Saturday will be observed on the preceding Friday. Should it fall on a Sunday, the holiday will be observed on the following Monday. We do not prorate tuition for holidays.

- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Friday after Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day
- New Year's Eve
- New Year's Day
- Martin Luther King's Birthday
- Good Friday

During the holiday season, if parents elect not to bring his/her child, the full tuition is still due.

### **CHILD ABUSE POLICY**

The Virginia Code is very clear regarding the reporting of child abuse and includes every employee at Mount Hope Christian Academy. The Code states in part "...any person associated with or employed by a private organization responsible for care, custody, or control of children who has reason to suspect that a child is an abused or neglected child, shall report the matter immediately" (Article 63.2-1509). Reports are to be filed within 24 hours to the Spotsylvania County Department of Social Services. As mentioned earlier in this document, staff are arequired to receive training in recognizing child abuse.

### **ACADEMIC PROGRAM DRESS CODE**

While recognizing true Christianity is a matter of the heart and not outward appearance, it is nonetheless true that appearance is important in a Christian educational environment. Students not in compliance with the dress code standards set forth below will be asked to conform before entering the classroom. The Mount Hope Christian Academy Director retains the right to prohibit any clothing choices deemed inappropriate or distracting to the educational process, with the approval of the Academy's Board of Directors.

#### **General Information**

**(NOTE: During the 2021 - 2022 Academic School Year, uniforms will be worn following the Christmas/New Year break.)**

- Starting the first day of school, students must be dressed in complete wardrobe items.
- The wardrobe should remain neat, mended, and clean.
- Uniforms should fit properly and not appear sloppy or baggy.
- Shorts, skirts, and jumpers should be no more than 1 ½ inches above the knee.
- A specific uniform is mandatory for chapel on Wednesdays for all students.
- A specific uniform is mandatory for physical education (PE) on Tuesdays for all students.

- Girls shall wear shorts under their skirts and dresses.
- All shirts must be neatly tucked in, with only one button open at the neck. Underclothing should consist of a white T-shirt only.
- Please color-coordinate socks and tights with the white and burgundy color scheme.
- **Solid black** shoes or **solid black** or **solid white** tennis shoes may be worn anytime, with the exception of Wednesday, when **solid black** shoes are mandatory.
- Girls may wear **black** boots during the winter months.

### Girls Wardrobe

All items should be purchased from French Toast

<https://www.frenchtoast.com/schoolbox/schools>, 1-800-373-6248, Source Code QS47EQY

- Girls must wear the following on Monday, Thursday and Friday.
- Burgundy plaid jumper or skirt
- White Peter Pan Blouse (short sleeve or long sleeve)

### Boys Wardrobe

All items may be purchased from French Toast

<https://www.frenchtoast.com/schoolbox/schools>, 1-800-373-6248, Source Code QS47EQY

- Boys must wear the following on Monday, Thursday and Friday.
- Gray pants or shorts (no more than 1 ½ inches above the knee)
- White oxford shirt (short sleeve or long sleeve)
- Belt

On **Wednesdays**, all students must wear the following chapel attire.

### **Girls Wardrobe**

- Burgundy plaid jumper
- White Peter Pan collar blouse (short or long sleeve based upon season)
- White socks/Tights
- **Solid black** shoes
- Burgundy solid cross tie

### **Boys Wardrobe**

- Gray long pants
- White oxford shirt (short or long sleeve based upon season)
- **Solid black** shoes
- Belt
- Solid Burgundy tie

**NOTE: On Fridays**, parents/guardians have the option of dressing the child in the school uniform or dress out-of-uniform. The following articles of clothing are permitted when dressing out of uniform:

#### **Boys**

Jeans, casual pants, or shorts (no more than 1 ½ inches above the knee)  
Outerwear Tee-shirts  
Shirts with collars  
Tank tops are not permitted

#### **Girls**

Shorts, skorts, skirts, dresses (no more than 1 ½ inches above the knee)  
Jeans or pants  
Blouses or tops (Sleeveless tops **must** cover the total width of the shoulders)

Clothing imprinted with questionable and/or violent messages, symbols, or pictures should not be worn. Shoes that are completely closed-in should be worn. Students are not permitted to wear slip-on shoes, crocs, or sandals at any time **for safety reasons**. Mount Hope Christian Academy retains the right, and has sole discretion, to prohibit any clothing choices deemed inappropriate or distracting to the educational process.



