



FOUNDATIONS
CHRISTIAN MONTESSORI ACADEMY

Parent and Student Handbook

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Foundations Christian Montessori Academy

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Welcome to Foundations Academies

2017-2018 Parent and Student Handbook

To new and returning families, we extend a warm welcome to the new school year. We are so happy you are a part of our Foundations family. Over the course of this year our children will grow in a Christian Montessori environment to become self-assured, God-reliant, vibrant students who love to learn. Parents are the most important teachers in the lives of their children and are a very important part of what makes our school community so special. We are honored to be partners with you in the development and education of your child. We rely on your communication, energy, support, and involvement to ensure a successful experience for your child. Foundations Academies can benefit your child best when you understand the roles played by parents, teachers, and children. As we begin our 11th year, we are delighted to share the many wonderful things about our school and to orient you to our policies, procedures, resources, and events.

Please read carefully the information included in this handbook. It is intended to acquaint you with the policies and procedures of the school. It is important that you read it thoroughly.

We do our best to remain in close communication with our families in a number of different ways.

- We use email to communicate important information. Please make sure that we have your most updated contact information.
- We use a text alert system to notify families of upcoming events and emergencies. Please make sure you register with your child's class alert system.
- You may visit our website at www.foundationscma.org for information about the school and to keep up to date on school events and news. Our school calendar can be accessed on the website.
- If you have suggestions, ideas, or concerns, contact your child's teacher and make arrangements to meet. She is your first line of communication. We also have a special box located in the front office where you can drop off your ideas, suggestions, concerns, needs, and prayer requests.
- If you believe your ideas or concerns are not being addressed, please contact an administrative team member at info@foundationsacademies.com.
- You may want to join our parent organization, Partners in Education – PIE, for volunteer opportunities.
- An annual parent survey provides you with an opportunity to give us feedback covering the whole program.

We look forward to another wonderful and productive year. We are excited to see all the amazing things God has in store for you and your child, and for Foundations Christian Montessori Academy, in this new school year.

Heather J. Angersoll

Heather J. Angersoll
Head of School

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Introduction

This handbook contains explanations and policies regarding life at Foundations Christian Montessori Academy. We are not just a set of policies, but an environment of learning. However, policies are necessary in order to maintain the climate we desire to establish in our classrooms. Realizing you may not agree with all the policies, we expect that you will respect and respond properly to the authority over you even when you are not in full agreement. We trust that our guidelines will help maintain a positive atmosphere for you to enjoy. Nothing in this handbook should be construed as a contract. Foundations Christian Montessori Academy reserve the right to add, delete, or modify any policy in this handbook at any time without prior notice.

Mission

Foundations Christian Montessori Academy is dedicated to the mental, physical, social, and spiritual development of children. The mission of our school is to provide a quality educational program that challenges and encourages children to achieve their fullest potential. We recognize that each child is a unique gift from God, and we pledge to always show God's love by our kind word, deed, and example. Therefore, each teacher and staff member has been chosen to reflect the ideas and goals of Foundations Christian Montessori Academy. We are committed to give every child the fundamental building blocks upon which they can build a successful future. At Foundations, children and families experience personalized education that builds the foundation for a lifetime of success and a love of learning through specialized lessons and materials in accordance with the principles and philosophy of Dr. Maria Montessori.

Mission Statement

Laying a strong foundation to build up the next generation.

Statement of Faith

- We worship the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; with Him are the origin and destiny of nature and of man.
- Our knowledge of God and His ways comes primarily from the Bible and through these writings God speaks.
- He is holy and righteous, merciful and steadfastly loving. He desires that men should live in fellowship with Him and each other. In their self-centeredness, all men defy God's purpose for their lives. They are alienated from God and unable to find their own way back to Him.
- In the life, teaching, crucifixion and triumphant resurrection of Jesus Christ, His one true Son, God has revealed Himself to men and reconciled them to Himself.
- By the working of the Holy Spirit we are invited and enabled to turn from our sin and put our faith in Christ. In the Christian fellowship, we enter upon a new life of praise, joy, peace, freedom, service, witness and love.
- As Christians, we are not immune from grief and pain, and are called to be ready for sacrifice in serving Christ. Yet we are assured of the help of God in bearing the burdens of life and overcoming its difficulties.
- The reality of God is greater than any man's understanding of it; we can set no limits to His power.
- In the light of the resurrection Christians face all their future, including death, with confidence in the sufficiency of God.

Educational Goals

At Foundations Christian Montessori Academy we aim to provide high-quality, comprehensive education that fosters your child's love of learning and addresses the whole child academically, emotionally, socially, culturally, and spiritually. The Montessori curriculum varies by program, however the goals for our school are consistent:

- To enter a partnership with parents in the education of their children
- To lead children toward mastery of individually identified intellectual, social, physical, and daily life skills
- To foster in the children deep and persistent curiosity that will lead to lifelong pursuit of knowledge
- To help children develop self-confidence
- To assist each child develop a habit of concentration
- To instill in each child a sense of personal responsibility for the world in which we live
- To spark in our children, wonder, imagination, and joy and to lead children into long lasting relationship with their Creator

Our Core Values

We believe that the pedagogical principles and practices developed by Dr. Maria Montessori fundamentally respond to the developmental characteristics and needs of children. We seek to utilize her educational principles and methodologies in all of the programs offered at Foundations Christian Montessori Academy. We also believe that the pedagogical principles of the Bible be integrated into all aspects of instructional learning.

- We believe that all children deserve to develop in an environment that is nurturing, safe and intelligent.
- We believe that parents are the principle influence in the child's life. The school provides a secondary supportive role to the home. It is a tandem cooperative relationship between home and school which best serves the child.
- We believe that the model of our own behavior serves as the most distinct teacher to the child.
- We believe that every member of our community has a fundamental right to be treated with respect regardless of age, gender, ethnic origin, religion, race, or disability.
- We believe that intelligence is not rare, but a state of the healthy mind. As such, it can and should be nurtured and encouraged.
- We believe that wisdom can be nurtured and cultivated in a positive, affirming, and intelligent learning environment.
- We believe that the development of whole, healthy individuals requires that our many dimensions be nurtured, including the intellectual, physical, social, emotional, and spiritual.
- We center the programs and curriculum of Foundations on the natural needs of human development.
- We describe the learning environment of Foundations as active as opposed to passive. The environment is dynamic, with children functioning as active agents in the learning process by making choices and learning to be responsible for those choices.
- We believe that the first six years of life are critical to the development of one's life.
- We offer a flexible learning environment that responds to individual needs, has an adaptable curriculum, and honors diverse learning styles.
- We strive to create a true balance among freedom, order, and responsibility in each classroom.
- We believe that children can learn constructive modes of problem-solving and conflict resolution, thereby creating a more peaceful learning and living environment.
- We believe that we are intimately interdependent with other life forms on this planet. As educators, it is our responsibility to foster knowledge of, interest in, and responsibility for the natural world we inhabit.
- We believe in the fullness of life and the value of a diverse community, which promotes an understanding for and acceptance of all peoples.
- We believe that all forms of expression and communication should be nurtured. Art, music, literature, drama, and other forms are fundamental modes of expression for the human spirit.
- We believe that the technology of the "Information Age" must be made available to children as is appropriate for their developmental level. Access to, and instruction in the use of, computers is fundamental to the Elementary program.
- We believe that we are a dynamic member of our community. We nurture and promote "outreach" activities that involve the children in community improvement projects.
- We nurture an extended family community within the school whose participants are supported at all levels by the whole community.
- We believe that the Academy has a responsibility to prepare its students for life, balancing academic excellence with the development of personal and practical life skills, and by developing a personal relationship with their Creator, Jesus Christ.
 - We believe that education is the biblically integrated process of developing students spiritually, academically, physically, socially, and emotionally.

