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## School Mission Statement

McDonough Presbyterian Children's Academy ("MPCA") affirms that each child is a unique gift of God and is dedicated to providing a stimulating educational environment.

## School Value Statement

McDonough Presbyterian Children's Academy affirms that each child is a unique gift of God and has the right to be treated with dignity and respect in a safe, loving, and nurturing environment. MPC Academy accepts and embraces families of all nations, religions, races, colors, and ethnic groups. We believe in the individuality and creativity of every child. MPC Academy is dedicated to providing a stimulating environment, which allows children to develop attitudes, appreciations, skills, ideas, and habits that lead to a lifelong love of learning intellectually, physically, socially, and spiritually. The MPC Academy team pledges to encourage and champion every child and to share with them the joy learning and the love of God.

## Preschool Program Goals

*The goals of the Preschool program at MPCA are:*

- To provide a warm and nurturing environment where the young child's learning can thrive through play and directed activities.
- To stimulate the young child's learning with activities in areas of reading readiness, language arts, math readiness, computer, art, music, foreign language, motor skills, and ethics.
- To encourage the self-esteem of the young child through respect of cultural and ethnic diversity with the support of teacher, class, and school.
- To create a love of learning and develop a life-long learner who challenges himself/herself daily for future school and life success.

## Entrance Age

- One-Year Class:** Child should be at least 12 months but not older than 24 months on September 1 of the year of enrollment;
- Two-Year Class:** Child must be at least 2 years by September 1 of the year of enrollment;
- Three-Year Class:** Child must be at least 3 years by September 1 of the year of enrollment and potty trained (see toilet training section below);
- Four-Year Class:** Child must be at least 4 years by September 1 of the year of enrollment and potty trained (see toilet training section below);
- Kindergarten:** Child must be at least 5 years by September 1 of the year of enrollment.

MPCA reserves the right to change a child's class placement when appropriate. Any changes will only be made with the consent of the child's parents and the teachers involved.

## Registration

Registration typically begins in January. The registration/supply fee is equal to one month's tuition. Siblings will receive a 25% discount on the lowest registration/supply fee. Registration/supply fees are non-refundable for all classes. It is payable at the time of registration. Checks should be made payable to McDonough Presbyterian Children's Academy or MPCA.

A Georgia Certificate of Immunization (Form 3231) is required before your child may begin school.

## **Tuition**

Tuition is payable one month in advance and is due the first of each school month for the following month (i.e., August tuition will be due July 1, with the final payment being April 1). All tuition and fees must be received by the tenth of the month or a late fee will be assessed. Unless tuition and late fees are received before the 30<sup>th</sup> of the month, your child will be withdrawn from school immediately.

Checks should be made payable to McDonough Presbyterian Children's Academy. A service charge will be assessed on all returned checks.

MPCA sets the tuition and fees for each class based on a number of factors that are not limited to the projected number of class days. Parents must pay the full tuition when due for the child's class to ensure their child's continued enrollment and good standing at the school. The school does not ordinarily reduce, alter or prorate monthly tuition obligations for any reason, including a child's periodic planned or unplanned absences from school, emergency school closings and the like.

## **Hours**

Preschool Hours	9:00 a.m. – 12:00 a.m.
Kindergarten Hours	9:00 a.m. – 1:00 a.m.
Lunch Bunch	12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Early Morning	8:00 a.m. – 8:45 a.m.
Students may enter classrooms	8:45 a.m.

## **Holidays and School Calendar**

MPCA will follow the Henry County Public School calendar, with the exceptions that we typically start school one week after the county and end one week prior to the county's schools closing for the summer.

## **Early Morning**

Children may be dropped off at the school between 8:00 and 8:45 in the morning and taken to a designated room. Reservations for a space in this room may be made in the office. Please refer to the Tuition and Fee Schedule for pricing.

## **Lunch Bunch**

Preschool children may stay and play until 1:00 pm and eat a sack lunch brought from home. Reservations will need to be made and paid for at the first of the month. Please refer to the Tuition and Fee Schedule for pricing. Please send healthy foods that you know your child likes. Lunchtime at school is generally not a good time to experiment with new items. Keep in mind that the preschool does not have the facilities or the staff necessary to microwave or otherwise warm items.

## **Arrival and Dismissal**

Preschool begins at 9:00 am and ends at 12:00 pm; Kindergarten ends at 1:00 pm. Children must be dropped off no earlier than 8:45 am and picked up no later than 12:15 pm. Beginning at 8:45, children may be dropped off through the car line.

In the afternoon, children may be picked up either by walking into the building or through the car line. Car line vehicles must have their children's pick-up name cards posted in their front driver's side window. Lunch bunch students are picked up in the classroom by 1:00 pm.

