



# Family Handbook 2023-2024

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

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

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

Dear Families,

As a leader in Montessori education in The Heights, we are proud to celebrate our 23rd year! As the only faith-based Montessori school in the area, we provide a superior education for children and their families within a Christian environment.

St. Andrew's Episcopal School 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 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 Christian love that guides and challenges all who attend our school to build lives of genuine meaning, purpose, and service in the world. St. Andrew's is a small community that values family participation and views the education of your child as a collaboration between home and school.

Please review this handbook where you will find school policies/procedures and general information. We believe a partnership between the teachers and parents is vital. These early years are critical to your child's development as the foundation for their future is being built and nurtured. Peace and grace,

*JMC*

Jamie Martin-Currie M.S.Ed., Head of School

## **A LETTER FROM OUR RECTOR**

Dear Parents,

Welcome to St. 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 the community. Encompassing all of this is an emphasis on the blessings and joy that God offers to us. Our commitment to the children of St. 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 help 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,

*James*

The Rev. James M. L. Grace Rector, St. Andrew's Episcopal Church, and School

## STAFF

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

### **I.1 About Us**

St. Andrew’s Episcopal School is a Montessori program for children ages 18 months through six years old, taught by certified and experienced Montessori teachers in an Episcopal church setting. Our two Toddler communities, for children ages 18 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.

### **I.2 Mission**

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

### **I.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 (SAES).
- 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).

### **We Value**

#### **I.4 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 school gatherings.

#### **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.

#### **I.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 caring for creation.

## **Environment**

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

### **I.6 St. Andrew's Episcopal Church**

St. Andrew's Episcopal School is an outreach/mission 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 several 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 with the children's developmental level. 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 Early Childhood communities, the teachers provide a more explicit discussion of religious topics.

Every Tuesday, the children and teachers attend a developmentally appropriate chapel service led by the school chaplain, the Director of Family Faith Formation, or the Head of School. The service includes a ritual procession, lighting candles, ringing bells, singing, and prayers. The leader tells a Bible story chosen for its timeliness. Each child is given a chance to pray for anyone needing bring prayers for anyone who needs healing or consolation and receive a birthday blessing. Parents are invited to attend Tuesday chapel whenever they want, and we encourage their participation to bridge the gap from school to faith at home. Tuesdays | 11:00 am EC Chapel / 11:30 am Toddler Chapel.

We provide an inclusive chapel service that embraces and shares the religious beliefs of all present. When appropriate, the Godly Play curriculum is used for children to become familiar with the language of God and God's people: sacred stories, parables, liturgical actions, and silences. Through this powerful language, wondering, and the community of people gathered, we hear the most profound invitation: an invitation to play with God.

The entire philosophy and assumptions of the school are thoroughly Christian. Maria Montessori was deeply imbued with the belief that all of creation, including people of all ages, should be treated with respect and care. 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 and the environment 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 student.

## I.7 Montessori Education

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*

- 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, probe deeply, and make connections. Montessori students can think critically, work together, and act boldly.
- **Each child is valued and respected as a unique individual.** Montessori education recognizes that children learn in diverse ways, and it, therefore, accommodates all learning styles. Students are free to learn at their own pace, each one advancing through the curriculum as they are ready, guided by teachers, and has 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, so the 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.

- **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.

## I.8 The Board of Trustees

The St. Andrew's Episcopal School Board of Trustees includes parents, church members, and a vestry liaison. The school board meets monthly to support and promote the school's mission, vision, strategic goals, and policy positions. The Board of Trustees and the Head of School can amend school policies and procedures at any time, at their sole discretion. The school will notify parents of changes to school policies and /or procedures.