History and Philosophy

History

Foundations Academies was founded in 2007, and operated under the name "Foundations Developmental Learning Academy. The vision was to provide an early learning preschool environment that would focus on developing the whole child in a Christ-centered milieu. With the compassionate help of a local businessman, who saw the owner's dream and passion and with the faithful support of staff who agreed to work that first year without pay, Foundations' doors were opened on August 27, 2007. By the end of the first year, Foundations had grown from one student to seventeen students. Due to the demand for infant and toddler care, Foundations saw the need to expanded its facility. With the help of Lakewood Church on the Ranch, three more classrooms were built to accommodate infants, ones, and twos. Foundations opened its doors for the 2008 school year with 32 students enrolled.

God continued to bless Foundations by making the facility “desirable” and growth was imminent. By the summer of 2009, we expanded our original 3,500 square foot facility by adding an additional 1,700 square feet which provided a beautiful, new classroom, reception area, and storage area. The old office and reception areas were remodeled to create two additional classrooms. With the added space, came more children. Despite the recession, God continued to bless Foundations and by the end of the school year, enrollment remained strong with seventy-five students.

Foundations would undergo three more renovations, one in the summer of 2010, one in the winter of 2011, and the final expansion in the summer of 2012 that would give the facility 10,000 square feet which now houses 10 classrooms, an occupational therapy room, large lobby/reception area and a full administrative wing which includes an administrative office, teacher’s resource room, fine arts office, speech therapy classroom, dance studio, and full service kitchen. Foundations Academies has the unique distinction of meeting the local community’s needs by offering not only quality childcare, but an exceptional alternative to public education.

At the end of July 2016, Foundations was presented another opportunity for growth. A local, evangelical church closed their school, and offered Foundations an opportunity of a life time...to move into and lease their existing school facility. Foundations now occupies over 35,000 square feet of dedicated school facilities, and has access to playground and playing field. Foundations also has the potential to assume an addition 55,000 square feet of dedicated school space as we grow. This additional space includes full size commercial kitchen and gymnasium. With this move and new location, Foundations Academies decided to rebrand and rename itself with the school that had developed over the course of previous 10 years, a Christian Montessori school. So, In January 2017, Foundations Academies, submitted corporate amendments and officially became Foundations Christian Montessori Academy.

Foundations Christian Montessori Academy has the unique distinction of meeting the local community’s needs by offering not only quality childcare and educational programs, but offers an exceptional alternative to public education.

Jeremiah 29:11, says “For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” So it is with great joy and anticipation, that Foundations looks forward to this future.

Educational Philosophy

The Christian philosophy of education is unique in contrast to all other educational philosophies. Other philosophies are academically centered, child centered, or state-centered, while the Christian philosophy is centered in the person of Jesus Christ as God. Foundations base its philosophy on two biblical truths. First, that God is the source of all knowledge. Second, that parents are instructed to be responsible for the instruction and discipline of their children. Therefore, Foundations Christian Montessori Academy was established to assist in the education of children whose parents are concerned with their spiritual growth and character formation, as well as academic and developmental achievement. To this end, Foundations hope to provide for each child a true Biblical worldview perspective of life.

Our Christian Montessori Philosophy

Dr. Maria Montessori was one of the first female doctors in Italy. Although misunderstood by her contemporaries and some today, she was a pioneer in her thoughts and actions toward children. She did not work with the elite, as many people think, but the disadvantaged, the mentally and physically challenged, and the poor. She brought her theories of sensorial learning to life and began to give children tools that would expedite and facilitate their love for learning. She was the first to create child-sized everything; instead of mini-adults, she respected children as children. She coined the phrase “a place for everything and everything in its place” as she recognized the child’s need for organization.

She further observed that children are different from each other and need to learn at their own pace and time of readiness. The first six years are the most sensitive and critical period of the child’s life. The child has the unique ability (one that is lost in adulthood) to absorb everything in their environment in an intuitive way. Dr. Montessori developed what she called the “prepared environment,” which has a certain order and allows children to develop at their own pace, according to their own capabilities, in a noncompetitive atmosphere. She said, “never let a child risk failure until he has a reasonable chance of success.” She also observed that children have an innate love and need for purposeful activities. The child receives pleasure in the “doing,” not just in the profit and completion of the task, as adults do.

The Montessori philosophy of education is that every child carries within themselves the person that they will become. To develop their physical, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual capacity that must have freedom—a freedom that is achieved through order and self-discipline, a freedom not to do what you want, but to do what is right. A child’s world is full of sights and sounds that appear chaotic, and in this chaos they must create order, thus learning to master themselves in the world in which they live.

Dr. Montessori used the term “Atrium,” derived from the gathering place for worship in the early Christian church, to describe the spiritual environment that is carefully set up and prepared for the children to proclaim the message of Jesus,

teach the lessons Jesus taught, and focus on the Word and worship. Each of our classrooms house religious work and biblical lessons through which the children can express their faith in Christ.

"The Montessori Method was furnished with a long-sought opportunity of penetrating deeper in the life of the child's soul, and of thus fulfilling its true educational mission." —E.M. Standing

Campus and Classroom Spaces

Foundations Christian Montessori Academy campus is located at 4141 Desoto Road about two miles west of I-75 off University Parkway. At this campus we have two infant classrooms for children ages birth to 18 months, two toddler classrooms for children ages 18 months to 36 months, two primary classrooms for children ages 36 months to 60 months, two lower elementary classroom (levels 1 – 3), one upper elementary classroom (levels 4 – 6), and one middle school classroom (levels 7 -8).

Each classroom is thoughtfully arranged and offers an inviting space for activity that is focused and calm. Learning materials are displayed on shelves that are accessible to the children to foster independence as the students go about their daily work. There are spaces in the classroom that allow for group activity as well as areas where the student can work alone. There are well-defined spaces for each part of the curriculum, such as Language Arts, Math, Science, History, Geography, and more. Each of these areas features shelves or display tables with a variety of inviting materials from which students can choose.

Community- Our classrooms allow for both independence and fostered collaboration. Daily, students sit together as a whole class to reflect on what they're learning, both academically and socially. Class agreements are made that are often reviewed or referred to during this time. This supports students in making decisions that have a positive effect on their peers.

School Culture - As a result of the multi-age grouping, students have the same teacher for multiple years and are able to develop a rapport and trust. These supportive connections can serve as the basis for strong behavioral health and provide students with the comfort to confide in adults. It is important to note that it is the classroom teacher that sets the parameters for all academics.

Relationships- Our three year cycles give students the unique and essential opportunity to build long lasting relationships with their teachers and other students in their multi-age communities. This enables students to feel safe and have respect for themselves and others.

The Prepared Environment- Students are in an academic environment that supports inquiry and both independent and collaborative exploration. The materials and instruction are differentiated to provide students at all levels with satisfying work that doesn't expose struggling students to work outside their current skill level. Through a combination of self-directed and teacher-directed learning, students are engaged in high level, non-competitive tasks that absorb their attention and build their confidence. As a result of these aspects of the Montessori Method, students are less apt to engage in negative behaviors.

Curriculum and Teachers

The term "Montessori" implies both philosophy and a method of education philosophy based on the research of Dr. Maria Montessori – an Italian physician and educator. At its heart, the Montessori method emphasizes independence, freedom within limits, and a respect for the child. Classroom spaces are purposefully designed and materials carefully curated in pursuit of an education partnership. Multi-aged classrooms provide benefits that are readily apparent when visiting the classroom. Younger children in the classroom have an opportunity to observe and imitate the older students as they work. Older students have an opportunity to reinforce their own knowledge by explaining what they are doing and assisting and mentoring younger children. Each child can learn and develop at his own pace within a classroom that accommodates many levels of ability and complexity. The head teachers are referred to as Lead Guides.

