

# 2019-2020



## Academy Parent/Student Handbook

**Merritt Island Christian School**  
**2019-2020 Academy Parent/Student Handbook**  
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# Part I: Philosophy of Merritt Island Christian School

## **Mission Statement**

The mission of Merritt Island Christian Academy is to provide a learning environment while nurturing children's capacity to grow spiritually, socially, emotionally, physically and cognitively. We also strive to deepen children's commitment to positive Christian values such as kindness, helpfulness and respect for others.

## **Core Values**

- To foster respect for authority and the Lord Jesus Christ.
- To display a Christ-like character in all endeavors.
- To offer a Biblically-based curriculum at all levels of the school.
- To create leaders who are Godly role models.
- To develop a servant-minded attitude at school and in the community.

## **School Purpose**

Merritt Island Christian School is a ministry of First Baptist Church Merritt Island. Therefore, the purpose for the school is consistent with and flows out of the mission of First Baptist Church.

The purpose of Merritt Island Christian School is to extend the mission of First Baptist Church by providing sound academic training in an environment where students can be nurtured spiritually to become all they can be according to God's purpose for their lives. Our goal is excellence in Christian education, all for the glory of Jesus Christ.

## **Strategy for Mission Accomplishment**

- To instill each student with the understanding that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge.
- To partner with parents for the development of convictions and character.
- To maintain the highest standards of academic credibility.
- To challenge students to achieve their personal best in learning potential and life skills development in a creative, affirming, and encouraging atmosphere.
- To promote Biblical standards of behavior.
- To prepare a new generation of Christian leadership for impact in every arena of life.

We are here to help encourage students toward these goals. We expect them to be teachable, to learn from their mistakes, and to have a sincere commitment to be everything God desires for them.

## Statement of Faith

1. **God:** God is the Creator and Ruler of the Universe. He has eternally existed in three (3) personalities: The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These are CO-equal and are one God. *Examine these Scriptures: Genesis 1:1, 26, 27; 2:22; Psalms 90:2; Matthew 28:19; I Peter 1:2; II Corinthians 13:14.*
2. **Jesus:** Jesus Christ is the Son of God, Virgin born. He is CO-equal with the Father. Jesus lived a sinless life and offered Himself as the perfect sacrifice for the sins of all people by dying on a cross. He arose from the dead after three days to demonstrate His power over sin and death. He ascended to Heaven's glory and will return someday to earth to reign as King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. *Examine these Scriptures: Matthew 1:22,23; Hebrews 4:14, 15; Acts 1:9-11; Isaiah 9:6; I Corinthians 15:3,4; I Timothy 6:14,15; John 1:1-5; 14:10-30; Romans 1:3,4; Titus 2:13.*
3. **The Holy Spirit:** The Holy Spirit is CO-equal with the Father and the Son of God. He is present in the world to make men aware of their need for Jesus Christ. He also lives in every Christian from the moment of salvation. He provides the Christian with power for living, understanding of spiritual truth, and guidance in doing what is right. He gives every believer a spiritual gift when they are saved. As Christians we seek to live under His control daily. *Examine these Scriptures: II Corinthians 3:17; Acts 1:8; Ephesians 1:13; Ephesians 5:18; John 16:7-13, 14:16, 17; I Corinthians 2:12, 3:16; Galatians 5:25.*
4. **The Bible:** The Bible is God's Word to us. Human authors, under the supernatural guidance of the Holy Spirit, wrote it. It is the supreme source of truth for a Christian's beliefs and living. Because it is inspired by God, it is the truth without any mixture of error. *Examine these Scriptures: II Timothy 3:16; Psalms 119:105, 160, 12:6; II Peter 1:16, 20, 21; Proverbs 30:5.*
5. **Mankind:** People are made in the spiritual image of God, to be like Him in character. People are the supreme object of God's creation. Although every person has tremendous potential for good, all of us are marred by a nature of disobedience toward God called "sin". This nature separates people from God and causes many problems in life. *Examine these Scriptures: Genesis 1:27; Psalms 8:3-6; Isaiah 53:3-6, 59:1,2; Romans 3:23.*
6. **Salvation:** Salvation is God's free gift to us but we must accept it. We can never make up for our sin by self-improvement of good works. Only by trusting in Jesus Christ as God's offer of forgiveness can anyone be saved from sin's penalty. When we turn from our self-ruled life and turn to Jesus we're saved. Eternal life begins the moment one receives Jesus Christ into his life by faith. *Examine these Scriptures: Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8,9; John 14:6, 1:12; Titus 3:5; Galatians 3:26; Romans 5:1, 10:9,10.*
7. **Eternal Security:** Because God gives us eternal life through Jesus Christ, the true believer is secure in that salvation for eternity. If you have been genuinely saved, you cannot "lose" your salvation. Salvation is maintained by the grace and power of God, not by the self-effort of the Christian. It is the grace and keeping power of

