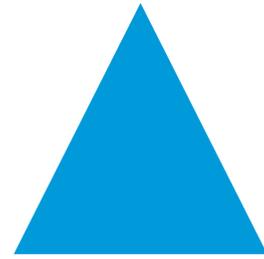




**St. Andrew's  
Episcopal  
School**



**Family Handbook  
2020-21**

General provisions that apply to this handbook:

1. The terms of this handbook are not contractual, but parents and students in the St. Andrew's Episcopal School community have agreed, by signing the Tuition and Enrollment Agreement and Family Handbook Acknowledgement Form, to abide by all terms of this handbook.
2. St. Andrew's Episcopal School reserves the right to supplement or modify the terms of this handbook from time to time at the sole discretion of the Head of School, with or without prior notice to parents and/or students.

**Due to COVID-19, many policies and procedures in this handbook will be modified for the 2020-21 school year. If modifications are not noted in the handbook, please refer to separate policies/procedures distributed to you by St. Andrew's Episcopal School administration and staff.**

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## **A LETTER FROM OUR HEAD OF SCHOOL**

Dear Families,

Welcome to St. Andrew's Episcopal School! I know that looking for a school and choosing an environment that is right for your child is one of the hardest decisions you will make during your child's early years. I personally think you have chosen one of the best learning environments for your child, and I am thankful you decided to join us. I look forward to getting to know each of you and your families.

St. Andrew's Episcopal School (SAES) is accredited by the Southwestern Association of Episcopal Schools and is a full member of the American Montessori Society. The tenets of each association require that we value and emphasize a community life in which the physical, spiritual, and emotional health of all are supported and nurtured. As part of our program, we engage in a study of religion that is academically substantive, age-appropriate, and that fosters dialogue about other faith traditions. By weaving the ideals and concepts of equity and justice into the fabric of our daily school life, we ensure that our mission is built on the foundation of a Christian love that guides and challenges all who attend our school to build lives of genuine meaning, purpose, and service in the world.

SAES is a small community that values family participation and views the education of your child as a collaboration between home and school. Welcome!!

With Gratitude,



Nancy Inge Simpson  
Head of School

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**St. Andrew's Episcopal School, Houston, Texas, A Texas Non-Profit Corporation [I.R.C. Section 501(c)(3) Organization]** does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national or ethnic origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, gender, or disability.

## **A LETTER FROM OUR RECTOR**

Dear Parents,

Welcome to Saint Andrew's Episcopal School! The Episcopal faith tradition, like the Montessori philosophy of education, emphasizes the importance and dignity of every person and aspect of creation. Both also place a high value on the life of community. Encompassing all of this is an emphasis on the blessings and joy that God offers to us. Our commitment to the children of Saint Andrew's School is to nurture, respect and engage them in complex learning about self, family, God, community, and world.

We welcome every family, regardless of faith tradition, who places their trust in the school as a formative part of their children's development. As a church family, we are also ready to serve as a resource of faith and pastoral care to our children and their families. If I can be of any assistance to you, I hope you will not hesitate to contact me. The staff of the school and I are all dedicated to being available and of service in whatever ways we can. On behalf of the community of St. Andrew's Episcopal Church and School, I look forward to being a part of the journey of growth and delight that awaits each child at St. Andrew's.

God's Peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James M. L. Grace" with a small cross or plus sign at the end of the line.

The Rev. James M. L. Grace  
Rector, St. Andrew's Episcopal Church and School  
[www.saecheights.org](http://www.saecheights.org)

## **SCHOOL EMPLOYEES**

Head of School	Nancy Inge Simpson <a href="mailto:nsimpson@saesheights.org">nsimpson@saesheights.org</a>
Director of School Operations	Debbie Masters <a href="mailto:dmasters@saesheights.org">dmasters@saesheights.org</a>
Director of Marketing and Communication	Erin Craig <a href="mailto:ecraig@saesheights.org">ecraig@saesheights.org</a>
Rector, St. Andrew's Episcopal Church	The Reverend Jimmy Grace <a href="mailto:jgrace@saecheights.org">jgrace@saecheights.org</a>
Toddler Community	Mari Matthews, Toddler Coordinator Gredel Blanco <a href="mailto:toddler@saesheights.org">toddler@saesheights.org</a>
Early Childhood Community – Downstairs	Martha Reyes, EC Coordinator Tuan Vu Rosalie Cuadros <a href="mailto:ec@saesheights.org">ec@saesheights.org</a>
Early Childhood Community – Upstairs	Amber Reid, Curriculum Coordinator Elsa Reymundo Christa Wilson <a href="mailto:ec.upstairs@saesheights.org">ec.upstairs@saesheights.org</a>
Music	Heidi Kaim

**St. Andrew's Episcopal School**  
**1819 Heights Boulevard**  
**Houston, Texas 77008**  
**713-861-2954**  
<http://www.saesheights.org/>  
[standrewsschool@saesheights.org](mailto:standrewsschool@saesheights.org)

# **SECTION 1 – ABOUT ST. ANDREW’S EPISCOPAL SCHOOL**

## **1.1 About the School**

St. Andrew’s Episcopal School is a Montessori program for children ages 12 months through six years old, taught by certified and experienced Montessori teachers in an Episcopal church setting. Our two Toddler communities, for children ages 12 months to three years old, offer partial and full day and week options. Our two Early Childhood communities, for children ages three to six years old, offer a five-day-a-week program with partial and full day options.

## **1.2 Mission**

We are a welcoming Episcopal Montessori school that educates and nurtures the whole child and family with love and respect.

