



DAYCARE HANDBOOK – Infant to 4K
2021-2022

Midland Valley Christian Academy is a Christ-centered school guiding students to DESIRE the kingdom of God and DISCOVER their place in His world.

(August 2021)

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ADMINISTRATION & STAFF

Daycare Director	Michelle Kight	mkight@mvcaonline.org
Administrative Assistant	Jennifer Widener	jwidener@mvcaonline.org
Registrar / Admissions	Melissa Ward	admissions@mvcaonline.org
Student Billing	Jennifer Chipley	billing@mvcaonline.org
Head Custodian	Andy Fralix	Contact school office
Head of School	Dr. Bryan Easley	beasley@mvcaonline.org

IMPORTANT CONTACTS

For assistance regarding ... you should contact

Behavior or classroom incidents, curriculum	Classroom teacher
Billing, payment plans, charges, financial aid, fees	Mrs. Jennifer Chipley, Financial Aid Director
Student devices, internet access, printing, cloud storage, Microsoft accounts, or other technical questions	Chris Ward, IT Director
Other school policies or disciplinary issues	Dr. Bryan Easley, Head of School

OFFICE HOURS

Main School Office

M-F, 8 am – 4:30 pm (August 5-May 30)

M-Th, 9 am – 3 pm (Summer hours: June 1 – August 4; subject to change based on staffing)

Daycare Office – Open during daycare operating hours.

1. ABOUT MVCA

Midland Valley Christian Academy exists to provide a Christ-centered education that guides students to desire the kingdom of God and to discover their place in His world.

Midland Valley Christian Academy offers a wide variety of educational experiences that build a strong foundation that prepares students for future learning and success in life. Through an emphasis on academic excellence combined with curiosity, discovery, experience, and growth, each student is lovingly challenged to realize the full potential of his or her abilities.

We believe that all truth is God's Truth and revealed through the Bible as the foundation for properly understanding and living with God and His world. Only by recognizing God as the Creator, Designer, and Organizer of the universe can a proper understanding and mastery of facts and knowledge be possible. We believe God's Word is the highest authority and strive to bring all knowledge into a living relationship with His Truth.

1.1. OUR BELIEFS

- We believe in one God as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- We believe that the Bible is God's inspired Word and holds the answer for man's needs.
- We believe that all men have sinned and come short of the glory of God.
- We believe that God offers forgiveness, salvation, and eternal life through faith in Jesus Christ.
- We believe that the believer, through the infilling of the Holy Spirit, can live a holy, radiant, and useful Christian life.
- We believe that the Church exists for the purpose of evangelizing the world and helping the Christian grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.
- We believe that the Lord will return, the dead will be raised, and the final judgment will take place.

STATEMENT REGARDING GENDER, MARRIAGE, AND SEXUALITY

We recognize that because of human sinfulness, humanity's brokenness is demonstrated in many various ways that are contrary to God's ways. However, because of the attention given to gender, marriage, and sexuality in today's public discourse, we find it necessary to address these issues in the following statements.

We believe that God wonderfully and immutably created each person as distinctly male or female (Gen. 1:26-31; 2:18-25; 5:1, 2). These two distinct and complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. Rejecting one's biological gender is a rejection of the image of God within that person and is a sin against God. Some believe an individual can find themselves trapped in a body of the opposite gender and may seek to deal with this disconnect in a variety of ways including sex-change operations. We believe that God's design in creation is clear and that seeking to change one's gender identity through surgery or any other means is prohibited, as well as any form of transgender expression, such as cross-dressing. Those associated with Midland Valley Christian Academy should not advocate for any form of transgender expression.

We believe that God has established marriage as a lifelong, exclusive union between one biological man and one biological woman (Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19:4-6) and that all intimate sexual activity outside the marriage relationship, whether heterosexual, homosexual, or otherwise, is immoral and therefore sin against God (1 Cor. 6:15-7:6; Eph. 5:3-7). Sexual immorality includes, but is not limited to, adultery,

homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, transgender or gender non-conforming relationship, incest, and use of pornography. The belief that members of the same sex can marry is contrary to Scripture. Accordingly, Midland Valley Christian Academy prohibits any form of homosexual behavior, as well as any public expression of support for such behavior or same-sex marriage.

We believe that God offers forgiveness, redemption, transformation, and restoration to all who confess and repent from their sin and humbly ask for His forgiveness through Jesus Christ (1 Cor. 6:11).

We believe that all people are to be shown compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity (1 Cor. 13, Gal. 5:22-23) regardless of whether they agree with us or behave in ways we see as sinful based on Scripture. We intend as a school to always reflect these qualities and any behavior or attitudes not displaying these qualities should be renounced, as they are not in accord with scripture or the Spirit of Christ.

1.3. GOVERNANCE AND ACCREDITATION

The school is incorporated as an educational, non-profit organization. The corporation operates under the direction of a Board of Directors. The Board determines policy, ensures that the vision, philosophy, and objectives of the school are maintained, and ensures fiscal stability. The Board is committed to a relationship with home, church, and school in the growth and development of the child.

MVCA is accredited with the South Carolina Association of Christian Schools (SCACS), the American Association of Christian Schools (AACCS), and regionally with Cognia/AdvancEd. The MVCA Daycare is approved and certified by the South Carolina Department of Social Services.

2. ADMISSIONS POLICIES

Enrolling at MVCA for all levels and programs is a two-step process: application and final enrollment. Application is done online at mvcaonline.org/apply. Interested families first submit the online application packet and pay the application fee. As daycare slots become available (some classes have ongoing waiting lists), the admissions office will review the application and make admissions decisions. Once accepted, the parent completes the online enrollment packet, sets up payment plan options, and pays the enrollment fee.