The experience and training of a Montessori guide is integral to the Montessori method. Our guides use both concrete teaching materials and a well-defined innovative curriculum tailored to the child, and through each three-year cycle from the Primary program through both levels of the Elementary program. The Montessori guide is specially trained to observe each child and to design lessons based on that child's natural curiosity and love of learning. The guide is responsible for preparing the educational environment within each classroom and for presenting lessons in that environment. During the course of a day, the Lead Guide will demonstrate a wide array of concrete sensorial materials and sequential activities through individual instruction. The child soon learns to associate abstract concepts with hands-on experience.

Family Commitment

Parents are a fundamental part of the well-being of our school and of a successful educational experience for their child. As such, we have the expectation that all members of the school community participate and support the school whenever possible. It is the hope and expectation of Foundations Academies that parents make every effort to understand and embrace the mission of the school. To that end, we aim to help parents learn about the Montessori approach by providing information and opportunities for parent education. Additionally, we expect parents to familiarize themselves with the philosophy, policies, and procedures contained in the Parent Handbook and other school publications, including our email communications, and website. Teachers value the assistance and participation of parents in the classroom and in adventures beyond the classroom. Both parents and students are enriched by parents' involvement in school activities. In addition, each family is expected to contribute to the annual fundraising efforts of the school. We rely on our parents and families to help ensure the successful future of our school.

Parents are required to sign a parent pledge and agreement at the beginning of each school year, or upon enrolling. In signing this pledge, parents are committing to supporting the expectations, policies and guidelines set forth in the Parent and Student Handbook. It is the family's obligation to read and to follow the handbook. Failure to do so could lead to the dismissal of the student. We realize that you may not agree with all the policies, but we expect you to respect and respond properly to the authority over you even when you are not in full agreement. Failure to exhibit respect towards administration, teachers, and /or staff, or failure to support the policies and procedures as stated in this handbook, may result in the immediate dismissal of the student.

Governance

Foundations Christian Montessori Academy is a privately owned, non-public, private Christian school consisting of five educational programs, infants, toddlers, primary, elementary, and middle school. The Owner/President has served as a children's minister, youth minister, and worship leader for over two decades. The President has selected a governing body, the School Advisory Council, and ensures that each person on the Council that exhibits Christian principles in all areas of life. All members of the School Advisory Council, as well as all employees, are required to sign an agreement to the statement of faith. The governing body oversees the school in accordance with Foundations stated philosophies and objectives by governing the procedures, policies and finances. The School Advisory Council is constantly kept informed of the day-to-day operations of the school by daily and weekly reporting's from the Head of School to the President of the School Advisory Council.

School Administration

Heather Angersoll – Head of School
Sindy Jones – Assistant Head of School
Douglas Cooley – Campus Pastor/Director of Community Events
Chelsea Long – Registrar / Front Office Manager
Rachel Uneberg – Director of Admissions / EC Curriculum Specialist
Rachel Downing – Administrative Assistant / IT Specialist
Kristina Mumford – Food Service / Facility Administration

Accreditations, Certifications, Memberships, and Licensure

Foundations Christian Montessori Academy infant, toddler, and primary programs are licensed by the Sarasota County Health Department (#58-03-178413). Foundations Christian Montessori Academy is accredited by the Florida League of Christian Schools (FLOCS) and holds national accreditation through International League of Christian Schools (ILCS) (#15348). Foundation Christian Montessori Academy also hold membership the Florida Association of Academic Nonpublic Schools, CAPE - the Council for American Private Education, NCSPA – The National Council of Private Schools Association, CITA – the Commission of International Trans-Regional Accreditation, and with the International Montessori Council. Foundations Christian Montessori Academy is registered with the Florida Department of Education as a non-public, private school (#5780).

Non-Discriminatory Statement

It is the policy of Foundations Christian Montessori Academy, in the admissions of students or the hiring of employees, not to discriminate on the basis of the applicant's race, color, ethnic origin, or disability and entitle them to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities made available to students and employees at this school.

Americans with Disabilities Act

Foundations Christian Montessori Academy does not discriminate against qualified applicants, employees, prospective students or enrolled students who are/or become disabled. A qualified person is someone who, with or without a reasonable accommodation can perform the essential functions of the job or educational program in question. In accordance with the ADA, Foundations has adopted a policy that prohibits discrimination against faculty, staff or students with disabilities. The school, however, admits only those students for which the school can provide an appropriate educational program.

Other Legal Disclosures

Reasonable Suspicion of Abuse, Mandated Reporting. In accordance with State law and school policy, all school staff members are obligated under penalty of fine and jail term to report the reasonable suspicion of physical abuse, sexual abuse, or child neglect that may be observed. In this very serious and legally narrow area, the school will not contact parents in advance of making a report to authorities, which would be the procedure followed in most other legal matters. The clear intent of the law, based on the seriousness of the crimes listed above, is to mandate that a report of reasonable suspicion of abuse be made. School staff members will make such reports in the best interest of the affected child and do not, once reasonable suspicion is established, have any legal alternative except to make the report to the proper authorities for their investigation and review. All incidents involving significant changes in a child's pattern of behavior, or significant changes in a child's physical condition, will be documented on an official incident report, and will be signed by the parent, teacher, and school administrator. Any continued patterns of reported changes to a child's well-being, could be considered abuse and/or neglect, and if not rectified, will be subject to mandated reporting.

Interviewing Children and Inspecting Records. In accordance with State law, the state child care regulatory enforcement and administration agency and the local department of social services or child protective services has the authority to interview children or staff, to inspect and audit child or facility records, to interview children privately, to observe the physical condition of the children in the school, to make provisions for the independent medical examination by a licensed physician of any child, and to contact and instruct any other appropriate authority to do the same, without prior notice or consent by myself or by the school.

Guide to the Toddler Program

Rapidly developing, constantly exploring, determined to do things independently — toddlers learn by working with materials that develop their brain through direct experience: seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling, touching, and movement.

Our 5-day Toddler program lays the foundation for a sense of school community. The same group of children come together each day, learning from one another, and deepening relationships that will continue throughout their time at Foundations. Every element in the design of the Children's House learning environment empowers young children to dive right in using all their senses to follow their emerging and evolving interests.

At Foundations, toddlers have myriad opportunities in the classroom and in nature to explore, engage, and master tasks to reach key milestones in their cognitive, physical, and social/emotional development:

- Practical Life builds independence through a focus on caring for self, others, and our environment.
- Mathematics moves from concrete to abstract, using manipulatives to understand quantity, patterns, and shapes.
- Language integrates rich pre-reading and pre-writing resources and activities throughout each day.
- Music includes creative singing, finger-play, and rhythm.
- Movement captures the spirit of toddlers, building essential motor skills and creating an atmosphere of joyful exuberance.

Guide to the Primary Program

Principles of the Classroom

The most important time for learning is the period between birth and six years of age. Children are eager to learn from new people and experiences. They absorb all the environment must offer and it is our responsibility to ensure the world they experience is rich, safe, nurturing, and intelligent. The foundation of self-esteem and all future learning is constructed during these early years and the Primary and Extended Day Programs are designed to take advantage of this powerful, formative period. The Primary program is our fundamental, core Montessori program that runs five days a week. The preschool

program offers your child a step toward independence in an environment specially created for the developing young learner. This happy and intelligent setting offers your child an opportunity to develop strong social skills as well as explore language, music, practical life skills, art, math, geography, science, culture and large motor activities.

In the primary classroom, your child will be introduced to many different concepts and will learn both through observing and through direct interaction with our beautifully crafted materials.

The Three-Year Cycle

The Montessori primary (preschool) program is a three-year cycle. Children begin at three years of age in the primary (preschool). We have found children adjust and access the Montessori environment much more successfully when they attend five days a week. Pre-school aged children especially need consistency. They bond socially more readily with the other children. They also tend to progress through the full spectrum of materials in the five-day format. Developmentally it is beneficial for children to experience the full three-year cycle. Children move into the extended day program at age four or five depending on their need for a nap.