## **1.3 Our Accreditations, Memberships, and Licenses**

St. Andrew’s Episcopal School holds the following accreditations, memberships, and licenses:

- Accredited by the Southwestern Association of Episcopal Schools.
- Member of the National Association of Episcopal Schools (NAES), American Montessori Society (AMS), National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS), and the Texas Association of Private and Parochial Schools (TAPPS).
- Licensed by Texas Child Care Licensing (CCL) and authorized by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Service (TDFPS).

## **1.4 We Value**

### **The Whole Child**

We use a child-directed Montessori approach to nurture the emotional, spiritual and academic development of the whole child while fostering respect for self, others, and the environment.

### **Family**

We provide a family-oriented environment built on trust and respect, where relationships can be developed through a network of extended resources.

### **Community**

We are inclusive of children and families of all faiths and backgrounds and we strive to build relationships and connections between the school, church, and community.

## **1.5 Our Vision**

### **Enrichment**

We offer quality programs, consistent with the Montessori philosophy, that enrich the lives of our students and their families.

## **Faith**

Our children and families enjoy fellowship in a Christian faith community through prayer, worship, and community service.

## **Environment**

We will create a program-driven environment that is welcoming, safe, and supportive of our mission.

### **1.6 St. Andrew's Episcopal Church**

St. Andrew's Episcopal School is an outreach of St. Andrew's Episcopal Church. The Rector is available for pastoral care and counseling of all children, parents, and staff of the school. The school helps to nurture the faith of each child in a number of ways, including the following:

- Celebrating joy in the child's relationship with the Holy in his/her life.
- Cultivating an awareness of God as a loving, protecting, and creative presence.
- Nurturing a sense of community through ritual and prayer.
- Developing a familiarity with the foundational stories of the Judeo-Christian faith.
- Instilling a loving and caring attitude toward all other people and the rest of God's creation.

The means of addressing these goals change in accord with the developmental level of the children. In the Toddler communities, the teachers introduce the children to religious concepts through behavior and modeling of attitudes of love and concern for others, and through informal discussions and questions initiated by the children. In the Early Childhood communities, the teachers provide more explicit discussion of religious topics.

Each week, the children and teachers of SAES attend an all-school chapel service. **(Due to COVID-19, we have temporarily suspended chapel services. We will resume chapel services when it is safe to do so.)** The service follows a modified form of Morning Prayer and includes ritual processions, the lighting of candles, the ringing of bells, singing, and prayer. In addition, the leader of the service tells a story from the Bible chosen for its timeliness. Each child is given an opportunity to lift up in prayer anyone who is in need of healing or consolation. Parents are invited to attend chapel whenever they would like.

The entire philosophy and assumptions of the school are thoroughly Christian. Maria Montessori, the founder of the Montessori school movement, was deeply imbued with the belief that all of creation, including people of all ages, should be treated with respect and care. Policies and programs are considered with an intentional concern for social justice and a sense of inclusion and care for all.

We act as daily models of service for the children of our community. We model good stewardship and care for others throughout the day. We talk to the children about the fact that we have much and there are those who have little, which provides a first introduction to community service at an age-appropriate level.

We are truly an all-embracing community, with respect for the diversity and individuality of each and every student.

## 1.7 Montessori Education

### The Montessori Method

The Montessori Method of education, developed by Dr. Maria Montessori, is a child-centered educational approach based on scientific observations of children from birth to adulthood. Dr. Montessori's Method has been time tested, with over 100 years of success in diverse cultures throughout the world.

- *American Montessori Society*

### Benefits of a Montessori Education

Montessori education offers our children opportunities to develop their potential as they step out into the world as engaged, competent, responsible, and respectful citizens with an understanding and appreciation that learning is for life. Montessori students become confident, enthusiastic, self-directed learners when they are given the freedom and support to question, to probe deeply, and to make connections. Montessori students are able to think critically, work collaboratively, and act boldly.

- **Each child is valued and respected as a unique individual.** Montessori education recognizes that children learn in different ways, and it therefore accommodates all learning styles. Students are free to learn at their own pace, each one advancing through the curriculum as s/he is ready, guided by the teacher and an individualized learning plan.
- **Beginning at an early age, Montessori students learn order, coordination, concentration, and independence.** Classroom design, materials, and daily routines support the individual's emerging "self-regulation," or the ability to educate oneself and to think about what one is learning.
- **Students are part of a close, caring community.** The multi-age classroom typically spans three years. Older students enjoy stature as mentors and role models; younger children feel supported and gain confidence about the challenges ahead. Teachers model respect, loving kindness, and a belief in peaceful conflict resolution.
- **Montessori students enjoy freedom within limits.** Working within parameters set by their teachers, students are active participants in deciding what their focus of learning will be. There is an understanding that internal satisfaction drives the child's curiosity and interest and results in joyous learning that is sustainable over a lifetime.
- **Students are supported in becoming active seekers of knowledge.** Teachers provide a learning environment where students have the freedom and tools to pursue answers to their own questions.
- **Classroom design and learning materials are thoughtfully and deliberately chosen.** Hands-on learning is central to the Montessori curriculum, and the Montessori learning environment is responsibly and carefully prepared with multi-sensory, sequential, and self-correcting materials to support self-directed learning. Students work at tables or on work rugs on the floor. Learning materials are displayed on open, easily accessible shelves and are arranged from the simplest to the most complex. Classrooms feature low sinks, chairs,

and tables, reachable shelves, cozy reading areas, and child-sized flatware, plates, and cups. Montessori classrooms are designed to be warm, well organized, and inviting.

- **Self-correction and self-assessment are an integral part of the Montessori classroom approach.** As they mature, Montessori students learn to look critically at their work and become adept at recognizing, correcting, and learning from their errors.

- American Montessori Society

## 1.8 Board of Trustees

The St. Andrew's Episcopal School Board of Trustees is made up of nine members and includes the Head of School, the Rector of St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, school parents, and church members. The School Board holds meetings every month.