2.1. Admissions Philosophy

MVCA is a distinctly evangelical Christian school. We have an open admissions policy which means we do not require parents or students to be adherents to the Christian faith or practice. We have and do admit families of other religions. However, we do require that parents recognize our statement of faith and agree to support MVCA in teaching these beliefs and those of the Christian faith to their child as described by our student goals listed above.

2.2. Nondiscriminatory Policy

Midland Valley Christian Academy admits students of any race, color, sex, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate based on race, color, sex, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship program, athletic or other school-administered programs.

2.3. Tour

A tour of the daycare facilities provides an excellent opportunity for you to know your school. Visitors and parents are welcome to make an appointment to visit the daycare. Upon your arrival at the school, you may be asked to sign in and obtain a visitor's pass. Daycare staff will arrange to show you around the building, let you observe classes and activities, and give you a chance to talk with teachers. Please be aware that tours may not be scheduled during times when there is illness going around the school.

2.4. APPLYING TO THE DAYCARE

Application to the daycare/preschool is done online via the school's website at mvcaonline.org/apply.

2.5. 4K Entry

Students entering the 4K program must have reached their fourth birthday by September 1 of the school year.

2.6. RECORDS

The following documents are required for admission into MVCA:

- copies of all academic or disciplinary records from previous schools
- medical or psychological evaluations records
- IEP/504 documentation and records
- valid birth certificate
- updated immunization record on South Carolina forms
- any custody-related court orders or TROs

If there are custody agreements involved with your student, you must provide MVCA with a copy of court papers indicating who has permission to access educational records, make educational decisions, or to pick up the student. MVCA cannot deny a parent access to their child without proper documentation.

Failure to disclose all necessary information may lead to the student's withdrawal.

2.7. Waiting List

Prospective students' names are not automatically put on our waiting list. This is done only by parent request when there is no vacancy in the desired age group. In order to be placed on a waiting list, an active application must be completed and on file. When an opening becomes available, the daycare office will contact the parent(s) and arrange a pre-admissions conference prior to completing the enrollment process.

All children are enrolled as full-time from our infant nursery through age three. Should a parent withdraw his/her child and discontinue payments during the summer, the parent forfeits the child's position in the class. Children may be placed back on a waiting list at the parent's request, but it will be at the end of the current waiting list for the desired room.

2.8. RETURNING FAMILY REENROLLMENT

Returning families must complete the re-enrollment process through FACTS Application and Enrollment accessed in FACTS Family Portal. No paper reenrollment forms will be accepted. MVCA reserves the right to refuse re-enrollment to any student of families who have demonstrated disharmony regarding the purpose, objectives, standards, policies, or any rules and regulations of the school. In addition, no student may be reenrolled unless all financial obligations for the previous school year have been paid in full.

2.9. DISMISSALS / RESCINDING ENROLLMENT

The administration of MVCA is responsible for safeguarding the mission, wellbeing, and reputation of the school. Accordingly, the school reserves the right, within its sole and exclusive discretion, to suspend, expel, dismiss, refuse or rescind enrollment and/or remove from campus any student, parent, or family member, or guest if it is in the best interest of MVCA as deemed by the school's administration to take such action.

Please note that a child may be released from the MVCA Daycare program at any time at the discretion of the Director or Head of School due to a child's physical injurious behavior towards other students or staff.

In the event of dismissal or expulsion from MVCA, all rights are waived to a refund of tuition and fees previously paid. Parents/guardians shall remain obligated by signed contract to pay the enrollment year's school tuition as agreed on during the enrollment process. A student will be dismissed/expelled for the following:

- Violation of school policies as outlined in MVCA Handbook.
- Student conduct, attitude, or lack of academic effort making it mandatory for that child to withdraw from MVCA.
- Tuition is 30 days delinquent.
- Parents/Guardian/Student who are not in harmony with the mission and philosophy of MVCA or who engage in public comments, airing of grievances, or any other written or verbal expressions that are harmful, demeaning, or derogatory towards MVCA staff, students, or families.

WITHDRAWALS

A written notice of intent to withdraw a student from the MVCA Daycare must be submitted, acknowledged, and settled prior to two (2) weeks before the last day of attendance. All grades and records will be held until all outstanding balances are paid. Withdrawal from MVCA must be signed and processed through the school office. Open accounts will incur additional tuition fees and late fees until withdrawal papers are returned to the administration office.

In the event of withdrawal, all rights are waived to a refund of tuition and fees previously paid. Parents/Guardians shall remain obligated by signed contract to pay the remaining school tuition and fees unless the following applies:

- Parent or guardian has moved out of town or a distance away that the school recognizes as unreasonable for transporting the child to and from school.
- Agreement between the parent/guardian and the school that is in the best interest of the student to pursue his/her education with curriculum or a learning environment more suited to the needs of the student.

- Loss of income equal to the amount of tuition in the immediate family of the student.
- Student contracts a serious illness that would prevent him/her from attending school. Documentation from a physician is needed.
- Death of the student.

All records will be held until all outstanding balances are paid. No records will be released on the same day a student withdraws.

(Late fees will be added to your account according to what due date you have chosen. You may choose the 5th of each month or the 20th of each month.)

Late Payment Fees: A late fee of \$10.00 per month will be applied starting the date specified in contract.

Unresolved Payments: Any payment unresolved because of failure to pay, returned/declined payment will be turned over to legal and be prosecuted through the local magistrate courts in the county of residence for collection. This will include all court costs and accumulated fees with the unpaid balance. *No returning student may begin the new school year with an outstanding balance from the previous year.*

Declined/Returned FACTS Payment: A \$30.00 return check fee will be charged for each returned check. A late fee of \$10.00 per month will be applied if returned/declined payment has not been settled by specified dates in contract.