Adrienne Allie	281-755-7399	<a href="mailto:Adrienneallie@gmail.com">Adrienneallie@gmail.com</a>	New Church Trustee
Dr. Matt Blank	832-567-2445	<a href="mailto:Matthew.I.blank@gmail.com">Matthew.I.blank@gmail.com</a>	New Church Trustee & Secretary
Liz Dennis	713-826-9765	<a href="mailto:edennis@gmail.com">edennis@gmail.com</a>	New Church Trustee
Cathey Harrison	713-702-1282	<a href="mailto:catheyph@sbcglobal.net">catheyph@sbcglobal.net</a>	Head and Board Evaluation
Rev. Jimmy Grace	832-453-4111	<a href="mailto:jgrace@saecheights.org">jgrace@saecheights.org</a>	Rector
Jamie Martin-Currie	713-591-4869	<a href="mailto:jmc@saesheights.org">jmc@saesheights.org</a>	Head of School
Amber Mullins	713-628-5697	<a href="mailto:amwmullins@gmail.com">amwmullins@gmail.com</a>	Development Chair & FAST Financial Aid Student Tuition
Dana Robinson	972-358-9109	<a href="mailto:danakrobinson@icloud.com">danakrobinson@icloud.com</a>	Head and Board Evaluation
Steve Runner	713-253-6806	<a href="mailto:ssrunner@hotmail.com">ssrunner@hotmail.com</a>	President
Holden Rushing	713-498-0493	<a href="mailto:holdenrushing@gmail.com">holdenrushing@gmail.com</a>	New School Trustee
Corey Wilson	832-647-2433	<a href="mailto:wilson.coreyallyn@gmail.com">wilson.coreyallyn@gmail.com</a>	Finance Chair & FAST Financial Aid Student Tuition
Lisa Carpenter Moore	713-876-2191	<a href="mailto:lacdcn@yahoo.com">lacdcn@yahoo.com</a>	Church Vestry Liaison

## **SECTION 2 – PROGRAM OVERVIEW**

### **2.1 Enrichment Activities; Chapel and Music/Movement**

During our weekly chapel service all students pray, sing songs, and hear a Bible story. The service also incorporates rituals typical of an Episcopal church service, such as lighting candles, ringing bells, and offering prayers of thanksgiving, healing, and birthday blessings. Parents are always welcome to attend our chapel service. Chapel is led by the school Chaplain, Director of Family Faith Formation, or the Head of School.

Weekly music and movement classes are 30 minutes long for Early Childhood children and 20 minutes long for the Toddler 3-day and 5day classes.

Please note that Chapel and music are not available for the 2-day Toddler class and summer programming may differ from the academic year.

### **2.2 Classrooms**

#### **2.2.1 Toddler Community (18 months to three years old)**

Children ages 18 months to three years old, who have established independent walking and eating, may begin their Montessori experience in our Toddler community. Children enrolled in our Toddler classrooms 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).

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, movement, art, practical life activities, and fine and gross motor activities that are developmentally appropriate. Snack 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 Community (three to six years old)**

The Early Childhood (EC) community offers 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 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 Early Childhood 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 guide daily group lessons, songs, and games that are engaging and nurture cooperation among the children. All children help maintain the environment by folding laundry, cleaning 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 the EC community 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 EC 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. Full-day children who no longer nap will rest for a ½ hour then have an additional worktime in the afternoon.

## **SECTION 3 – POLICIES AND GUIDELINES**

### **Carpool Arrival, Departure, and Early Care**

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

#### **The school will not release a child into a car without a car seat. Toddler**

drop-off & pick-up occurs at the Toddler playground gate.

- **Toddler 1 drop-off** is at 8:30am ○ **Toddler 2 drop-off** is at 8:45am ○ **Toddler 1 pick-up** is at 12:30pm or 2:30pm ○ **Toddler 2 pick-up** is at 12:45pm or 2:45pm

**Adults who transport Toddlers are solely responsible for securing students into their car seats. Please be prepared to exit your car to do so.**

**Early Childhood** drop-off & pick-up occurs 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

**Adults who transport Early Childhood students are solely responsible for securing students into their car seats. Please be prepared to drive forward and park your car to do so.**

Your child's teacher will be ready to welcome your child upon their arrival and escort them into the school. Similarly, a teacher will escort your child out of school at the end of the day.

**Early Care** begins at 7:30 am. Your child should be escorted through the front door to the assigned early care classroom by a parent or caregiver. Children may bring a light breakfast to enjoy while in Early Care. Contact Mari Matthews, Early Care Coordinator with any questions. [earlycare@saesheights.org](mailto:earlycare@saesheights.org).