**PE Uniform** – Students should come to school on **Tuesdays** dressed in the following attire:

- **Burgundy** short or long sleeve interlock polo(School logo is mandatory)
- **Gray** Hooded Sweatshirt (School logo is mandatory)
- **Gray** sweatpants
- **Gray** jersey shorts
- **Solid black** or **solid white** tennis shoes

**NOTE: Seasonal weather will determine whether students wear shorts and polo or sweat pants and hooded sweatshirts for P.E.**

## **DISCIPLINE**

At Mount Hope Christian Academy we stress two main patterns of behavior: respect for others, and respect for property. As a result, we do not allow children to hit, kick, bite, spit on, shove other children, or verbally abuse them. We also stress that they treat material possessions with respect.

Effective classroom discipline is a necessary key ingredient for a good learning environment. Discipline at MHCA works not only to achieve this goal but also to help our students learn self-discipline and good character traits. Teachers use visualized charts for behavior (Green Choices and Red Choices) in their classrooms. The chart is a visual indicator of a student's positive or unacceptable behavior. Rewards, verbal incentives, and positive reinforcement occur because of good behavior. Some of the character traits that will be observed are obedience, respect, cooperation, kindness, and patience.

Verbal reprimands, redirection, loss of privileges, and classroom isolation (calming area) occur because of poor behavior skills. When children misbehave, a Teacher or Instructional Aid first reminds them of the proper behavior. If the behavior is repeated, the child may be sent to a calming area. The amount of time a child remains in the calming area will be one (1) minute per year of age, but this amount will never exceed five (5) minutes. When the calming area time has expired, the Teacher or Instructional Aid will talk to the child to explain why that behavior was inappropriate. They might ask, "What might happen if we continue to throw toys?" The appropriate answers are usually: something might get broken, the toy might break and/or someone might get hit with the toy. If a child still has not calmed down, the Teacher or Instructional Aid will try to separate the child from the other children with a quiet activity (book, puzzle, etc.).

The "reminder" is skipped and a child goes to the calming area if the offense involves *hitting or physically abusing another child*. If use of the calming area and loss of privileges become a regular routine and appear ineffective, as many of the following steps deemed necessary will be taken:

1. The child will be sent to the Director's office in an effort to calm the child.
2. The parents will be notified, and a written notice will be placed in the child's file.
3. The Director will visit the classroom to observe the child's behavior.
4. A meeting will be arranged with the child's parents, teachers, and the Director to consider corrective actions.
5. The child will be suspended from the Academy for an appropriate period of time.
6. Should all efforts fail, the child will be dismissed from the Academy with proper written notification.

### CODE OF CONDUCT

- Students are expected to respond with respect at all times when speaking with adults.
- Students must get permission to leave their seats once class begins.
- Students must be respectful of others and the property of others, as well as the authority of the Academy staff.
- Students are not to be rowdy, run, or yell, while in the classrooms or building.
- Proper language must be used at all times.
- All school activities will be chaperoned by teachers and/or staff members.
- Students are expected to enter classrooms **on time** and in an orderly fashion, listen attentively, and raise their hands when they desire to speak.
- Eating is allowed only at lunch and snack times, or during special celebration parties and events that have been approved.
- Students are not allowed to chew gum at any time during school hours.
- Students are not allowed to have any weapon or imitation of weapons on the school grounds or premises.
- Students are expected to quiet themselves in classes and chapel as soon as attention is called.
- Students shall remain on the Academy grounds in the designated places unless granted special permission to do otherwise.
- The Academy's Code of Conduct is applicable while at the Academy as well as during field trips conducted during school hours.

Parents and staff are expected to demonstrate courtesy and respect towards each other, children, and management (MHCA staff) at all times. Should differences arise, parents should first go to the person directly involved and attempt to resolve the issue; most problems can be solved at this level. If a satisfactory resolution is not reached, parents may arrange a conference with the staff member and the Director. If satisfaction is still not achieved, the Academy Board of Directors may be informed of the matter in writing. The Board will make the final decision in resolving such cases.

While at Mount Hope Christian Academy, parents and staff are expected to foster a positive self image in each child that they have contact with and to treat all children in a respectful manner. Neither parents nor staff should engage in any act that could be negatively interpreted with respect to the children (i.e., name calling, talking to children in a raised voice, touching the child in any way deemed inappropriate).