God that gives us this security. *Examine these Scriptures: John 10:29; II Timothy 1:12; Hebrews 7:25, 10:10, 14; I Peter 1:3-5; Romans 3:20,28.*

8. **Eternity:** People were created to exist forever. We will exist eternally separated from God by sin or eternally with God through forgiveness and salvation. To be eternally separated from God is Hell. To be eternally in union with Him is eternal life. Heaven and Hell are real places of eternal existence. *Examine these Scriptures: John 3:16, 2:25; Romans 6:23; Revelation 20:15.*

## **Spiritual Life**

### **Spiritual Growth**

Merritt Island Christian School endeavors to provide a Christ-centered program through its atmosphere, curriculum, and staff. However, MICS's efforts are not a substitute for personal spiritual growth. We strongly encourage each family member to strengthen his/her personal faith through the study of God's word (the Bible), active involvement in a Bible-teaching church, and prayer.

## **Parents' Covenant**

*(Every MICS Parent will be required to sign and return a Parents' Covenant Form which will be provided in the Back to School Celebration packet on Friday, August 9, 2019)*

Parents play a vital part in the total educational program at Merritt Island Christian School (MICS). Working together, parents and teachers can strengthen students and provide an excellent school experience. Together it is our goal to "Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old, he will not depart from it". (Proverbs 22:6)

As parents/guardians we understand and agree to the following:

1. I/we will pray regularly for the teachers, administration and staff of MICS.
2. I/we have read and agree with the policies and procedures stated in the Student Handbook. Electronic copy – <http://www.micscougars.com/>
3. I/we will ensure that my/our child(ren) regularly attend(s) school and arrive(s) at school on time. I/we understand if my/our child(ren) is/are tardy they will be delivered to their respective classrooms in a timely manner. (approx. 15mins.)
4. I/we promise to pay all financial obligations to the school promptly. If unable to do so, I/we will notify the school immediately. I/we will be willing to bear my/our fair share of practical responsibilities in order to keep costs at a minimum.
5. I/we agree to model good problem-solving for my/our child(ren) by applying the Matthew 18 principle. (Matt. 18:15-19, 35) If a question or concern should persist I/we agree to confer first with the classroom teacher. If a resolution cannot be reached, I/we agree to secondly make an appointment to meet with the principal, working towards a resolution reflecting the school's mission and purpose. If there is not a satisfactory resolution, I/we thirdly agree to make an appointment with the school superintendent.
6. I/we will seek to uphold the testimony of Jesus Christ in this community by not entering into negative gossip or complaints about Merritt Island Christian School's academic program, athletic program, any member of the MICS staff, or the policies and procedures established, either in the presence of my/our child (ren) or with other parents. (Leviticus 19:16)

7. I/we understand that if I/we cannot deal with concerns and challenges in an adult, respectful, Christian manner, but instead display negative attitudes and behaviors toward Merritt Island Christian School through contact with staff, other parents, and students in the community, I/we will be asked to come in for a conference with the superintendent. If the attitudes and behaviors continue, I/we will face the administrative removal of my/our child (ren) from Merritt Island Christian School. All situations will be handled in a godly, loving and respectful manner.

## **Part II: General Information**

### **Admissions Policy**

Merritt Island Christian School admits students of any race to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. The school does not discriminate on the basis of race in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

Preschool and childcare applicants are placed on a first-come, first-served basis. Applicants entering K5 through 12<sup>th</sup> grade must successfully complete an acceptance process. Students may not be accepted due to poor academic performance and/or a history of disciplinary issues. Classroom space is limited at each grade level.

Parents or guardians of enrolled children must provide current immunization and medical records to the Academy office within 30 days of the enrollment. Failure to provide the necessary documents will result in the child being unable to attend MICS.

### **Confidentiality Statement**

If a student reveals information that in the teacher's or counselor's opinion and discretion raises concerns for the safety or emotional stability of the student, that information should be revealed to appropriate officials and the student's parents. Not everything said to a teacher or a counselor is confidential.

