



Maitland Community Preschool

Parent Handbook

2021-2022

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Welcome to Maitland Community Preschool! We are so thankful to have your family with us. We look forward to a great year together!

Our Mission:

To lead our children to know God and His world by providing a solid foundation for life and Learning.

Our Vision:

That each child who attends MCP will grow spiritually, intellectually, socially, emotionally and physically.

Our Philosophy of Education:

We believe that each child is uniquely created by God. We believe parents should be the primary teachers of their children; therefore, our role is to support and encourage parents in the nurture and training of their children. We believe that children learn best in a loving, caring environment where they may experience the awe and wonder of God's world through hands-on, developmentally appropriate activities.

MCP admits children of any religion, gender, race, national or ethnic origin.

MCP is accredited by Christian Schools of Florida and NCPSA

Calendar for 2021-2022:

August 9 - 13	Teacher Planning Days
Weds. Aug 11	Parent Orientation (7pm)
August 12 - 13	Meet The Teacher
Mon. Aug. 16	Classes Begin
Aug. 23 - 27	Early Birds/Fun Fridays Begin
Mon. Sept. 6	No School – Labor Day
Weds. Sept. 8	Room Parent Meeting (9:15)
Fri. Oct. 8	No School – Teacher Workday
Oct 14 & 18	Family Chapels
Oct. 25- 29	Parent Conference Week
Nov. 22 - 26	No School – Thanksgiving Break
Wed. Dec. 8	Christmas Parade (9:30)
Fri. Dec 17	Last day before Christmas Break
Dec. 20 - Jan. 3	No School – Christmas Break
Mon. Jan. 3	No School – Teacher Workday
Tues. Jan. 4	Classes Resume
Mon. Jan. 17	No School – MLK Holiday
Jan. 27 & 31	Family Chapels
Fri. Jan 28	Re-Enrollment for 2022-23 DUE
Jan. 31 - Feb. 4	2022-23 Early Registration
Mon. Feb. 7	2022-23 Open Registration (8:00am)
Feb. 18 - 21	No School – President’s Day Break
Fri. March 11	No School – Teacher Workday
March 14 - 18	No School – Spring Break
April 13 & 14	Easter Egg Hunt & FamilyChapel
April 15 - 18	No School - Easter Break
April 25 - 29	Parent Conference Week
May 3 - 4	Water Days
Fri. May 20	Last Day
May 23 & 24	Teacher Post-Planning Days

Clothing:

Please dress your child in comfortable play clothes and closed-toed shoes. Clothing should be easy for the child to manipulate when using the bathroom. Dress your child in clothes you don't mind getting messy. Flip-flops are not acceptable shoes for school. Outside play is on our schedule each day, so consider the weather conditions when dressing your child. PLEASE label all jackets with your child's name!

At the beginning of the year, please send in a complete change of clothing (including socks) in the labeled gallon Ziploc bag provided for you by your child's teacher. In the event your child has an accident (potty or spill), we will send the dirty clothes home in the plastic bag. Remember to return the bag with fresh clothing the next school day.

Communication:

We consider communication between home and school to be of utmost importance. Remember that changes at home affect a child's behavior at school. Please let us know the joyous happenings, the upsetting experiences, or important changes at home that may affect your child. It is also important to let teachers know what a child has been told about an impending birth, serious illness, adoption, or a recent death, so that any conversations with your child can follow with complete empathy. In all events, we consider this school year a joint venture with you in the continuing development of your child.

Our main source of communication is through the Brightwheel app. Your child's teacher will update the app often, including photos from class, so be sure to log in to see what's happening in the class. Our goal is to use this app to help connect our families to MCP. Please be sure to watch for and accept the email invitation to join MCP on Brightwheel. Once you download the app, be sure to set notifications so that you will be alerted when there are updates. Also, let us know if you do not receive this email so we can get you connected. You may update your child's page, especially things like address changes and adding others who may pick up your child. When adding others to pick up, be sure to include their cell phone number and have them add the Brightwheel App to their phones.

Urgent or emergency information will also be communicated through Alerts and texts through the Brightwheel app. We will use this communication when we consider it of utmost importance to reach all the parents in your child's class quickly such as arrival or dismissal changes due to severe weather or emergency situations. If you have more than one number you would like to receive these texts, please let our Receptionist know. Please check your preferences on your phone to be sure you see notifications for these.

Your child's school bag is also a vehicle we use for daily communication. Please check your child's bag daily for notes and artwork. You are also welcome to send tuition checks in the bag. Be sure your child brings his bag to school daily.

Discipline Policy:

We believe that children learn best in an environment where the uniqueness of each individual child is valued and respected. We believe that an important part of our teaching task involves helping children develop self-discipline. This means we must provide reasonable rules and limits, which are clearly defined and consistently maintained, while being willing to give more personal responsibility to children as they are able to assume it.