### 3.1.1 Arrival

To encourage independence, children should enter school carrying as many of their belongings as they are able. This builds your child's confidence and independence and gives them a purpose upon arrival (hanging their backpack, putting away their lunch box, etc.). We encourage you 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. **If your child will be absent from school, please notify the school office by 9:00am by calling 713.861.2954.**

### 3.1.2 Dismissal

If you anticipate picking up your child before their scheduled dismissal time, please inform your child's teacher in a timely manner. You may call the school office to relay a message to your child's teacher. Please inform the front office of any changes to the list of authorized pick-up adults you have provided. New authorized pick-up adults will need to provide identification. The school will confirm they are authorized to pick up your child before they are released into their care

## 3.2 Calendar

The school calendar may be found on the homepage of the school website <http://www.saesheights.org/>.

## 3.3 Children's Clothing

Please dress your child for school in clothing and shoes that do not hinder play activities, you do not mind getting dirty, and your child can manage independently. When dressing your child, remember when they play outside, work on art projects, and eat snacks and lunch, they are likely to get messy. Clothing with buttons/zippers, and shoes with buckles/laces can be particularly difficult for small hands to maneuver and can lead to unnecessary frustration. **For safety reasons, please do not send your child to school in flip-flops.**

## 3.4 Communication

It is our hope that each family feels the school communication is open and accessible. Please contact your child's teacher or any member of the school leadership team 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 concerns that you feel need immediate attention from your child's teacher, please email them and they will respond during rest time or after dismissal. **The school does not provide mobile phones for the staff so as a courtesy please do not text your child's teacher even if you have their number. If they did call you from their cell phone, they needed to reach you quickly.**

Two parent-teacher conferences are scheduled during the school year to provide formal feedback about your child’s experience and progress – 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, schoolwide community events, and church events.

### 3.5 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). Divorced and/or separated parents are expected to treat each other with mutual respect in support of what is in their child's best interest.

### 3.6 Donations to the School

All donations and gifts to St. Andrew’s Episcopal School are 501(c) tax-deductible.

### 3.7 Door Code

The door code is changed frequently and only available to the staff. Please call the front office **713.861.2954** if you are picking up early.

	<b>Classroom Emails</b>	<b>Instagram Accounts</b>
<b>Toddler 1 (5-day Toddler)</b>	<a href="mailto:toddler1@saesheights.org"><u>toddler1@saesheights.org</u></a>	<b>saes_toddler 1</b>
<b>Toddler 2 (2&amp;3-Day Toddler)</b>	<a href="mailto:toddler2@saesheights.org"><u>toddler2@saesheights.org</u></a>	<b>saes_toddler 2</b>
<b>Early Childhood – Downstairs</b>	<a href="mailto:ec@saesheights.org"><u>ec@saesheights.org</u></a>	<b>ecfriends_saes</b>
<b>Early Childhood – Upstairs</b>	<a href="mailto:ecupstairs@saesheights.org"><u>ecupstairs@saesheights.org</u></a>	<b>earlychildhood_saes</b>

### 3.8 Extended Day Nap Mats and Lessons

For children who remain at school after lunch, rest 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 Morreales, who may be reached at 832-868-7920 or [smorreale@gmail.com](mailto:smorreale@gmail.com). Susan provides a coordinating nap mat cover, blanket, and storage pillowcase. Families are required to take their child’s nap linens home on Fridays for laundering.

If your EC child does not nap and is four years or older, they will rest for a half hour on their mat then be invited to work. This additional work time includes extended language, math, science, and geography.

### 3.9 Gang-Free Zone

Texas Penal Code § 71.028 imposes more severe punishments for 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.

### 3.10 Employee Gifts

St. Andrew's Episcopal School recognizes that students and parents often wish to express their gratitude for teachers and staff members with gifts. Room Parents help guide families on appropriate gift-giving during holidays and teacher appreciation week. Families may also give to the St. Andrew's School Fund in honor of an employee.