### **Before School and After-School Hours**

Merritt Island Christian School's main school office hours are from 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. every school day. The "Academy's" office hours are 6:30 A.M. to 6:00 P.M., Monday through Friday. Students, Kindergarten through 6<sup>th</sup> grade, who are on school grounds before 7:30 A.M. or after 3:15 P.M., will be sent to childcare and charged a minimum one-half hour charge. Students in the preschool/VPK program will be checked into childcare if they arrive before 8:00 A.M. or stay after 12:15 P.M.

### **Student Drop-Off and Pick Up**

#### **Drop-Off**

All preschool and childcare students will need to be escorted by their parents to their classroom and left in the care of the teacher on duty. Children arriving for childcare will need to be clocked in on the computer before entering the building.

#### **Pick-up**

Parents of children in childcare will need to clock them out of the computer before picking them up at their classroom. Parents of children who attend preschool only, may pick up their child at the classroom door at dismissal time.

If you need to pick up your child early, please come to the Academy Office and your child will be brought to you.

**Children will be permitted to leave school only with their parents or individuals listed on their **FACTS SIS/Procare accounts** or teacher information cards.** We ask that adults picking up children bring picture I.D. until we are familiar with you and the people on your pick-up list.

**Please drive cautiously** as you enter the school parking lots and follow the cones or arrows that indicate traffic patterns. For the safety of the children please do not park along the fence or double-park in front of the school.

### **FACTS SIS**

**FACTS SIS (formerly RenWeb)** is an internet communication resource provided to every K3 and VPK family at Merritt Island Christian School. All families will receive FACTS SIS log-in instructions and information at our annual Back to School Celebration. Please check FACTS SIS for school wide announcements and upcoming events. The school master calendar is also posted on FACTS SIS.

### **Emergency Contact Phone Numbers**

It is vitally important that parents be sure to keep their emergency contact phone numbers up-to-date each time they move or change jobs. In the event the school cannot contact the parent, an individual on the emergency contact list will be notified.

### **Field Trips**

Merritt Island Christian Academy will host on-site field trips. All onsite field trips are considered an important part of the educational program at the academy. They are carefully planned to give the students educationally enriching experiences. Participation is strongly encouraged.

### **Chaperones/Volunteers**

It is required that all chaperones/volunteers be fingerprinted prior to working or volunteering on our school campus. MICS has the equipment needed to fingerprint all our volunteers, which includes any individual that wishes to help with our students in a classroom or on our campus, and chaperone field trips. Once fingerprinted, we will be notified by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement if an individual is allowed to chaperone or work with our children. We need to be vigilant in protecting our children. The cost for fingerprinting is \$50. This is the cost we have to pay the Florida Department of Law Enforcement. Fingerprints are good for five years. If you have questions regarding fingerprinting, please contact Mrs. Suzie Boyer, at 321-453-2710, ext. 344.

Chaperones are parents or guardians who seek to attend an off-campus activity in order to help ensure proper supervision of children. In order to serve as a chaperone, you will not be permitted to bring additional children with you. If you want to attend the field trip and

bring other children with you, and you will not be functioning as a chaperone, it might be necessary for you to secure your own ticket directly.

In situations where there is a reduced price or free ticket for chaperones, please understand that only those functioning as chaperones under the definition above will receive the free or discounted price. If you sign up to be a chaperone and turn in your money and later realize that you cannot go as intended, we regretfully cannot return your money.

Please be aware that you may not be able to participate in every field trip. We will have a number of field trips throughout the year and hope that everyone who desires to be a chaperone will have the opportunity to do so at least once throughout the course of the year.

### **Handling of Money**

Please do not allow students to carry large amounts of money to school for personal use. Please do not turn in loose money to teachers. Any money sent to the school for fees, etc., should be sent in a marked envelope with the student's name, the teacher's name, and the amount and purpose listed on the front.

### **Lost and Found**

Personal items, which are found, will be placed in lost and found boxes. Please check with the school office for lost/found items. Items not claimed within one week will be donated to local thrift stores.

### **Valuables**

Students are responsible for anything of value they bring to school. The school is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

### **Visiting the Campus**

We encourage parents to visit the school. Out of respect for our teachers, we ask that you call the Academy Office to schedule your classroom visit. Before entering the classroom, please stop by the Academy Office. We ask parents to limit their visits to twenty minutes and to sit in the back of the class.

All visitors, parents, etc. must check in to the Academy office. Unapproved visitors will be asked to leave the campus.

### **Playground Policy**

Parents or adult guests may not go out to recess with any preschool class. This is for the protection and safety of all our students. The students will remain under the supervision of MICS teachers.