Curriculum

Practical life. Dr. Montessori structured exercises for the classroom to help children satisfy the need for meaningful activity. We refer to these as "exercises of practical life." They include those daily activities which adults perform to maintain the environment and promote cohesive human relations. The Montessori practical life area is designed to allow the child to practice skills that will lead to greater independence and self-control. This area provides the child with the opportunity to engage in tasks associated with the real world of home, garden, and self-care. This work allows the child to develop concentration and attention to detail. Fine motor skills are honed, as the child gains a sense of satisfaction that comes from completing a task. They develop a deep joy for caring for themselves, others, and their environment. There are four distinct groups of practical life exercises:

- Care of the person. Children learn hand washing, fastening buttons, zipping, tying, combing, and other personal hygiene skills. First children should take care of themselves, and then reach out to the environment. We help guide the children to gradually develop independence from their parents.
- Care of the environment. With these exercises, children take responsibility for the space they use and enjoy. The Montessori classroom is kept clean and tidy and the children are, in large part, responsible for its maintenance. They delight in washing windows, tables and chairs, sweeping floors, dusting shelves, polishing, and gardening. In addition, each child is responsible for returning his/her materials to the shelf upon completion.
- Grace and Courtesy. Through classroom activities and modeling by teachers, children develop the necessary skills for conversation, conflict resolution, greeting, and thanking. By participating in Grace and Courtesy exercises, children learn to positively interact and to problem solve.
- Concentration and Coordination. The exercises in practical life are among the first presented. These preliminary exercises include spooning, pouring, using tools, opening and closing bottles, folding and matching. These lessons help the child develop his/her gross and fine motor skills as well as develop concentration. In addition, there are groups of exercises that involve the analysis and control of movement to facilitate coordination. There are exercises that are essentially designed for this purpose, such as walking on the line and the silence game.

Sensorial Exercises. Maria Montessori believed that nothing exists in the intellect that was not first experienced in the senses. The materials in the sensorial area are designed to help children sharpen their senses by isolating particular qualities such as size, shape, composition, color, flavor, smell, pitch, texture and weight. Each of the materials in this area is autodidactic and allows the child to work at their own pace with minimal interruption from the teacher. Children enjoy working with these materials repeatedly and often develop their own variations on the standard lesson.

Language. Language is an integral part of the entire Montessori preschool curriculum. Stories, songs, poems along with conversations with adults and peers help children increase their vocabulary and develop oral language skills. Written language is taught through a specific progression of lessons that engage the senses—children learn letters and sounds through seeing, hearing, and touching them—and through immersion in a linguistically rich classroom environment. Children first learn the phonetic sound of each letter. Using inviting, hands-on materials the children progress by classifying objects based on their sounds and then begin putting these sounds together to create words. Once they have learned to create their own words, reading follows quickly. The children work with increasingly more challenging materials. As they progress with their reading, the focus turns to comprehension and grammar. With the development of language, children develop a greater ability to organize their thoughts and express themselves.

Mathematics. The materials in the math area are designed for the development of a concrete understanding of abstract mathematical concepts. The hands-on materials in the math area help the child sequentially progress from basic

comparisons of different quantities and their numeric symbols, through addition and subtraction and on to the combination of numbers, multiplication, division and fractions.

Science. The objective of science in the Montessori classroom is to develop each child's natural sense of wonder and invite them to find answers to some of their "Why's". Each classroom contains many materials with which to explore various aspects of science.

Geography and Cultural Studies. Maria Montessori believed it was important to study what humans have in common to instill in the child a greater sense of belonging to the universe. By examining the similarities and differences of humans around the globe, we build a sense of connection to all human beings. Children in the Montessori classroom begin by looking at the world as a whole. Children are first introduced to the ideas of air, land, water, and continents. They then begin the study of local regions, cultures, and geography of the United States and all the continents. Colorful puzzles provide extensive hands-on exploration of world geography. Boxes containing a variety of items from each continent give the children a concrete link to peoples in other lands. Students at The Montessori School come from a variety of rich cultural backgrounds. This allows us a unique way to introduce students to other cultures and customs and to study countries in a variety of different ways.

Foreign Language and the Arts. At Foundations Academies, we believe that artistic talent is a God-given gift that can be honed through discipline and study. We believe that exposure to creativity nourishes the soul and opens the mind. Our cosmic education curriculum encompasses art, music, foreign language, dance, musical theater, culinary arts, geography, literature and science. Children are introduced to Spanish, Mandarin, and American Sign Language through exploration and expansion of numerous lessons given throughout science, mathematics, English, history, and geography.

Guide to the Elementary Program

Our Lower Elementary program (Grades 1 to 3) seeks to balance the child's developing imagination with concrete skills learned through hands-on exploration. Montessori materials are exceptionally logical and beautifully constructed, enticing the children to want more, to learn more, and to achieve "flow" as they reach deeper and deeper levels of concentration. Our teachers carefully observe and track each child's progress, and add levels of difficulty to the work with each new success they've witnessed. Our teachers match their instruction with each child's learning style and natural talents, ensuring every child is engaged and invested in learning, and capable of achieving success.

The Lower Elementary program creates students who are willing to take intellectual risks and have the resiliency needed for the challenging pursuits of Upper Elementary. Dr. Montessori's "Great Lessons" are the cornerstone lessons of our Lower Elementary classrooms. They include: The Story of the Universe, The Coming of Life, The Coming of Humans, The Story of Language, and The Story of Numbers. Stories, charts, experiments, and the arts form a narrative of human civilization through time—shaping a global vision and developing critical thinking, problem-solving, and research skills.

In our Upper Elementary (Grades 4 to 6) students focus on building greater independence and responsibility as they begin to think more abstractly and explore more complex ideas. Teachers encourage students to make cross-curricular connections and to seek ever expanding academic challenges. At this level, students truly refine their time management skills as they are offered "freedom with responsibility." While students continue to explore, concepts using concrete materials, technology begins to play a larger role, enhancing abstract learning and providing new pathways for student expression.

The elementary program is a natural continuation of the philosophy, materials and methods found in the Primary room. Like classrooms for younger children, Elementary classrooms are multi-aged; they include children aged 6 to 12 years old.

A Guide to the Middle School Program

In Middle School, students take on increasing levels of responsibility and independence as they build the academic, social, and emotional skills essential for the challenges of high school and college. Our cross-disciplinary curriculum nurtures essential skills for academic success, including the ability to work both independently and collaboratively, to organize one's work and time, to craft research into meaningful projects, to communicate effectively, and to think globally. Students strengthen their ability to:

- Speak, listen, write formats, and to read with purpose and understanding through Language Arts.
- Solve problems with Mathematics, through a deep dive into fundamentals and applications of algebra.
- Explore broad questions through research and philosophical discussion in History & Social Studies.
- Utilize techniques and concepts of chemistry, physics, and biology in hands-on Science investigations.

Admissions Guidelines

To be considered for enrollment at Foundations Christian Montessori Academy, children must be at least six weeks of age. Enrollment preference will be given to families with a firm commitment to Christian Montessori philosophy. Classes are multi-age, and the school will make every reasonable effort to balance each class with respect to age and gender. Foundations Christian Montessori Academy is open to all children regardless of race, sex, religion or creed, national origin, ancestry, or ethnicity. Foundations Christian Montessori Academy is considered a main-stream educational facility. Foundations does not specialize in special needs education, does not provide therapeutic services, and does not hire special needs certified instructors. It is at the sole discretion of Foundations Christian Montessori Academy to assess and determine whether the programs at Foundations can meet the needs of an applicant.