Forms of Payment: All tuition and fee payments will be made through our FACTS service and must be set up on auto-draft.

2.10. CUSTODY AND SEPARATION AGREEMENTS

Specific custody arrangements or instructions will only be recognized and administered by the school if the school has been provided with a copy of the appropriate legal agreements. If there are specific custody/separation instructions that apply to your student, please discuss this with your principal and make sure they have the appropriate documents on file. The Daycare will release children to parents with natural, biological rights or other designees, unless legal documents are provided instructing differently. Verbal instructions are insufficient to deny access.

2.11. FINANCIAL AID

MVCA does not provide financial aid or scholarships for Daycare students. However, the following discounts are available to daycare families:

- **MVCA Student** – \$250 grant if an older sibling is enrolled at the Academy (K5 or higher)
- **Family Grant** – eligible families with more than 2 students enrolled at MVCA may receive a Family Grant of a \$500 credit for third, fourth, and fifth students enrolled in same family.
- **Clergy** – full-time ministers or pastors receive a 10% tuition discount
- **Active Military** – active duty military parents receive a 10% tuition discount

3. BUSINESS POLICIES

3.1. TUITION AND FEES

The tuition for Midland Valley Christian Academy is determined each year by the school board and is payable by options described under payment plans. The following tuition and fees are for students enrolling for the 2021-2022 school year beginning August 2021.

DAYCARE (Infant to age 3)

Application Fee _____	\$35
Registration Fee _____	\$ 155
Materials/Resource Fee _____	\$ 100

WEEKLY RATES

Infants / Toddlers _____	\$ 160 / week
2/3 year-olds _____	\$ 150 / week

4K PRESCHOOL

Application Fee _____	\$35
Registration Fee _____	\$ 150
Materials/Resource Fee _____	\$ 265
Holiday Care (when school is closed) _____	\$ 620
Afterschool Care Standard (until 4:30 pm) _____	included in tuition
Afterschool Care Extended (until 6 pm) _____	\$ 500

TUITION (for regular school year, 10 months)

Half-day 4K (until noon) _____	\$3,750 annually
Full-day 4K (includes Afterschool Care Standard) _____	\$ 5,500 annually

Our 4K program is a regular academic program, much like kindergarten. Summer camp opportunities will be available when school is not in session.

Application and enrollment fees are non-refundable.

3.2. PAYMENT PLANS

Parents will select one of the following payment plans in FACTS Financial at the time of enrollment:

1. One annual payment – the total annual tuition is due on or by August 20 of the school year. No discount is given for annual payment.
2. Two bi-annual payments – half tuition is due on or by August 20 of the school year with the remaining half of tuition due on or by January 20 of the school year. No discount is given for bi-annual payment.
3. Ten equal payments (Monthly payment plan) – The first payment is due on or by August 20 of the school year or at the time of registration. This is non-refundable. The remaining nine payments are due on the 5th or 20th each month, September through May.

3.3. 4K EXTENDED AFTERSCHOOL AND HOLIDAY CARE

For 4K families, MVCA provides an afterschool program for the convenience of working parents. Afterschool care is included for free up until 4:30 pm. For an additional fee, parents may sign up for extended afterschool care until 6:00 pm.

Holiday care allows families to have full-day childcare for their 4K student on days when the academy is closed but the daycare is open. On days when the daycare is closed, no childcare is provided. Parents bringing children on holidays without holiday tuition will be charged a \$50.00 a day drop-in rate. *When parents are using holiday care, students must be dropped off on or before 9:00 AM. Please call if your child will not be here by 9:00 AM.*

3.4. ACCOUNT STATUS

It is important that student billing accounts remain current throughout the school year. When an account becomes past due there are several actions that occur which negatively impact the student:

- Daycare or school records will be held.
- Access to student records will be limited.
- Tuition assistance may be revoked.
- Dismissal of student if the account becomes more than 90 days past due. To avoid these actions and the impact on the student, any family experiencing financial difficulty should contact the business office if your account becomes delinquent to determine alternative payment plan options

3.5. PAYMENTS

ATTENDANCE AND PART-TIME FEES

No reduction of fees will be made for absences. All fees are due whether your child attends part of a week or the entire week. Part-time fees are not available.

REFUNDS

Refunds for weekly tuition are not given in cases when students have to be sent home or classes have to be closed due to inclement weather, illness, or natural disaster.

LATE PAYMENT FEES

A late fee of \$10.00 per month will be applied starting the date specified in contract.

Unresolved Payments

Any payment unresolved because of failure to pay or returned/declined payment will be turned over to legal and be prosecuted through the local magistrate courts in the county of residence for collection. This will include all court costs and accumulated fees with the unpaid balance. *No returning student may begin the new school year with an outstanding balance from the previous year.*

DECLINED/RETURNED FACTS PAYMENT

A \$30.00 return check fee will be charged for each returned check. A late fee of \$10.00 per month will be applied if returned/declined payment has not been settled by specified dates in contract.

FORMS OF PAYMENT

Payments will be made through our FACTS service: FACTS Online (E-Check, Credit/Debit Card & Automatic Withdrawal).

TAX FORMS

Childcare expenses are tax deductible. At the end of the year, tax statements can be printed from within your FACTS Financial account, which you can access through the FACTS Family Portal. Contact FACTS at 866-441-4637 for any help or questions related to tax forms.

3.7. LATE PICKUP FEES

A late fee of \$1.00 per minute per child will be charged when a parent or guardian is late picking up the child past closing time. **Once you are late three (3) times within a thirty (30) day period, the fee increases to \$5 per minute.** (At this point, the late fee will only revert to \$1 per minute once you have gone 30 days without a late pickup fee.) Late fees will be automatically added to your account.