There will be a \$5.00 late pick up fee for the first 15 minutes and \$10.00 for each additional 15 minutes. If an emergency situation arises and the child cannot be picked up promptly, please call the school and notify the director prior to dismissal. Prompt pick up adds to your child's sense of security.

If you need to notify the school that you are running late or making emergency changes to transportation, please call **770-957-9890**. If your child is going home with someone other than yourself, please send a note to the teacher authorizing this change in transportation. We cannot allow a child to leave school with anyone without the parent's written permission.

## **Attendance**

Each student is expected to attend school every day except in case of illness.

Emergency Information Card: It is vital that parents complete and keep current the information requested on the student emergency card.

Absence From School: To the extent possible, please notify the school on any morning in which your child will be absent. If you know your child will be absent in advance, please let the teacher know by note or verbally.

Early Dismissal: Written or verbal requests from parents for early dismissal should be given to the teacher or the Director on the day of the request.

Late Arrival: Preschool students arriving after 9:00 am are brought by their parent directly to their teacher. If you arrive 15 minutes past 9:00 am we will need you to come to the preschool office and sign our tardy list. Then the assistant director will escort your child to class.

Illness: Students who become ill during the school day are sent to the office with a staff member and the child's parent will be called. Please keep your child at home whenever there are symptoms of illness or if you do not wish him/her to go outside. Personnel are not available to keep children inside while their class is outside. Your child may return to school no sooner than 24 hours after vomiting or running a fever of 100 degrees or more. Please do not send children to school with diarrhea or if they have had little or no sleep due to a cold, cough, or any other illness during the night. It is important to think of other students as well as the health of your child.

## **Emergency School Closing**

MPCA will be closed on days when the Henry County Public Schools close for weather. Emergency school closing information is broadcast on local radio and television stations.

## **Student Dress**

MPCA believes that how students dress affects the total learning environment. Appropriate dress is essential for children to fully participate in all facets of our program. It is recommended that children dress so as not to be inhibited from participation in messy art activities or active play. Children should be sent with appropriate outerwear during the winter. Classes play outside each morning unless it is raining or below 40 degrees. Rubber-soled shoes or gym shoes are preferred to give maximum traction and mobility during playground time. Backless shoes, cowboy boots, dress shoes, and sandals are discouraged.

Extra Clothes: There is an appropriate need for each preschool student to have an extra set of clothes in the classroom at all times. We advise that these clothes be updated seasonally for the comfort of the preschool child. Please package in plastic bag and label. Include underwear, socks, pants, and shirt or dress.

## **Discipline Code**

General Guidelines: By becoming part of the MPCA community, the faculty, staff, parents, and students promise to be responsible, to respect one another, and to pursue excellence.

Rules for the preschool exist so that students will be able to grow into mature and successful young men and women. It is everyone's responsibility to help to create a learning environment in which all can be successful and happy.

Good manners and character training are a regular part of the MPCA program. The children are taught to listen, to obey, to share, to be kind to others, and to respect the personal and property rights of others. There will be positive reinforcement for good behavior. We use positive discipline techniques that are constructive. We set limits that are developmentally appropriate and are enforced consistently. When necessary, children are given 2 to 6 minutes in "time out" (depending on age) to consider their actions before they are allowed to rejoin the group. The use of corporal punishment is not permitted. If behavior problems persist, your child will be sent to the Director's office.

We will contact a child's parent if necessary regarding behavior concerns. If there is a consistent problem, a conference will be scheduled with the parents, the teacher, and the Director. We will work together as a team to resolve the problem. However, we do reserve the right to withdraw a child from the program if behavior problems cannot be corrected or if we do not have the full support and cooperation of the parents.

## **Personal Property**

Please mark your child's name on all personal property (i.e. coats, backpacks, lunch boxes). Valuables and toys should not be brought to school. MPCA cannot be responsible for lost or sto-

len articles. There is a “Lost and Found” box located near the Director’s office.

## **Snacks**

For your convenience the preschool teachers will afford your child the opportunity of a daily snack. Parents provide snacks for their own children each day. Drinks will be provided. In some cases, teachers will ask for parents to provide snack for the entire class once every few weeks. Please check with your child’s teacher to see what the preference is in the class.

## **Toilet Training**

We expect that children will be potty trained by the time they enter the three year old class. However, we realize there are exceptions. Please, contact us regarding these exceptions. Learning these new skills can be challenging for both parent and child. Our aim is always to keep open communication with parents.

## **Health and Safety**

MPCA will make every effort to ensure the safety of your child. Unfortunately, accidents do happen. In the event that your child is involved in an accident, we will make every effort to contact you. If we cannot reach you, we will call the emergency contact listed on your child’s enrollment form.