If parents cannot convey a positive image of Mount Hope Christian Academy and/or are irrevocably dissatisfied with the Mount Hope Christian Academy, they will be encouraged to withdraw their child from the Academy.

### **MEALS AND SNACKS**

The Academy offers breakfast (for children in the Before Care Program), lunch and one snack each day as a part of our program. Parents are responsible for the morning snack. You do not need to provide a drink. We ask that you do not send snacks that contain peanuts, peanut butter, tree nuts, or more than 7 grams of sugar per serving unless it is a fresh fruit.

Breakfast is served each morning from 7:30 A.M.-7:45 A.M. Morning snack is at 10:00 A.M. Lunch is served at 12:00 P.M. Parents are welcomed to join children for lunch for \$3.00 per meal. Afternoon snacks are provided at 3:30 P.M for students enrolled in the After Care Program. If your child has an allergy to a specific food, the allergy(ies) must be annotated as required in the child's enrollment package for the Academic and/or the Before/After Care Program. The MHCA Food Service Manager will provide an appropriate substitution for children with food allergies. If a child has numerous allergies and cannot eat from the menu or if the parent prefers the child not eat a particular food item, parents must provide the child's lunch and/or snacks. No outside food from fast food restaurants are permitted. ***NOTE: For health and safety of all children and staff at the Academy, the Director may suspend parental visits for lunch to support the Academy's COVID19 mitigation strategy.***

Parents may request to review the Mount Hope Christian Academy's most recent Virginia Department of Health Environmental Sanitation Inspection and Food Establishment Inspection Report.

## **BIRTHDAY PARTIES**

Children enjoy celebrating their birthdays with their classmates. Parents may bring in a cake or cupcakes for the entire class. Only store-purchased cake or cupcakes may be served during lunch. Based upon safety regulations, balloons are not allowed because they have been deemed hazardous and could become harmful if used improperly.

## **FIELD TRIPS**

Class trips provide hands-on experience that will help reinforce information presented in the classroom. Parents must sign a permission form for a child to participate. Car seats/booster seats must be provided for children ages seven (7) and below. If a child is unable to participate in the field trip, the parents must make other arrangements for care during this time. Staff members will accompany the children on the field trip. Parents are encouraged to chaperone whenever possible; however, it must be coordinated with the teacher or MHCA staff.

## **PERSONAL ITEMS**

Mount Hope Christian Academy *is not responsible for loss of personal items*. All clothing items should be clearly marked with the student's name. Students are encouraged to leave toys, money, gum, candy, etc. at home. Parents should help the child understand this policy, and explain that toys are only permitted for specific activities (e.g., "Show & Tell"). However, It is permissible for children to bring a soft doll or stuffed animal for naptime. Students are not allowed to bring electronics to the Academy. This includes cell phones (functional or nonfunctional). Bringing these items to school can become a classroom distraction, and is also at risk for damage or misplacement. The Academy will not be responsible for any broken, stolen, or misplaced electronics.

## **FIRE DRILLS**

Each classroom has the main and alternate routes for evacuation during a fire emergency. Students will participate in fire drills monthly. Teachers instruct students how to go quickly to their designated areas.

## EMERGENCY PLAN

### Fire Drill/Evacuation Meeting Place

- ❖ Lower parking lot

**Sheltering Inside** (tornados, hurricanes, earthquakes etc.) – All shelter locations are located downstairs in the Mount Hope Baptist Church Academy area. During a weather emergency the following locations are used for shelter.

- ❖ **During Before care** when children are in Classroom C: Women's restroom
- ❖ **During Before care** when children are in the fellowship hall: Women's restroom, Men's restroom, and hallway near those restrooms
  
- ❖ **During Academy Hours (8:00-3:30)**
  - Students in Classroom A: Men's restroom
  - Students in Classroom B: Women's lounge
  - Students in Classroom C: Women's restroom
  
- ❖ **During After care** when some children are in the fellowship hall and some are in Classrooms B and C:
  - Students in Classrooms B: Women's lounge
  - Students in Classroom C: Women's restroom
  - Students in Fellowship Hall: Men's restroom and hallway near women and men's restroom.
  
- ❖ **During After care** when all children are in the fellowship hall: Women's restroom, Women's lounge, Men's restroom, and hallway near those restrooms.
  