The Board of Trustees and the Head of School have the right to amend school policies and procedures at any time, in their sole discretion. The school will notify parents of any changes to school policies and/or procedures by email.

## SECTION 2 – PROGRAM OVERVIEW

### 2.1 Chapel

Throughout the school year, all-school chapel services are normally held on Tuesdays at 10:15am. During chapel, all students sing songs and listen to a Bible story. With help from our Early Childhood friends, the chapel service also incorporates rituals typical of an Episcopal church service, such as lighting candles, ringing bells, and offering prayers of thanksgiving and healing. Parents are always welcome to attend our chapel service. **Due to COVID-19, we have temporarily suspended chapel services. We will resume chapel services when it is safe to do so.**

### 2.2 Community Classrooms

#### 2.2.1 Toddler Communities (12 months to three years old)

Children ages 12 months to three years old, who have established independent walking, may begin their Montessori experience in our Toddler community. Children enrolled in our Toddler community may attend school two days a week (Thursday and Friday), three days a week (Monday through Wednesday), or five days a week (Monday through Friday). Children in our Toddler communities attend an all-school chapel once a week, a Music Together® music class twice a week, and an art class twice a week. **Due to COVID-19, we have temporarily suspended chapel services and art and music classes, but we will resume these activities as soon as it is safe to do so.**

Montessori-trained teachers guide and support the toddlers as they develop independence, an appreciation for order, and a love of learning. Throughout the day, toddlers explore language, music, movement, art, practical life activities, and fine and gross motor activities that are developmentally appropriate. Snack time and outdoor play are also part of the toddlers' daily routine. Group-time songs and stories encourage an early sense of community and cooperation. Children gain coordination, speech, independence, and confidence as they work and play in this nurturing environment.

### **2.2.2 Early Childhood Communities (Three to six years old)**

The Early Childhood ("EC") communities offer a five-day, multi-age program for children ages three to six years old. In keeping with the "whole child" approach to learning, children in the EC classrooms participate in various activities that focus on sensory development, practical life skills, language, math, science, art, and cultural studies. In addition to the students' independent exploration of learning materials, the Montessori-trained EC teachers help guide students' studies with individualized work plans and lessons. Throughout the day, older children model for younger friends and help demonstrate various activities for them. All children in the EC classrooms experience the opportunity to both lead and follow.

The Early Childhood classes encourage an atmosphere of community. Teachers lead daily group lessons, songs, and games that are engaging and nurture cooperation among the children. All children help maintain the EC classrooms by folding laundry, cleaning up dishes, and returning furniture to its place after work and meals. Children are also responsible for restoring their learning materials to the proper place after lessons or work time. Children in our Early Childhood communities attend an all-school chapel once a week, a Music Together® music class once a week, and an art class twice a week. **Due to COVID-19, we have temporarily suspended chapel services and art and music classes, but we will resume these activities as soon as it is safe to do so.**

Children in the Early Childhood communities participate in show-and-tell, which normally correlates with their snack days. Children who bring show-and-tell are asked to explain to their classmates and teachers what they have brought to share and why it is special to them. This is a good opportunity for the children and teachers to get to know each other, and for the children to gain confidence speaking in front of others.

In the Early Childhood environments, our lessons, Montessori materials, and group study units are aligned with the Texas Essential Knowledge Skills (TEKS) to ensure we are meeting State educational standards in our classroom setting.

## **2.3 Summer Program**

The summer program at St. Andrew's Episcopal School is optional and is offered during the months of June, July, and August. We typically distribute summer program information in March. We offer priority registration to families who are re-enrolled for the upcoming school year or whose children are previous SAES students (and not yet six years old).

There are three summer sessions, each of which is further broken down into single weeks. We ask that any student enrolled in our summer program commits to attending at least three weeks of the program, but we do not require those weeks to be consecutive. The school is closed for three weeks during the summer; the weeks we are closed are usually the week of Memorial Day, the week of July 4<sup>th</sup>, and the week in August before the new school year begins.

Each year, our summer studies are based on a school-wide theme. In addition to exploring the theme of the summer curriculum, we enjoy weekly splash days and water activities. We also offer in-house “field trips,” which are visits from various community groups such as the Houston Museum of Natural Science, Moody Gardens, and the Houston Zoo.

## SECTION 3 – SCHOOL POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

### 3.1 Arrival and Departure

**Due to COVID-19, we have made temporary changes to our arrival and departure procedures. Early drop-off is not available at this time.**

We will have staggered arrival and departure times, with children entering specific doors depending on which classroom community they attend.

- **Toddler** drop-off & pick-up will occur at the Toddler playground gate. Toddler drop-off is at 8:45am and Toddler pick-up is at either 12:45pm or 2:45pm.
- **Early Childhood** drop-off & pick-up will occur at the Early Childhood playground gate.
  - **Downstairs EC drop-off** is at 8:30am.
  - **Upstairs EC drop-off** is at 8:45am.
  - **Downstairs EC pick-up** is at 12:30pm or 2:30pm.
  - **Upstairs EC pick-up** is at 12:45pm or 2:45pm.

A staff member will meet you or your child’s caregiver in the parking lot when you arrive at school, ask a few short questions, and take your child’s temperature before escorting your child into school. Similarly, a staff member will escort your child out of school at the end of the day. In order to minimize risk and maintain a healthy environment, **parents and caregivers are not allowed on campus at this time.**

#### 3.1.1 Arrival

- Please arrive to school on time each day. Drop-off normally occurs from 8:45am–9:00am, and the school day starts promptly at 9:00am. Early drop-off, which is available to full-day students for a fee, normally begins at 7:45am. **Due to COVID-19, early drop-off is not available at this time.**
- To encourage independence, children should enter school carrying as many of their belongings as they can. This builds your child’s confidence and independence and gives him/her a purpose upon arrival (hanging their coat, putting away their lunch box, etc.). We encourage parents to develop a quick good-bye ritual with your children. A timely departure assists your child’s transition to school and helps them to bond with their teacher. Please do not linger after saying good-bye to your child.