### **Weather Related School Closings**

MICS will close any time there is a public school closing due to a threat of dangerous weather conditions. Please listen for TV or radio announcements. In the event of weather-related school closure, MICS will determine, separate from Brevard County schools, when MICS will reopen. The school will make every effort to inform our families when school opens.

## **Fire Drills, Tornado Drills and Emergency Evacuations**

The Academy runs a minimum of 12 fire drills per year, 2 tornado drills per year, and one lock down drill, intruder drill and bomb threat drill. If an actual fire or evacuation of the children's building would occur, the children will be escorted to the Fire House building on the west end of the church property. Parents will be notified, if necessary, and instructed on pick-up procedures.

## **Surveillance Cameras**

MICS uses video cameras as an added security measure in all classrooms and open play areas, including outside playgrounds. For the protection of the children in our care, recorded videos are only viewed by the MICS Academy Director, Assistant Director and/or Security Officer.

## **Parent-Teacher Fellowship**

All MICS parents are encouraged to participate in our PTF. This organization promotes fellowship and cooperation between parents, teachers, and administration in order to ensure the shaping of students' lives and the reinforcement of Christian values in the world in which we live. Please become an active member of this organization, which serves as a vital part of each student's emotional, social, spiritual, and educational growth.

## **Meals**

### **Breakfast for all Academy Children**

We will feed your child the breakfast you bring if he/she arrives before 8:00 am. Children arriving after 8:00 am should have breakfast before they come to school.

### **Lunch/snack**

#### **Babies/Toddlers**

Each room has a refrigerator to keep food cold. Finger food is best for toddlers. Please be sure to send an adequate amount of food, bottles, (formula and juice), and diapers in case you pick your child up later than expected. **All infant bottles, containers, and sippy-cups must be marked with your child's first and last name.**

#### **Two Years through VPK**

Children two years and older can bring their lunch in a lunch box or order a hot lunch. Lunches brought from home cannot be heated or refrigerated. Please DO NOT send glass containers, carbonated drinks, candy, or excessive sweets. For hot lunches, orders must be turned into the childcare office by Wednesday morning by 10:00 am for the following week's lunches.

If your child stays for lunch after school, there will be a minimum 30-minute childcare charge.

We have two snack times, once in the morning and the other after naptime. We ask that you send nutritious food for snack. Please do not pack soft drinks or candy.

## **Illness/Medication**

Children should not come to school with the following:

- **FEVER:** Children that have had a fever of 100.0 or higher, within the previous 24 hours;
- **CONJUNCTIVITIS:** Commonly known as “pink-eye.” Your child may return to school 24 hours after treatment with antibiotic eye drops;
- **DIARRHEA:** If fever is present and/or 2 or more episodes occur in 1 hour.
- **VOMITING:** If fever is present or more than one episode occurs;
- **RASHES/IMPETIGO:** Rashes associated with internal diseases are almost always contagious. Impetigo, ringworm and scabies are also contagious;
- **HEAD LICE:** After treatment with an effective medication, and all nits removed from the hair, the child will be allowed to return to school;
- **CHILDHOOD DISEASES:** Chicken pox, measles, and scarlet fever.

If symptoms of illness develop while your child is at school, you will be notified. If it is necessary for your child to leave childcare, arrangements must be made for pick up within one hour. We realize all symptoms do not indicate serious illness. However, for the protection of all children in our care, the staff and/or school nurse will make the decision whether your child should be picked up or not.

**If your child has been sent home with an illness, they will not be allowed back to school until they are symptom free for 24 hours.**

In order for medication to be given at the Academy, the parent must bring a prescription from the doctor that we keep on file. The medication must be in the original bottle with the matching prescription on the front. We will keep all medications in the front office. The Academy office staff will administer required medication beginning at 10:00 am, as instructed by the prescription label. **Parents must administer the first required dose of medication (i.e.-nebulizers, antibiotics, etc.) prior to dropping the child off each day.** No medication is to be left in the diaper bag, backpack, or lunch box. This is for the protection of every child. Parents must provide a measured medicine dosage cup or dropper in order for medication to be given. **Medication cannot be added to any food or drink sent into the classroom.** All medication will be sent home with the parent when he/she picks up the child. We ask that you notify the school immediately if your child has been diagnosed with any communicable illness.

### **Photo Policy**

Students at Merritt Island Christian Academy may be photographed during class time, field trips, or activities. These photographs will be used in school newsletters, handouts, website, school social media and school yearbook.