3.6. STUDENT ACCIDENT INSURANCE

Student Accident Insurance is provided by the school for all students. This coverage is for covered injuries which occur while an enrolled student is: (1) Participating in activities sponsored and supervised by MVCA in the United States, and (2) Traveling during such activities as a member of a group in transportation furnished or arranged by MVCA in the United States.

4. PROGRAM INFORMATION

4.1. DAILY SCHEDULE AND CALENDAR

HOURS

Birth-3 years	7:00 am – 6:00 pm
4K	8:00 am – 12:00 pm
Extended 4K Aftercare	12:00 pm – 6:00 pm

HOLIDAYS

The Daycare (all programs) will observe the following holidays and be completely closed with no childcare programming on these days: New Year's Eve, New Year's Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, July 4th, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day and the Friday after Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, and Christmas Day. If a holiday falls on a weekend, an alternate day will be assigned for staff to observe this day.

ARRIVAL TIME

Children are required to arrive on-site each day before 9:00 am. This arrival deadline helps ensure a structured day for your child, reduces disturbances in the classroom schedule of activities, and assists in staffing needs.

If you are needing to arrive after 9 am, you must contact the daycare office prior to 9:00 am. Students habitually or frequently arriving after 9:00 may be asked to withdraw from the Daycare. **Children cannot be dropped off for the day after 12:00 pm.**

MORNING DROP-OFF

Children are to be dropped off at the front door of the daycare. Staff will meet the child there and escort them to class. In accordance with DSS, each child will be logged in upon arrival in the classroom. A daily tracking sheet, which is always with the teacher, will be used throughout the day to track and record the child's coming and going from the classroom.

4.2. DRESS CODE

MVCA Daycare's goal is to create a comfortable, positive environment for children. Simple play clothes and shoes, appropriate for weather conditions and outdoor play, are recommended. We suggest clothes with convenient fastenings that will also encourage self-help for children. A complete change of clothing, appropriate for the season, including undergarments and socks, must be always kept at the Daycare in case of accidents. Each item of clothing should be labeled with the child's name.

All children are required to wear tennis shoes or casual shoes with closed toes and backs. Cowboy boots, flip-flops, and slides are not allowed. Girls who wear dresses must wear a pair of shorts underneath. This will help with modesty on the playground.

We realize that children at the ages of 2 or 3 are beginning to express clothing preferences and may sometimes use clothing selection as a means of asserting their individuality. This may result in some off but perfectly acceptable combinations. However, we do ask that there be no commercial cartoon or other characters or negative slogans on the clothing, shoes, or other articles the child brings to MVCA unless teachers are having a themed day in their classrooms.

Children in the daycare should not wear any jewelry that can become a choking hazard for them or other children. Children with pierced ears are allowed only to wear stud earrings.

4.3. FOOD SERVICE AND LUNCH

A monthly menu of meals can be found on the MVCA Family App or by logging into the FACTS Family Portal. Morning snack, lunch, and afternoon snacks are provided by the Daycare. Food and snack items may be brought from home if the parent desires. **Fast food is not allowed.**

Our kitchen begins serving breakfast each morning at 8:00 AM. Children who arrive before 8:00 are allowed to bring a snack of appropriate early morning breakfast foods such as fruit bites, biscuits, pop tarts, milk, juice, or granola bars. Items such as soft drinks, candy, chips, and other inappropriate snacks will not be allowed for breakfast or lunch.

Please notify the Daycare Office if your child has food or juice allergies. Parents will be asked to provide safe alternative foods/snacks in case of severe or multiple allergies.

4.4. NAPTIME

Naptime is a scheduled part of your child's day as well as a DSS requirement. Although the children do not have to go to sleep, each child must lie down on a mat and remain quiet during naptime. In accordance with DSS mandates for daily naptime, parents must provide a blanket each week for their child. All bedding needs to be labeled with the child's name.

4.5. TOYS

Children may not bring toys from home. Toys cause confusion and misunderstanding for children and teachers. Toys often get broken, and the Daycare cannot be responsible. Toys from home are permitted only on days that the teacher has designated as "Show and Tell" days. These toys must be labeled with your child's name and must be small enough to fit into your child's cubby. All toys will be taken home the same day. Play guns, ropes, and knives are not permitted at any time.

Please do not send your child to the daycare with candy or gum. This can be a choking hazard to your child as well as others. This can also be harmful to children with allergies.

4.6. BIRTHDAYS

Your child's birthday may be celebrated with his/her classmates. Parents will need to provide refreshments and/or party favors. **Arrangements must be made at least 3 days in advance with your child's teacher.** Birthday invitations may not be given out at school unless the invitations include every child in the classroom. No personal information on any child will be given out.

Any refreshments provided for holidays or birthday parties cannot be homemade. All food items must come from a DHEC-approved facility.

4.7. RELEASE AND DISMISSAL

Children will only be released to authorized adults. Parent(s) or guardians must identify in writing to the school all adults who are authorized to pick up the child from MVCA. Individuals may be required to show photo identification when picking up the child. If special circumstances arise and you need someone to pick up your child that is not on their pickup list, you must provide the school with written permission before your child will be released. Identified biological parents will not be denied from picking up a child unless a court order on file with the school office expressly forbids them from doing so.

4.8. COUNSELING & REFERRAL

MVCA has partnered with the Hope Counseling Center and Braveheart Counseling to give our families access to high-quality, affordable, Christian counseling for adults, adolescents, and families. On occasion, MVCA has referred families to the center where they have found strong support and help. In the event the person attempting to pick up your child appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol, law enforcement will be automatically called.