All elementary and middle school students must follow Foundations Christian Montessori Academy admissions and enrollment process as previously stated and must additionally meet and fulfill following obligations:
Applicants for Kindergarten must meet the following requirements:

Kindergarten – must be 5 years of age on or before September 1st

Submit copies of the following to the school office:

Report Cards (past 2 years, if applicable)
Standardized Test Scores (past 2 years, if applicable)
Any Developmental Screenings
Any IEP or 504 plan, if applicable

Foundations Christian Montessori Academy reserves the right to refuse admission to an applicant or to discontinue the enrollment of a student if his/her behavior and/or conduct is in opposition to the policies and procedures set forth in the parent and student handbook or if the student is unwilling or unable to modify behavior. Parents are also expected to uphold the values, objectives, rules, and purposes of Foundations Christian Montessori Academy. Parents, guardians and/or authorized pick-up persons who show a lack of respect to the administration, teachers, staff, families or other students will be addressed personally by the Head of School. Any inappropriate behavior that causes undo confusion or problems, or is in opposition to the mission and/or philosophy of Foundations may result in the dismissal of the child. Foundations Christian Montessori Academy, as a private school, reserves the right to dismiss any child, with or without cause, and with or without notice. Foundations reserves the right to dismiss any child, or adult, who is unable to behave in a manner conducive to a Christian environment. Excessive wrong behavior by a child such as biting, hitting, bad language, refusing to cooperate, lying, cheating or bullying with Foundations staff or students may be cause for immediate dismissal. Parents are expected to work with their child's teacher to create an environment that promotes respect and caring for other students, adults, school property and the promulgation of acceptable attitudes, actions, and good behavior. Annual fees and tuition are non-refundable in the event of dismissal.

Admissions Process

Tour and observation. Though not required, a tour of our campus is strongly recommended. Foundations Christian Montessori Academy conducts weekly "Walk-In Wednesday" tours. During this tour, you will meet our school administration for a short introductory session about our school, followed by a campus tour. Walk-In Wednesdays are from 9:00am-10:00am and give each guest the opportunity to observe a classroom "in action."

Application. Interested families are encouraged to visit our website to submit a student application. Foundations uses an online application system. Once application is submitted and the non-refundable \$100 application fee has been processed, family will be contacted to acknowledge receipt of application.

Request for Records/Testing. During the campus tour, families receive a request for records form. As part of the application process, request for records from the student's current/previous school need to be made prior to student shadow and family interview. During the student shadow visit, the student will be observed and elementary/middle school students will take the NWEA MAP test for language, reading and math.

Student Shadow Visit and Family Interview. Once a completed application has been submitted and student records have been received, the student shadow visit will be scheduled. Primary aged children will explore the Montessori classroom materials with the guidance of a teacher for a half-day, which includes a morning work cycle period. Elementary children typically will shadow a classroom for one half-day and one full day.

Enrollment. The school will notify you within one week regarding the admissions decision. If accepted and space is available, the school will issue you a contract. Signed contracts, along with an enrollment fee, tuition deposit, and

additional enrollment forms are due back to the office within 14 days to hold your child's spot in a classroom. If your child is accepted but there are no openings, he or she will be placed in a waiting pool until an opening exists.

Continued Enrollment. A letter requesting an application for continued enrollment is sent to parents in February of each year. Applications are to be submitted, with the application fee, by the due date. New enrollment information and fees must also be submitted to assure that your child's placement in the school is secure. Fees are non-refundable.

Addition Enrollment Requirements. Per State Legislature, all infant, toddler, and primary parents must read, "Getting to Know Your Child Care Facility" brochure and "The Flu, A Parent's Guide" brochure. You will find copies of these brochures in the student application section on-line at wwwFOUNDATIONSMA.org

Probation Period

A new student to Foundations Christian Montessori Academy enters with a provisional 60-day probation period. During this time, the teachers expect that students will experience an adjustment period as they begin a new routine with new teachers and classmates. Teachers will communicate with you during this time as to your child's adjustment and at the conclusion of this 60-day time period, may request a meeting to discuss their transition. If it is deemed that your child is not progressing successfully during this period, a meeting will be requested between the family, teacher, administration, and student, if appropriate.

Student Success and Meeting Student Needs

The Montessori environment is unique. It cultivates an inner discipline that is the foundation for further learning and social development. Occasionally the learning style of an individual child is not compatible with the climate of the Montessori classroom. If the head teacher becomes concerned about the suitability of the Montessori class for your child, you will be contacted to set up a conference. We want every child to experience the satisfaction and joy of a successful education. Generally, children adapt to the Montessori classroom within 60 days. If your child is not functioning successfully in the classroom, we will make educational recommendations to your family. If we believe that Montessori will not meet your child's needs, we will recommend alternate environments to you and remove him/her from the class.

Enrollment Termination and Student Expulsion

Foundations Christian Montessori Academy is dedicated to maintaining a safe, harmonious classroom environment for the optimum development of all our students. Parents of children with excessively disruptive or hurtful behavior will be asked to seek professional assistance according to our Developmental and Behavioral Referral process.

Enrollment Termination Process

- The Lead Guide will consult with the Head of School at the earliest opportunity to identify an at risk student.
- The Head of School will observe the student in the classroom and/or on the playground and will provide the Lead Guide with information and recommendations to address the child's needs.
- Staff will document specific incidents of behavior that are worrisome or problematic.
- If needs or problems are significant, the Head of School and Lead Guide will meet with parents. Using observations about patterns of behavior, a plan will be created to address the needs of the child. The need for specific professional consultation may be identified. If the need for professional support is requested, parents are expected to respond in a timely manner to acquire those services.
- A written statement of goals and strategies for achieving goals will be created with parents, the School and consulting professionals. A date for a progress review will be set.
- If support from the family is not forthcoming and/or the problems are of such severity that the climate of the classroom and safety of the other children is in jeopardy, parents will be given a date by which the student will be removed from the classroom and parents will need to obtain alternate care for their child.

Other Reasons for Expulsion. Unfortunately, in particular situations, it may be imperative for Administration to discontinue a student's enrollment. Such a decision would be based on whether it is in the best interest of the student, or other students in the class, and the overall operation of the program.

Every effort will be made to correct a problematic situation before a final decision is made. Termination of enrollment may be a result of the following:

- NSF (Non-Sufficient Funds) or Non-payment
- Continued violation of academy policies
- Disruptive or dangerous behavior

- The program's inability to meet the student's needs
- Student not in attendance for two consecutive weeks without notification by parent/guardian
- Three or more late tuition payments
- Not picking up child due to illness or behavior

In the event expulsion of a student is necessary, all fees, deposits, and tuition paid is non-refundable. Please refer to Enrollment and Financial Contract.

The school operates on the tuition and fees paid for services. If a family's account is 30 days or more past due, the child will be withdrawn from the program until the account has been brought up to current status. Written notification of intent to withdraw a child shall be made at least seven days prior to withdrawal. (See Enrollment Contract and Financial Agreement for terms of withdraw).

Enrollment Ratios

Infants:	1 staff to 4 children
Toddler:	1 staff to 6 students
Primary:	1 staff to 12 students
Elementary/Middle School:	1 staff to 15 students

Programs

Infant Program

Our Infant community serves children from 6 weeks of age to 18 months. Dr. Maria Montessori believed that education as an "Aid to Life" begins from the period of pregnancy. In this nurturing environment, our teachers will meet the unique needs of both infants' and their parents' as their children begin their path toward independence.

We believe that adults are responsible to guide children along this path and that every moment is a learning opportunity. At each stage in development, we must meet children's needs to maximize their developmental interests and potential. Infants are given freedom to move, eat, sleep, and communicate at will, guided by special materials and furniture to facilitate this development. Each family works with our trained teacher to formulate an individual plan for feeding, resting, toileting, and activities. As infants' interest in communication and movement grows, they begin to seek a broader environment for stimulation and become ready to join our Toddler community.

"Infancy is a period of true importance because when we want to infuse new ideas, to modify or better the customs or habits of a people, to breathe new vigor into its national traits, we must use the child as our vehicle.... Out of this truth comes the importance of nursery schools, for it is the little ones who are building mankind and they can work only on the materials we give them." — Dr. Maria Montessori

Toddler Program

The Toddler community is designed around the basic Montessori concept of "freedom within limits." The environment is prepared with age-appropriate materials and exercises that encourage each child's natural curiosity and enthusiasm. The equipment in the prepared environment, as well as the consistency of our routines, have all been carefully designed to foster the development of our youngest students.

