



ST. ANDREW'S
EPISCOPAL SCHOOL

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2011-2012

**St. Andrew's Episcopal School
Parent Handbook**



Our Mission

The mission of St. Andrew's Episcopal School is to enrich children's lives through respectful exploration of spiritual, cognitive, physical and creative learning while nurturing the environment, the community, the family, and the child.

Please visit our website to read further about our Episcopal Montessori program at www.saesintheheights.org

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A Letter from Our School's Rector

Dear Friends,

We of the Saint Andrew's Episcopal Community wish to welcome you to Saint Andrew's Episcopal School. Our community is a member of the network of the Episcopal Church and the Anglican Communion worldwide. Our Episcopal faith tradition, like our Montessori philosophy of education, emphasizes the importance and dignity of every person and every 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 to engage them in complex learning about self and family, community and world.

We welcome the families who decide to place their trust in the school as a formative part of their children's development; and, as a church family, we are also ready to serve as a resource of faith and pastoral care to our children and their families. If I can be of any assistance to you, I hope you will not hesitate to call 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 which await the children of St. Andrew's School.

Faithfully,

Barbara Lewis
Rector, St. Andrew's Episcopal Church and School

St. Andrew's Episcopal Church



Welcome to St. Andrew's

With a long history in the Houston Heights, St. Andrew's Episcopal Church has welcomed those who wish to worship and grow in Christ together since 1911. Over the years, St. Andrew's has expanded physically and broadened spiritually to address the changing needs of our parishioners and our community.

Our Mission

We are a caring community of Christ that, by God's grace, nurtures faithful relationships and spiritual growth.

Our Faith

Our faith rests in wanting to be closer to God in daily life. This single desire is at the heart of the St. Andrew's community. Together, we celebrate God's gifts and presence through worship, prayer, and exploration of God's teachings.

Our Values

Our values guide our interactions with one another and shape our shared future:

- We are a caring, multigenerational church family.
- We are inclusive and accepting of all.
- We enjoy fun and fellowship together.
- We find spiritual growth in a worship service based on Holy Communion and prayer.
- We are active in and supportive of the needs of our neighborhood.

Worship at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church

Sunday, 8:30 am

Holy Eucharist, Rite I : *Solemn and contemplative*

Sunday, 10:30 am

Holy Eucharist, Rite II: *Joyous and family-friendly*

During the 10:30 am service, children ages 3 years and older are invited to the chapel for **Children's Liturgy**, where they hear a simplified version of the day's Gospel reading, sing songs, and learn about worship.

Nursery care is available for children, from infancy through 3 years old, from 9:15 am until the end of the 10:30 am service. The nursery is located to the right of the church's main entrance at the far end of the Oak Table Lobby. The nursery is staffed by an attendant and volunteers who have been trained in *Safeguarding God's Children* and the Montessori infant/toddler environment.

Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, 6:30 pm

Evening Prayer: *A service of quiet and calm reflection at the end of the day*

Thursday, 9:30 am

Healing Eucharist and Bible Study

First Friday of the Month, 6:30 pm

Taize Service: *A primarily meditative service that blends music, word, and silence together*

People of all ages are welcome to receive Holy Communion at St. Andrew's.

Educational Programs:

Godly Play: ages 3-3rd grade, Montessori based Christian education

Faith Explorations: 4th grade 0High School

Spirit Path- Parenting Classes

Adult Bible Study

For additional information, times and schedule, please contact the church office at 713-861-5596 or visit the website: <http://www.saintandrewsepiscopal.org/>

Our Episcopal Identity

The religious goals of St. Andrew's Episcopal School include our students:

- Taking joy in their relationship with the Holy in their lives;
- Increasingly coming to know God as a loving, protecting, creative presence;
- Nurturing a sense of community through ritual and prayer;
- Developing a beginning familiarity with some of the foundational stories of the Christian faith; and
- Increasingly developing a loving, caring attitude toward all other people and the rest of God's creation.

The means of addressing these goals change in accord with the developmental level of the children. In the Toddler classes, religious concepts are inculcated 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 class, more explicit discussion of religious topics is provided, both in the weekly chapel service and in classroom discussion. For example, the death of a loved one or a national weather disaster may lead to discussions in which religious concepts such as life after death, God's loving and comforting presence, and relevant Bible stories are presented. The story of Christ's birth, ministry, death and resurrection are told frequently and in numerous ways.

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

We have weekly chapel services for the students in the Early Childhood class, conducted by the Rector. They follow a modified form of Morning Prayer, including ritual processions, lighting of candles, ringing of bells, hymn singing and prayer. In addition, there is a homily, usually by the Head of School (or, at times, by the Rector), which focuses either on a Bible story or on a topic chosen for its timeliness. For example, the concept of Advent as a time to prepare for the great gift of Christ's birth is a prominent focus in December. Such homilies are presented in a way appropriate to the developmental stage of the children. Each child is given an opportunity to lift up in prayer anyone who is in need of healing or consolation. All children and teachers in the Early Childhood class attend. Parents are told of the chapel services at the beginning of the school year, parents are invited to attend whenever they would like.

The primary ways in which religious and moral values are taught are in the three cardinal rules of the school: children are not allowed to do anything that will harm themselves, harm others, or harm the environment. This is a statement about love of and respect for all God has created; and is a foundation for the values that come from these three rules. Children are allowed to express themselves freely, to express their feelings, and to explore their world in the ways that interest and call to them. These freedoms are limited by the freedom of others to do the same. In group discussion time, each is allowed to speak, but each is then expected to provide others the same privilege. Each is allowed to explore the various uses of, say, a wooden dowel; but such freedom stops when the exploration threatens another person or any property. There is encouragement in these rules, and in their presentation by the staff, of the development of a sense of empathy – a love of neighbor. There is an equal encouragement in these rules and their interpretation by the staff, of a respect for oneself. The Second Great Commandment is thereby inculcated in every aspect of school life. The first Great Commandment, to love God, is approached more indirectly, through a love of the created world, and through teaching and explanation in chapel and through discussion of God's loving presence.

The rector is available for pastoral care and counseling of all children, parents and staff of the school. Current events are frequently the subject of prayer in chapel, and are discussed in classrooms, at appropriate developmental levels, in terms of their religious, existential and social justice implications.

For the young children of our community we provide daily models of service. We model good stewardship and care for others throughout the day. To highlight service to the greater community we sponsor a drive during the winter holidays to provide for children who reside in foster care. We talk to the children about the fact that we have much and there are those who have little; this provides a first introduction to community service at an age appropriate level.

We are truly an all embracing community, with respect for diversity and individuality. We strive to display this stance in all we do. Other than ongoing invitation to share in the life of the parish we have a chapel service once a week for the 3-6 year old class. The toddler classes incorporate gratitude and compassion in their daily life. The toddlers often stop in our chapel with their parent as they walk to the parking lot on their way home. We share glimpses of these moments in our newsletters, parent conferences, and daily discussions. With prospective parents, we share that as a Montessori program we hold a global perspective, embracing all. We share with our new families that the philosophies of both the Episcopal Church and St. Andrew's Episcopal Church are all embracing. When working with the very young children the religious life of our school is not instruction in the Episcopal faith but exposure to the rituals and values of this faith that are appropriate at this age.

Written by The Reverend Barbara Lewis

Welcome

St. Andrew's Episcopal School (SAES) is a ministry of St. Andrew's Episcopal Church to the Heights and Houston area with a commitment to providing our community a program which nurtures the growth of both family and child. The Board of Trustees is the policy-making body responsible for the actual operation of the program. We hope to have compiled information that will answer many of your questions so that we may begin our relationship from an informed stance. We suggest that you read this handbook thoroughly now and throughout the year to refer to guidelines as the year proceeds. We hope to create sound relationships with all our families so that we may provide nurturing care for each child. Parents are encouraged to call and visit at anytime.

Accreditation:

- ✦ St. Andrew's is fully accredited by the **Southwestern Association of Episcopal Schools (SAES)** www.swaes.org. Accreditation with SAES is recognized by the state education agency in Texas – **Texas Private School Accreditation Commission (TEPSAC)**, www.tepsac.org. It is also recognized by the **National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) Commission of Accreditation** (www.nais.org, accreditation). SAES is the only denominational accrediting association so recognized. Additionally, SAES accreditation is recognized by eleven Episcopal dioceses within the six states served by SAES.

Affiliations:

- ✦ St. Andrew's has been an affiliate member of the **American Montessori Society, (AMS)** www.amshq.org, since 2003.
- ✦ St. Andrew's is licensed through the **Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services**, www.dfps.state.tx.us/child_care/about_child_care_licensing
- ✦ St. Andrew's is certified by the **Diocesan Schools Commission of the Episcopal Diocese of Texas**, http://www.epicenter.org/edot/Guidelines_For_Parishes_With_Schools1.asp?SnID=1841757461

Our Program

St. Andrew's Episcopal School, SAES, is a Montessori program for children from 12 months through 6 years old taught by certified and experienced Montessori teachers. In our Toddler Communities, we have a 2 day (Th/Fri), 3 day (M/T/W), or 5 day option and 5day program for children 3-6 in our Early childhood program. We have a calendar year similar to Houston Independent School District's, August-May schedule with half-day and full-day schedules. As a preschool, we honor the child's relationship with the family and have created the calendar of the year with this in mind thus, providing opportunities for family time. We are also committed to maintaining what Montessori calls "the prepared environment" thus scheduling in-service teacher work days and days off for parent/teacher conferences. We do offer a summer program with time off for families to plan vacations and for teachers to have a rejuvenating pause in preparation for the fall. Often, improvements to the facility occur during these weeks off. Please see the **Arrival/Departure** section for more information on hours of operation.

The Board of Trustees of St. Andrew's Episcopal School meet regularly to decide school matters. They and the Head of School have the right to amend school policies and procedures at any time. Parents will be notified of any changes with a note in their child's drawer/pocket, by mail, or by e-mail. The school must ensure compliance with all minimum standards set forth by the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services. In the school office, parents can find a copy of Minimum Standards and the current licensing inspection.