- When your child arrives at school, s/he should be escorted to class by a parent or caregiver. Each child must be signed in on the class sign-in sheet, with his/her arrival time noted. Sign-in sheets are located either inside or just outside each classroom. *Please do not leave your child alone in a classroom if a teacher is not present.*
- If your child will be absent from school, please notify the school office by 9:00am.

### **3.1.2 Dismissal**

- It is very important that you pick up your child from school on time. Dismissal for half-day students is at 12:45pm, and dismissal for extended day students is at 2:45pm. If you anticipate picking up your child before his/her scheduled dismissal time, please inform your child's teacher.
- You must provide the school office with a copy of the driver's license and the contact information for any adult who is authorized to pick up your child. Please inform the front office if a different authorized adult will pick up your child. Any different adult who picks up your child will be asked to show their photo ID to a staff member before we release your child to them.

## **3.2 Calendar**

A copy of the school's current calendar, which shows holidays, teacher in-service days, and parent/teacher conference days, is at the end of this handbook. It is also posted in your child's classroom and can be found online at [www.saesheights.org](http://www.saesheights.org).

## **3.3 Children's Clothing**

Please dress your child for school in clothing and shoes that will not hinder play activities, that you don't mind your child getting dirty, and that s/he can manage independently. When dressing your child, remember that as your child plays outside, works on art projects, and eats snack and lunch, s/he is likely to get messy! Please also keep in mind your child's ability to manage his/her clothing and shoes independently. Clothing with buttons/zippers and shoes with buckles/ laces can be particularly difficult for small hands to maneuver and can lead to unnecessary frustration. When choosing your child's shoes, please remember that certain types of shoes may slow down your child or cause injury, and others may be difficult for your child to manage on his/her own. For safety reasons, please do not send your child to school in flip-flops. Please ask your child's teachers if you have any questions regarding school-appropriate clothing or shoes.

## **3.4 Communication**

It is our hope that each family feels that the lines of communication with the school are open and accessible. Please feel free to contact your child's teacher or any member of the school administration team at any time with questions, concerns, or feedback.

Arrival and dismissal times are important transition times for your child. At the start and end of the school day, the teachers' attention should be focused on the children in their care, so *please do not attempt to discuss any concerns with your child's teacher at those times.* If you have any questions or concerns that you feel need immediate attention from your child's teacher, you may

leave a message with the office staff asking your child's teacher to call you. Your child's teacher will contact you either during afternoon rest time or after dismissal. You may also send a message to your child's teacher at the appropriate email address:

Toddler	<a href="mailto:toddler@saesheights.org">toddler@saesheights.org</a>
Early Childhood – Downstairs:	<a href="mailto:ec@saesheights.org">ec@saesheights.org</a>
Early Childhood – Upstairs:	<a href="mailto:ec.upstairs@saesheights.org">ec.upstairs@saesheights.org</a>

Two parent-teacher conferences are scheduled during the school year to provide you with formal feedback about your child's experience and progress at SAES – one in the fall, and one in the spring. During your parent-teacher conference you will learn more about the Montessori philosophy, your child's classroom environment, and your child's day-to-day experiences at St. Andrew's.

The school issues monthly newsletters that will keep you up to date on classroom events, school-wide community events, and church events. We distribute newsletters electronically, but you may request a paper copy of the newsletter from the school office.

Please remember to check your child's pocket (outside the classroom) or cubby/drawer (inside the classroom) for artwork, flyers about upcoming events, and other school information.

### **3.5 Community Classroom Pets**

Students at SAES help to care for the class pets in each of our classroom environments. The opportunity to observe and help care for a class pet is exciting and rewarding for kids. Caring for class pets also helps children learn proper hygiene and behavior when caring for and handling these special creatures.

### **3.6 Custodial/Non-Custodial Parents**

St. Andrew's Episcopal School may require divorced and/or separated parents to file unaltered, certified copies of the current court order or decree relating to the custody/conservatorship of their child(ren). It is expected that divorced and/or separated parents will treat one another with mutual respect in support of what is in the best interest of their child(ren).

### **3.7 Donations and Gifts to SAES**

All donations and gifts to St. Andrew's Episcopal School are 501(c) tax-deductible. The school will issue receipts for all donations received.

### **3.8 Door Code**

SAES provides a front door entry code to all enrolled families. We will change this code at the beginning of each school year, or at any other time the administration deems it necessary. *This entry code should not be shared with anyone outside the school community.*

### **3.9 Extended Day (12:45-2:45pm)**

For children who remain at school after lunch, nap time begins at 1:00pm. Children may bring their own nap mats to school or use a school nap mat for resting. If you use a school nap mat, you must provide linens for the mat. If you choose this option, we recommend that you purchase your linens from Susan Morreale, who may be reached at 832-868-7920, 713-861-6646, or [smorreale@gmail.com](mailto:smorreale@gmail.com). Susan provides a coordinating nap mat cover, blanket, and storage pillowcase. Families are asked to take their child's nap linens home on Fridays for laundering.

### **3.10 Gang-Free Zone**

Texas Penal Code § 71.028 imposes more severe punishments for particular crimes that are committed within 1000 feet of certain identified premises, including St. Andrew's Episcopal School's campus. This "gang-free zone" is intended to deter criminal activities in areas where children gather.

