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# Family Handbook 2026-2027

The terms of this handbook are not contractual. Still, parents in the St. Andrew's Episcopal School community have agreed to abide by all terms of this handbook by signing the Family Handbook Acknowledgment Form. 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.

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## A LETTER FROM OUR HEAD OF SCHOOL

Dear Families,

Welcome to St. Andrews. We know that choosing the right school can be overwhelming, and we are honored you have entrusted us with the care of your child. Our small community values kindness, clear communication, and close partnerships with families.

The Southwestern Association of Episcopal Schools accredits St. Andrew's Episcopal School, and we are a full member of the American Montessori Society. The tenets of each association require that we value and emphasize a community life in which physical, spiritual, and emotional health 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 create lives of genuine meaning, purpose, and service in the world. St. Andrew's is a small community that values family participation and views your child's education as a collaboration between home and school.

We look forward to meeting you and your child and supporting you in every step of this meaningful educational journey.

With Gratitude,



Amber Reid, Interim 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 trusts 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 school staff 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,



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

## I.I Us

|                                                                            |                                                                                                                      |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Interim Head of School<br>areid@saesheights.org                            | Amber Reid                                                                                                           |
| Early Care Coordinator<br>earlycare@saesheights.org                        | Mari Kite                                                                                                            |
| Facilities Manager<br>creid@saecheights.org                                | Cooper Reid                                                                                                          |
| Toddler 1 (5-Day)<br>toddler1@saesheights.org                              | Elsa Reymundo, Teacher & Licensing Coordinator<br>Lydia Lege', Teacher                                               |
| Toddler 2 (2-Day & 3-Day)<br>toddler2@saesheights.org                      | Mari Kite, Teacher & Toddler Coordinator<br>Gredel Blanco, Teacher                                                   |
| Early Childhood – Downstairs<br>ec@saesheights.org                         | Martha Reyes, Teacher & EC Coordinator<br>Laurel Shadbolt, Teacher<br>Rosalie Cuadros, Teacher                       |
| Early Childhood – Upstairs<br>ec.upstairs@saesheights.org                  | Jamie Payne, Teacher<br>Idalia Espino, Teacher<br>Tuan Vu, Teacher                                                   |
| jgrace@saecheights.org<br>cgreene@saecheights.org<br>tdurr@saecheights.org | The Rev. Jimmy Grace, Rector<br>The Rev. Catie Greene, School Chaplin<br>Taylor Durr, Director of Children and Youth |

## About

Andrew's Episcopal School is a year-round 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 offer partial and full-day and week options for children ages 18 months to three years old. Our two Early Childhood communities offer a five-day-a-week program with partial and full-day options for children ages three to six.

## **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), and the National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS)
- Licensed by Texas Childcare Licensing (CCL) and authorized by the Texas Health and Human Services Commission.

## **We Value**

### **I.4 The Whole Child**

We use an authentic child-directed Montessori approach to nurture the child's emotional, spiritual, and academic development 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 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 a mission of St. Andrew's Episcopal Church. The Rector is available for pastoral care and counseling of all school children, parents, and staff. 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 others 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, as well as through informal discussions and questions initiated by the children. In the early childhood communities, the teachers provide a more explicit discussion of religious topics.

The children and teachers attend a developmentally appropriate chapel service led by the school chaplain, the Director of Children and Youth, 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, and every child receives a birthday blessing. Parents are invited to attend chapel whenever they want, and we encourage their participation to bridge the gap from school to faith at home.

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 gathered, we hear the most profound invitation: an invitation to play with God.

The school's entire philosophy and assumptions are thoroughly Christian. Maria Montessori was deeply imbued with the belief that all 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 some have little, which provides a first introduction to community service at an age-appropriate level. We are genuinely 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 worldwide. - *American Montessori Society*

- Montessori education offers our children opportunities to develop their potential as they enter the world as engaged, competent, responsible, and respectful citizens who understand and appreciate that learning is for life. Montessori students become confident, enthusiastic, self-directed learners with 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 accommodates all learning styles. Students are free to learn at their own pace, each advancing through the curriculum as they are ready, guided by teachers, and having an individualized learning plan.
- **Beginning early, 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 their learning focus. There is an understanding that internal satisfaction drives the child's curiosity and interest and results in sustainable, joyous learning 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 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 easily accessible shelves arranged from the simplest to the most complex. Classrooms feature low sinks, chairs, 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 the Rector, Head of School, parents, church members, and a vestry liaison. The board meets monthly to support and promote the school's mission, vision, strategic goals, and policy positions. The Board 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.