4.9. FACTS SIS

MVCA uses the FACTS SIS web-based school management system. FACTS Family Portal provides parents and students a convenient way to access student grades, attendance, and behavior reports. The FACTS Family Portal can be accessed through a link on the school webpage or, more conveniently, through the MVCA School App available for both iOS and Android.

4.10. LOST AND FOUND

Lost and found items are kept in the school's front office. Students or parents seeking missing items should check there. Lost and found items will be cleared out at the end of each semester. MVCA is not responsible for lost items or items left unclaimed in lost and found at the time of disbursement.

4.11. CHRISTIAN TEACHING

We are a distinctly Christian daycare. Each child will receive teaching and training through Bible stories, scripture, music, and curriculum. 4K students attend the MVCA Elementary Chapel held once each week. Elementary chapel lasts approximately 30 minutes and usually involves worship, singing, and movement along with an object lesson, prayer, and birthday blessings. Attendance at chapel is mandatory for all students. Parents and student families are invited and encouraged to attend chapel each week.

4.12. CHURCH PARTICIPATION

Church participation is not a requirement for enrollment at MVCA because of our admissions policy. However, we strongly encourage all families to find, join, and be active in a local church community committed to biblical faith, life, and practice. MVCA teachers and staff will regularly encourage families to attend and will openly extend invitations to their churches or others in the area.

4.13. INCLEMENT WEATHER / UNSCHEDULED SCHOOL CLOSINGS

Parents will be notified through Parent Alert (call or text) of unscheduled school closing or delays. Announcements may additionally appear on the local news or the school's Facebook page.

1. MVCA does not always follow Aiken County on unscheduled school closings.
2. MVCA may, on occasion, have an unscheduled closing due to providential or safety issues. Whenever possible, the administration will attempt to inform parents in advance of such closings. When advance notice is not possible, parents will be notified by FACT's Parent Alert text/message or local TV stations.
3. There may be occasions where MVCA must close early during operational hours due to providential or safety issues (ex. severe weather or the threat of severe weather). Parents will be notified through FACT's Parent Alert (call or text) with details and time that students need to be picked up. Please know administrative staff will contact appropriate authorities for any student not picked up by designated time.

PLEASE DO NOT OPT OUT OF THE PARENT ALERT TEXTING SYSTEM. FACT's Parent Alert system is our ONLY means of mass communication with parents. Please know if you opt out of this system of communication, you will MISS OUT on very important information. Those who opt out of receiving these text/messages will still be held accountable for information given in the Parent Alerts.

5. LEARNING SUPPORT SERVICES

5.1. PHILOSOPHY

As a kingdom school, we desire to be a Christ-centered learning community “which fully includes children and young people of all abilities and creates a culture that equips each pupil to actively contribute to the life of the school community”¹ and to fulfill their created life purpose in God’s kingdom. Midland Valley Christian Academy is committed to educating students—to the extent our resources will permit each year—with a variety of special learning or developmental needs by providing these students with an educational experience that honors their unique worth, ability, and dignity as persons created in the image of God.

One size does not fit all when it comes to good education. We recognize that each student is a unique learner and has their own mixture of needs and abilities, so our learning approach and environment must be flexible and adaptable, focused on meeting each student and family where they are. We also believe that all students have gifts and talents in a wide range of activities; good education involves discovering and developing these gifts. Thus, MVCA aims to provide meaningful opportunities which allow students to realize their God-given potential and to live lives that glorify God in all realms of life.

Our approach is collaborative teamwork and partnership. Teachers, support staff, parents, and students work together to create the appropriate, best support environment that helps each student realize his or her full potential and experience.

We are in the earliest stages of developing learning support services at MVCA. This means that the support we can provide significantly depends upon the student and their needs and available staff and program resources. It may not be possible in given cases to provide or continue to provide the learning environment for students needing support.

Due to the highly individualized nature of learning support, limited class sizes, specialization of subject matter, support staff, and resources, *additional fees are associated with some of the Learning Support Services offered by MVCA. These fees and any charges on a student’s account will be disclosed and agreed upon with parents prior to beginning any such services.*

5.1. SPECIAL LEARNING NEEDS

Special Learning Needs are identified conditions affecting a student’s ability to access and learn effectively in a typical classroom environment or curriculum. ADD/ADHD, sensory processing (such as auditory or visual), mild dyslexia/dysgraphia, or autism spectrum disorder. Certain medical or emotional conditions also affect learning and may qualify as special learning needs.

A *diagnosed* special learning need requires identification of the learning need or disability by a qualified professional such as a psychologist, speech-language pathologist, occupational therapist, educational psychometrist, or medical doctor, along with a diagnostic assessment appropriate to the disability. Diagnostic assessments must be current, having been done within the past three years. In cases where supporting diagnostic assessment data is available but more than three (3) years old, MVCA reserves the right to request new assessments as a part of the enrollment or service placement process.

¹ <https://clcnetwork.org/media/The-Christ-Centered-Educational-Services-Standard-110617.pdf>

We welcome students with special learning needs or differences for inclusion in our academic program based on the following:

- Student must be able to perform successfully without academic modification unless there is a documented medical or educational diagnosis demonstrating the need for modifications.
- Parents fully disclose any previous or ongoing assessments, diagnoses, or educational interventions, or special learning services.
- Parents regularly keep the school informed of any changes in diagnosis, learning assessment results, treatments, or medications directly affecting the learning environment.
- Availability of support depending on grade level, classroom teachers, student needs, and support staff.
- High school students wishing to request accommodations for college-entrance testing (ACT/SAT) *must have* a DSM-IV or DSM-V identification of a learning disability on record with the school office.