Important Numbers and Links to know:

Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-252-5400

Child Care Licensing: 713-940-3009

www.dfps.statetx.us

Enrollment

Enrollment is offered to Toddlers 12 months - 3 years, who are confident walkers and are capable of self-feeding, to Early Childhood aged children, 3 - 6 years old and is dependent on date of application and space availability.

St. Andrew's does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, or national and ethnic origin; we welcome students of any race, color, religion, national or ethnic origin to all rights and privileges, programs and activities of the school.

An active waiting pool is maintained for those awaiting an available space in the school. This pool remains current until you accept or decline a space for your child.

In order to complete enrollment the following information is needed:

1. SAES application form and application fee on file.
2. SAES enrollment form, which includes an emergency medical release form, a current immunization record from your child's physician and a health form to be filled out by parents and the child's physician.
3. A signed copy of the SAES tuition contract and paid beginning tuition invoices.
4. A signed form stating receipt of, intent to read and agreement to follow the Parent Handbook's policies and procedures (found on the enrollment form).

A copy of the school's current calendar year displaying when holidays, noon dismissals, teacher in-services, conferences, etc. occur is attached to the application packet, parent handbook and enrollment forms. Also attached, is the tuition schedule showing fees. Policies regarding tuition payments are included in your tuition contract, which is given at the time of enrollment.

Re-Enrollment

The month of February is re-enrollment time for the up-coming school year. Currently enrolled families who plan on returning for the next school year are required to submit the re-enrollment form (issued by the 1st of February) along with a \$200 re-enrollment fee to retain their child's space at St. Andrew's Episcopal School. The re-enrollment fee of \$200 is credited to your child's September tuition.

NOTE: Please remember that all of your forms must be completed and turned into the office before your child may attend school.

Tuition Policy

All parents and/or legal guardians are required to sign a tuition contract prior to enrollment. Parents are required to indicate to whom all billing information and correspondences are to be addressed.

Tuition payments are due on the first of the month and are considered late by the fifteenth. A late charge of \$50 will be assessed after the 15th. If payment has not been received by the last day of the month, SAES has the right to remove your family from the program. If your child attends our part time program, you may deliver your tuition payment on the day closest to the first of the month and on a day when your child is in attendance. Please place your check in the tuition box in the school's office. A \$40.00 charge will be assessed for all returned checks.

A deposit, equal to one month's tuition, is due at the time of enrollment. This deposit may be applied toward your child's last month of attendance during the regular session (August –May) prior to leaving St. Andrew's Episcopal School. This deposit will stay on file for the length of time your child attends St. Andrew's Episcopal School; a thirty-day written notice is required for applying your child's tuition deposit to his or her last month's tuition invoice prior to leaving the school. This tuition deposit is associated with the school year's regular session, August – May, and is not applicable to the summer program. The tuition deposit is forfeited if notification of withdrawal is made after May 1st of the preceding regular session (August – May).

The supply fee of \$125.00 is charged at the beginning of each semester, September and January, and will be invoiced accordingly.

For new families, your child's first month's tuition, tuition deposit, new family fee, and semester supply fee is due in August prior to the beginning of the August– May school year.

For returning families, the first month's tuition deposit, update of your tuition deposit on file and the semester supply fee is due in August prior to the beginning of the August– May school year.

Non-payment of tuition is grounds for dismissal from the program. Timely payments are essential for continued enrollment at SAES; however, if you anticipate difficulty with paying on time, please discuss the matter with the Head of School. If alternative arrangements for payment are approved by the board's finance committee, you will be notified by the Head of School.

There is no credit given for vacations, scheduled school holidays, child illness, or for closings due to emergency situations, inclement weather or acts of God. Parents who wish to change their child's days or times of enrollment may submit a request.

We appreciate your understanding of the importance of prompt tuition payments, here at SAES we depend greatly on this as it allows SAES to remain committed to providing the program of excellence that you have come to expect.

Goals of a Montessori Preschool

The main purpose of a Montessori preschool is to provide a carefully prepared and stimulating environment that will help the child develop an excellent foundation for creative learning. Some of the goals include the following:

Developing a positive attitude toward school

Most of the learning activities are individualized: i.e., each child engages in a learning task that particularly appeals to him; because he finds the activities geared to his needs and level of readiness. Consequently, he works at his own rate, repeating the task as often as he likes, thus experiencing a series of successful achievements. In this manner, he builds a positive attitude toward learning itself.

Helping each child develop self confidence

In the Montessori school, tasks are designed so that each new step is built upon what the child has already mastered, thus removing the negative experience of frequent failure. A carefully planned series of successes builds upon inner confidence in assuring the child that he can learn by himself. These confidence-building activities likewise contribute to the child's healthy emotional development.

Assisting each child in building a habit of concentration

Effective learning presupposes the ability to listen carefully and to attend to what is said or demonstrated. Through a series of absorbing experiences, the child forms habits of extended attention, thus increasing his ability to concentrate.

Fostering an abiding curiosity

In a rapidly changing society, we will all be students at some time in our lives. A deep, persistent and abiding curiosity is a prerequisite for creative learning. By providing the child with opportunities to discover qualities, dimensions, and relationships amidst a rich variety of stimulating learning situations, curiosity is developed and an essential element in creative learning has been established.

Developing habits of initiative and persistence

By surrounding the child with appealing materials and learning activities geared to his inner needs, he becomes accustomed to engaging in activities on his own. Gradually, this results in a habit of initiative - an essential quality in leadership. "Guiding principles" call for completing a task once begun and gradually results in a habit of persistence and perseverance for replacing materials after the task is accomplished. This "cycle of activity" gradually results in a habit of persistence and perseverance.

Fostering inner security and a sense of order in the child

Through a well ordered, enriched but simplified environment, the child's need for order and security is intensely satisfied. This is noticed in the calming effect the environment has on the child. Since every item in the Montessori classroom has a place and the ground rules call for everything in its place, the child's inner need for order is directly satisfied.

The Child

The child, instead of being a burden, shows himself to us as the greatest and most consoling of nature's wonders! We find ourselves confronted by a being no longer to be thought of as helpless, like a receptive void waiting to be filled with our wisdom; but one whose dignity increases in the measure to which we see in him the builder of our own minds; one guided by his inward teacher, who labors indefatigably in joy and happiness following a precise timetable at the work of constructing the greatest marvel of the universe, the human being.

-Maria Montessori

The Rights of the Child

It is a fundamental right for every child to have an opportunity to develop according to his or her own time-table and to be encouraged to explore that which would allow for fulfillment physically, emotionally, intellectually and spiritually.

In order to accomplish this, a child needs an environment that will meet basic needs (unquestionably), but will also provide opportunities for the child to attempt new challenges. In taking on new challenges, there is the possibility of making mistakes, but the child learns to see mistakes as opportunities for growth, rather than as failures.

Children learn from each other. A child needs a social system that consists of peers and fair and just caregivers who are able to guide the group in establishing rules and norms that result in the protection of all. Clear and appropriate expectations allow the child successful and positive social experiences, building his or her self-esteem.

Children learn from direct experiences and the child will be exposed to curriculum that is relevant to “real-life”. The work of the child is self-directed, allows for open-ended exploration and is always playful because play IS the work of the child.

Children learn from adults and the model that they provide. The caregivers are made aware of their influence in these children’s lives and are encouraged to develop themselves physically, emotionally, intellectually and spiritually.

Having an understanding of the family system (parent, siblings and other extended family members) is considered to be critical to providing the appropriate care for the child. The nurturing of the child requires a partnership between the family and the caregivers. Opportunities are provided for the families to interact with the classroom, creating a community for the children.

The child’s connection with all of humanity is instilled through exploration and acceptance of various cultures. The curriculum includes art, music, literature, traditions and other mediums to promote cultural awareness.

The adults trust the child to be able to communicate his or her needs and trust themselves to continually reassess their abilities to “hear” those communications. It is a fundamental right of every child to be heard. All children have inside of themselves the answers to their fulfillment. It is the responsibility of every adult to help the child learn to discriminate what those needs are and to develop the skills to best obtain them.

(Written by Jennifer Simmons)

A New Beginning

Very young children often experience feelings of fear or anxiety when they first enter new situations or when they are asked to separate from their primary caregivers. When your child first begins attending school we will be asking him/her to face both of these challenges.

In order to ease this transition, we have developed a phase-in approach. During the phase-in, your child will not be attending his/her fully enrolled hours until the gradual introduction to the daily schedule is finished. Although this transition period was originally designed with the child in mind, we have found it also helps parents feel more comfortable with the new school environment when they participate in this transition. If your family has some difficulty with following the transition schedule we suggest, please let us know and we will work with you to create a transition that will best support everyone. We have provided phase-in recommendations (see below) for transitioning into our Toddler Program and our Early Childhood Program.

NOTE: Throughout the phase-in process, it is important that one of your child's primary caregivers attend. This person can be a parent or someone who has been involved in your child's care on a daily basis. From this point on, the term "you" is generally referencing the person who will be helping the child make the transition.

For the Toddler Communities: During the time preceding your child beginning school, your child's teacher will contact you to discuss your child, set up an initial parent/teacher conference and schedule his or her phase-in.

As you follow the schedule and the teacher's suggestions, you will be informed of your arrival times, departure times and any modifications. The first step in the phase-in process is a classroom visit. You and your child will have an opportunity to visit the classroom together. During this brief visit, your child will be able to look around and explore; perhaps trying out a tiny chair or choosing a piece of work. While visiting, please speak softly to your child, encourage but do not force a connection with any child, work or teacher just yet; it is his or her time to see and take in the new environment at his/her own pace. Focus on your child and his/her needs and interests in the new environment. This initial visit is also a good time to bring a few things to store in your child's cubby: a picture of your family, a set of clothing and a diaper. You won't be leaving your child this first time, but he/she may notice that you are leaving a few of his/her things! Choosing a cubby helps to establish that there is a place for your child in the classroom, giving him or her a little ownership of the room. When leaving, please make sure to quietly say good-bye to the teachers and exit the environment.

The phase-in process continues with just a longer visit the next day and each day thereafter. The times will vary; it may be early or mid-morning. Your child's teacher will let you know when it is best to leave. Even if your child is still happily engaged, it is better to leave earlier and on a positive note instead of waiting until your child begins to tire.