### **3.11 Gifts to Employees**

St. Andrew's Episcopal School recognizes that students and parents sometimes wish to express their gratitude for teachers and other staff members with gifts. If a family wishes to give a teacher or staff member a gift, SAES encourages the family to show its appreciation with a gift made by the child or another nominal gift. Families may also make a donation to the school in an employee's name. *SAES does not condone the collection of funds for group teacher gifts. At no time should any family feel compelled to provide gifts to the teachers or staff of St. Andrew's Episcopal School.*

### **3.12 Guidance and Discipline Policy**

Our teachers use only positive methods of redirection and guidance that encourage children's self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction.

### **3.13 Health Requirements**

For your child's initial enrollment to be considered complete, St. Andrew's Episcopal School requires that you submit the following items: a note from your child's pediatrician stating that your child is able to participate in a childcare setting; an updated immunization record or affidavit of exemption; and, for children four years of age and older, the results of a hearing and vision screening.

- ***Annual Physical Exam***

St. Andrew's Episcopal School requires a signed physician's statement indicating that your child is in good health and able to participate in our program. The required form is in your enrollment packet.

- ***Immunization Records or Exemptions***

Please provide a copy of your child's current immunization record or a state-issued exempt affidavit. The Texas immunization schedule and more information regarding exemption can be found at: [www.immunizetexas.com](http://www.immunizetexas.com).

The State of Texas grants and acknowledges the right of parents to exempt their children from vaccination requirements for day care, school, and college for reasons of conscience, including religious beliefs, or for medical reasons. Schools and childcare facilities must maintain an up-to-date list of students with exemptions so they can be excluded from attending school if an outbreak occurs. If your child has not received immunizations, please submit a state-issued exempt affidavit to the school office.

- ***Hearing and Vision Screening***

The State of Texas requires that children four years of age and older have a hearing and vision screening. As a licensed childcare facility, SAES is required to keep a record of the results of this screening on file for each affected child. If your child is four years of age or older, please submit the results of their most recent hearing and vision screening to the school office

**Each year that you re-enroll your child at SAES, you will be required to submit a copy of your child's current immunization record and, if your child is four years of age or older, the results of a hearing and vision screening.** You should be submit these items to the school office within two weeks of your child's annual well-child pediatrician visit.

### **3.14 Hours of Operation**

The school office is open from 8:00am to 3:00pm Monday through Friday, except on school holidays or during other school closures (teacher workdays, parent-teacher conference days, etc.).

There are two options for the length of your child's school day:

- Half-day: 8:45am – 12:45pm
- Full-day: 8:45am – 2:45pm

Early drop-off, which is available to full-day students for a fee, normally begins at 7:45am. **Due to COVID-19, early drop-off is not available at this time.**

### **3.15 Illness and Accidents at School**

Your child's first school experience will likely bring increased exposure to viral and bacterial illnesses. Although the school environment is thoroughly cleaned and maintained daily, young children are susceptible to illness. As a Montessori school, we encourage each child to practice self-care (washing hands, cleaning one's nose, etc.) in an effort to not only build the child's self-esteem, but to help reduce the spread of germs. Despite our best efforts, we know that children will inevitably become ill during the school year. Below please find our guidelines regarding illness.

#### **COVID-19 ILLNESS POLICY**

Please do not send your child to school if s/he, or anyone in your household, has symptoms associated with COVID-19, which may include the following: fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, new loss of sense of smell or taste, sore throat, congestion, runny nose, nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea.

Please immediately report to SAES if you, your child, or anyone in your home has been exposed to COVID-19, is presumed to have COVID-19, or is known to have COVID-19.

In the event that a student or staff member has a known exposure to COVID-19, we will perform appropriate contact tracing and inform anyone who came into contact with the student or staff member so that they can get a COVID-19 test. Before a child or staff member who has had a known exposure to COVID-19 may return to school, s/he must provide the results of a negative PCR COVID-19 test.

In the event that a student or staff member is diagnosed with COVID-19, we will perform appropriate contact tracing and inform all families in the classroom community of the positive case. We will also close the affected classroom for 14 days. Before a child who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 may return to school, s/he must be symptom-free for 72 hours and must provide a doctor's note stating that s/he is virus-free and eligible to return to school. Before an adult who has been diagnosed with COVID-19 may return to school, s/he must be symptom-free for 72 hours and provide negative results from a PCR COVID-19 test.

*Any communications to families regarding health alerts will be compliant with HIPAA requirements.*

Please keep your child at home if s/he has symptoms of any illness (see below).

### **3.15.1 Illness at School**

If your child becomes ill during the school day, we will contact you immediately and ask that you pick him/her up from school as soon as possible.

Illness is defined as:

- A temperature of 100 degrees or more;
- Two or more episodes of diarrhea or vomiting;
- Any undiagnosed rash, open sores, blisters, or spots;
- Colored discharge from nose, eyes, or ears; and/or
- The onset of severe illness symptoms: extreme sleepiness, lethargy, or other unusual behavior.

### **3.15.2 Exclusion from School Due to Illness**

**Please do not send a sick child to school.** If your child has a fever, s/he may not attend school. Please keep your child home from school if s/he has an undiagnosed rash, excessive mucus production, fluid secretion from the skin, mouth, eyes, or ears, and/or unusually red or itchy eyes. If you have any questions about bringing your child to school, please consult with your physician. *SAES reserves the right to send your child home if a teacher or staff member suspects that s/he is ill.* Please notify SAES if your child develops a contagious or communicable disease so that we may determine whether we need to notify our licensing agent and/or community parents.

### **3.15.3 Readmission to School after Illness**

**After an illness, your child must be fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medication before s/he returns to school.** S/he must also be free of any other symptoms of illness. St. Andrew's Episcopal School may require a physician's certification of health before readmitting a child who has been absent due to a contagious disease, extended illness, or injury.