### 3.11 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.

### 3.12 Health Requirements

#### 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.

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 can 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.

### 3.13 Illness and Accidents at School

Your child's first school experience will 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.) to build the child's self-esteem and 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.

**If your child becomes ill during the school day, we will contact you immediately and ask that you pick them up from school ASAP.**

#### **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.

### 3.13.1 Exclusion from School Due to Illness

**Please do not send a sick child to school.** If your child has a fever, they may not attend school. Please keep your child home from school if they have 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 your physician. *The school reserves the right to send your child home if a teacher or staff member suspects that they are ill.* **Please notify the school 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.**

### 3.13.2 Readmission to School after Illness

Before returning to school after an illness, your child must be **fever- and symptom-free for 48 hours** *without the use of fever-reducing medication* or you must provide a note from your child's physician stating that they are healthy and cleared to return to school.

### 3.13.3 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 they 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 severe injury at school, their 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.

### 3.14 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. 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. Nonprescription 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.

- **Immunization Records or Exemptions**

Parents are required to provide a copy of your child's current immunization record or a state-issued exempt affidavit. The Texas immunization schedule and information about exemptions can be found here: [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 daycare, school, and college for reasons of religious beliefs or for medical reasons. Schools and childcare facilities must maintain an up-to-date list of exempt students 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, the school must 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, 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 submit these items to the school office within two weeks of your child's annual well-child pediatrician visit.

### **3.15 Hours of Operation**

The school office is open from 7:30 am to 2:45 pm Monday through Friday, except on school holidays or during other school closures (teacher prep and professional days, parent-teacher, and conference days).

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

Your child's teachers will work with you to establish a phase-in schedule for your child to help them adjust to being in school. Phase-in usually occurs over 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. Please know that during this adjustment period, it is quite 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.

### 3.17 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.

Snack: Normally, each family is asked to provide snacks for their child's class on a rotating basis. Each classroom community will distribute its 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 fruit, a vegetable, a carbohydrate, and a protein. If you have any questions about what to send for a snack, please ask your child's teacher for suggestions. Your child's teacher will inform you of any class allergies. Please keep those in mind when sending snacks.

### 3.18 Safety

#### 3.18.1 Emergency Drills

The employees and students at 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.

St. Andrew's is required to hold one fire drill once a month, 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, as 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.

#### 3.18.2 Emergency School Closing

St. Andrew's closely follows the Houston Independent School District's policy on school closures and severe, inclement weather. The school may close due to unique city-wide emergencies at the discretion of the Head of School. These decisions are always made with our students' safety in mind.

#### 3.18.3 Evacuation

In the event of a school evacuation, children ages 2 years old and younger are placed in a buggy/wagon and are assisted by teachers to the school's designated evacuation area. If we need to evacuate to an alternate site, staff and children will proceed to: **Hamilton Middle School / ID # 49 / 139 East 20th Street / Houston, TX 77008 / 713-802-4725**

#### 3.18.4 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 give the school permission to release them. **For your safety, please do not come to school in this situation, as you will not be allowed to enter the school.**

### 3.18.5 Child Abuse & Neglect

St. Andrew's Episcopal School has a moral and legal obligation to report any suspected cases of child abuse and neglect. Any suspected cases of child abuse and neglect must be reported to Texas Health and Human Services either by phone (1-800-252-5400) or through their secure website ([www.txabusehotline.org](http://www.txabusehotline.org)). If a member of the school staff believes the child is in immediate danger, 911 will be called.

### 3.18.6 Child Care Licensing Inspection Report & Minimum Standards

St. Andrew's Episcopal School is a licensed childcare center through the DFPS (Texas Department of Family and Protective Services). The school is required to allow parents to view a copy of the school's most recent licensing inspection report. The report is located outside of the school office near the school entrance. Parents may access the Minimum Standards for Child-Care Centers from the Texas Health and Human Services website at: <https://www.hhs.texas.gov/sites/default/files/documents/doing-business-with-hhs/provider-portal/protectiveservices/ccl/min-standards/chapter-746-centers.pdf>.