By the third day of your child's phase-in, after your child seems to have settled into the environment or perhaps even if he or she still seems a little uncomfortable, the teacher will suggest that you leave for a brief period of time. It is very important that you say goodbye to your child every time you leave. Although your child may experience more tears when you leave, he/she will grow to trust that you come and go when you say you will. You might say to your child, "I am going to the bathroom/front office and I will be back soon." Once you tell your child you are going it is important to depart quickly. (Your child's teachers will be close by to support the separation.) Once again, you are demonstrating to your

child that you can be trusted to do what you say you are going to do and that you feel safe and comfortable leaving him in this new place. When you return to the environment, enter quietly; let your child know you are there and that it is now time to go.

Throughout the process, you and the child's teacher will follow the phase-in schedule but will also decide what your child is ready for and how much to lengthen each separation until your child is fully phased-in and attending normal hours. You and the teacher will be communicating frequently during this time. The length of this process depends on a variety of factors. Some children seem ready from the very first day while others may take much longer. For most children a period of three to five days seems about right. On the other hand, a few children will begin with no signs of anxiety or concern, and then suddenly feel very sad a week or two later. In fact, there is no ideal way to make this transition into the Toddler environments. Each time, the child and family will find his or her own best way. It is important that we all trust this process as we go through it together and remember you are always welcome to make a phone call to your child's teacher with any questions or concerns.

For the Early Childhood Community: During the time preceding your child beginning school, your child's teacher will contact you to discuss your child, set up an initial parent/teacher conference and schedule his or her phase-in.

The first step in the phase-in process is a classroom visit. You and your child will have an opportunity to visit the classroom together. During this brief visit, your child will be able to look around and explore; perhaps choosing a piece of work and discovering the many areas of the classroom. While visiting, please speak softly to your child, encourage but do not force a connection with any child, work or teacher just yet; it is your child's time to see and take in the new environment at his/her own pace. The teacher will show your child around the room and let him/her know where his/her cubby is located. This initial visit is also a good time to bring a few things to store in your child's cubby: a picture of your family and a set of clothing. You will not be leaving your child this first time, but he or she may notice that you are leaving a few things at school! Choosing a cubby helps to establish that there is a place for your child in the classroom giving him/her a little ownership of the room. When leaving, please make sure to quietly say good-bye to the teachers and exit the environment.

The phase-in process continues with just a longer visit the next day and each day thereafter. The times will vary; it may be early or mid-morning. Your child's teacher will let you know when it is best to leave. Even if your child is still happily engaged, it is better to leave earlier and on a positive note.

By the third day of your child's phase-in, after your child seems to have settled into the environment or perhaps even if he or she still seems a little uncomfortable, the teacher will suggest that you leave for a brief period of time. It is very important that you say goodbye to your child every time you leave. Although your child may experience more tears when you leave, he or she will grow to trust that you come and go when you say you will. You might say to your child, "I am going to the bathroom/front office and I will be back soon." Once you tell your child you are going it is important to depart quickly. (Your child's teachers will be close by to support the separation.) Once again, you are demonstrating to your child that you can be trusted to do what you say you are going to do and that you feel safe and comfortable leaving him in this new place. When you return to the environment, enter quietly, and let your child know you are there and that it is now time to go.

The length of this process depends on a variety of factors. Some children seem ready from the very first day while others may take much longer. For most children a period of three to five days seems about right. On the other hand, a few children will begin with no signs of anxiety or concern, and then suddenly feel very sad a week or two later. In fact, there is no ideal way to make this transition into the Early

Childhood environment. Each time, the child and family will find his or her own best way. It is important that we all trust this process as we go through it together and remember you are always welcome to make a phone call to your child's teacher with any questions or concerns.

What to Bring to School

Toddlers

1. Season appropriate changes of clothing: 1 – 2 outfits; check daily.
2. 3-4 Diapers/Underwear, to be replenished daily.
3. A picture of your child's family including pets. (Can be kept in cubby/photo frame/album)
1. A small plant for the classroom or garden.
4. A small lunch box that is easy to open and close. Please be certain all lunch containers are also easy for your child to manipulate. Label all items.
5. An extra pair of shoes is nice; especially if your child is practicing toileting.
6. Nap Items if your child stays for a full-day. Nap items will be sent home on Friday's for laundering. Nap sets tailored for the nap mats we use can be purchased in the office.

*Please see your child's phase-in schedule for information on what to bring as he/she starts school.

Early Childhood

2. A small plant for the classroom or garden.
3. A picture of your child's family including pets. (Can be kept in cubby/photo frame/album)
4. Nap Items if your child stays for a full-day. Nap items will be sent home on Friday's for laundering. Nap sets tailored for the nap mats we use can be purchased in the office.
5. 2 Season appropriate changes of clothing that stay in your child's cubby. Please label all items and include underwear and socks. (more bottoms than tops)
6. A small lunch box that is easy to open and close. Please be certain all lunch containers are also easy for your child to manipulate. Label all items.

*Please see your child's phase-in schedule for information on what to bring as he/she starts school.

**PLEASE LABEL ALL OF YOUR CHILD'S CLOTHING AND PERSONAL ITEMS (even socks)
WITH HIS OR HER NAME.**

Communication

We feel that communication is one of the most important elements of our program. In order to fully support each child and family, we need to communicate regularly and openly. At St. Andrew's Episcopal School we do that in a variety of ways.

Before your child begins, we provide you with numerous documents. Some of these are designed to help us learn a little more about you and some are meant to begin to tell you about us. Portions of the paperwork we send home will make it easier for us to contact you when we need to communicate. Please make sure to fill out all forms and promptly return them to the school office. If ever there is a change in contact phone numbers, address or any other information, please inform us in writing of the changes so that we may add it to our records.

During the first few weeks of school we will be communicating a great deal about how we are all experiencing this new beginning. We hold two scheduled conferences during the school year with the option to schedule a conference at any time in between. We are also happy to set up additional conference times at your request. We will email monthly newsletters that will keep you updated on classroom events and the events going on within the entire St. Andrew's Episcopal School and church community. The church also distributes their monthly newsletter, called *The Voice*, to the families of SAES- watch for hard copies of it in your child's pocket or drawer. Please check your child's pocket or drawer frequently.

The arrival time and dismissal times are important transitions for your child. Thus, the attention of the adults should be focused on the children in their care. As tempting as it may be, this is not a good time for a mini parent-teacher conference. If you have concerns that you feel need immediate attention, please send a note or leave a message in the office for your child's teacher to call you at their earliest convenience. Anticipate a return phone call around 1:30 or after school at 3PM. An email can also be sent to your child's teacher; the school email address is standrewsschool@SAESintheHeights.org.

We believe all of this communication is very important and by talking frequently, we can all gain a more complete picture of your child. Every communication gives us the opportunity to work together to create the most nurturing environment possible for your child and your family.

Arrival and Departure

School begins at 8:45AM and departure begins at 12:45 and ends at 1:00PM. Children who remain for the extended day program will end their day beginning at 2:45 and ending at 3:00PM. Please make it a routine to contact the school when your child will be absent. We want to assure that, by phone or email, we keep informed of any illness or other details to note

An entry code to the front door is given to attending families. During 8:45-9AM arrival, parents must come into the classroom to sign-in their child's attendance in the community sign-in/out log and remain with your child until he/she has been acknowledged by the teacher. Arrival routines may change throughout the year; your child's teacher will inform you of the current practice in advance.

During 12:45- 1PM departure, **please be prompt picking-up your child as children who stay are beginning to prepare for nap.** At both departure times, parents must come into the classroom to sign-out their child in the community sign-in/sign-out log and remain with your child as you exit the building. Extended day children will be dismissed to their parents from 2:45 until 3:00PM. Please come to the

classroom to pick-up your child and **remember to sign-in/out in the logbook** this is required by our Texas State Licensing organization.

Young children have very limited concepts of time. It is important to your child that you arrive at the same time every day. We understand that sometimes, unavoidable circumstances make it impossible for you to pick up your child on time. If this happens please notify the school office and your child's teacher will remain with your child while he or she waits for your arrival. If you are consistently late, a \$15.00 late fee will be required. Please remember that the time after departure is the teacher's time to prepare the classroom for the following day as well as pick up their own children from school. Please support your teacher's use of this valuable time by being prompt.

Releasing Children: Authorized Pick-up Persons

If you anticipate a different person picking up your child, please notify the teachers and come by the office in advance to make sure he or she is authorized to pick-up your child. Authorized pick-up person information is filed out annually on your enrollment form and any changes or additions must be initialed and dated by you. By checking your records and filling out a form informing us of the day this authorized person will be picking up your child, all parties involved in the care of your child will be informed and a smooth transition can take place. **We will not release your child to any person not authorized by you.** In addition, please make sure your authorized pick-up person checks-in at the office and is prepared with their driver's license for us to photo copy and keep on file.

Toddler: Dress

Imagine a day in which you planned to repaint your dining room, polish silver, work in the garden a little, and relax with a book after you were finished. Now consider what you would wear. Every day your child is involved in tasks, which can be messy. Have your child wear clothing in which he or she can work comfortably. We encourage self-care, but young children do not have the skills to keep themselves and their clothing perfectly clean.

Also, appropriate clothing can be a wonderful tool to help encourage your child's independence resulting in higher self-esteem. Please do not send your child to school in overalls, stockings or belts. Acceptable clothing is loose fitting, soft fabric which the child can pull down...quickly. Elastic waist pants and T-shirts with wide collars allow the child to dress and undress more independently. Avoid small buttons and zippers which often present a problem for the child and can cause wetting accidents. Bulky fabrics do not pull down easily and often get wet when the child empties his or her bladder, even though he or she is sitting on or standing at the toilet. The frustration the child experiences when this occurs is unnecessary and embarrassing.

These guidelines are also important for children still in diapers, because these children will now begin practicing dressing skills that will later make toileting more successful.

Most toddlers really love their shoes. Please send shoes that facilitate active play such as tennis shoes. Most sandals, cowboy boots and dress shoes make it difficult for the young child to participate safely in gross motor activity. Velcro clasps that **secure firmly** are a wonderful aid to the young child. Shoes with

laces are more appropriate for three to four year old children. Additionally, hair bows, clips and bands get lost easily and also present choking hazards in toddlers; please consider this when sending your daughter to school.