We will utilize positive discipline techniques such as modeling appropriate behavior, redirection, anticipation and removal of potential problems, positive reinforcement, and encouragement. We will help children recognize and accept logical or natural consequences of their behavior, taking time to talk through both positive and negative outcomes related to their choices of behavior. We will develop and maintain daily routines to help children understand our expectations.

If the circumstances require it, we will use supervised time apart from the group to help the child control his behavior. In the event of a persisting problem, the teacher and parent will work closely together to develop a plan to direct the child's behavior. If a child has repeated difficulty controlling his behavior to the extent that it continually disrupts the class, making it difficult for others to have a positive school experience, the teacher, parents, and Director will work together to determine whether the child can continue in our program. MCP staff members will not use corporal punishment.

Early Birds and Fun Fridays:

*** We are not offering Early Birds or Fun Fridays as we begin our school year as these both bring together children and staff from different classes (Cohorts) which expands the possibility of spreading Covid at MCP. We will add them back in as soon as we feel we can safely.*

Early Birds is our optional childcare program running from 8:00-9:00 each morning. Children are welcome to join Early Birds at a cost of \$7/day. Fun Fridays is an optional Friday school day where children enjoy themed activities at the cost of \$35/day.

Families must sign up and pay in advance for the days they wish to participate in Early Birds or Fun Fridays. Please be sure to return the form and payment by the due date. In order to ensure appropriate staffing for our programs and to avoid bookkeeping issues, we cannot allow drop-in attendance in these programs. We understand that occasionally circumstances will change and you may desire to add an Early Bird Day or Fun Friday after the deadline has passed. In order to add an additional day, you must request the day with our receptionist at least 24 hours in advance and pay for the day when you drop your child off. Adding on days should be more of an exception, not a regular occurrence. **Days paid for but not used do not carry over to the next month and are non-refundable.**

Please walk your child to the MCP door for Early Bird drop off (no carpool) and be sure to check your child in to Early Birds on Brightwheel. If your child's name is not listed in the Early Bird Class on Brightwheel, please see the Director.

Illness: Add All Saints' policy

*** We need you to follow our illness policies and keep children home with any of the symptoms listed below.*

If anyone in your home has symptoms of or tests positive for Covid-19, you must keep your child home from MCP and notify us so that we can take appropriate steps at school.

In the event that a child of staff member has symptoms or tests positive for Covid-19, we will follow the most current instructions from the CDC. This may include closing a classroom or all of MCP for a period of time.

Your child's health is important to us. If your child develops any symptoms of illness at school, including a fever (99.9° and above), he will be isolated from other children and you will be called to pick him up immediately.

The school makes every effort to protect the health and safety of all of our children. For your child's protection, and the health of others, please keep your child at home if he has:

- Had a fever, vomiting, or diarrhea in the last 24 hours
- Heavy nasal discharge, sniffles, reddened eyes
- Signs of rash on face or body
- A constant cough, sore throat, headache
- Been tired or listless
- Been fussy or cranky, just not himself
- A fever that is only reduced by medication, even if it is low grade
- Your child should not return to school until he has been symptom free for 24 hours.

Please notify the front desk immediately if your child contracts a communicable disease (Covid-19, strep throat, chicken pox, pink eye, H1N1 virus, or hand, foot & mouth virus) or any other condition, such as lice, that could be spread through our school.

Thanks for helping to keep us all healthy!

Lunch & Snacks:

Helping your child develop healthy eating habits is important to the staff at MCP. Our teachers will encourage children to try new foods, eat all (or most) of their lunches, and teach the children about balanced diets, health and nutrition. Please be sure that you are sending snacks and lunches that include fruits, vegetables and protein, while limiting fats and sugars. Please do not send sugary snacks, cookies, cupcakes, chips, or candy for snack. Your child's teacher will make you aware of any restrictions due to food allergies in your class. Your child's teacher

is also happy to share ideas/suggestions for packing kid- friendly, healthy snacks and lunches.

Please label all lunchboxes and water bottles with your child's name, as well as any plastic containers you would like returned. Please be sure all food is cut to avoid choking hazards. Don't forget napkins, and spoons and forks when needed. We do not heat lunch items for the children.

Parent-Teacher Fellowship/Volunteers:

All families and staff members are part of our Parent Teacher Fellowship (PTF). Parents are encouraged to help with PTF in a variety of ways, including staff appreciation, fundraising, and school-wide events.

Each class will have 2 Room Parents, a Playdate Parent and Library Parent.