## SECTION 4 – TUITION AND ENROLLMENT INFORMATION Tuition Schedule August 2023 – August 2024

<b>Toddlers 18 months-3 years old</b>	<b>Half Day</b>	<b>Full Day</b>
5 days	\$1415.00	\$1760.00
3 days Monday-Wednesday	\$945.00	\$1145.00
2 days Thursday-Friday	\$627.00	\$789.00
<b>Early Childhood 3-6 years old</b>	<b>Half Day</b>	<b>Full Day</b>
5 days	\$1356.00	\$1696.00

### 4.1 Tuition

All parents and legal guardians must sign up for a payment plan on brightwheel to have tuition deducted from their bank account or credit card on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the month. You will receive a reminder five days before tuition is charged. For frequent questions and answers regarding brightwheel billing, please refer to **Billing Parent FAQs**. Payments are considered late after the 15<sup>th</sup> day of the month. All overdue payments will be subject to a \$50.00 late fee. 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 Annual Payment Option

Tuition for the academic year paid in full by **July 31, 2023**, is eligible for a 5% discount. If an increase in tuition occurs because 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 charge you the difference.

### 4.3 Annual Reenrollment Fee

A \$75.00 non-refundable re-enrollment fee will be charged at the beginning of each academic year. This fee supplements the multiple family events such as; Fall Festival, Thanksgiving Feast, Holiday Tea, Easter egg Hunt celebrations hosted throughout the year.

### 4.4 Financial Assistance

The school offers need-based financial assistance to qualifying families. If you are interested in applying, contact the Head of School.

## SECTION 5 – PARENT ENGAGEMENT

**Transparent Classroom is our online parent engagement platform.** Learn more [here](#). Parents can be involved at St. Andrew's Episcopal School in many ways! We welcome families on campus for several unique school-wide events to gather our families together.

### 5.1 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, and we also welcome donations of items and services for the Gala's live and silent auctions.

### 5.2 The St. Andrew's Episcopal School Fund

The St. Andrew's School Fund, in addition to bolstering our operating budget, allows us to look ahead to the long-term growth of our school. This fund helps to support our operating budget and makes a tangible impact on every aspect of our school - classroom supplies, technology, payroll, financial aid, music, and much more. In short, the generosity of our supporters will help the school continue to provide our families with a well-rounded Montessori education within our vibrant school and church community. **Our goal for The St. Andrew's Episcopal School 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.

### 5.3 Recommended Reading

- *The Montessori Toddler; A Parent's Guide to Raising a Curious and Responsible Human Being* by Simone Davies ▪  
*The Secret of Childhood* by Maria Montessori
- *Montessori: The Science Behind the Genius* by Angeline Stoll Lillard
- *Montessori: A Modern Approach* by Paula Polk Lillard

- *Montessori Play and Learn: A Parent's Guide to Purposeful Play from Two to Six* by Lesley Britton
- *Positive Discipline: The First Three Years* by Jane Nelson, Ed.D. and Cheryl Erwin
- *Understanding Montessori: A Guide for Parents* by Maren Schmidt and Dana Schmidt
- *The Opposite of Spoiled: Raising Kids Who Are Grounded, Generous, and Smart About Money* by Ron Lieb

## **SECTION 6 – STAYING CONNECTED & FAQs**

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

The school will send text/email alerts in case of emergencies, inclement weather, or school closings through brightwheel. If you have questions using this platform, you can reach support directly by emailing [help@mybrightwheel.com](mailto:help@mybrightwheel.com).

### **Where can I find out about upcoming events?**

Information about upcoming school events can be found in the monthly school Constant Contact newsletter, and you will receive updates about extraordinary events in your classroom from your child's teachers and room parents.

### **How do I access the school's public Instagram account?**

We invite you to follow the school Instagram account for photos and videos of unique events. @saesintheheights

### **How do I access my child's activity in Transparent Classroom?**

Teachers will contact you about this app where they share the day-to-day activities.

Please sign the Family Handbook Acknowledgement Form so that we know you are current with the 2023.2024 policies. With gratitude,

*JMC*

Jamie Martin-Currie MS  
Head of School