We are fortunate that our climate allows for outdoor play throughout most of the year, yet we always take into consideration the weather and climate before going outdoors. Extreme heat, cold and turbulent weather will keep us indoors. The cooler summer mornings and puddles after a hard rain will draw us out, so please send outerwear for your child that is appropriate for the season: rain coats, puddle boots, swim suits, sweaters and coats will all have their fair share of use at school.

**PLEASE LABEL ALL OF YOUR CHILD'S CLOTHING AND PERSONAL ITEMS (even socks)
WITH HIS OR HER NAME.**

Diapering and Toileting

The procedures and rituals used in diapering and toileting are designed to create positive experiences for your child, as he or she becomes aware of natural bodily functions. A calm, positive attitude is of utmost importance in diapering and toileting.

Much of what is done in diapering is out of respect for the child's growing need for independence. The child is invited to get a diaper from his or her cubby and bring it to the bathroom. The child stands as the teacher changes the diaper because this encourages greater participation in manipulating his or her clothing. At each diaper change, the teacher invites the child to sit on the toilet. This gives the child an opportunity to practice all of the skills involved in toileting. Often the children are very interested in using the toilet when they see other children using it, but sometimes they are not at all interested! This invitation is simply an early introduction and is never forced.

There are a number of signs of readiness to use the toilet: being aware of wetness versus dryness, being consistently troubled by a wet diaper, being dry for long periods of time, requesting underpants, and occasionally having successful attempts in the toilet. In addition, being able to pull up and down his/her underpants and being able to communicate the need to use the toilet also helps with toileting success. When your child is showing these signs of readiness, the teachers will consult with you about changing to underpants. Keep in mind that this is a transition and your child may request to wear a diaper during a nap or at night. This changing between underwear and diapers will be led by the child's needs, and so we honor their requests to wear one or the other and we are prepared with both...and a mop and bucket and plenty of patience and understanding!

Please do not use "pull ups." They are confusing for the child and may delay the toileting process. Try to use underpants as much as possible during the transition. To facilitate the toileting process, we suggest the child be dressed in a T-shirt and underwear only- at home and at school. The teachers can show you examples of underwear that we have found to be quite easy for the children to manage on their own. During cold weather, sweatpants or loose-fitting clothing can be worn as outer clothing. No overalls or dresses please. An adequate supply of clothing changes should be sent to school. Your child's teacher will suggest how much clothing to send. Soiled clothing will be sent home daily. Please return the same number of clothing changes the next day. In the beginning, expect a lot of wet clothes. However, in our experience the children catch on quickly and accidents are minimized after a couple of weeks.

The teacher will confer with you about the supportive adult attitude; appropriate language, and scheduling. It is important to remember the child will let us know when he or she is ready to begin toileting. Toileting is a complicated skill which requires time, practice and more patience. When all adult caregivers work together, to assist the child in this developmental milestone, the child's independence in managing this process will be the result.

Remember to check your child's diaper storage area and cubby to make sure there are plenty of diapers and adequate changes of clothing. Unfortunately our storage is limited and storing large packages of diapers is not helpful, checking your child's diaper supply daily works best.

Early Childhood: Dress

Imagine a day in which you planned to repaint your dining room, polish silver, work in the garden a little, and relax with a book after you were finished. Now consider what you would wear. Every day your child is involved in tasks, which can be messy. Have your child wear clothing in which he or she can work comfortably. We encourage self-care, but young children do not have the skills to keep themselves and their clothing perfectly clean. Having your child dress him/herself in the AM and undress him/herself in the PM allows for independence and the mastery of self care skills.

Also, appropriate clothing can be a wonderful tool to help encourage your child's independence resulting in higher self-esteem. Please do not send your child to school in overalls, stockings or belts. Acceptable clothing is loose fitting, soft fabric which the child can pull down quickly. Elastic waist pants and T-shirts with wide collars allow the child to dress and undress independently. Bulky fabrics do not pull down easily and often get wet when the child empties his or her bladder, even though he or she is sitting on or standing at the toilet. The frustration the child experiences when this occurs is unnecessary and embarrassing.

Please send shoes that facilitate active play such as tennis shoes. Most sandals, flip-flops, cowboy boots and dress shoes make it difficult for the young child to participate safely in gross motor activity. Velcro clasps that **secure firmly** are a wonderful aid to the young child. Additionally, hair bows, clips and bands get lost easily; please consider this when sending your daughter to school.

We are fortunate that our climate allows for outdoor play throughout most of the year yet, we always take into consideration the weather and climate before going outdoors. Extreme heat, cold and turbulent weather will keep us indoors. The cooler summer mornings and puddles after a hard rain will draw us out so, please send outerwear for your child that is appropriate for the season: rain coats, puddle boots, swim suits, sweaters and coats will all have their fair share of use at school.

**PLEASE LABEL ALL OF YOUR CHILD'S CLOTHING AND PERSONAL ITEMS (even socks)
WITH HIS OR HER NAME.**

Nutrition

Parents are asked to provide nutritious lunches for their child to bring to school. Foods high in fiber, free of preservatives and processed sugar, and low in fats and salt help children to be alert and physically active. If you need further information, the guidelines on the next page will assist you in creating balanced meals for your child.

On a rotating basis, each family is asked to provide snacks for the entire group and to provide a bouquet of fresh cut flowers that the children will enjoy arranging. The number of children in the class will determine how many times each family will bring snacks.

The snack should consist of a fresh fruit, a carbohydrate and a protein. A sample snack menu may look like the following: apples, whole-grain bagels with cream cheese; berries, wholegrain crackers and cubed cheese; or bean dip, fresh flour tortillas and pears. **Please have all fresh fruits or veggies cut and ready to serve.** For your child's safety, parents are required to provide notification, in the form of a doctor's note, of any allergies (food or otherwise), with instruction for treatment should a child have an allergic reaction as well as any diet restrictions. A list of the daily snacks available to the children will be written on the community sign-in/sign-out log located inside the classroom. Snack time offers an opportunity for children to eat familiar as well as new kinds of food.

If you have any questions about what to send please ask your child's teacher for suggestions. We have included some ideas below:

Snack Ideas

Carbohydrate

Blue corn chips
Corn muffins
Egg noodles
Japanese sweet potatoes
Kashi cereal
Oat Bran Graham crackers
Oatmeal muffins
Pasta shells
Pita bread, pita chips
Pita chips
Rice cakes plain
Whole grain tortillas

Fresh Fruit/Veg

Baby carrots
Mango
Blueberries
Cantaloupe
Clementine's
English cucumber
Fiji apples
Grape tomatoes
Honeydew melon
Kiwi
Apples
Pineapple

Protein

Almond butter
Almonds
Avocado
Baked tofu
Beans
Boca breakfast links
Boiled eggs
Edamame (soy beans)
Hummus
Kidney beans
Sunflower Butter
Soy Milk

Health Information

As you know your child's first community experience will bring increased exposure to viral and bacterial illness. Although the school environment is thoroughly cleaned and maintained daily, young children are still extremely susceptible, so the chance of spreading germs is great

In a Montessori environment the emphasis is on helping the child achieve independence. Enabling the child to handle the functions of his/her own body, not only cuts down considerably on the spreading of germs from child to child, but also builds self-esteem. The teachers demonstrate, for example, cleaning one's nose and then encourage the children to practice themselves. (If your child has an unmanageably runny nose, please keep him or her at home.)

If your child has a fever, please keep him/her home for 24 hours after she is fever free. Children with symptoms of contagious disease should be kept home. These symptoms include undiagnosed rashes, excessive mucous, fluid secretion from eyes or ears and unusually red, itchy eyes. 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 or parents. If you have any question about bringing your child to school, please consult with your physician. The school will always let you know if your child has been exposed to a contagious disease. If your child becomes ill during the school day, we will contact you immediately and ask that you pick him/her up right away.

Parents are asked to consider if their child's wellness or lack of will prevent them from participating comfortably in school activities and if their wellness or lack of results in greater need for care than the teacher's may provide without compromising the health, safety, and supervision of the other children.

Parents will be notified any time a child is injured at school by a detailed accident report which we require you to sign showing you have been made aware of the incident. In most instances, your child's teacher will give you a call letting you know about any "hurt" they have received. If a parent or authorized person cannot be reached and the injury is of a serious nature, we will contact the primary source of health care as stated on your child's Health Record/Medical Release form.

Immunizations

For your child's enrollment to be complete all forms must be complete and on file including your child's **current immunization record or state issued exempt affidavit**. The Texas immunization schedule can be found below as well as a link for more information regarding exemption.

Immunization Schedule – taken from 2010-2011 Texas Minimum State Vaccine Requirements for Child-Care Facilities: We consider enrollment for children 12 months and older but have provided the requirements as below:

- | | |
|--------------|--|
| By 7 Months: | Three doses of DTaP/DT/DTP
Two doses each of polio, Hibc, and hepatitis Bd |
| By 16 Months | Three doses of DTaP/DT/DTP
Two doses each of polio and hepatitis Bd
One dose of MMRb, d and Hibc |
| By 19 Months | Four doses of DTaP/DT/DTP
Three doses each of polio and hepatitis Bd
One dose each of MMRb, d, varicellae, and Hibc on or after first birthday |
| By 25 Months | Four doses of DTaP/DT/DTP |

Three doses each of polio and hepatitis Bd
 One dose each of MMRb, d, Hibc, varicellad, e, and hepatitis Ad received on or after 1st birthday

By 43 Months Four doses of DTaP/DT/DTP
 Three doses each of polio and hepatitis Bd
 Two doses of hepatitis Ad
 One dose each of MMRb, d, Hibc, and varicellad, e received on or after 1st birthday

a In accordance with the most recent General Recommendations on Immunizations adopted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) regarding the validity of vaccine doses administered less than or equal to 4 days before the minimum interval or age will meet this requirement.

b MMR (or one dose of each of its components) must have been received on or after the 1st birthday if the vaccine was administered on or after September 1, 1990. Measles vaccine received prior to September 1, 1990 may have been administered in the calendar month of the 1st birthday.

c Complete series of any *Haemophilus influenzae* type b (Hib) vaccine, OR one dose of any Hib vaccine given at or after 15 months of age. A Hib primary series and booster is two doses (two months apart) and a booster dose on or after 12 months of age, received at least two months after the last dose.

d Serologic confirmation of immunity to measles, mumps, rubella, hepatitis B, hepatitis A, or varicella or serologic evidence of infection is acceptable in lieu of the vaccine.

e Previous illness may be documented with a written statement from a physician, school nurse, or the child's/student's parent or guardian containing wording such as: "This is to verify that (name of student) had varicella disease (chickenpox) on or about (date) and does not need varicella vaccine."