### **Birthdays/Parties**

Birthday cupcakes or a special cookie may be brought for your child to share with his or her class. Consult the teacher about the number of children in the class. No noisemakers, hats, ice cream, drinks, balloons, or candy please. It is not appropriate to make this time the kind of birthday party you would have at home.

## **Book Bags**

All children are required to have a book bag large enough to hold a lunch box, change of clothing, papers, etc. throughout the day. Label the bag clearly on the outside of the bag with a tag or permanent marker.

# **Part III: The Academy Program**

## **Class Overview**

### **Infants and Toddlers**

Our infant classes use *Frogstreet* Curriculum. This curriculum actively engages and stimulates infants through social interactions: talking, playing, moving, singing and reading. The activities help your infant develop a wide variety of skills, including: language acquisition, sense of self, sensory awareness, motor skills, visual tracking and more.

### **2's**

We have a well-rounded curriculum for our 2's, *Frogstreet*. It focuses on literacy, social development, language development and beginning math concepts. We have daily Bible stories and songs. We teach the children basic biblical concepts such as: God created everything; Jesus is the Son of God; and God wants us to love one another, etc. The children actively participate in art experiences, movement and music. The 2-year-old classes participate in a weekly, half-hour beginning soccer class, at the school, taught by a Soccer Shots coach.

### **K3 Classes**

We will prepare your preschool child for a lifetime of learning with the *One-In-Christ* curriculum. The colorful curriculum is filled with activities that will excite your child about learning. It uses a center-based, hands-on approach to learning in order for each child to learn at his own developmental level and ability. Each lesson incorporates age-appropriate lessons in language arts, prereading skills, phonics, math, handwriting, social studies, and science. Music lessons are included twice a week and emphasize music, rhyme, play, movement, and literature. The class begins each day with a Bible lesson. Enrichment programs are weekly with cooking experiments, soccer, music, and art. In addition to individual classroom activities, the Academy sponsors an annual spring musical program. This program is performed during morning school hours.

### **VPK Classes**

In the VPK classes, we begin each day with a Bible lesson. The lessons emphasize character traits such as obedience, kindness, courage, responsibility, thankfulness, and more. Bible stories and application stories illustrate these characteristics. We use the Starfall Pre K and Abeka Curriculum. This exciting program integrates math, science, health, creative arts, social studies, physical movement, early literacy, and social-emotional development, all under a framework of guided instruction and imaginative play. Key curriculum highlights include:

- **Motivation** — *Build a cooperative classroom environment* to fuel motivation, with child-directed instruction, hands-on experiences, ownership of materials, and interactive online activities, and by supporting and exploring imagination.
- **Phonological Awareness** — *Ensure readiness for phonics* instruction with short, daily exercises.
- **Phonics** — *Introduce letter-sound relationships* systematically, sequentially, and explicitly.
- **Vocabulary** — *Explore vocabulary* in quality literature, during instruction, and in everyday communication.
- **Social & Emotional Development** — *Prepare children for new social environments* presented at school by example, through direct communication, and with cooperative learning activities.
- **Science** — *Explore the magic of the natural world* with simple scientific experiments involving plants, temperatures, textures, and more!
- **Math** — *Build a foundation for mathematical thinking* through center exploration, activities, and games, using math children encounter every day.

The VPK enrichment program is on a nine-week rotation. They will go to Soccer Shots, art, music, and P.E. In addition to individual classroom activities the Academy sponsors an annual Christmas musical program. This program is performed during morning school hours.

### Attendance Policy

Excessive absences and tardies certainly do not benefit a student’s educational progress and are disruptive to the academic focus of the classroom. We want to ensure that your child has the best opportunity possible to receive a quality education. Regular attendance and prompt arrival is an important part of this process.

If you do run late and arrive after 8:30 please bring your child to the preschool office and office staff will take your child to class. If you know your child is going to be absent, please call the Academy Office so we can notify your child’s teacher.

School hours will be 8:30 A.M. until 12:00 P.M. We have before and after care available. If you are interested in these services, you may get information at the preschool/childcare office.

### VPK Attendance Guidelines

We follow the State of Florida’s VPK rules on attendance. Each child is allowed 3 excused absences per month or 20%. Absences beyond the 20% **may be excused** under “extraordinary circumstances”, if appropriate documentation is provided. Appropriate documentation for specified circumstances includes:

- Hospitalization of student, parent or guardian
- Infectious disease or parasitic infestation of the student, parent or guardian
- Funeral, memorial or bereavement due to death of a family member
- Extraordinary circumstances beyond the control of the child or child’s parent
- Court ordered visitation

- Observance of a religious holiday or service
- Doctor or dentist appointment
- Family vacation (not to exceed 5 days per program year)

At the beginning of each month, parents must verify their child's attendance by signing the monthly Student Attendance and Certificate of Eligibility. These forms will be available to sign in your child's classroom.