|                   |                    |                                 |                        |
|-------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| Kristin Chabarría | Church - Nonvoting |                                 | Vestry Liaison         |
| Lisa Moore        | Church             | Lacdcn@yahoo.com                |                        |
| Vanessa Lozano    | Church             |                                 | Secretary              |
| Michael Bosch     | Church             |                                 |                        |
| Jaclyn Harrison   | Church             |                                 |                        |
| Rev. Jimmy Grace  | Church – Nonvoting | jgrace@saecheights.org          | Rector                 |
| Stephen McCormick | Church             | SMcCormick@StFrancisHouston.org |                        |
| Caroline Roberts  | School             | Lcroberts729@gmail.com          | Finance Committee      |
| Kathryn Sinclair  | School             | sinclairbelascohouse@gmail.com  | Board Chair            |
| Amber Reid        | School – Nonvoting | Areid@saesheights.org           | Interim Head of School |
| Cameo Jenkins     | School             |                                 | Finance Chair          |
| Terri Hoever      |                    |                                 |                        |

## 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. The chapel is led by the school Chaplain, Director of Children and Youth, or Head of School.

Weekly music classes are 30 minutes long for Early Childhood children and 20 minutes long for Toddler 3-day and 5-day classes. Please note that Chapel and music are unavailable 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). Once children are assigned to their classroom, they may not move but can add additional days if available.

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. In keeping with the “whole child” approach to learning, children in the EC classrooms participate in activities focusing 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. Older children model for younger friends and help demonstrate various daily activities. 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 usually 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 unique 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 meet state educational standards in our classroom setting. Full-day children who no longer nap will rest for a ½ hour and then have additional work time in the afternoon.

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

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

The drop off time for all classes is 8:30 am with children entering specific playgrounds depending on which classroom they attend. All families will be given car tags to display in their windshield during carpool. Car tags are required by any authorized person picking up your child.

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

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

**Adults who transport Toddlers are solely responsible for securing the students in 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 and Upstairs EC drop-off** is at 8:30 am
- **Downstairs and Upstairs EC pick-up** is at 12:30 pm or 2:30 pm

**Adults who transport Early Childhood students are solely responsible for securing students in their car seats. Please be prepared to drive forward and park your car in a spot 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. If your child is attending Early Care you may pull or park close to the double doors in the parking lot. A Early Care teacher will receive your child and escort them inside to the appropriate room. Children may bring a light breakfast to enjoy while in early care. Contact Mari Kite, Early Care Coordinator, with any questions. [earlycare@saesheights.org](mailto:earlycare@saesheights.org).

### **3.1.1 Arrival**

Children should enter school carrying as many belongings as possible to encourage independence. 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 school transition and helps them bond with their teacher. Please do not linger after saying goodbye to your child. **If your child will be absent from school, please notify the school office by 9:00 am by calling 713.861.2954 or by message via brightwheel.**

### **3.1.2 Dismissal**

Please inform your child's teacher if you anticipate picking up your child before their scheduled dismissal time. Call the school office or message your child's teacher via brightwheel. 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 school website's home page, [saesheights.org](http://saesheights.org). We are a year-round school, so payment, but not attendance, is required over the summer to save the following year's spot.

## **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 that they are likely to get messy when they play outside, work on art projects, and eat snacks and lunch. Clothing with buttons/zippers and shoes with buckles/laces can be complicated for small hands to maneuver, leading to unnecessary frustration. **Please do not send your child to school in flip-flops for safety reasons.**

### 3.4 Communication- please read carefully

We hope each family feels the school communication is open and accessible. Don't hesitate to contact any member of the school leadership with questions or concerns. Arrival and dismissal times are important transition times for your child. At the start and end of the school day, the teachers should focus on the children in their care, so please do not attempt to discuss any concerns with your child's teacher at those times. Anything that is a larger concern should be communicated by email so that a more extended conversation can be scheduled.

If you have concerns that need immediate attention from your child's teacher, **you should message through the brightwheel app so the administration can address your note if the teacher is absent.** If you have a longer message, please email the teacher, and they will respond during rest time or after dismissal. **Do not text your child's teacher even if you have their number. brightwheel is the messaging platform we use at St. Andrew's instead of personal cell phones.**

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 administration emails monthly e-newsletters that update you on schoolwide community and church events. Email is used to send lengthy updates.

Transparent Classroom is the Montessori platform used to share photos and lessons. Teachers will instruct you to download the app.