Exemptions

The law allows (a) physicians to write a statement stating that the vaccine(s) required is medically contraindicated or poses a significant risk to the health and well-being of the child or any member of the child's household, and (b) parents/guardians to choose an exemption from immunization requirements for reasons of conscience, including a religious belief. Schools and child-care facilities should maintain an up-to-date list of students with exemptions, so they can be excluded from attending school if an outbreak occurs.

Instructions for the affidavit to be signed by parents/guardians choosing the exemption for reasons of conscience, including a religious belief can be found at www.ImmunizeTexas.com

For children needing medical exemptions, a written statement by the physician should be submitted to the school or child-care facility.

In addition, all children 4 and older are required to have a hearing and vision screening.

Medication

When your child needs to take medication at school, it is important to communicate with teacher about what the child is taking and why. Child care facilities are not required to administer medication, but if they do, they must follow strict standards to ensure each child's safety. Consider these suggestions: Ask your doctor if it is possible to change the way the medicine is administered so that medicine may be given only at home and if your medicine must be given at school ask the doctor and pharmacist to fill the prescription in two labeled containers, one for home and another for school.

If your child is to receive medication at school, we require you to fill out a Medication Dispensation Form- available in the school office. This form will let you know the date, time and dose we give the child the medication. All prescription medications must be in original containers, labeled with child's name, name of drug, child's dosage with directions for administering, date, times and most of all, the prescribing physician's name. Non-prescription medication must be labeled with your child's name and the date the medication was brought to the school. It must be in the original container and must be administered according to the label directions and show an expiration date. If the medication is liquid,

include a measured medicine spoon. Always check the medication form to be sure your request is being met.

Nap

In the afternoons all of the children will spend time quietly resting. Dimming the lights and playing soothing music helps create a restful atmosphere for the children. Those children who do not fall asleep will be invited to look at books or work quietly in the classroom.

If your child will be napping at school, please send a small blanket, 1 standard sized pillow case (to hold all the nap items in) and 1 king-size pillow case to cover the nap mat. You may also check in with the school office to purchase a mat cover and blanket set that is handmade to fit by a local seamstress. At the end of each week, we will send your child's nap items home to be washed. It is important that you return them promptly on Monday and place the covers on their mat so it is ready for use. **Remember to label all items with your child's name.**

Some children are used to resting at home with a special stuffed-animal. To reduce the risk of loss, we prefer that such special items remain at home. However, some children feel it is important to have their special things with them at nap and we will support your child's need as well as encourage him/her to be responsible for its whereabouts. At St. Andrews Episcopal School, we want our decisions to be led by the needs of each child. Your child will let us know when he or she is ready to leave his or her attachment object at home.

Toys

To reduce the risk of loss or breakage, we prefer toys remain at home. We recognize that children may occasionally need a familiar item from home to feel more secure in the transition between home and school. Please suggest to your child that he/she leave items at home or in the car at the beginning of the day. However, if the object is an important bridge between home and school please feel comfortable sending the toy rather than engaging in a power struggle. Once at school, your child's teacher will handle the storage of the toy. As an alternative, a flower from the yard may be a simple way to help your child feel this sense of connection. The family photo in your child's cubby is another link to home.

We have found that when children are supported in having familiar objects with them, they are then able to leave them behind when they are ready. It is our job as caregivers and parents to trust our children and listen to them carefully as they let us know what they need.

Classroom Pets

The children help care for our classroom pets. We practice proper hygiene when feeding, cleaning and caring for our special creatures. ☺

Celebrations

Children feel safe and comfortable when their caregivers provide them with a consistent daily routine. However, there are times when the routine will be changed so the children can experience a festive occasion together. We will be inviting parents both to attend and to help organize some of these holiday events. Celebrations for young children are best when they are kept low key and simple. The teachers will help guide you in creating child-centered celebrations.

Children's birthdays are another time for celebration. Parents are encouraged to provide snacks and refreshments on their child's birthday, keeping in mind the school's guidelines for nutrition. Parents are welcome to participate in their child's celebration of life at school. It is fun to share photos of your child showing the different stages of growth such as newborn, sitting up, crawling, walking, running, eating solid foods and a picture for each birth day will help your child to celebrate the passage of time and all the many things he or she has learned since birth. Your child's teacher will have her own special additions to the celebration. We try to plan snack rotations so that your child's celebration of life is usually on your snack day.

We prefer that you not send party favors, gift bags to school. The trinkets often break or get lost and mistaken for someone else's causing great distress. If you would really like to commemorate your child's birthday, we suggest a book, puzzle or item off the teacher's wish list as a gift for the classroom that all of the children may enjoy. A book donation with a special commemorative nameplate marking your child's birthday is one example.

Guidance & Self-Discipline: Conflict Resolution with Toddlers

Hitting, biting, pushing, and scratching are elements of toddler behavior that parents often struggle with the most. It is embarrassing for many parents when their young child hurts another. It is important to remember that all of these behaviors are normal in very young children. However, as caregivers it is our responsibility to quickly stop any behavior that might hurt another child. Once both children are safe, we may take the time to carefully consider and choose a response that truly supports both children. We must try to discover and understand the underlying motivation for the misbehavior.

Infants and young toddlers are very interested in cause and effect. Biting or hitting can elicit a loud response from the other child. Sometimes the child who hits is interested in this causal relationship and quite unaware of the pain being experienced by the child he or she has hurt. Giving the child the information hitting hurts will help him or her begin to empathize. In a situation where the child seems interested in cause and effect, we must be careful about how we involve that child. We want to demonstrate our concern for the injured child with gentle touching and care. However, if we invite the child who was inappropriate to help too much with the care of the injured child, this helping may be seen as another positive effect of hurting. The adult must use discretion in these instances. Often the environment can offer its own solutions. When children are searching for causal relationships to explore, it is important to provide many appropriate opportunities to explore cause and effect.

Very young children may bite because they are teething and looking for anything to grip with their teeth. Again, the child must be told that biting hurts. Involving the child in getting a tissue or ice for his or her hurt friend will in this case help increase empathy. It is also valuable to demonstrate gentle touching and encourage it when the hurt child is receptive. Sometimes the injured child is still too upset to accept this support and nurture. We must always support children in maintaining the physical boundaries they require.

When children are teething it is helpful if they have several options to soothe sore gums, such as cool washcloths, or crunchy teething biscuits.

Some young children are uncertain about how to engage with others. A toddler may hit or push another child in an attempt to greet and interact. Again, caregivers must immediately stop the hurtful behavior and be certain both children are safe. It is then helpful to suggest more appropriate invitations to play. Simply learning to wave hello may be an exciting new idea.

When a toddler is experiencing strong emotions, he or she has minimal language skills and limited impulse control. Any maneuver that might end the conflict will seem like a good idea to the child. It is helpful to remember that even adults have trouble expressing themselves when they are in an emotionally charged situation. Although very young children may hit in anger or frustration, they are not yet exploring concepts of aggression and authority. Three and four year olds are interested in exploring those concepts. One and two year old children are still very egocentric. It is these very experiences of conflict and interaction within the home or school, which begin to lead the child out of egocentricity and into community.

It is our job as teachers and parents to guide children toward more appropriate ways to handle conflict. Giving children the words they need to express themselves is very important. It is something that must be done for them repeatedly as they learn to identify both their feelings and their needs. The more we support them in this struggle for self-expression as children, the more they will be able to handle strong feelings as adults. If we can look at inappropriate behaviors such as hitting, biting and pushing as opportunities to guide young children toward becoming more empathetic human beings, then we can perhaps be more empathetic ourselves.

In this busy, modern world, it is not unusual for children to experience their lives as hurried or stressful. Sometimes children, who are experiencing stress in their lives, will behave inappropriately. When stress appears to be negatively affecting a child, adults must work together to support the child. Reducing stressful activities, creating opportunities for connection, and developing soothing rituals for the child are all helpful responses. Often a child's need for a slower pace can create a more peaceful rhythm for everyone.

As teachers, we use only positive methods of re-direction and guidance that encourages self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction. We follow the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services **Minimum Standards** for Licensed Child Care Centers for guidance on discipline issues.

Guidance & Self-Discipline: Conflict Resolution with Young Children

Aggression is a normal expression of emotion in young children. They are still learning acceptable ways to channel their anger and frustration. Aggressive behavior includes hitting, throwing things, name-calling, spitting, biting, pushing, pulling, scratching, forcing someone to do or not do something, destroying property and taking someone else's possessions. These are the childhood behaviors that parents often struggle with the most. It can be embarrassing for many parents when their young child hurts another. It is important to remember all of these behaviors are normal in young children. However, as caregiver it is our responsibility to quickly stop any behavior that might hurt another child, the environment or themselves. Once all is safe, we take time to carefully consider and choose a response that truly supports the situation.

We recognize the importance of dealing with aggressive behavior between children. Teachers help children find acceptable ways to express their feelings, negotiate to get what they need as well as handle aggression directed towards them by peers.

In our daily interactions, we encourage children to express their feelings in words. When conflict arises, we facilitate conversations between the children, we may even suggest words which help communicate each child's feelings and with time children are able to use these social skills to solve their own problems.

At home, when your child behaves aggressively, try discussing what you are seeing and what he/she may be feeling. Sometimes offering a choice of a cooling down time (not punitive punishment as in time-out) or another activity may help alleviate the stress that lead to the aggression. Emphasize words and appropriate coping skills rather than actions. With time and practice, a child will learn to say, "I'm angry because I want to play with the truck and I cannot find it," instead of lashing out.