### **Conferences**

Parent/Teacher conferences are in January. You will need to call the Academy Office to schedule a conference, if needed.

### **Progress Reports and VPK Assessment**

K/3 and VPK students will receive two progress reports during the school year. VPK students will also receive the state mandated VPK assessment three times during the year to monitor the students' progress. Final report cards and assessment scores will be handed out at the end of the school year.

### **Toys**

Please do not allow your child to bring toys, stuffed animals, or jewelry to school unless it is for Show and Tell. These items are distracting in a classroom environment and may get lost.

### **Love and Logic Discipline and Guidance Plan**

Rules in our classrooms are few. We believe that as all children are different, and all actions and reactions vary and are personal in nature, effective discipline involves a few overriding tenets rather than a long list of specific rules. Situations are dealt with as they arise with the focus on enabling the child to grow and learn from his or her actions.

#### **Guidelines for student behavior:**

1. You may engage in any behavior that does not create a problem for you or anyone else in the world.
2. If you find yourself with a problem, you may solve it by any means that does not cause a problem for anyone else in the world.
3. You may engage in any behavior that does not jeopardize the safety or learning of yourself or others. Unkind words and actions will not be tolerated.

#### **In ensuring that the above guidelines are adhered to, teachers will operate with the following principles as their guide:**

1. Teachers will react without anger or haste to problem situations.
2. Teachers will provide consequences that are not punitive but that allow the child to experience the results of a poor choice, enabling him or her to make better choices in the future.
3. Teachers will proceed in all situations with the best interest of the child foremost in their mind: academic, social, and emotional well-being will be fostered.
4. Teachers will guide students toward personal responsibility and the decision-making skills they will need to function in the real world.
5. Teachers will arrange consequences for problem situations in such a way that the child will not be humiliated or demeaned.

6. Equal is not always fair. Consequences will be designed to fit the problems of individual students, and they may be different even when problems appear to be the same.
7. Teachers will make every effort to ensure that, in each situation, the students involved understand why they are involved in consequences.

## **CHILD BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE PLAN**

Merritt Island Christian Academy believes that all children should experience success. We strive for a classroom setting that provides children with opportunities to explore their environment within consistent, age-appropriate limits; in such an atmosphere, most behavioral issues are prevented.

However, if behavioral issues occur, our philosophy is to help children learn human values, problem solving skills and to take responsibility for their own choices. By using the following progressive guidance techniques, we strive to minimize inappropriate behavior while creating a positive environment for all of our children:

### **I. Classroom Management**

Our teachers manage individual classrooms by:

- Modeling and reinforcing appropriate behavior
- Maintaining consistent supervision
- Setting reasonable expectations for children's behavior based on their developmental levels and individual differences
- Becoming familiar with an individual child's special needs
- Providing interesting, challenging, age-appropriate activities

### **II. Ignoring**

Some negative behavior is exhibited by a child to seek attention; however, it can be stopped when it does not get the attention desired. We may utilize this technique when there are no safety issues involved.

### **III. Redirection / Distraction**

We will offer alternatives to children engaged in undesirable behavior by offering a different toy, suggesting a new activity, engaging the child in an activity with a teacher or another child, or by suggesting independent play.

### **IV. Verbal Intervention**

As teachers of young children we know that each behavior has a meaning. If a child is engaged in inappropriate behavior we will first try to help the child identify what they are feeling (your face looks like you might be angry, are you ok?) Next, we remind the child of the limits or guidelines we follow (we share our toys). Then, if it is a conflict between two children we encourage them to use their words and come to a resolution. We ask them questions and give clues as to what they might do to solve their problem.

### **V. Logical Consequences**

For many situations there are obvious logical consequences. We will let children experience logical consequences as is appropriate.

## **VI. Take a Break/Thinking Chair**

This is used when a child is engaging in behavior that is either dangerous to themselves or someone else or is disrupting a group and the tools described above have not altered their behavior. When a child is asked to "take a break" they are separated from the group (still in the classroom and supervised). The goal is for the child to take some time to relax and calm down in the thinking chair, and to enable him/her to not be influenced by peers. The process used for "Take a Break" is:

- The child is assisted to an area in the room where he/she can be supervised at all times.
- The child may return to the group as soon as the negative behavior stops or is significantly reduced.
- "Take a Break" will not be used for children under the age of 18 months; instead, redirection or distraction techniques will be used.
- If "Take a Break" occurs two or more times in one day, parents will be notified when the child is picked up at the end of the day.
- If "Take a Break" is not working effectively; the Persistent Inappropriate Behavior Procedure will be instituted.