The toddler day includes independent and small group activities that develop gross and fine motor skills, cognitive, social, and language skills. Art, music and free play round out their busy day. And, since children in this age group love to be "on the go," ample opportunity is provided to explore the outdoor environment, engage in water activities, or just run in the sun for a part of every day.

Skills for Life. An important part of each toddler's social development revolves around practical life skills. They are encouraged to help clean up after art or activity periods and often help prepare their morning and late afternoon snack. We also work with our students on cleanliness and hygiene, developing the routine of washing hands before and after meals and other appropriate times. We believe toilet training is a normal acquisition that is both developmental and learned and will work with parents to make sure that the opportunity is available to the child when the time is right.

The time in a child's life from 18 – 36 months is delightful, with new discoveries occurring almost every day; but we acknowledge that it can be a frustrating time too. To this end, we encourage frequent parent/teacher communication

and endeavor to share pertinent information just as quickly as changes occur. In addition to these routine and regular contacts, we schedule a written progress report and two in-depth parent/teacher conferences each school year.

Primary Program

The Primary community at Foundations Christian Montessori Academy covers a three-year cycle for children 3-6 years of age. Each class is a multi-age grouping, balanced for gender and developmental stage. That means every student has a chance to be both leader and follower.

Dr. Montessori showed that learning results from the interaction of a child's internal thought and external experience in the world around them. To encourage children to explore this world and organize their knowledge of it, we prepare the classroom environment with activities and material that are appealing and enjoyable but serious in purpose and effect.

An observer in one of our Primary (3 to 6) classes is struck by the wide range of independent activities going on. This takes careful monitoring, encouragement and tutoring by our experienced teachers and assistants, but the result is well worth it, allowing each child to develop academically and socially to their fullest potential. Children learn to read, write and count at their own pace. They learn how to make choices, finish and put work away, and how to correct their mistakes. They learn and practice independence, patience and responsibility for themselves and others as well as becoming masters of creative problem solving.

Elementary and Middle School Programs

Our Elementary and Middle School community is divided into three multi-aged group levels: Lower (Level 1, 2, 3), Upper (Level 4, 5), and Middle School (Level 6, 7, 8).

The academic program at this level is strong in skill development and broad in character. We believe that basic proficiencies and critical thinking skills are essential. We emphasize the values of independence, cooperation, and self-discipline. Education is more than learning factual information; it is the ability to concentrate, to read and write fluently, to research confidently, to complete projects, and to work productively, both individually and in a group. This format for learning is one that builds knowledge, working with concrete materials which lead to the abstract and critical thinking skills.

The Montessori approach along with additional approaches and materials from larger non-Montessori educational community, including Bob Jones Press, meets individual needs. This combination provides opportunities for enrichment beyond the basic curriculum. Personalized pacing and flexibility in the classroom program meets varied styles of learning.

Tuition and Fees

Foundations Christian Montessori Academy is a private educational organization that relies entirely on tuition to fund the salaries of our exceptional staff and for the maintenance of facilities, and quality educational materials. Any disruption in the collection of tuition puts our school at financial risk. All accounts must be kept up to date. The school will be forced to withhold all services to students whose accounts have fallen behind unless written arrangements have been made for deferred payment. The tuition charged each year is for the academic year (see school calendar and tuition schedule), and tuition obligation remains regardless of withdraw or termination (see contract).

Explanation of Fees

- Application Fee – A yearly fee, per student, that is due upon the submission of the student application for the upcoming school year. Fee includes FACTS Tuition Management user account.
- Enrollment Fee – A yearly fee, per student, that is paid at the time of enrollment. This secures a position in a class for the student and includes student supplies, books, and other materials, and includes enrollment in RenWeb student information system. This fee is non-refundable and non-transferable should the student cancel for any reason.
- NEW Family Fee– A one-time fee, for new incoming families. This fee is non-refundable and non-transferable should the student cancel for any reason.
- NSF Fee – A fee charged for returns on checks. Fee is assessed per item.
- Tuition Return Fee – A fee charged for returns on debit/credit cards processed through tuition management system. Returns include NSF, General Declines, Expired Card, etc. Fee is assessed per item.
- Late Payment Fee – A fee charged, per day, until tuition payment has been submitted to office. This fee may be additionally assessed with an NSF fee and/or Rapid Return fee, until payment has been made current.
- Withdraw Fee – A one-time fee, to release patron of remaining yearly financial tuition obligation (infant, toddler, and primary programs only).

- Late Pick Up Fee – A fee that is charged, by the minute, for any late pick-up of a student after the student's official program closure. Time will be determined by actual time child was signed out in our Childcare Time Manager keypad.
- Late Arrival Fee – A fee that is charged, per tardy, that is in excess of five tardies per quarter.

Other Fees

- Graduation Fee – An end of year fee for graduating students. Fee includes graduation cap, gown, certificates, etc.
- Program Fee – Primary and Elementary grades will present an annual Christmas program. Other special school programs may also be presented throughout the school. Where required, any associated fees (i.e. Costumes, etc.) will be announced, in writing, in advance of the scheduled program.
- Fundraiser and Charity Drives – Fundraisers and charity drives for the benefit of the school or other worth charitable organizations may be conducted throughout the year. Participation for these events is voluntary, unless otherwise agreed to.
- Lunch Program – Lunches are available to purchase through our school's lunch program. Lunch program does NOT operate during the summer months.

Tuition Payments

Tuition and fees are established at the time of enrollment and are processed through FACTS tuition management company. For your convenience, you can select your preferred choice of payment plans: weekly, monthly, quarterly, by semester, or pay in full. Payments are to be made by use of FACTS tuition. Accounts that are created after the original program start date will be subject to a waterfall selection of payment options. All families are required to create a FACTS user account upon enrollment. Your child's official start date to Foundations will be on hold until FACTS account is created. In the event a family terminates FACTS account, enrollment will be placed on hold until account is reestablished. All families will be subject to late fees, if payment is not submitted as authorized, and/or will be subject to NSF/Return fees for any tuition payments declined. Additionally, payment options available through FACTS are subject to the actual date account was created. Dates are established to begin prior to the official start date of school.

Financial Agreement

All Foundations Christian Montessori Academy families are required to sign the Enrollment Contract at the time of enrollment which addresses the financial agreement and obligations. Parents understand and agree that the student is enrolled for the entire school year, and the Parent becomes liable for the entire year's tuition upon the signing of the Enrollment Contract (refer to details of signed contract). If thereafter the student is withdrawn, absent, or expelled, the academy will not refund any amounts paid and the parents remain responsible for the entire year's tuition and fees. The parents further agree that the obligation to pay tuition, fees, assessments, and charges ("financial obligations") for the entire school year is unconditional and that the withdrawal of absences by the student from Foundations for any reason, including personal vacation, scheduled holidays, professional days, sick days, inclement weather closures, unsatisfactory academic progress, disciplinary suspension or expulsion, or failure to pay tuition in a timely manner, does not relieve the parents of the responsibility for payment of the entire year's financial obligations. Similarly, the parents remain solely responsible for payment of all financial obligations, regardless of whether the Parent depend upon or anticipate other sources for funding. The student is expected to participate actively in all aspects of school life. If, in the sole discretion of administration, the student persistently is absent from classes, neglects work, fails to meet academic standards, exercises poor citizenship, or fails to cooperate, the student may be asked to withdraw from the Academy. Cancellation under this paragraph will not relieve the parents of the responsibility for payment of the entire year's financial obligations. Foundations parents are liable for the full tuition of the school year, or remainder thereof, when the student has been accepted for entry and has been enrolled for the said term.