Learners, not Labels. Students with learning disabilities, various disorders, or special needs are far more than their diagnoses or labels; these things do not define our students. We wish to embrace all students regardless of their abilities and help them realize their full potential. We believe, given the right environment, every learner is capable of great things. To that end, we use diagnostic and testing tools to help us better understand and be able to individualize support rather than label and limit. Our objective for each student is to help them participate as much as possible in the normal ebb-and-flow of the learning community while maximizing their creative, spiritual, and learning potential and fostering a sense of importance and belonging.

5.2. LIMITATIONS

1. We are currently unable to provide alternative or significantly modified instruction such as might be found in a traditional special education or functional life skills program. We will accommodate as much as our resources will allow but the extent of need for support may prohibit admissions or continued enrollment.
2. Because of the highly specialized psychological, counseling, and environmental resources required, we are unable to accommodate students with significant behavioral struggles such as those stemming from trauma or mental health-related issues. In these situations, we are happy to work with these families as best we can to make referrals or recommendations.
3. MVCA is unable to provide embedded occupational, speech, or physical therapies as a part of the everyday classroom environment. Students needing those services as a part of the school environment – such as typically found in many special education programs – are likely better served elsewhere.
4. MVCA is a private faith-based school and receives no state or federal funding for learning support or special needs programs. As such, MVCA is under no obligation to follow federal laws such as required by the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA), thus not legally required to implement an IEP or 504 Plan created by public school system. However, we appreciate the valuable expertise, context, and information that these plans often provide. Thus, when such plans have been prepared for a student, we use these to help inform our decision-making and in developing our own support plans.

5.3. SOCIAL & BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS

While we are committed to a continuously improving, positive, encouraging, and stimulating learning experience for students with special learning needs, all our students are included in the general classroom and school environment. As such, there are minimum expectations for social behavior necessary for the well-being of all members of the community and to help avoid persistent disruptions to the learning environment that interferes with the ability of other students to do their work. Consequently, all students must be able to habitually operate within the following parameters:

1. Remain and function in the classroom without the need of additional staff being constantly present in the room.
2. Regulate anxiety enough to avoid repeated or regular verbal outbursts and emotional meltdowns that disrupt the environment.
3. Perform in-class or assigned work without a teacher regularly needing to prompt for each step or task.
4. Refrain from excessive hand-raising and question-asking that stalls the flow of classroom activities or instruction.
5. Demonstrates age-appropriate self-management.
6. Abide by the policies and procedures described in the MVCA Family Handbook, including having a signed parental statement of commitment.

By “habitually operate,” we mean that the student’s *normal, regular pattern of behavior*, especially after the first six weeks of school, can be maintained within these parameters. We are mindful that there is often a transition period as students begin a new year, move to a new building, start a new grade, or adjust to a new environment. Our focus here is on a student’s habitual patterns after a reasonable period of adjustment. Every student has rough days or moments of frustration, fatigue, or still-developing maturity and thus occasional or episodic occurrences of poor behavior can be understood. But these should be the rare exception, not the norm. Students unable to habitually maintain within these parameters are likely better served in a learning environment able to provide highly individualized support, instruction, and embedded therapeutic learning.

6. HEALTH, SAFETY, AND SECURITY

To protect the health of children and staff at MVCA, we will generally abide by guidelines provided by DSS and DHEC. School administration works diligently to maintain a safe and healthy environment for all our students. Parent cooperation with the school health and safety policies are necessary to avoid accidents and to properly care for our students.

6.1. MEDICATIONS

Parents must provide record through SIS of permission to treat their student medically, which over-the-counter medications may be given by school staff, and any prescription medications that must be administered at school. All medication information for each student must be maintained up to date in the student’s medical section of SIS.

Students may not have medication in their possession at school unless approved by the school. All other medication(s) must be dispensed by designated school staff. It is the parent's responsibility to provide any medication for students. Parents are not to leave medications in a child's book bag.

A medication authorization form must be completed when a physician has ordered a medication (prescription or over the counter) that will require in-school administration for an indefinite period. However, an authorization form is not needed if a medication is to be given for no longer than two weeks. All parent-provided medication must be brought to the school office in an approved container (see below) and accompanied by a parent note indicating the purpose of the medication and the time(s) it should be given to the student.

All medication dispensed at school must be in the original container. Prescription medication must be in a current, completely labeled (date, pharmacy, physician, student, medication, full dosing instructions) prescription container. *Expired medications will not be administered.* Over-the-counter medication must be in clearly labeled original packaging and accompanied by a parent note stating the student's name and the instructions for dispensing the medication. Limited quantities and brands of over-the-counter medications may be available in the office for emergency use.

6.2. SPECIAL MEDICAL TREATMENTS

When special medical treatments such as insulin injections or breathing treatments using a nebulizer are necessary, parents must make prior arrangements with office personnel and provide specific written instruction from the child's physician.

6.3. ILLNESS GUIDELINES

Children will be checked daily for their health status and signs of illness will be evaluated by Daycare staff. Sick children are not to be brought to the daycare facilities and will not be allowed to remain. Mildly ill children whose illness results in greater need for care than staff can provide at that moment without compromising the health and safety (including supervision) of the other children will be sent home

In the interest of every student's wellbeing, parents are requested to keep their child home when they are sick. Please do not medicate your child and send them to school. If a child develops symptoms during school, the parent will be called to pick up the student as soon as possible. If we cannot reach the parents, we will notify the next person listed as an emergency contact list in the student's file. In the event we are unable to reach a parent or emergency contact within an hour, administrative staff will contact the appropriate authorities.

The following is a partial DHEC exclusion list of certain illnesses requiring temporary removal of a student from school.