## **GUIDELINES FOR PERSISTENT INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR**

Persistent inappropriate behavior is any inappropriate behavior which continues after the progressive guidance steps have been used; any behavior which threatens the health or safety of other children or staff; or a continuous inability to follow the rules and guidelines of our program.

Merritt Island Christian Academy will use the following progressive procedures:

1. We will observe and record the child's inappropriate behavior
2. We will document what we have done to try to change the behavior.
3. If inappropriate behavior continues, parents will be asked to participate in an immediate parent-teacher conference. A specific action plan will be developed at this conference to address the behavior. The action plan will outline all steps the staff will take to change the behavior, all steps the parents will take, and all steps toward disenrollment if the behavior persists.
4. The Academy Principal may suggest outside resources to parents. The Academy will work with any outside resource for further guidance in responding to the child's behavior.
5. If the inappropriate behavior continues, parents may be asked to keep the child home for a day or two. A parent may also be required to pick their child up immediately due to inappropriate behavior.
6. If the inappropriate behavior persists after the child is kept home for several occasions, Merritt Island Christian Academy will request the parent to dis-enroll the child.

## **GUIDELINES FOR IMMEDIATE DISENROLLMENT**

Certain behavior may cause a significant risk of harm to the health and safety of other children or staff. (For example, i.e., a physical assault which results in serious bodily injury, an attempted physical assault, which if completed, would result in serious bodily injury, setting or attempting to set fires, bringing weapons to the Academy, substantial damage to real or personal property, etc.)

Merritt Island Christian Academy may disenroll any child whose behavior creates a significant risk of harm to the health and safety of other children or staff, without following the guidance steps outlined above.

### **OTHER FORMS OF DISCIPLINE**

Our policy does not permit the use of the following forms of discipline:

- Corporal punishment
- Emotional punishment, including ridicule, embarrassment, or humiliation
- Punishing a child for lapses in toilet training habits
- Withholding food, light, warmth, clothing or medical care
- Physical restraint, other than the restraint necessary to protect a child or others from harm

### **Dismissals**

It is our desire that every student succeed at MICS. From time to time, however, the administration will determine, in the best interest of all parties involved, that a student must be dismissed or asked to withdraw from MICS due to a poor pattern of behavior or academic choices. A dismissal recommendation will be made by the Principal. The final approval will be given by the Superintendent

### **Biting Policy**

Biting is a natural developmental stage that many children go through. It is usually a temporary condition that is most common between thirteen and twenty-four months of age. The safety of the children at the Academy is our primary concern. The Academy's biting policy addresses the actions the staff will take if a biting incident occurs.

Toddlers bite other toddlers for many different reasons. A child might be teething or overly tired and frustrated. He or she might be experimenting or trying to get the attention of the teacher or his peers. Toddlers have poor verbal skills and are impulsive without a lot of self-control. Sometimes biting occurs for no apparent reason. The Academy will encourage the children to "use their words" if they become angry or frustrated. The staff members will maintain a close and constant supervision of the children at all times.

The following steps will be taken if a biting incident occurs at our Academy:

- The biting will be interrupted with a firm "No...we don't bite our friends!"
- Staff will stay calm and will not overreact.
- The bitten child will be comforted.
- Staff will remove the biter from the situation. The biter will be given something to do that is satisfying.
- The wound of the bitten child shall be assessed and cleansed with soap and water.
- The parents of both children will be notified of the biting incident. Appropriate forms will be filled out (Incident Report)
- **Confidentiality of all children involved will be maintained.**
- The bitten area should continue to be observed by parents and staff for signs of infection.
- If biting persists, the parents will be asked to meet with MICS Academy Principal, in which

they will develop a behavior modification plan specific to the child's needs.

### **Inappropriate Touching Policy**

All inappropriate touching that is observed and/or reported to Academy Personnel must be immediately reported to the Academy Principal. The Academy Personnel supervising the children involved will interview the children separately and document their statements. (This interview must take place as soon as the incident has been reported.)

#### First Offense –

All parents, whose children were involved in the incident, must be contacted the day of the incident.

The documented statements will be given to the Academy Principal for review.