In reliance on the signed Enrollment Contract and Financial Agreement, the school will incur financial obligations including but not limited to: the annual contract of teachers, the payment of leases, the purchase of literature and materials, etc., pursuant to the education of the enrolled student, therefore tuition payments cannot be cancelled or reduced.

Hours of Operation

Foundations Christian Montessori Academy is open Monday through Friday, 7:00 am to 6:00 pm. Specific program hours are as follows:

Infant – Primary Full Day	Monday – Friday	8:00am – 3:30pm
Infant – Primary Extended Day	Monday – Friday	7:00am – 6:00pm

Elementary/Middle School Full Day	Monday – Friday	8:00am – 3:30pm
Elementary/Middle School Extended Day	Monday – Friday	7:00am – 6:00pm
Business Office Hours	Monday – Friday	8:30am – 4:30pm
Summer Hours	Monday – Friday	7:30am – 5:30pm

ALL STUDENTS should make every effort to arrive to school before 8:30am. ALL elementary – middle school students that arrive to school after 8:30am, will be held in the office until 8:45am and then will personally escorted to their classroom by a Foundations Christian Montessori Academy staff member. All infant-primary who arrive after 9:30 am will NOT be permitted to attend classes for the day, unless previously arranged.

Attendance

The Montessori classroom is a structured environment, with the first part of the day being reserved for organizing activities and planning the students' uninterrupted work cycle. This sets the tone for their entire day.

Prompt arrival and consistent attendance are essential for your student:

- To self-develop
- To self-educate
- To succeed.

Late arrival is inconsiderate and is a serious detriment to your child's and their classroom's success. Families must support their children and make sure that they arrive on time every day. This is typically the parents' responsibility.

When your child is tardy:

- It prevents your child from benefitting from the most important part of a school day when the day's work is outlined
- It prevents your child from participating in cooperative learning experiences.
- It is a serious distraction for the teacher and children who are punctual, because it detracts from the progress of the class.
- It is disruptive as the other children stop their work to wonder why their friend was late.

When your child has excessive or habitual tardiness:

- It sends the message that your child's work day (school) is not a priority to you.
- It denies your child the valuable lesson of personal responsibility and punctuality.
- It impacts your child's future work ethic.

If tardiness is excessive, a parent/teacher conference will be scheduled. Excessive tardiness is defined as tardiness that impacts your child's and/or the classroom community. This is up to the discretion of the school. Foundations Christian Montessori Academy keeps attendance records and this information is reported on all report cards and school transcripts. Excessive tardiness can be grounds for dismissal. A Late Arrival Fee of \$10 per tardy will be assessed for all tardies in excess of five, in any given quarter.

When your student has excessive absences:

- It will impact your child's education.
- It sends the message that your child's work day (school) is not a priority to you.
- It makes forming friendships difficult.
- It denies your child opportunities for community building and social opportunities that cannot be recreated.

If absenteeism is excessive, a parent/teacher conference will be scheduled. Excessive absences are defined as absences that impact your child and/or the classroom community. This is up to the discretion of the school.

Foundations Academies keeps attendance records and this information is reported on all report cards and school transcripts. Excessive absenteeism can be grounds for dismissal. All elementary and middle school students are required by law, to be in attendance 90% of the school year (18 absences) or student could face grade retention. Parents should be aware that taking their children out of school for additional vacation time other than time designated on school calendar, could be detrimental to their education. If a vacation is scheduled, parents should discuss with the Lead Guide the educational experiences and activities that will be learned.

If a child is unable to attend Foundations Christian Montessori Academy for any reason, the parent should notify the school office by 8:30am or as soon as possible, and submit written documentation, signed by a parent/guardian. Student absence

forms are available on our website, www.foundationscma.org, and available in the school office. It is extremely important for children to attend as many days of school as possible. A missed school day results in the loss of a learning experience that cannot be fully replaced. The following are acceptable reasons for a child to miss school:

- Illness
- Doctor/dentist appointment (accompanied by a note from the physician)
- Death in the family
- Planned absences, that have received prior approval from school administration
- Family emergencies

Elementary and Middle School students are responsible for any and all missed assignments, projects, quizzes and/or tests.

School Readiness students are required to additionally sign in and sign out SISO sheet daily. Parents MUST clearly sign their full name, both first and last and write the exact time of arrival and departure to meet funding requirements. Failure to comply with attendance signature requirements could jeopardize funding and enrollment. All excessive absences not paid by the Coalition, is the responsibility of the parent.

Arrival and Dismissal

When arriving on campus, all parents and staff must follow our safe 10 mph while driving on campus. Additionally, all parents and staff must be alert while driving on campus. Being alert means that you are not on your phone or texting while operating your vehicle on campus.

All parents must park in the main parking lot and walk their child(ren) around the circle drive sidewalk. Parking spaces on along the south Student Center are designated for staff. For the safety of all, parents should not cut across circle loop drive or cut across parking lot. Foundations staff will monitor circle drive, and all entry access points between 7:45 am – 8:30 am and from 3:00 pm – 3:45 pm.

All parents must register their child's attendance using our Time Manger keypad. Each parent and authorized pick up person is assigned as special login PIN# that specifically associates them to their child. **DO NOT** give out your individual PIN# or use the PIN# of another parent or pick up person. If your child is receiving School Readiness Scholarships, you will also be required to record attendance manually in an attendance record book. This same process is followed for end of the day. At the end of the day, each child must be signed out of our care by using the Time Manager keypad and attendance record book, if required.

For your child's protection, we will not release a child to someone other than a custodial parent or individuals designated on the authorized pick up and release form, unless written authorization is provided to the school. We will ask for photo identification of the person picking up your child. Authorization can be granted on the emergency information form, but make sure to include a note anytime changes in regular dismissal are made. Please be sure to let a staff member know when your child arrives and leaves the school. When your child arrives for the day, his/her arrival time will be recorded by a staff member. The departure time, also noted by a staff member, will be recorded as the time you and your child leave the school grounds for the day. Staff members will be happy to discuss this process with you if you have any questions.

At Foundations, we have an **open-door policy** allowing you access to your child at all times. With that said, we are concerned about the safety of all of our students. Therefore, parents must receive prior approval from the Administrator for class-time visitation or observation. Everyone must check in at the office and submit personal identification (driver's license) to obtain visitor pass. In order to maintain the structure and schedules of the individual classrooms, we ask that **visits not exceed a 15-minute period**. Any visitor, who has not completed the Authorized Pick-up and Volunteer affidavit or who has not received prior Administrative approval, will not be allowed to visit the student on the school campus. **Safety is our main priority.**

- **NEVER LEAVE YOUR CAR'S ENGINE RUNNING IN THE PARKING LOT.**
- **NEVER LEAVE A CHILD OR AN ANIMAL ALONE IN YOUR VEHICLE.**
- **NO TEXTING WHILE DRIVING IN PARKING LOT**
- **ABIDE BY SET SPEED LIMIT (10 MPH) WHILE DRIVING IN PARKING LOT**

Curbside Drop-Off and Pick-Up

Curbside drop-off and pick-up is available for all upper school students in Lower Elementary through Middle School. All families will be required to register their student in the Curbside Drop-Off and Pick-Up program. Included in the registration,

parents authorize their child to sign themselves in and out of the Student Time Clock System. Registration will also include a list of people, authorized to drop-off and pick-up their child. Curbside Student Identifier (CCSI) Display cards will be distributed to all people listed on registration form. CCSI Display Cards, must be placed on the right side of the dashboard, and must be clearly visible to Foundations staff, in order to release the student. Students will NOT be released to anyone that is not listed on this registration form and does not have a CCSI Display Card. Additionally, CCSI Display Cards must not be shared with unauthorized persons as the CCSI number correlates to the specific authorized person. Parents are welcome to park and escort their child to class in the morning. In the afternoon, all students will be brought to the curbside in front of the administration building for afternoon pickup. Morning curbside drop-off will run from 8:00am – 8:30am. Afternoon curbside pick-up will run from 3:30pm – 3:45pm. After 3:45pm, all remaining students will be escorted to after school care.