Often, young children may be uncertain about how to engage with other children. A child may knock down his friend's tower of blocks in an attempt to engage the other child in play. It is through the ensuing conflicts that children learn the boundaries of appropriate interaction with others. Three to five year olds are interested in authority and limits. They push against both in a variety of ways in order to discover what both mean. They push against both in a variety of ways in order to discover what both mean. Their aggressive behaviors are often attempts to answer internal questions such as: Who is in charge? Are dad's rules and expectations the same as mom's? Is the person in charge going to be fair? What is the REAL limit here? When adults have clear limits and age appropriate expectations children feel safe as they discover the answers to these internal questions.

It is our job as teachers and parents to guide children toward more appropriate ways to handle conflict. Giving children the words they need to express themselves is very important. It is something that must be done for them repeatedly as they learn to identify both their feelings and their needs. The more we support them in this struggle for self-expression as children, the more they will be able to handle strong feelings as adults. If we can look at inappropriate behaviors such as hitting, biting and pushing as opportunities to guide young children toward becoming more empathetic human beings, then we can perhaps be more empathetic ourselves.

Children in this age group are developing friendships with peers and often experience strong emotions, as they continue to learn how to relate with others and work through conflicts. When we are helping young children resolve conflicts, it is helpful to remember that even adults have trouble expressing themselves when they are in an emotionally charged situation. It is these very experiences of conflict and interaction within the home or school, which begin to lead the child out of egocentricity and into community.

In this busy, modern world, it is not unusual for children to experience their lives as hurried or stressful. Sometimes children, who are experiencing stress in their lives, will behave inappropriately. When stress appears to be negatively affecting a child, adults must work together to support the child. Reducing stressful activities, creating opportunities for connection, and developing soothing rituals for the child are all helpful responses. Often a child's need for a slower pace can create a more peaceful rhythm for everyone.

As teacher's, we use only positive methods of re-direction and guidance that encourages self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction. We follow the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services **Minimum Standards** for Licensed Child Care Centers for guidance on discipline issues.

Mine, Yours, and Ours

Sharing is a very big parenting issue during play dates, between siblings, and at various events that involve children and families coming together to play. The very young child does not understand the concept of sharing. Parents want their children to play and share easily with others. What is the best way to address this issue? How do we help children to develop the ability to share?

It helps to remember that adults often do not like to be told share either. Imagine arriving at the grocery store, selecting a grocery cart and beginning to fill it with your weekly grocery items when another

shopper came and took it exclaiming that it was really his turn with the cart and that **you** had already had a **really long turn**? How would you feel? What if your request for help, from the manager, was met with her insistence you be kind and share the cart? Would you feel that your rights had been respected? Would you begin to develop an innate desire to share with others? Why do we so often think this method will work with our children?

Before children can begin to share they need to know that their right to ownership will be respected. The first step in this direction is supporting the child in his or her strong claim of “**Mine!**” Letting children know that they will be supported and protected when another child tries to take their toy builds trust between the child and the caregiver. A child who is supported in keeping his own toy will be more understanding when caregivers support the rights of the other children as well. The idea of “**yours**” is the second step toward sharing and the first toward respecting the rights of others. A child who knows that just caregivers will support everyone fairly during conflicts over ownership feels safe in the environment. This child will begin to explore the idea of “**ours**” by inviting others to join in play, letting other children know when the contested toy is available, and by accepting invitations from caregivers and children to play together.

In the Montessori environment children spend a good portion of the day in free activity. Children have many opportunities to choose materials from the shelf and work alone or in small groups. The freedom to move about and make choices creates an atmosphere, which invites social interaction. In the environment we do not provide one of each item for every child. In fact scarcity of materials (two sets of markers instead of ten) is an important element in creating a community of children who interact and learn to resolve conflicts together. Real sharing occurs every day when one small child is excited about digging, reading, singing or building with another.

At home and in other social settings there are several ways you can support your child in sharing. When other children are coming to visit, remind your child that they will be coming to play with his or her toys. Help select the toys he or she feels comfortable sharing. Put away special toys that are difficult to share. If your child is really struggling with sharing, it helps to have a few toys of your own that you are willing to share with the visiting child! Let other parents know that your child is too young to understand sharing, and that you are helping him or her learn. The concept of sharing and the ability to do so rarely occurs before the age of four. Young children must first learn to take possession of their world before they are able to let go of it. When you as the parent help others to respect a young child’s space and possessions you are in fact helping your child internalize the concept of sharing. In settings where other parents feel that sharing is important it may be helpful to acknowledge differences.

The Prepared Environment

This may be the child's first experience of being in an environment outside of the home with a caregiver that is not a parent. The Montessori environment is arranged to be as home-like as possible. The living area will contain rugs, plants, a rocking chair, and other things reminiscent of the home. The kitchen area contains materials to prepare food. The "parlor" area contains materials for artistic endeavors. This definition of specific areas continually reminds the caregiver of his or her role as one who facilitates the child's development, rather than as a giver of information that the child will "learn".

In a Montessori environment the adults are careful to provide the following five characteristics:

- **Respect-** Respect is an important aspect of the environment and the interactions within the environment. Caregivers show respect to the children they care for by trusting each child to make appropriate choices. The adult observes the child's actions and allows events to unfold, instead of intervening in the child's process. To evaluate whether it is necessary to intervene, the caregiver will ask herself, "Will this behavior hurt the child? Will the behavior hurt others? Will it harm the environment?" If the answer to any of these questions is yes, then it is the caregiver's responsibility to protect the child. In these interactions, the caregiver will come close to the child respectfully, and gently touch him or her while speaking calmly, but seriously about the incident.
- **Movement-** Movement is crucial in an environment for children under three years of age who are in their sensory-motor stage of development. Children are free to move from one area to another as they choose an activity, and all of the activities that the children may choose from involve some type of activity. Voluntary group times for children under three include a lot of movement: simple finger plays for fine motor movement and songs that encourage gross motor movement. In addition, the total environment accessible to the children is made safe for exploration. Observation skills are used constantly by the adults to determine the safety of the activities and provide assistance when needed.
- **Independence-** Toddlers are socially becoming independent human beings. They have begun separating from Mom and Dad. To foster this newfound sense of independence, the environment provides many acceptable choices for the toddler to make. In addition, the toddlers are given the time and the child-sized equipment to develop self-help skills. There is a great deal of flexibility in scheduling and in the caregiver's attitudes. Children need routines, but the scheduling of those routines can and should be very flexible to provide for the needs of each individual child while also keeping in mind the needs of the group.
- **Order-** Everything in the environment will be in fully functioning order. Materials are grouped according to various classifications with clear divisions of areas or "rooms" within the environment. The environment is kept simple to support children in maintaining order. Also, routines and rituals order the children's day. This gives the children a sense of security because they know what to expect throughout the day. The emphasis is on the cycle and the order of events. This keeps the stress level low for children and caregivers, and allows for impromptu learning experiences. Rituals in such activities as the serving of snack or the changing of diapers lead the children to independence because the clear order allows them a greater chance for success.
- **Beauty-** The adult prepares a space that is orderly and free of clutter, with furnishings that fit tiny bodies and hands and materials that will guarantee success and enjoyment. The environment is safe, clean, well maintained, and cheerful. The noise level will fluctuate from periods of stimulating social interactions between children to quiet interludes of conversations between caregivers and children, or among children themselves. Soft music or the sounds of nature may be heard in the background. The tone is peaceful when adults slow their pace to match that of the

children and everyone is encouraged to experience nature both indoors and out. There is a quality of harmony sensed in the physical and emotional surroundings.

The caregivers in the environment assess the group daily to provide respect, movement, independence, order, and beauty within the larger considerations of each child's rights and the needs of the family.

(Lynne Aiken, Tracey Hall, Caryn Powel, and Jennifer Simmons first wrote the above article for an NAEYC conference presentation.)

Also note that each environment may have their own "pets" to care for and watch grow. If your child's class has a pet the teacher will introduce you to the pets within their community. Most commonly there are gerbils and fish.

Allowing Errors in Learning

"It is well to cultivate a friendly feeling towards error, to treat it as a companion inseparable from our lives, as something having a purpose, which it truly has". ~Dr. Maria Montessori

One of the children's favorite songs in toddler environments is about what clothes the children are wearing. We ask each child, "What would you like to sing about?" and we sing a song with his or her OWN name, and his or her OWN CLOTHING in the lyrics. It is very exciting, but it can be very puzzling to visitors when they hear children singing, with a teacher, about David's green shirt - when his shirt is clearly bright red.

Language models with language cards are integral to the daily work in our classrooms. We present the models and the pictures to the children. We name the objects, and we demonstrate matching the model with the card. When Catherine places the giraffe model on the rhinoceros card, we do not remove it. Nor do we correct her if she calls the giraffe a "horse". This also can be confusing to the observer.

A cornerstone of the Montessori Method is Sequin's three-period lesson. In the first period, the material or concept is presented to the child. In the second period, the child is able to identify the material or concept. And in the third period, the child has integrated the information, or learned it. For example, a young child learning colors would be shown an example of blue, and be told, "This is blue" (first period). Then the child would be able to point to a blue object when asked, "Show me blue" (second period). And ultimately, the child would be able to answer the question, "What color is this?" (third period).

This method helps us know a child's current understanding of a concept, thus guiding our future lessons. We are also freed from needing to correct the child. At any state of the learning process, if the child makes an error, the adult simply notes the inaccuracy and presents the material again. The correct information would need to be presented again anyway, and the child's error only indicates what he or she has not yet learned; therefore, the correction is not necessary. If the child is corrected, the correction could be more salient to the child than the information. Furthermore, the adult may not even realize what the child is exploring and learning.

In the first example of David's green/red shirt, it is important that he is comfortable making suggestions and supported in participating. He may have heard his friend say, "green shirt," and everyone sang for his friend. Color is an abstract concept that David has not mastered, but in this situation, he is exploring and learning about conversation, creativity, and social interaction.

When Catherine places a giraffe on the rhinoceros card, she may be making an error in matching. However, she is demonstrating her understanding of one-to-one correspondence when she matches one object to each card. A correction would inhibit her exploration of math concepts. Later, we can point out the characteristics of the giraffe and the rhinoceros in an exploration of language.