#### Classroom Emails

|                              |                                                                              |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Toddler 1                    | <a href="mailto:toddler1@saesheights.org">toddler1@saesheights.org</a>       |
| Toddler 2                    | <a href="mailto:toddler2@saesheights.org">toddler2@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> |
| Early Care                   | <a href="mailto:earlycare@saesheights.org">earlycare@saesheights.org</a>     |

### **3.5 Custodial/Non-Custodial Parents**

St. Andrew's Episcopal School requires 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 to support their child's best interests.

### **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 is only available to the staff. Please call the front office at **713.861.2954** or **message your child's teacher on brightwheel** if you are picking up early.

### **3.8 Extended Day Nap Mats and Lessons**

For children who remain at school after lunch, rest time begins at 1:00 pm. Children may bring their 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. 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 half an hour on their mat and 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 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. The administration can 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 can 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.
- For children four years of age and older, the results of a hearing and vision screening are as follows:

### 3.13 Illness and Accidents at School

Your child's first school experience will increase 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 children will inevitably become ill during the school year. Please find our guidelines regarding illness below.

**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, or has had one recently, 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. Please consult your physician if you have questions about bringing your child to school. *The school reserves the right to send your child home if a teacher or staff member suspects 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 using fever-reducing medication*, or you must also 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 cannot 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 essential 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 how 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 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 to measure it.

- **Immunization Records or Exemptions**

Parents are required to provide a copy of their 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 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 or older, you must submit the results of their most recent hearing and vision screening to the school within two weeks of your child's annual pediatrician visit.

### **3.15 Hours of Operation**

The school office is open from 7:30 am to 2:30 pm Monday through Friday, except during school holidays or other school closures.

### **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 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 save special treats for home.

Snack: Every 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 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 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. Our emergency drills include fire, evacuation, shelter-in-place/severe weather, and lockdown drills.

St. Andrew's must hold one fire drill once a month, four shelter-in-place drills, and four lockdown drills each calendar year. We do not announce emergency drills beforehand, but we schedule them to occur during the children's least disruptive time of day. 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 get in touch with 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 age 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. **Please do not come to school in this situation for your safety, 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 school staff member believes the child is in immediate danger, 911 will be called.

### 3.18.6 Childcare 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 must allow parents to view a copy of the school's most recent licensing inspection report. The report is located outside the school office near the 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/protective-services/ccl/min-standards/chapter-746-centers.pdf>.

## SECTION 4 – TUITION AND ENROLLMENT INFORMATION

As of the 2024-2025 school year, St. Andrew's became a year-round school, which means tuition is charged during the summer months to hold a child's fall spot regardless of summer attendance.

### Tuition Schedule June 2026 – May 2027

| Toddlers 18 months-3 years old | Half Day  | Full Day  | 7:30 AM Early Care  |
|--------------------------------|-----------|-----------|---------------------|
| 5 days                         | \$1500.00 | \$1868.00 | \$350.00            |
| 3 days Monday-Wednesday        | \$1035.00 | \$1288.00 | \$210.00            |
| 2 days Thursday-Friday         | \$690.00  | \$836.00  | \$140.00            |
| Early Childhood 3-6 years old  | Half Day  | Full Day  | \$25.00/day drop-in |

|        |           |           |          |
|--------|-----------|-----------|----------|
| 5 days | \$1437.00 | \$1828.00 | \$350.00 |
|--------|-----------|-----------|----------|

#### 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, child illness, or school closings due to emergencies, inclement weather, or acts of God.

Withdrawal Policy- You may withdraw at any time with a 30-day written notice. Withdrawals with less than a 30-day written notification will be responsible for the next month's tuition.

#### 4.2 Annual Fees Due July 15th

|                       |              |
|-----------------------|--------------|
| <b>Enrollment Fee</b> | <b>\$300</b> |
| <b>Facility Fee</b>   | <b>\$350</b> |

#### 4.3 Financial Assistance

The school offers need-based financial assistance to qualifying families. If you are interested in applying, contact the Head of School. We use the Financial Application for Student Tuition (FAST) system.

## SECTION 5 – PARENT ENGAGEMENT

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. **Transparent Classroom is our online parent engagement platform.** Learn more [here](#).

#### 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 our exceptional program. 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 financial assistance. 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
- *The Opposite of Spoiled: Raising Kids Who Are Grounded, Generous, and Smart About Money* by Ron Lieb

Please sign the Family Handbook Acknowledgement Form so that we know you are current with the 2025.2026 policies.

With gratitude,



Amber Reid, Interim Head of School