Allergies are common among young children. If your child has an allergy that you are aware of, please provide us with written details so we can take appropriate precautions to protect your child’s health.

Except for emergency first aid, no prescription or non-prescription medication will be administered without written parental authorization. All medication must be in the original container complete with the child’s full name, type of medication, date of prescribed medication, and amount of dosage.

## **Characteristics of Preschool Children**

The following thoughts about how children learn and develop will help parents in their tasks of teaching and watching them enjoy their school adventure:

- Preschool children are different from adults—socially, emotionally, physically, and intellectually.
- Remember that children are individuals. Even though they may grow through the same developmental stages, they grow at different rates.
- Children enjoy attention and concern expressed by adults and older children.
- Children need help in setting limits. This is especially important for very young children. They need limits to protect their health and safety and to help them feel secure.
- Children are curious and have a natural desire to explore. They like to investigate the world around them.
- Children usually learn best in a natural and relaxed setting without undue pressure from adults. They respond best to those who are relaxed and comfortable around them.

- Children learn through their physical senses of touch, taste, smell, sight, and sound as well as through their minds.
- Children learn best by being active. They learn and concentrate better by doing rather than by listening.
- Being challenged is a natural part of the child's learning process. Encourage the child to try again.
- Children ask lots of questions. Discuss and explore the answers with them.

### ***Preschool Staff***

Teachers and staff at the preschool are dedicated to the growth and development of young children.

### ***Working Hand-in-Hand***

Families have many opportunities to be actively involved in their child's school experience. We believe that family involvement is essential in the development and learning of the children. After all, parents are the first teachers of their children.

During the entire academic year, parents are welcome and encouraged to visit the preschool and participate in numerous activities. These events also allow the parents to get to know the other children and families. It is our hope that the class (families included) becomes a close community.

Parents can volunteer in numerous ways throughout the year including school events (e.g., a class/school party, read a story, etc.). Any help would be much appreciated. Notes will be sent home to keep families abreast of classroom activities, themes/units, future events, and all the wonderful adventures of preschool.

We look forward to collaborating with the preschool families through the year. By working hand in hand, we can ensure that each child's needs are being met, and that the home-school connection remains strong.

### ***Preschool Course Description***

The main objective of the preschool program is to enhance the children's social skills and self-image. In order to be successful learners, cooperation, turn-taking, and problem-solving skills must be developed. In addition, it is important for young children to feel confident in their ability to take choices, initiate a learning encounter, ask questions, and utilize their knowledge.

Activities and lessons are designed to insure a developmentally appropriate, child-centered program. Although the curriculum is teacher-prepared, it is responsive to the children's interests, needs, and levels of development. Some themes and units arise from the children's academic interests and inquiries.

We recognize that children learn primarily through play and meaningful experiences. Therefore, structured activities are coupled with free exploration at various "centers." Every day the chil-

dren have the opportunity to choose in which centers they will participate. The centers reinforce the theme/unit and academic skills (reading, math, science, and social studies) that are the main focus at that time. Centers may include dramatic play, painting, reading corner, listening center, sensory table (sand/water), markers, puzzles, blocks, Legos, beads, pattern blocks, art projects, games, sorting, cooking, and computer.

## **Reading and Language Arts**

The goal of the reading and language arts component is to immerse the children in print.

- A variety of children's literature is available for children's use in the classroom and the library.
- Materials and objects in the classroom are labeled in order to build children's sight words. Children's names are displayed throughout the classroom.
- The children's words are written down whenever possible. (4 year-olds) The children are encouraged to write letters and words by themselves (copying or invented spelling). Journals are an important part of reading readiness curriculum. (4 year-olds).

## **Reading Readiness Skills**

**(developed throughout the school year)**

- Recognizing and writing of their own name
- Use of illustrations to understand the story
- Awareness of the multiple purposes of print
- Left-to-right reading directionality
- Recitation and recognition of ABC's
- Knowledge of front and back of books
- Introduction to authors and illustrators
- Reproduction of letters via copying
- Awareness of beginning sound-letter associations
- Knowledge that a "string" of letters create a word

## **Mathematics**

The focus of the mathematics component is to develop the children's number sense. This is achieved through daily hands-on math encounters.

### **Numeration**

- One-to-one correspondence using manipulatives
- Number recognition
- Counting
- More or less estimation
- Number books

### **Geometry**

- Free-play with pattern blocks

- Free-play with wooden blocks
- Names of basic shapes: circle, square, triangle, rectangle
- Recognizing shapes in everyday objects
- Art activities using basic shapes (e.g., collage)

### **Money**

- Free-play with money in the dramatic play center (e.g., grocery store)

### **Measurement**

- Water and sand play with volume (pails, cylinders, boxes, etc.)
- Free play with measuring tools

### **Science**

The objective of the science curriculum is to make the world familiar to the children via hands-on explorations of everyday objects.