- *Room Parents* are in charge of working with the teacher to help with class events such as our Christmas and Easter parties, and helping the teacher as she requests.
- *Playdate Parents* organize monthly playdates for the class.
- *Library Parents* are responsible for checking out and returning books from their local library for classroom use. Teachers will work with the library parent to select specific titles or themes of books for the classroom

Parents who wish to volunteer on a regular basis in the classroom must first be fingerprinted and pass a background screening (if volunteering 10+ hours/month). Parents are invited by the teacher to volunteer in the classroom. Not all classes will involve volunteers on a regular basis. Neither student nor parent volunteers will ever be left alone with a child or with the class. The teacher is always responsible for the supervision of the children. Parents coming for holiday parties or birthday celebrations or occasional volunteering do not need to be fingerprinted.

Parties:

*** We will let you know if we will have special events such as Family Chapel and our Christmas Parade and parties closer to the time.*

Parents may send in a special snack for children's birthdays, but may not join the class celebrations.

We enjoy special celebrations at MCP for Christmas and Easter. At Christmas, we hold our annual Christmas Parade, where each class has a theme and marches in our parade around the school. Easter brings fun egg hunts followed by a special Family Chapel time and picnic. Parents, Grandparents, and siblings are encouraged to join us for both the Parade and Easter Egg Hunts.

Our classes also have a party, planned by the teacher and Room Parent, to celebrate Christmas. Parties are kept simple, usually consisting of an activity and special snack. They do not include gifts or favors. We ask that you not bring younger siblings to your child's class party. This is a special time for you to celebrate with your MCP child, and younger children in the room tend to remove the focus from the children in the class. We also appreciate your help in supporting our teachers in their efforts by being actively involved with the children during the parties.

Parents will also be invited to join the class for a special lunch on one of the last days of school as a time to celebrate the year and say goodbye.

Other holidays, such as Thanksgiving and Valentine's Day, may be recognized with a small celebration by the teacher in the classroom during regular classroom activities, but not with a party.

Parents are welcome to come celebrate their own child's birthday with a special treat. Please check with your teacher regarding the best time to come. No gifts or party favors please.

Photos:

Please do not post any photos taken at MCP that include children other than your own, on any public social media platform, such as Facebook, Instagram or YouTube. Thank you for respecting the privacy of other families in this regard.

Safety/Security:

We consider the safety of your children one of our highest priorities. We have many policies and procedures in place to help keep MCP secure. We have full time security officers patrolling the building and outdoor areas of our campus in conjunction with Orangewood Christian School. We conduct regular fire, tornado, and lockdown drills, as prescribed by our accreditation association requirements. All exterior doors to the campus and classroom doors are kept locked. During drop off and pick up times a staff member will assist you with entry to the building. All of our staff members have current background screenings through the FDLE and FBI. We follow specific child protection policies and participate in annual school safety training as well as keeping CPR/First Aid certifications active.

We need your help as well, especially during dismissal time. Please be sure to check your child in and out with Brightwheel. As we are getting to know you, expect us to ask for your picture ID as well.

On your registration form you gave us the names of others who may pick up your child. Please feel free to contact the front desk or update these names on Brightwheel at any time during the year. When someone who does not regularly pick up your child is coming, please be sure they are on your list, have their ID available, and have the Brightwheel App. **We will not release your child to anyone other than those you listed.**

Additionally, on your application we asked if there is anyone who is NOT permitted to pick up your child from school. Please keep this list updated with our front desk. If it is a parent, we must have a copy of the legal papers denying that parent permission to take the child.

For the safety of your children and our staff, please do not use your cell phone while in the carpool line! If you are on a call that you need to continue, please park and then either walk in or re-enter the car lane once you are off the phone.

Student Arrival and Dismissal Procedures:

Arrival

Note: The gate from Sandspur Road does not open until 9:00. This is a city decision that we do not have any control over.

*** Parents may walk their children in only on the first day of school. After that, ALL children will use carline for both pick up and drop off.*

*** Walking in - First day ONLY*

- *Park in the gravel lot beside the preschool entrance or in the main parking lot, but not in the carpool lane*
- *Check your child in with Brightwheel at the MCP door and use hand sanitizer*
- *Adults are asked to wear a mask while in our building*
- *Walk your child to his classroom door, but do not enter the classroom*
- *Walk the rest of the way down the MCP hallway and exit through our playground doors.*

*** Carline:*

- *Pull up to the crosswalk along the sidewalk in front of the building*
- *Stay in your car*
- *If possible, please have your child's carseat on the passenger side of the car.*
- *Do not allow your child out of the car until a staff member comes for him*
- *If you arrive after our carpool is finished please walk him to the MCP door and a staff member walk your child to class*