This approach takes patience and trust. The adults monitor their own reactions when something is WRONG, and patiently present the material again and again. We trust the learning process and the child. We remember that the child is learning how to learn when we allow him/her to make “mistakes”.

This three-period lesson is used at every level of Montessori education. “This is a polygon...”

Curriculum

The 5 curriculum areas are: Practical Life, Sensorial, Math, Language and Culture. Each area has activities that range from beginning to advanced and entail concepts that gradually challenge the child to understand abstract thinking by providing a plentitude of concrete, hands-on materials that are developmentally appropriate and allow children to learn at their own pace. Our Montessori curriculum is based on developmentally appropriate practices and on a child’s individual development. The two are always coupled for the overall success of the child. Maria Montessori understood children learn best in a prepared environment free from competition and reward systems. In the Montessori classroom you will see children internally motivated to learn in a fun, relaxed setting without external rewards. Children are natural learners; rewards get in the way and cloud the purpose of self-actualization. The development of the whole child is a daily task that entails close interactions and quiet observations. Montessori teachers are trained to encourage and help the child develop many life skills that will ensure his/her success in the classroom and will aid in the child’s overall success, participation and care for one’s self and community. Academics are not the focus, but a positive result of the preparation of the child for life-long success.

A Child Friendly Home: Toddlers

Our homes are designed for adults and most of our furnishings reflect this. One of the reasons children are so joyful in a Montessori environment is that they are able to function so effectively in the child size room. If you feel awkward or ill at ease in their small-scaled environment, it may give you a hint of how they feel in our oversized one.

One way to make your home more comfortable for your child is to include something child centered in every room. A small rocker and a basket of books are a nice quiet addition to more formal living areas in your home. A small table and chair in your dining room or kitchen are nice for meals and simple food preparation. If you don’t have room for another table just placing a small stool at a coffee table creates a great space for your child.

Stools are just a great help for the child in general. A sturdy stool in the bathroom makes hand washing an easy thing for the child to do throughout the day. A utility stool in the kitchen makes it easier for the child to assist you in simple food preparation tasks. A toddler who has a few dishes to wash at the sink, or lettuce to tear will be a much more relaxed companion during that often hectic early evening time.

Some other suggestions for the kitchen can make it easier for your child to be successful. Find a low cabinet or shelf to store child sized plates and silverware. Keep child friendly snacks and drinks on low shelves in both the refrigerator and the pantry. A child size pitcher with a lid can be used to store milk or juice. A small thermos works well for this as well. The kitchen is also a great place to store child size cleaning tools. Try to create tools for your children that are similar to the ones you use for cleaning. If

you use sponges for cleaning spills, cut one in half for your child. Keep a small broom for him next to your larger one. Children in this young age group still love to participate in cleaning. However, it is important to remember that while you are sweeping to achieve a clean floor, they are sweeping just for the joy of the process. When you invite your child to join you, focus on the process not the product!

Several things can be done to support your child in the bedroom. Wherever your child sleeps as an infant, a low mattress on the floor can be a nice transition before the big single bed or the exciting bunk bed. The low mattress is easy for the child to get in and out of in the morning or at night when he or she needs help. Your child may be more comfortable in the little bed because there is no risk of falling and no space for anything to hide under the bed! A low bureau with easy to open drawers or low open shelving will make it easier for your child to choose clothes and dress independently. Small pictures on the outside of the drawer or the edge of the shelf can help your child locate clothes and make it possible for him or her to put clothing away when it comes back from being laundered. Low shelves are also a nice location for your child's toys. Baskets and small containers can be used to help your child keep toys sorted and stored. Young children are only able to keep things orderly if there are a small number of items that have clearly defined locations.

If it seems difficult for your child to keep things put away, consider reducing the toys available and either storing or donating excess toys. Plus, at this young age it is important to remember that our children have short attention spans. As the adult caregiver it is our responsibility to remind them to put things away as they are finishing not after they have already moved on to something else. If your child has moved on and is engrossed in a new activity, quietly return your child's old activity to its place. The transition time between play activities or between play and other life events is the best time to help your child clean up with you.

Remember these are just suggestions. Some will work for your family and some will not. You may have other ideas to share with this community. Please do. It is through working together that we will create a true community for our children.

Curriculum

The 5 curriculum areas are: Practical Life, Sensorial, Math, Language and Culture. Each area has activities that range from beginning to advanced and entail concepts that gradually challenge the child to understand abstract thinking by providing a plentitude of concrete, hands-on materials that are developmentally appropriate and allow children to learn at their own pace. Our Montessori curriculum is based on developmentally appropriate practices and on a child's individual development. The two are always coupled for the overall success of the child. Maria Montessori understood children learn best in a prepared environment free from competition and reward systems. In the Montessori classroom you will see children internally motivated to learn in a fun, relaxed setting without external rewards. Children are natural learners; rewards get in the way and cloud the purpose of self-actualization. The development of the whole child is a daily task that entails close interactions and quiet observations. Montessori teachers are trained to encourage and help the child develop many life skills that will ensure his/her success in the classroom and will aid in the child's overall success, participation and care for one's self and community. Academics are not the focus, but a positive result of the preparation of the child for life-long success.

A Child Friendly Home: Early Childhood

Our homes are designed for adults and most of our furnishings reflect this. One of the reasons children are so joyful in a Montessori environment is that they are able to function so effectively in the child size room. If you feel awkward or ill at ease in their small-scaled environment, it may give you a hint of how they feel in our oversized one.

One way to make your home more comfortable for your child is to include something child centered in every room. A small rocker and a basket of books are a nice quiet addition to more formal living areas in your home. A small table and chair in your dining room or kitchen are nice meals and simple food preparation. If you don't have room for another table just placing a small stool at a coffee table creates a great space for your child.

Stools are just a great help for the child in general. A sturdy stool in the bathroom makes hand washing an easy thing for the child to do throughout the day. A utility stool in the kitchen makes it easier for the child to assist you in simple food preparation tasks. A child who has a few dishes to wash at the sink, or lettuce to tear will be a much more relaxed companion during that often hectic early evening time.

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Several things can be done to support your child in the bedroom. Wherever your child sleeps as an infant, a low mattress on the floor can be a nice transition before the big single bed or the exciting bunk bed. The low mattress is easy for the child to get in and out of in the morning or at night when he or she needs help. Your child may be more comfortable in the little bed because there is no risk of falling and no space for anything to hide under the bed! A low bureau with easy to open drawers or low open shelving will make it easier for your child to choose clothes and dress independently. Small pictures on the outside of the drawer or the edge of the shelf can help your child locate clothes and make it possible for him or her to put clothing away when it comes back from being laundered. Low shelves are also a nice location for your child's toys. Baskets and small containers can be used to help your child keep toys sorted and stored. Young children are only able to keep things orderly if there are a small number of items that have clearly defined locations.

If it seems difficult for your child to keep things put away, consider reducing the toys available and either storing or donating excess toys. Plus, at this young age it is important to remember that our children have short attention spans. As the adult caregiver it is our responsibility to remind them to put things away as they are finishing not after they have already moved on to something else. If your child has moved on and is engrossed in a new activity, quietly return your child's old activity to its place. The transition time between play activities or between play and other life events is the best time to help your child clean up with you.

Remember these are just suggestions. Some will work for your family and some will not. You may have other ideas to share with this community. Please do. It is through working together that we will create a true community for our children.

Conferences, Observations and Screening

If at any time during the school year you are interested or concerned about your child's progress, do not hesitate to communicate with either the teacher or head of school. If the situation is detailed, it is better to

schedule a conference during rest time. Home phone calls also work well. Please remember never to discuss a concern in front of your child. We will hold two conferences during the school year with an optional phone conference in between.

During the year once the children have settled into their daily routines we open the communities to observations. You will be able to schedule an observation at this time, of course if you feel the need you may schedule an observation at any time, simply check with your child's teacher. In an observation it can be challenging to get a true picture of your child's daily activity as your child may wish to stay close to his/her parent. We suggest observing the entire community as this opportunity gives you a good idea of what normally occurs for your child.

Children enrolled in a licensed Child Care Facility are required by law to be screened or have a professional examination for possible vision and hearing problems. Please provide us with the results of any testing done by your child's physician.

Inclement Weather & Crisis Situations

Inclement weather sometimes demands cancellation or early closing of school. We follow Houston Independent School District's procedure for unscheduled closings. Listen to the local news stations for such announcements. We will update our phone message with current information and try to return calls as soon as possible. It is imperative that you keep your child's records updated at all times with current contact numbers and names of persons to whom we may release your child.

We will Shelter In Place if toxic chemicals or other hazardous materials have been released in our immediate area. In this situation it will be important for everyone in the affected area to go indoors immediately and remain there. Children will remain indoors, inside school facilities, until we are given permission to release them by the Houston Office of Emergency Management or other local officials. Do not come to school in this situation. We will not be able to allow you entry. We are prepared to cover all crisis situations and will take excellent care of your child. A copy of our Crisis Policy and Procedure Manual is available for viewing in the school office. It gives detailed information concerning the school's response to a variety of situations. A copy of the school's **Crisis Management Plan** is available for viewing upon request in the school office. Faculty and staff are trained on the plan's content at the beginning of each school year during teacher in-service. Should an alternate evacuation site be needed, the teachers and children will proceed to

Hamilton Middle School,
ID# 49
139 East 20th St
Houston, 77008-2596
Phone: 713-802-4725
Fax: 713-802-4731

In addition, House Bill 2086 (law) ensures St. Andrew's Episcopal School is protected with and has a 1000 feet gang-free zone around our school. A gang-free zone deters certain types of criminal activities in areas where children gather by enforcing tougher penalties.