- ❖ **Office Personnel:** Women's lounge, Men's restroom

### During a Tornado Watch or Warning

- ❖ If a tornado **watch** has been issued for our area, parents will be notified we are under a watch. Should a tornado **warning** be issued for our area, all students and staff will go to the designated inside shelters, and remain there until the warning is over. No one will be permitted to enter or leave the building while the warning is in effect.
- ❖ Students will return to their classrooms once the **warning** has been lifted.

### Emergency Evacuation Locations

In the event of an emergency situation that requires evacuation of the Academy, the Academy staff and students will be evacuated to one of the locations listed below.

❖ Merit School at the Castle, 6306 Old Plank Road, Fredericksburg, VA 22407, (540) 786-2434

❖ Creative Childcare Academy and Camp, 7001 Harrison Road, Fredericksburg, Virginia 22407, (540) 548-8003

❖ Salem Fields Early Learning Center, 11120 Gordon Road, Fredericksburg, Virginia 22407, (540) 786-6292

In all situations, the designated person in charge when evacuating shall:

- Take an accurate attendee list;
- Account for all children and staff as they board/depart vehicles
- Bring any necessary medications/supplies and emergency notifications.
- Take a cellular phone if available to be used for emergency notifications.

**Note:** The person in charge and all teachers or Before/After Care Staff shall bring their emergency bags.

## REGISTRATION

To enroll your child in Mount Hope Christian Academy Academic or Before/After School Care Program, you must complete and submit the required enrollment forms. You may request the enrollment forms and the Registration and Parent Handbook from the school office or go online to [www.mhcademyva.org](http://www.mhcademyva.org) to obtain them. Pre- registration begins February 1<sup>st</sup> of the current school year for those who will be returning next year. All completed enrollment forms along with the non-refundable registration fees must be received to begin the enrollment process. The admission enrollment forms can be picked up and returned to the school office between the hours of 8:00 a.m.- 4:00 p.m. Monday-Friday, or they can be downloaded from the aforementioned website and emailed to [director@mhcademyva.org](mailto:director@mhcademyva.org). The completed forms and fees must be submitted and the initial tuition payment must be made in order to be considered enrolled in the Academy. Students must be at least 2 years old no later than September 30th of the academic school year for which the enrollment is effective, and completely toilet trained. To ensure close developmental maturity, children are placed in a class according to their age by September 30th of the current year.

Once the enrollment forms have been submitted and registration fees are received, the Academy Director will set up an interview with the parents to discuss any questions and concerns and to review our policies. Tours of the Academy as well as the classrooms can be arranged during school hours during a time that will be least disruptive to students in the classroom. Enrollment is limited and is based on a first-come basis. Returning students are registered first. **NO ENROLLMENT SHOULD BE CONSIDERED FINAL BEFORE RECEIPT OF ALL REQUIRED ENROLLMENT DOCUMENTS, REGISTRATION FEES, INITIAL TUITION PAYMENT, AND COMPLETED ENROLLMENT FORMS.** For fees and tuition rates, please refer to [www.mhcademyva.org](http://www.mhcademyva.org).

No child will be denied enrollment on the basis of race or religion. Mount Hope Christian Academy retains the right to deny enrollment, when deemed appropriate, or should vacancies for a particular child's age group be filled to capacity. We do not deny enrollment for children with special needs. However, if after talking with the parents of a child with special needs, and it is realized Mount Hope Christian Academy does not have the personnel, training, equipment, or facilities, to support the needs of the child, the Academy will not enroll the child. This is in the best interest of the child/children, as our goal is to meet the needs of each child. For some situations, the Director may decide to conduct a trial enrollment for a specific period of time to determine if MHCA's academic program can meet the needs of a child. This trial period will be for a maximum of two (2) weeks and can be terminated during the 2 weeks, or as deemed appropriate by the Director in consultation with the teacher and parents.

Complete and submit forms (<https://www.mhcacademyva.org/enrollment-forms/>) to start the application process for enrollment in any of Mount Hope Christian Academy's

Following Programs:

Before Care Program

After Care Program

Before and After Care Program

Full or Half Day Academic Program

You may begin the process to complete these forms by registering via the brightwheel app

or

these forms may be downloaded and emailed to [director@mhcacademyva.org](mailto:director@mhcacademyva.org) from the website <https://www.mhcacademyva.org/enrollment-forms/>.