Dismissal

**** All children will use the carline for dismissal daily**

****Carline:**

- *As you enter our lot, please follow the directions of our security officer or staff member. Once the line backs up, we will direct you to circle through the gravel lot and then across the front of the school. This keeps traffic from backing up and blocking cars that are exiting.*
- *Pull up to the crosswalk along the sidewalk in front of the building*
- *Do not leave empty spaces in the line*
- *A staff member will come to your passenger window for you to scan the QR code on your phone to check your child(ren) out. Please have your phone ready and Brightwheel app open.*
- *Keep your carpool number(s) displayed in your windshield until your child is in your car*
- *Stay in your car*
- *Our staff will help your child into his carseat but not fasten the buckle. If your child cannot buckle by himself, please pull into a guest parking spot to buckle your child. Do not hold up the line getting children buckled up.*
- *Stay in the car line until the cars ahead of you leave and you can safely exit the parking lot*

Late Pick Up:

Beginning at 1:20, you will be charged a late fee of \$10. An additional \$10 will be charged for every 10 minutes after 1:30. If you are running late, please contact the front desk and leave a message – 407-215-0990 – so we know when to expect you. Note: we do not answer the MCP phone during arrival and dismissal but do check our messages as soon as we have finished.

Bad Weather Plan:

If it is raining during arrival/dismissal time we follow our normal procedures. Our staff uses large umbrellas to walk children in/out of the building for carpool.

If it is storming (but no lightning) we will walk children in/out through the church foyer entrance loading/emptying one car at a time from the covered walkway.

If there is **lightning** in the area, we will wait the required 30 minutes after the last lightning strike before restarting carline. Please be patient, as this procedure takes longer than our usual carpool routine. We will send out a Brightwheel text letting you know when we are using this plan.

Only under a lightning alert: Parents may park and walk up to our door to get children as they feel safe in the weather.

Arrival/Dismissal During the School Day:

If you arrive late to school or need to pick up your child early, please come to the MCP door to check your child in/out. We will then bring your child to/from the classroom. The preschool entrance is locked at all times, so please ring the bell and our receptionist will come to meet you.

Toilet Training:

We expect the children in our 3's, PreK, and Kindergarten programs to be independent in the bathroom. This means your child can get pants up and down, manage himself on the toilet, wipe, flush, and wash hands independently. Children should be good at knowing when they need to go to the bathroom. We will certainly remind children to visit the bathroom, as well as to flush and wash. We do expect occasional accidents, but these should be infrequent, and really more of a surprise to the child. If your child is having accidents consistently, his teacher will work with you in helping your child become more independent. Wearing pull ups to school is not the same as being toilet trained. Please contact us if you have any questions or concerns about your child.

Children in our 2's program do not need to be toilet trained to attend MCP. We follow accepted procedures for safely changing children's diapers as well as assisting them in the bathroom as they become toilet trained. Please let your child's teacher know when you are working on this at home and she will encourage children to use the bathroom at school as well. Please be sure children have fresh diapers or have been to the bathroom before you drop your child at school.

Tuition:

Tuition is an annual fee divided into 10 equal monthly payments. Monthly tuition is due on the 1st of each month. MCP accepts payments through Brightwheel as well as cash or checks (payable to MCP). A \$20 late fee will be charged for tuition payments received in the office after the 10th of the month. A \$25 fee will be charged for returned checks. Please contact our Bookkeeper, Susie Chiaro, at schiaro@orangewood.org with any financial questions or concerns.

VPK Attendance Policy:

*** VPK is adjusting the attendance policy as necessary due to Covid closings. Covid-related absences do not count against the child.*

The VPK funding payment to MCP is based on student attendance. All VPK children must be checked in and out daily on Brightwheel to verify attendance. Parents will also need to sign the VPK Attendance and Parental Choice Certificate monthly to confirm that MCP is still your VPK provider. We will have these sheets available for you to sign at the beginning of the month. We will be randomly audited during the school year, so appreciate your help with this record keeping.

The VPK attendance policy states:

“... providers will be paid for the entire annual student allocation, unless a child misses more than 20% of the program. For those cases where a child is absent over the 20% absence threshold, the provider will not be paid for hours over 20% under any circumstances.”

What this means at MCP:

VPK will not pay us tuition for absences after your child has missed 27 school days. Therefore, beginning with your child's 28th absence, MCP will drop your child from our VPK program. Your child may continue to attend his class as usual, but tuition from that point forward will be the parent's responsibility, no longer paid by VPK funding.

We hope that the VPK attendance policy will not affect any of our families. We would not expect any of our children to have more than twenty-seven absences in one year. Our Receptionists track daily attendance, so they will let you know if you are in danger of having too many absences. You are also welcome to contact them to check your child's number of absences if you are concerned.

Thank you for taking the time to read this handbook. We hope that you find the information helpful. Please contact the school any time you have questions or concerns. We are looking forward to a wonderful year with your family.