### **3.15.4 Accidents at School**

Most injuries that occur at school will be minor (bumps, bruises, cuts, scrapes, etc.). In those cases, your child's teacher will treat the injury and your child will remain at school. Your child's teacher will wash all cuts or scrapes with soap and water, and she may also apply a bandage to the injured area. Your child's teacher will also provide your child with an ice pack for minor bumps and bruises. Staff members are not allowed to remove splinters or other items embedded in a wound. If the seriousness of an injury is in question, your child's teacher will consult you to determine whether you should pick up your child immediately or at the end of the school day.

If your child sustains a serious injury at school, his/her teacher will call you immediately. If your child is seriously injured and we cannot reach either parent or any other authorized contact person, we will contact the health care provider listed on your child's *Health Record/Medical Release Form* and take action to ensure that your child receives proper medical attention. In the case of any significant injury to your child at school, your child's teacher will provide you with a detailed report, which you will be required to sign to indicate that you have been made aware of the incident.

### **3.16 Medication Administered at School**

When your child needs to take medication at school, it is important to communicate with your child's teacher about what medication your child is taking and why s/he is taking it. Childcare facilities are not required to administer medication, but if they do, they must follow strict standards to ensure each child's safety. Therefore, we ask that you consider asking your doctor if it is possible to change the way your child's medicine is administered so that it may be given only at home.

If your child's medicine must be given at school, please ask your doctor and pharmacist to fill the prescription in two labeled containers, one for home and another for school. In order to dispense medication at school, we also require you to fill out a Request for Administration of Medication at School form, which is available in the school office. If we give your child any medication during the school day, we will use the Medication Administration Record to record the date, time and dose of medication given to your child. All medication is stored in the school office.

All prescription medication must be in its original container and labeled with the following information: your child's name; the name of the medication; the correct dosage with administration directions (how much and how often); and the prescribing physician's name. Non-prescription medication must also be in its original container, with a visible expiration date, and must be administered to your child according to the label directions. It must also be labeled with your child's

name and the date the medication was brought to school. If the medication is liquid, please include a medicine spoon for measuring it.

### **3.17 New Students: Orientation and Phase-In**

- **Classroom Orientation**

When your child enrolls at SAES, his/her teacher will contact you to schedule an initial parent-teacher conference. At that conference, your child's teacher will orient you to the community classroom procedures and discuss your child's transition into the environment. Your child's teacher will also give you a welcome packet, in which you will find information including what to bring to school, your child's daily schedule, and other classroom-specific information.

- **The First Days of School and Phase-In**

Your child's teachers will work with you to establish a phase-in schedule for your child to help him/her adjust to being in school at SAES. Phase-in usually occurs over the course of a week, but it may be shorter or longer depending on your child's needs. We understand that children handle separation from their parents in many ways. The key to your child's successful adjustment to school will be a cooperative effort between your family and your child's teachers. Children need time to adjust to new routines, and during this adjustment period you may see tears and/or hear protests from your child at school drop-off. Rest assured that this is a normal reaction to a new routine, and know that during this adjustment period, it is very common for tears to stop within minutes of the caregiver's departure from school. Daily separation will become easier as your child masters this new routine. This is all part of your child's growth process, and it will help him/her to become a confident, self-assured child.

### **3.18 Nutrition**

We value healthy eating habits, and we know that foods high in fiber, free of preservatives and processed sugar, and low in fats and salt help children to be alert and physically active. With this in mind, we suggest the following guidelines:

Lunch: Please provide a nutritious lunch for your child to bring to school, and please save special treats for home. **Due to COVID-19, we ask that you either send your child's lunch in disposable containers or agree to sanitize your child's lunch kit each day.**

Snack: Normally, each family is asked to provide snack for their child's class on a rotating basis. The snack schedule is posted in or outside of your child's classroom. You can also find the snack calendar in the monthly newsletter and on the school website. Each classroom community will distribute their specific snack guidelines, including the number of children who will be served each day. A good rule of thumb is that the daily snack should consist of a fruit, a vegetable, a carbohydrate, and a protein. If you have any questions about what to send for snack, please ask your child's teacher or your Room Parent for suggestions. **Due to COVID-19, each family must provide a snack for their child each day until further notice.**

### 3.19 Safety

#### 3.19.1 Emergency Drills

The employees and students of St. Andrew's Episcopal School participate in various emergency drills throughout the school year, so that everyone is prepared in the case of an emergency. The emergency drills we conduct include fire drills, evacuation drills, shelter-in-place/severe weather drills, and lockdown drills.

SAES is required to hold one fire drill once a month, as well as four shelter-in-place and four lockdown drills each calendar year. We do not announce emergency drills ahead of time, but we schedule them to occur during the least disruptive time of day for the children. All staff members are involved in emergency drills, and the children's safety is our number one priority during these drills.

If you have any questions about emergency drills or the processes used during these drills, please contact the Head of School or the Director of School Operations.

#### 3.19.2 Emergency School Closing

If it becomes necessary to close the school at any time, due to inclement weather or another unexpected emergency, St. Andrew's Episcopal School will generally follow the decision of HISD (Houston Independent School District) regarding school closures. However, with the children's safety in mind, the Head of School may at times use her own discretion to close the school.