How Parents Can Promote Their Child's Success

1. Help your child come to school unhurried and dressed in clothing they can manage themselves.
2. Be on time, both at the beginning and at the conclusion of the day. Your child will feel more secure and the teachers will appreciate the effort.
3. Label all items brought to school.
4. Remember to sign-in/sign-out in the classroom logbook each day.
5. Do not send your child if she/he is ill or has been ill within the past 24 hours.
6. Be informed: Read the Parent's Handbook, newsletters, snack calendars and all articles of interest sent home.
7. Keep us informed: Always let us know of changes in information such as addresses, phone numbers, etc.
8. Attend parent education opportunities organized by the school. This gives you a great deal of knowledge about what your child experiences at school each day.
9. Become a volunteer. We have many opportunities for parents to volunteer. Check in the office or with your child's teacher for ideas of how you can become more involved.
10. Attend parent workdays, family socials, parent encounters, the school Gala, conferences, discussion groups and other school events.
11. And in closing always be assured that your questions, concerns, and inquiries are always welcomed and appreciated. Without your supportive voice we are unaware of that which needs our attention!

Parent Participation/Volunteers

Parents are invited and encouraged to be involved in your child's life at school. There are many different ways in which parents can participate and volunteer at SAES. Parents may volunteer to substitute, answer phones, present a special talent or interest to the children, assist teachers by making materials, visiting the library, becoming a room parent, joining the parent circle and/or coordinate special events.

Another fun and very important volunteer opportunity at SAES is sitting on our Gala committee; the annual SAES Gala has become a very well-known community event in which the proceeds allow us to continue offering the exceptional program that we have. We are forthcoming with the knowledge that tuition alone does not cover our basic operating expenses; we rely on the generous contributions of our community to maintain our program commitment. The annual Gala has quickly grown a reputation for a most entertaining parent's night out. We ask that all families support the Gala by purchasing tickets, seeking auction donation items, and assisting in any way possible. This is the night to plan for childcare and invite all your family and friends to *play* as your children do each day while supporting their school.

All volunteers who work directly with the children (substituting, etc.) are required to fill out appropriate paperwork, have a background check and attend Safeguarding God's Children training. Ask for details in the school office and watch for volunteer opportunities in our school newsletters!

Again we depend upon your support as you depend upon our care of your child each day! A mutually supportive relationship is crucial to the success of our community, a community that holds each child and family dear.

The Role of Parents According to the American Montessori Society

PUBLIC POLICY/ADVOCACY

Dr. Maria Montessori viewed the child as a member of a family, not as an isolated individual, and one whose most formative life experiences take place within the family. She recognized parents as a child's first and most influential teachers.

As a parent you are a role model and teacher

- Know your child well
- Be a patient observer and careful listener
- Place your confidence in your child
- Provide simple, safe and consistent rules encouraging your child to take responsibility and to contribute to his or her home and family.

As a parent you prepare your child's home

- Provide safety (physical & emotional)
- Provide organization, consistency, a reliable routine
- Prepare areas that are child sized — a place of her/his own
- Provide your child age-appropriate *responsibilities* in you home
- Provide "*real life*" experiences
- Provide age-appropriate choices and opportunities to make positive decisions

As a parent you set the limits

- Offer protection from objects and ideas that can hurt
- Always encourage your child to be capable and confident
- Limit toys and games to a workable number (rotate toys)
- Monitor television and other forms of media (inappropriate exposure can negatively affect social, emotional, intellectual, and physical growth)
- Develop consistent routines which encourage your child to develop self-control (self-control, responsible behavior and freedom are outcomes, not starting points)

As a parent you support and encourage your child

- Offer great possibilities for exploration in the home environment
- Encourage children to do for themselves ("Let me do it myself!")
- Encourage your child to be an active agent of his/her own education

THE ROLE OF THE PARENT AND THE SCHOOL

Parent, teacher, child, and school relationships are very important in a student's life. An alliance based on mutual respect and support will enhance all individuals' understanding, knowledge, and insight and offer a cohesive, prepared learning environment.

How to give support to your school

- Be involved, volunteer
- Be informed, attend all conferences & meetings
- Be knowledgeable, attend Parent Education meetings
- Contribute financially

Involved parents support their Montessori school by contributing their time, talents, and money. Each school offers different programs and projects for parents to volunteer their time, energy, and resources.

Informed parents communicate with their school by attending planned conferences and other parent activities, reading newsletters and e-mails, and asking questions. Ask the school's administrator or your child's teacher for the best time and method to communicate informally — to share insights, questions, and observations.

Knowledgeable parents select a school by seeking an optimal match between their child's needs; their expectations; and the school's philosophy, program, and services. Parents support the school's policies and procedures and attend Parent Education Meetings, as well as read articles and books about Montessori education.

Contribute financially to support programs at your child's school. Your contributions are often tax deductible and will help to create a foundation for stability and growth, vital for the school.

And most importantly feel welcome in your school community. Montessori is a philosophy of life not merely an academic educational methodology. Montessori schools not only enroll children they enroll families.

Montessori Links:

Maria Montessori, Biography: <http://www.michaelolaf.net/maria.html>

Montessori Information & Links: <http://mariamontessori.com/mm/>

Michael Olaf: Since 1982 the Michael Olaf Montessori Company has provided information on how to use Montessori philosophy in homes and schools and has provided the highest quality of materials, toys, and books for children from birth to 12 years. **For the very best in toys and materials for babies and children, click here: [THE MONTESSORI SHOP](#)**

Link: <http://www.michaelolaf.net/>

The Montessori Foundation Family Center (Videos & Articles):

http://www.montessori.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=section&layout=blog&id=18&Itemid=38

An Article for Parents: Montessori 101: Some Basic Information Every parent Should Know by Tim Seldin from the Montessori Foundation

Link: http://www.montessori.org/sitefiles/Montessori_101_nonprintable.pdf



**St Andrew's Episcopal School
School Calendar
2011-2012**

August 15 – August 19	Teacher In-service
August 22	First Day of School for returning students
August 23	Phase-ins for new students begin, scheduled by teachers
September 5	Labor Day Holiday
September 6	Classes Resume
Oct-Nov	Food Bank Drive – Watch for details
October 3	Teacher In-service, no classes
November 22	Grandparents Day/Thanksgiving Feast, Noon Dismissal
November 23 –25	Thanksgiving Break, no classes
November 28	Classes Resume
December	Advent Wreath Drive
December 16	Winter Tea, Noon Dismissal
December 19 – December 30	Winter Break, no classes
January 2	Teacher In-service, no classes
January 3	Classes Resume
January 6	Epiphany Celebration
January 16	Martin Luther King holiday, no classes
February	Re-enrollment for 2012-2013
February 16-17	Teacher In-Service, no classes, parent conferences
March 12 -March 16	Spring Break
April	Summer Registration: Summer Session Dates to be announced.
April	Spring Baby Wear Drive
April 6-9	Easter Holiday, no classes
April 10	Classes Resume
May 11	Mother's Day Brunch, Th/Fri Toddlers
May 14	Mother's Day Brunch, Early Childhood and M, T, W Toddlers
May 28	Memorial Day: No School
June 1	Last Day of School, Noon Dismissal EC Splash Day/Toddler Play Day

See your April 2012 summer registration packet for summer session dates & details.

SAES Board of Trustees

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Reading List



Many of you have asked for a suggested reading list, below you will find a list. When recommending a book, we add a disclaimer, no book is to be taken as the absolute word on a given subject; find within that speaks to your heart and leave the rest behind!

Awakening Your Toddlers Love of Learning by Jan Katzen-Luchenta
Your Two Year Old: terrible or tender & *Your X Year Old (one thru teens)* by Louise Bates Ames
The Continuum Concept: In Search of Happiness Lost (Classics in Human Development) by Jean Liedloff
Operating Instructions: A Journal of My Son's First Year by Anne Lamonte
The Emotional Life of the Toddler by Alicia F. Lieberman
How Babies Talk: The Magic and Mystery of Language in the First Three Years of Life by Roberta Michnick Golinkoff, Kathryn Hirsh-Pasek
The Secret of Childhood & *The Child In the Family* by Maria Montessori
Proactive Parenting: Guiding Your Child from Two to Six & *The Hurried Child: Growing Up Too Soon Too Fast* & *Miseducation: Preschoolers at Risk* by David Elkind
Kids, Parents, and Power Struggles & *Raising Your Spirited Child* by Mary Sheedy Kurchinka
Dear Parent: Caring for Infants with Respect & *Your Self-Confident Child, How to Encourage Your Child's Natural Abilities From the Very Start* by Magda Gerber
Between Parent and Child by Haim G. Ginott
Your Baby and Child by Penelope Leach
What's Going on in There? How the Brain and Mind Develop in the First Five Years of Life by Lise Eliot
Oneness and Separateness: From Infant to Individual by Louise Kaplan
Montessori From the Start: The Child at Home, from Birth to Age Three & *Montessori: A Modern Approach* by Paula Polk Lillard & Lynn Lillard Jessen
Michael Olaf's The Child of the World & *The Joyful Child* by Susan Stephenson
Understanding the Importance of the First Three Years of Life by Silvana Quattrocchi Montanaro
Montessori Controversy by John Chattin McNichols
Montessori Play and Learn by Leslie Britton
Escape from childhood: the needs and rights of children & *How Children Learn* by John Holt
You Are Your Child's First Teacher by Rahima Baldwin Dancy
Secrets of the Baby Whisperer for Toddlers by Melinda Blau, Tracy Hogg
For Your Own Good by Alice Miller
Punished By Rewards by Alfie Kohn
Children the Challenge by Theodore Dreikurs
The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Families by Steven R Covey
The 7 O'Clock Bedtime by Inda Schaenen
The Read-Aloud Handbook by Jim Trelease
The Measure of Our Success: Letters to My Children and Yours by Marian Wright Edelman
Children Who Are Not Yet Peaceful by Donna Goertz
Good Enough Parent by Bruno Bettelheim
Under the Chinaberry Tree: Books and Inspirations for Mindful Parenting by Ann Ruethling, Patti Pitcher
Reclaiming Childhood: Letting Children Be Children in Our Achievement-Oriented Society by William Crain
Whole Parent, Whole Child by Polly B. Berends
In Their Own Way by Thomas Armstrong
Positive Child Guidance by Darla Ferris Miller
Natural Family Living: The Mothering Magazine Guide to Parenting by Peggy O'Mara
The Nurture Assumption by Judith Rich Harris
Playground Politics: Understanding the Emotional Life of Your School-Aged Child by Stanley Greenspan
Einstein Never Used Flash Cards: How Our Children Learn and Why They Need to Play More and Memorize Less by Roberta Michnick Golinkoff