- **Vomiting** – Student may not attend or remain at school if vomiting has occurred **2 or more times during the previous 24 hours** or if vomiting has occurred accompanied by a fever of 101 or higher. *No dismissal is required for a brief, non-repeating episode of vomiting with no other signs of illness.* Student may return with parent note stating vomiting has resolved, student is able to stay hydrated and participate in activities, and no other symptoms have been present. Exceptions requiring prompt medical evaluation (call parents and dismiss student): vomiting that appears green or bloody, vomiting after recent head injury, vomiting and no urine output for 8 hours, or when student appears very ill during vomiting episode.

- **Fever** – Student must not attend or remain at school if fever is **100.4 or higher taken orally (100.0 axillary, 100.9 by ear, 99.9 temporal)**. Student may return when fever-free without medication for 24 hours or *with clearance from pediatrician indicating no health concerns or symptoms of illness or another diagnosis that does not preclude attendance*. Fever in conjunction with other symptoms shall be assessed using guidelines for those other symptoms, e.g., fever + vomiting, fever + pain, etc.
- **Diarrhea** – A student with diarrhea may not attend or remain at school until symptoms are resolved for at least 24 hours, *or medical evaluation (doctor’s note required) indicates that student may safely return to the school setting*. **Diarrhea is defined as 3 or more loose or watery stools in a 24-hour period that are not associated with changes in diet.**
- **Head lice** – Head lice is not a disease but is contagious. We maintain a nit free policy. For this reason, any student diagnosed as having lice will be sent home and may only return with a parent note after one treatment with an over the counter or prescription lice elimination product and no active lice is observed crawling in the hair or after removal by combing or heat treatment methods. The school administration must inspect the student prior to re-entry. Contact administration to make arrangements.
- **Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)** – Student may not attend with severe eye pain, purulent drainage, white or yellow eye discharge, or are too sick to participate in routine activities. Students may return when the condition has been resolved.
- **Rash** – Faculty/Administration will notify parent when rash is observed. If rash spreads or is accompanied by another symptom, the student must leave the school. A doctor’s note is required if a student returns to school with rash stating that student is not contagious.
- **Respiratory infection** – student must not attend with uncontrolled cough, difficulty breathing or wheezing. May return when symptoms subside.
- **Strep** – may return 48 hours after beginning antibiotic treatment as long as the student is fever-free.

Please do not bring your student to school with a contagious disease. They must be symptom-free for a full 24-hour period before returning to school.

6.4. COMMUNICABLE DISEASE

Students diagnosed with a communicable disease (meaning an illness which arises because of a specific infectious agent which may be transmitted either by a susceptible host, infected person or animal to another person) must be kept home until the possibility of the contagious infection has passed. The school administration must be notified immediately of a diagnosis of a communicable disease. A doctor’s note is required for re-entrance.

6.5. INJURIES

In the event of injuries, a parent will be called to determine further treatment. If a student is injured while at school, a medical event report will be completed in FACTS SIS and logged to the student’s record. In certain cases, the reporting staff member will include an automated email notification to the parent. If the situation is of a serious nature or there are questions about a course of treatment, a parent will be contacted immediately.

6.6. FOOD AND NUT ALLERGIES

At times, MVCA has children with life-threatening food allergies, such as peanut allergies. We are sensitive to students with these allergies and make every attempt to keep them safe. Always consult with your child's teacher before bringing any food into the classroom. We also ask that you encourage your child *not* to share food brought from home. If you have any concerns, contact the Daycare Office.

6.7. STUDENT HEALTH AND IMMUNIZATION RECORDS

It is mandatory that the school receive a copy of the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SC DHEC) Certificate of Immunization for each new student on or before the first day of school. This form is available at a physician office or can be obtained from the health department if other proof of immunization is provided.

6.8. LIABILITY AND INSURANCE

MVCA will not be responsible in cases of sickness or injury of children while in attendance at the daycare or in transit to or from the facility. Medical requirements for student injuries occurring at daycare will be the responsibility of the parent. We suggest that all children be covered under a family health insurance plan. MVCA does provide secondary Student Accident Insurance for all children on campus.

6.9. SECURITY

To provide a safe and secure learning environment for your child, we take the following security precautions:

- **Homeland Security** – Our number one priority is the safety for your child. Should situations arise that include Homeland security, we will respond as directed by the community emergency authorities. Children will be kept in a safe and secure area of the facility unless deemed necessary by emergency authorities to evacuate the building. If we evacuate the building, children and staff will relocate to the Youth Center located on our property, or an area designated by emergency authorities.
- **Visitor Access** – All facility doors are kept locked during operation hours. For the safety and well-being of our students, we require everyone entering the building to check in at the school office. Visitors, if permitted to be in the student areas, will be given a visitor's badge. Parent-issued key fobs are no longer being used by MVCA and have been permanently disabled.
- **Intercom/Phone System** – Each classroom is equipped with an intercom or telephone, which allows faculty to communicate with the office.
- **Video Surveillance** – MVCA maintains an active, archived video surveillance system with cameras covering main entryways, hallways, and gymnasium.
- **School Records** - Administrative procedures are in place for documenting and maintaining current academic, medical, disciplinary, and attendance records. These records are kept in a secure location in the academy office. If Midland Valley Christian Academy ceases operation, all student records will be turned over to SCACC (South Carolina Association of Christian Schools - 615 St Andrews Rd, Columbia, SC 29210).