#### 3.19.3 Evacuation

If for any reason we need to evacuate to an alternate site, staff and children will proceed to:

Hamilton Middle School  
ID# 49  
139 East 20<sup>th</sup> Street  
Houston, TX 77008-4725

Phone: 713-802-4725  
Fax: 713-802-4731

#### 3.19.4 Shelter in Place – Hazardous Materials

We will shelter in place if toxic chemicals or other hazardous materials have been released in our immediate area. In the event of a shelter in place order, we will contact parents/caregivers, and children and staff members will remain indoors until the Houston Office of Emergency Management or other local officials to give the school permission to release them. **For your safety, please do not come to school in this situation, as we will not be able to allow you to enter the school.**

### **3.19.5 Remind Messaging System**

We strongly encourage all parents to subscribe to **Remind**, which is a one-way communication system that allows the school to text parents/caregivers in case of a school emergency or an unexpected school closure. Parents must subscribe to this service in order to receive updates. (Please note: *all personal information shared with Remind remains completely confidential.*) There is no fee to use Remind.

To receive Remind messages via text message, text @saesfa to (512) 960-1748. Unsubscribe by replying “unsubscribe@saesfa.”

To receive Remind messages via email, send an email to [saesfa@mail.remind.com](mailto:saesfa@mail.remind.com). Unsubscribe by replying with “unsubscribe” in the subject line.

## **SECTION 4 – TUITION AND ENROLLMENT INFORMATION**

### **4.1 Tuition**

All parents and/or legal guardians are required to sign a Tuition and Enrollment Agreement.

The school distributes tuition invoices electronically, and tuition payments are due on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of each month. You may submit your tuition payment electronically (via the school website) or by cash/check to the school office (either in person or in the payment box outside of the school office). Tuition payments are considered late after the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the month. All past due invoices will be subject to a \$50.00 late fee, and a \$50.00 fee will be assessed for all returned checks. The school does not issue tuition credit for missed days due to vacations, scheduled school holidays, or child illness, or for school closings due to emergency situations, inclement weather, or acts of God.

### **4.2 Enrollment Fee**

At the time of your child’s initial enrollment at SAES, a \$500.00 enrollment fee is due. This enrollment fee will be applied to your first month’s tuition.

### **4.3 Annual Payment Option**

Tuition paid in full by January 3, 2021 is eligible for a 3% discount. If you are interested in taking advantage of the annual payment option, please notify Debbie Masters. If an increase in tuition occurs as a result of changes to your child’s enrollment made after full payment is received (by changing the number of days of attendance, moving to an extended day, etc.), we will bill the difference in tuition on a monthly basis.

### **4.4 Annual Re-Enrollment Fee**

Each year, re-enrollment forms for the next school year are due, along with a \$200.00 re-enrollment fee, on the last business day of March. The \$200.00 re-enrollment fee will be credited to your first tuition invoice of the next school year.

## 4.5 Financial Assistance

St. Andrew's Episcopal School offers need-based financial assistance to qualifying families. If you are interested in applying for financial assistance, please contact Debbie Masters at 713-861-2954. All financial assistance applications for the next academic year must be submitted by February 1.

## SECTION 5 – PARENT INVOLVEMENT

There are many ways parents can be involved at SAES! If you have questions about volunteer opportunities, please contact the school office or the Parent Association Chair.

### 5.1 Parent Association

The Parent Association is responsible for organizing a number of school-wide events throughout the year, including the Fall Festival, the Thanksgiving & Special Friends Day Feast, Polar Express Day, and the Easter Egg Hunt. The Chair of the Parent Association will work with school administration and other parent volunteers to plan and execute school events.

**Due to COVID-19, we do not anticipate hosting the events that usually occur at SAES during the school year. If and when we are able to hold any sort of event that requires parent volunteers, we will reach out to parents for help.**

### 5.2 Annual Gala and Fundraiser

A long-term financial objective of St. Andrew's Episcopal School is to keep tuition manageable while fully covering our basic operating expenses. As is typical of most independent schools, in addition to collecting tuition, St. Andrew's Episcopal School raises money each year to support our operating budget. Our major fundraiser each school year is the annual Gala, the proceeds of which allow us to continue offering the exceptional program that we have.

We ask that all families support the school by purchasing tickets to the Gala, but we also welcome parents to volunteer to be a part of the Gala Committee. The committee does everything from choosing the gala theme to gathering auction items – and lots of things in between! We also welcome donations of items and services for the Gala's live and silent auctions.

**Due to COVID-19, we are unsure of the format of the 2020-21 Gala. Once we have more information, we will share it with families and welcome volunteers!**

### 5.3 Annual Fund

The growth of the St. Andrew's Episcopal School Annual Fund, in addition to bolstering our operating budget, will allow us to begin to look ahead to the long-term growth of our school. The Annual Fund helps to support our operating budget and will make a tangible impact on every aspect of our school - classroom supplies, technology, payroll, financial aid, art, music, and much more. In short, the generosity of our supporters will help SAES continue to provide our families with

a well-rounded Montessori education within our vibrant school and church community. **Our goal for the Annual Fund is to have 100% participation from our parent community and board of trustees, regardless of the dollar amount of each contribution.** We also welcome additional support from our alumni and friends. *The Annual Fund runs each school year from June through May.*

#### **5.4 Recommended Readings**

- *The Absorbent Mind* by Maria Montessori
- *Discovery of the Child* by Maria Montessori
- *Education and Peace* by Maria Montessori
- *The Montessori Method* by Maria Montessori
- *The Secret of Childhood* by Maria Montessori
- *To Educate the Human Potential* by Maria Montessori
- *Montessori: The Science Behind the Genius* by Angeline Stoll Lillard
- *Montessori: A Modern Approach* by Paula Polk Lillard
- *Montessori Today: A comprehensive Approach to Education from Birth to Adulthood* by Paula Polk Lillard
- *Montessori Play and Learn: A Parent's Guide to Purposeful Play from Two to Six* by Lesley Britton
- *Girls Will Be Girls: Raising Confident and Courageous Daughters* by Joann Deak
- *The Six Stages of Parenthood* by Ellen Galinsky
- *Montessori Parenting: Unveiling the Authentic Self* by Jim McFarland and Sonnie McFarland
- *Positive Discipline* by Jane Nelson, Ed.D.
- *Positive Discipline: The First Three Years* by Jane Nelson, Ed.D. and Cheryl Erwin
- *Child's Play: Montessori Games and Activities for Your Baby and Toddler* by Maja Pitamic and Dr. Claire McCarthy
- *Understanding Montessori: A Guide for Parents* by Maren Schmidt and Dana Schmidt
- *Raising Cain: Protecting the Emotional Life of Boys* by Dan Kindlon and Michael Thompson
- *Montessori Insights for Parents of Young Children: Applying Montessori Principles in the Home* by Aline D. Wolf
- *Montessori: Why It Matters for Your Child's Success and Happiness* by Charlotte Cushman and Michael Berliner
- *The Opposite of Spoiled: Raising Kids Who Are Grounded, Generous, and Smart About Money* by Ron Lieb