The Academy Principal may use MICS' Disciplinary Panel to assist in resolving the situation.

Second Offense – The MICS Disciplinary Panel will determine the next discipline step to be taken. The child/ren involved may be dismissed from the MICS Academy.

### **Dress Code**

#### Infant through 2-year olds

Children need to wear loose, comfortable clothes. Please pack an extra set of clothes in your child's back-pack in case of spills or accidents. We prefer the children wear tennis shoes, but they may wear any rubber soled shoe that fits securely to their feet. This is so they can run and play easily. No crocks or flip-flops!

#### Preschool/VPK

Children enrolled in three-year-old preschool and the VPK program for four-year olds are required to wear playwear or MICS polos purchased through Sir Walter Uniforms on Merritt Island.

The navy shorts have elastic waistbands and the cotton tops come in gray, white and navy. Playwear items include the MICS Academy logo. Girls may also wear the blue plaid or navy jumper (with shorts underneath). In order to maintain a consistent appearance among our students, **MICS uniforms can be purchased from the following designated suppliers:**

- **Sir Walter Uniforms**-Sir Walter is located at 500 South Plumosa Street on Merritt Island. You may contact them at (321) 459-0646.
- **Local Various Stores**- navy or khaki uniform shorts and skirts may be purchased from various vendors.
- **Brevard Team Sports**- will put our crest logo on shirts purchased elsewhere for \$5.00.

For cold weather days, children may wear the following: any solid colored sweatpants and sweatshirt, khaki or navy pants (any brand) or layer a long-sleeve shirt under an Academy t-shirt. They may also wear any brand sweater, jacket or hoodie. (PLEASE label with your child's name.)

**Tennis shoes must be worn by preschoolers.** Tennis shoes provide more protection for your student's feet as children play on the playground than sandals or flip-flops.

Additionally, boy's hair may not be any longer than the top of the collar and must be cut in a conservative style. Boys are not allowed to wear earrings.

## Part IV: Academy Information

### Academy Billing

All Academy fees are to be paid weekly, and no later than the Friday of each week.

All accounts that maintain a balance will be charged a ten percent (10%) late fee per week, accrued every Monday.

A late policy is in effect for children picked up after 6:00 p.m.

- **Late pick-up occurrences will result in a fee of \$1.00 per minute for each child picked up after 6:00 p.m.**
- **If you have an outstanding balance of \$100 or more, report cards will be held until your balance is current.**

### Vacation

Each full-time Academy student is allowed two weeks of vacation in which no fees will be charged. The Academy office should be notified of your vacation plans in advance. When a full week is not used at one time, credits for vacation days will be given only after the amount of days in your contract have been accumulated.

### Holidays

When the Academy is closed for a holiday, no adjustment will be made to fees due unless the Academy is closed more than one day of your scheduled days (i.e., Thanksgiving, the academy is closed Wednesday, Thursday and Friday). Students on five-day contracts will only be charged for three days. In these situations, no adjustments will be made for students on two-day and three-day contracts.

### Academy Extended Care

K3 and K4 students, whose stay extends after the morning program, participate in the afternoon extended-care program. This program begins at 12:15P.M. for the children and will include the student's lunch and nap time. There is an hourly charge and is to be paid weekly.

### Naps

K3 and VPK children will have a quiet time for rest and sleep after lunch, from 12:30 pm to 2:30 pm. During nap time, your child will hear lullaby music. A staff member will remain in the room throughout the nap period. We have cots for the children while they nap. You will need to purchase a specialized sheet from the Academy Office. The sheet will go home each Friday for laundering and return on Monday morning. You may also bring a blanket.

### Toilet Training

Two-year-old teachers will gladly work with you and your child in the toilet training process. Please communicate with your child's teacher on what works for you at home and we will try to do the same here. We ask that you keep them in pull-ups or diapers until they are telling the teacher that they need to use the bathroom on their own.

**All preschool children must be FULLY toilet trained** and able to provide beginning personal hygiene care. It is acknowledged that three-year-olds require extra encouragement while making the transition into school in the fall. The staff members are very sensitive and

supportive of the children in this area. However, all children must be toilet trained before starting preschool. “Pull-ups” or training pants may not be worn in preschool. Repeated accidents over an extended period of time may result in having to withdraw your child until they are fully potty trained.

### **Withdrawal**

Students may withdraw at any time. All fees must be paid before records will be released. Students who do not attend for a period of four weeks will be considered withdrawn (and charged through the four-week period), unless other arrangements are made with the office prior to the absence. Re-enrollment will require new registration.