7. DISCIPLINE AND CONDUCT

7.1. EXPECTATIONS

We expect that each student at MVCA shall regularly and habitually:

- Demonstrate positive, respectful, and appropriate attitudes
- Express themselves with acceptable language and behavior
- Take responsibility for their own learning as an active learner
- Act with integrity and be accountable for their own actions
- Support and care for one another
- Treat others (including their property) with dignity, courtesy, and respect
- Represent the school in a positive manner
- Use careful judgment in the exercise of personal freedom
- Follow school rules
- Resolve conflicts and difficulties with others through discussion or by seeking assistance from school staff

PARENTAL EXPECTATIONS

Parents/guardians are expected to know and adhere to all school policies and to demonstrate a spirit of cooperation with the administration and faculty of the Academy. Any school-related concerns need to be resolved following the biblical principles found in Matthew 18. When questions or problems arise, parents or students should speak first with the teacher or responsible party. ***Please refrain from talking to other parents about a problem; it is divisive and not unifying.*** If a problem persists, then make an appointment to meet with the teacher, the Assistant Principal, or Head of School.

Parents/guardians should also be respectful of school staff and students and display Christ-like behavior in speech and actions, including in private and public communications, text or email messaging, and social media postings. *Complaints or derogatory comments about teachers, staff, or the school posted on social media accounts are a violation of the school's behavior policy for students and parents and may result in administrative withdrawal of the student's enrollment from MVCA.*

7.2. PHILOSOPHY OF DISCIPLINE

Discipline is the basic developmental process of learning self-control, respect for others, and personal responsibility in doing the right things the right way. As Christian parents and educators, we discipline students because we love them and want them to live a Christ-centered life. We discipline to help students learn to choose desirable, right behaviors. When students make wrong choices, we seek to help redirect, guide, heal, and restore. Our goal is that hearts are changed, and better choices are made in the future. We also want students to learn to make wise choices when we are not around, not simply to control them when authority figures are present. Discipline must address attitudes of the heart and lead students toward Christ-like behavior.

7.3. DISCIPLINARY GUIDELINES

To help children learning good behavior, MVCA adheres to the following guidelines:

- Develop and enforce clear, concise rules and limits that are age-appropriate and promote safety.

- Anticipate and redirect inappropriate behaviors.
- Remind children of expectations, rules, and limits.
- Assist children with verbalizing the conflict resolution process.
- Speak to children in a friendly (never angry) but firm voice as a role model and disciplinarian.
- Remove a child from an activity if inappropriate behaviors persist and redirect the child to appropriate activities.
- If a child physically hurts another child, remove that child from the activity, comfort the hurt child, and assist both/all children involved with the resolution process. Parents will be informed about the incident.
- If multiple inappropriate behaviors of a disruptive or physical nature occur within a two-week period, the teacher will request or recommend with the Daycare Director to undertake a behavior intervention review.

BITING

Young children may bite or try to bite another child. If biting occurs, we will discipline the offending student in the form of *time-out* or by contacting parents to help with the problem. After 3 bites/bite attempts in one (1) day, the child will be dismissed for the remainder of that day. After excessive amount of biting, parents will be notified and asked to meet with the administration to establish a plan of corrective action. If these measures are unsuccessful and the child continues to bite, the child may be dismissed from MVCA Daycare.

7.4. DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

If multiple inappropriate behaviors of a disruptive or physical nature continue to occur even after a review, school staff will typically enforce the suspension policy below. However, MVCA administration reserves the right, at their sole discretion, to elevate the response to specific situations where behavior is more egregious or serious.

- 1st offense – immediate pick-up from Daycare followed by a one (1) day suspension
- 2nd offense – immediate pick-up from Daycare followed by a three (3) day suspension
- 3rd offense – immediate pick-up from Daycare followed by a five (5) day suspension

All fees are still due and payable during the time of suspension. Any subsequent offense can, at the discretion of the Director or School Administration, result in immediate dismissal.

7.5. DRUG, ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Possession and/or use of drugs, tobacco, and alcoholic beverages are strictly forbidden. This is grounds for immediate dismissal of the student.

7.6. REPORTING AND INVESTIGATING SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

South Carolina law requires that certain professionals report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect, because they have unique opportunities to observe and interact with children. However, the law encourages all persons to report. The following professionals are mandated reporters of child abuse or neglect (includes but not limited to):

- Healthcare professionals: physicians, nurses, dentists, optometrists, medical examiners or coroners or their employees, emergency medical services, mental health or allied health professionals
- Educational professionals: teachers, counselors, principals, school attendance officers
- Social or public assistance professionals: substance abuse treatment staff, childcare workers, foster parents
- Computer technicians
- Clergy (subject to laws governing privileged communication)

Per the SC Department of Social Services (<https://dss.sc.gov/child-well-being/mandated-reporters/>):

Mandated reporters must report abuse or neglect when, in their professional capacity, they receive information giving them reason to believe that a child's physical or mental health has been, or may be, adversely affected by abuse or neglect. A decision to report must be based upon a reasonable belief that a child has been, or may be, abused or neglected. Thus, mandatory reporters need not have conclusive proof that a child has been abused or neglected prior to reporting abuse or neglect to the proper authorities.

A person who is required to report and fails to do so is guilty of a misdemeanor. Upon conviction, he or she may be fined up to \$500 or imprisoned up to six months, or both.

Midland Valley Christian School is committed to providing a safe, secure environment for children and their families. Any report of inappropriate behaviors or suspicions of abuse will be taken seriously and will be reported, in accordance with this policy and state law, to the MVCA Administration, Department of Social Services, or other appropriate agency.

MVCA supports and encourages a culture of communication related to abuse or suspected abuse of children. If you see or suspect inappropriate interaction with or between children, it is your responsibility to report the inappropriate interaction to a supervisor or a member of the MVCA staff or administration. This includes partial or inconclusive information concerning behavior, which may or may not be blameless.

Because sexual abusers 'groom' children for abuse, it is possible a staff member or volunteer may witness behavior intended to 'groom' a child for sexual abuse. Staff members and volunteers are asked to report 'grooming' behavior, any policy violations, or any suspicious behaviors to a supervisor or a member of the MVCA staff or administration.