## SECTION 6 – STAYING CONNECTED AT SAES: FAQs & HOW-TOS

### What should I do if I do not receive emails from SAES?

1. Please verify with Debbie Masters, at [dmasters@saesheights.org](mailto:dmasters@saesheights.org), that the school has the correct email address for you.
2. Check your Spam or Promotions Folders for any emails from “.....@saesheights.org” and mark SAES as a safe sender.
3. Add our email addresses to your email contacts:
  - Nancy Simpson, Head of School [nsimpson@saesheights.org](mailto:nsimpson@saesheights.org)
  - Debbie Masters, Director of School Operations [dmasters@saesheights.org](mailto:dmasters@saesheights.org)
  - Erin Craig, Dir. of Marketing and Communication [ecraig@saesheights.org](mailto:ecraig@saesheights.org)
  - Early Childhood Classroom – Downstairs [ec@saesheights.org](mailto:ec@saesheights.org)
  - Early Childhood Classroom – Upstairs [ec.upstairs@saesheights.org](mailto:ec.upstairs@saesheights.org)
  - Toddler Classroom [toddler@saesheights.org](mailto:toddler@saesheights.org)

### How do I receive text or email alerts from the school?

SAES will send text/email alerts in case of emergencies, inclement weather, or school closings. To receive these messages, parents/caregivers must opt in to our one-way messaging service, Remind. To subscribe to Remind, text @saesfa to (512) 960-1748 or email [saesfa@mail.remind.com](mailto:saesfa@mail.remind.com).

### I missed the newsletter – is it available online?

SAES distributes the monthly school newsletter via email. You can also find the newsletter in the “Resources” section of the school website (<http://www.saesheights.org/>).

### Where can I find the snack calendar?

The snack calendar can be found inside the monthly newsletter. Teachers also post the snack calendar outside of each classroom. You can also view the snack calendar in the “Resources” section of the school website (<http://www.saesheights.org/>).

### Where can I find out about upcoming school and/or classroom events?

Information about upcoming school and classroom events can be found in the school newsletter, and you will receive updates about special events from your child’s teachers. We will also share information about upcoming school events on the school website (<http://www.saesheights.org/>).

*(continued, next page)*

### **How can I access the school's Instagram accounts?**

We invite you to follow the school and classroom Instagram account(s) for photos and videos of both special events and day-to-day activities at SAES. The school account is public, but each classroom account is private; to follow, please submit a request via Instagram and your child's teacher will approve it. *At any time, you may request that your child's photo not be used on any of the school's Instagram accounts.*

Schoolwide account: @saesintheheights

Toddler: @saes\_toddler

Early Childhood: @ecfriends\_saes

Early Childhood – Upstairs: @earlychildhood\_saes

### **Can I pay tuition online?**

Yes. You can pay tuition through our website (<http://www.saesheights.org/>). To pay tuition online, click on the "Pay Tuition" button in the top right corner of the home page. This will direct you to our online billing site. New users must first register and create a student ID, which will function as your login name. The student ID is your child's last name and first name (for example, Nancy Simpson would be SimpsonNancy). Online tuition may be paid by credit card or e-check.

### **Who should I contact about tuition and payments?**

Debbie Masters – [dmasters@saesheights.org](mailto:dmasters@saesheights.org) or 713-861-2954.

### **Who should I contact if I would like to change my child's enrollment (add/remove days, extend the day, etc.)?**

Debbie Masters – [dmasters@saesheights.org](mailto:dmasters@saesheights.org) or 713-861-2954.

### **Who should I contact if I have a friend who is interested in the school?**

Debbie Masters – [dmasters@saesheights.org](mailto:dmasters@saesheights.org) or 713-861-2954.

### **Who should I contact if I have a concern about my child's class/teacher?**

Nancy Simpson – [nsimpson@saesheights.org](mailto:nsimpson@saesheights.org) or 713-861-2954.

## JANUARY

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- Jan 4-5 : Teacher In-Service (School Closed)
- Jan 6 : First Day of School for Returning Families
- Jan 11 : First Day of School for New Families
- Jan 18 : MLK Day (School Closed)
- Feb 12 : Wear **RED** or **PINK** for Valentine's Day
- Feb 15 : President's Day (School Closed)
- Feb 17 : Ash Wednesday
- Mar 15-19 : Spring Break (School Closed)
- Mar 26 : Re-Enrollment for 2021-2022 School Year and Summer 2021 Due
- Apr 2 : Good Friday (School Closed)
- Apr 5 : Easter Monday (School Closed)
- Apr 6 : School Resumes
- Apr 29-30 : Parent/Teacher Conferences
- May 27 : End of Year Celebration – Activities TBD
- May 28 : Teacher in-Service (School Closed)
- May 31-Jun 4 : Summer Break
- Jun 7 : Summer Session 1 Begins

## APRIL

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## JUNE

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