- Weather: ongoing through the school year
- Colors and color-mixing
- Magnets
- Plants & Flowers
- Animals, Bugs, and Insects
- Bubbles
- Babies & Human Growth
- Nutrition & Health
- Harvesting
- Other units that arise from the children's interests

### **Social Studies**

The primary goal of the social studies component is to promote the acceptance of all differences and similarities (cultural, ethnic, religious, physical and cognitive capabilities).

### **Foreign Language (Spanish)**

MPCA has designed a Spanish program as a way to expose children to the idea of studying a foreign language. Its goals are simple—to allow children to explore new sounds and learn basic vocabulary words and short phrases in Spanish. This exposure will hopefully inspire a lifelong interest in language learning in your children as well as aid them when they begin their “formal” study of language.

Students receive Spanish lessons weekly. Lessons focus on games, activities, songs, rhymes, and chants. Lots of props are used to engage the children. Don't worry if you don't know Spanish yourself; there is no need to “study” any of the material with your child other than asking them to share what they are learning.

Basic topics covered include:

- Greetings
- Numbers 1-12
- Colors
- Animals
- Body Parts
- Family
- Emotions

## **Art**

We acknowledge that young children are primarily process-oriented artists. Multiple opportunities to explore the media are necessary before they can be expected to create a purposeful art piece. Because of this, the preschool art program does not focus on the end product, but rather on the process that the child experienced. By designing process-oriented art encounters, the children's skills in drawing, painting, pasting, cutting, and tearing can be extended to its fullest potential. Furthermore, all artistic endeavors, great or small, are appreciated.

Media that are used throughout the school year may include:

- Pencils
- Markers
- Crayons
- Tempera paints
- Chalk
- Collage
- Playdough

## **Music**

The objective of the music component is to broaden the children's exposure to a wide range of songs and instruments in order to increase their appreciation of music. It is our hope that the children become confident in their abilities to express themselves and have fun through music.

- Songs are sung multiple times a day
- Free and structured exploration of musical instruments and various sound-makers
- The children have the opportunity to create their own sound-makers
- The children are encouraged to create their own songs
- Music classes are held once a week.

## **Outside / Gym Play**

Outside / gym play encourages gross- and fine-motor development. The children participate in fun cardiovascular activities or independent play while also working on their social skills (turn-taking, following rules and directions).

## **Show and Tell**

Occasionally, classes will have show and tell. This time is designed for the children to work on their speaking and language skills – not to show the newest toy they have received. Show and

Tell is optional. Encourage children to bring items related to the theme being studied or follow the teacher's lead (she may suggest items that begin with a specific letter or some other type of theme). Ideas include: photos, special music, favorite books, and interesting items from other countries.

## **Progress Reports**

Parent conferences will be scheduled during the school year. Please check with your child's teacher regarding dates and times. Assessment is naturally integrated into the course of every day as ongoing teacher observations of group development patterns and individual development and is used to adjust the program to better support group and individual progress. If concerns about an individual student's development arise and are not readily remedied via classroom adaptations, teachers should initiate a dialogue with other staff and/or the Director and parents to plan alternative approaches to try both at home and school.

Twice per year, the teachers combine these informal assessment techniques with a more systematic assessment of each child for the purpose of describing each child's developmental progress. These descriptions are shared with parents, both in writing and via personal conferences if necessary. To the extent that staff and/or parents identify the need for additional screening and/or professional diagnostic assessment, the Director will meet with you to more precisely identifying the focus for the screening / diagnosis and to review the resources available to children and families in our community.

Additional conferences may be requested by the teacher or by the parent. If you have any concerns regarding your child's development, curriculum or school staff, please talk to your child's teacher and/or MPCA's Director.

## **Social Activities**

MPCA allows classroom parties for the following holidays/occasions:

- Halloween/Fall
- Christmas
- Valentine's Day
- Easter
- End of school

Parent participation is strongly encouraged. Room parents will be requested at open house, so be sure to sign up to assist with these fun events.

Each student's birthday may be recognized within his/her individual classroom. Parents may provide special birthday treats for snack time. However, MPCA discourages balloons, hats, birthday favors or other activities which may disrupt classroom instruction.

In addition to age appropriate field trips, special school wide annual events may also include the following:

- September – Grandparent’s Day
- October – Doughnuts for Dad
- November – Thanksgiving Feast
- April – Art show

- May – Mother’s Day Event
- Graduation (4 year olds and Kindergarten)
- Last week of school.