All drop-off and pick-up persons must agree and abide to the terms and conditions of use of the Curbside Drop-Off and Pick-Up program. Failure to follow rules will result in revocation of use of program.

Guidelines for a Safe and Efficient Student Drop-off/Pick-up

- Drop-off and Pick-Up takes place in front of the main administrative building loop. Please watch the supervisors and pull up until you are motioned to stop.
- Students must exit the vehicle only when a supervisor is present and has come to your vehicle.
- Students will exit on the right curbside.
- Please unbuckle children only after your vehicle has come to a complete stop in the Curbside Lane area and a supervisor is approaching the vehicle.
- All cars should be flowing in a single file line along the curb, no double parking.
- Do not pass other vehicles in the Curbside Lane
- For safety and courtesy to other students and parents, parents cannot park their car in the Curbside Lane and let their children out or get out of their vehicle and walk children to the supervisors.
- Proceed with caution while in the Curbside Lane
- Be patient
- We are a cell phone free campus and we ask that no cell phones are to be used in Curbside Lane for safety reasons.
- We are a smoke free campus, and we ask that you refrain from smoking in Curbside Lane.

Additional Notes:

- If you would like to escort your child to class in the morning, please use main parking lot and sidewalks.
- If you are planning an after-school playdate with another student, proceed through Curbside Lane, and make arrangements to meet in main parking lot after pick-up.
- If you have scheduled a parent conference with your child's teacher, please use main parking lot and sidewalks.

Late Arrival

It is important that children arrive on time, as the beginning of the school day sets a tone for the classroom. Children who are rushed and arrive late may not be in the right frame of mind to begin their activities. We ask for your cooperation in ensuring that your child can begin his/her work at the start of class. Parents should not enter classrooms or disturb teachers once the day has begun. All students should arrive either before or promptly at 8:30 am. Elementary and middle school students should arrive no later than 8:15am. ALL STUDENTS should make every effort to arrive to school before 8:30am. ALL students that arrive to school after 8:30am, will be held in the office until a staff member is available to escort student to class. Upper school students will be held in office until 8:45am and will all be escorted to class at the same time. Due to classroom schedules and routines, Foundations Christian Montessori Academy requires all infant, toddler, and primary students arrive no later than 9:30 am or they will not be allowed to enter their classroom, unless previously arranged.

An elementary or middle school student who arrives late more than five times, will be asked to meet with the Head of School. Five unexcused tardies equal one unexcused absence. All unexcused tardies, in excess of five, in a quarter, will be assessed a \$10 Late Arrival fee. Excessive tardies could result in the termination of a student's enrollment at Foundations Christian Montessori Academy.

Excused tardies will be issued for all doctor, dentist, or other medical appointments. All other tardies will be considered unexcused.

HOS List

Elementary and Middle School students have the opportunity to be a part of the "HOS List", Head of School's List. This list will be comprised of all students who have no more than 3 tardies and 2 absences in each quarter. Students will receive a special invitation to join the Head of School for a quarterly HOS List celebration breakfast. If a student has no more than 12 tardies and 8 absences for the entire school year, the student will get to take part in a special end of the year field trip with the Head of School.

School Closings

In climate Weather. When weather conditions exist that would affect the safety of students, parents or teachers, classes will be canceled and school will be closed. Experiencing a hurricane or extremely severe weather is always a real possibility in Florida. Our closing policy in case of such weather conditions is as follows:

1. All closures and re-openings will follow Sarasota and/or Manatee County School Board decisions
2. Text alert message will be sent to all registered users.
3. Tuition responsibilities will not change. Tuition payments must be made as usual.

At times, in climate weather may occur during the school day. Parents will be notified by the school office if immediately school closure is mandatory. Parents will be required to pick up their child, in the event of an emergency.

We realize that many of you live some distance from school and we encourage you to use your own judgment when deciding whether to venture out in questionable weather and road conditions. School work can always be made up. You are welcome to call the office if questionable conditions exist.

Emergency Drills. As required by law, Foundations Christian Montessori Academy conducts monthly fire and/or emergency preparedness drills, as dictated by our emergency preparedness plan. These drills are conducted while the children are present. We are also required, by law, to conduct these drills twice a year during naptime and must include the use of "alternate routes." It is important for each child to be prepared in the event of an emergency and not to be afraid of the noises or requirements of each drill.

Facility Emergency Closure. In the event of an emergency, and the school facility needs to shut down immediately, Foundations Christian Montessori has made arrangement with The Tabernacle Church, to allow all of our staff and students to take shelter in their location, until all parents are able to be notified and children released in to their care. The Tabernacle Church is directly next to our facilities. Parents will be notified of facility emergency closure by means of our 911 text alert system.

Permanent Closure of School. In the event Foundations Christian Montessori Academy is required to shut down its operation, Foundations will give a two-week advance written notice, if possible, on the closing of the school to ensure each family has adequate time to secure placement of their child in another school. All student files will be transferred to the parent or legal guardian or will be maintained by the owner. All facility and state documents, including incident reports, fire drills, inspection reports, attendance, etc., will be maintained for a period of 5 years.

Accidents and Injuries

During activities, it is possible for a student to get injured. If an injury occurs, an incident report will be written. If the injury is serious, the parent/guardian will be notified immediately. Incidents reports are to be signed on the day of the occurrence. In the event the parent or legal guardian is not available for signature, the authorized pick-up person will be asked to sign the incident report on your behalf and a copy will be sent home for your review. Additionally, pictures of injury may be taken as a part of the documentation process. For the security and privacy of all students, staff and families, all pictures will be considered the sole property of Foundations Christian Montessori Academy and is to be used and reviewed ONLY by Foundations staff and administration without exception.

All accident claims should be made through the parent/guardian's primary insurance company before making any claim to Foundations insurance company. Should your child become ill or suffer an accident of any kind and need emergency treatment while in our care, the school administration and/or staff shall attempt to contact the parent or guardian immediately. In the event, we are unable to reach a parent or guardian, Foundations Christian Montessori Academy shall be authorized to secure such medical attention and care as may be necessary. Parent(s) will be responsible for any fees not covered by Foundations insurance.

Please remember that the school must be able to reach either parent at all times! If there are any changes to your contact information, notify the office immediately.

Health Policy

Medical Records. All students enrolling at Foundations Christian Montessori Academy must have a current physical exam, within one year of enrollment date, and up-to-date shot records before attending. It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to keep all medical records current. The office staff will send you a reminder notice of needed immunizations or physical updates. Per State licensing regulations, in the event the records are not submitted to the office by the designated due date, your child will not be allowed to return to school until they are current.

Necessary health and immunization forms are as follows:

HRS Form 680 (blue/white immunization form) or HRS Form DH 681 (blue Religious Exempt form) *
HRS Form 3040 (yellow/white physical examination form – both sides must be completed to make form valid)

Originals are no longer required of these forms for admission. Immunizations **MUST** not expire. Any student with an expired immunization is required to be sent home until in compliance. We suggest at each well child check or anytime your child receives a vaccination, you request from your medical provider a new immunization and/or physical form in efforts to keep your child's records current in his/her student file.

***Important Note Regarding Religious Exemption for Immunizations.** Foundations Christian Montessori Academy regulates the total number of Religious Exemption certificates accepted, as recommended by the Department of Health. A student's enrollment could be placed in waiting until an appropriate spot becomes available for an exempt student. Additionally, exempt families must sign a Vaccine Preventable Disease Exclusion Policy Acknowledgement. This policy is dictated by the State of Florida and The Department of Health. It states that in the event of a vaccine preventable disease outbreak, for the health and safety of all, all exempt students must immediately be removed from campus and may not return to campus for 21 days of the last reported outbreak. Families remain responsible for tuition regardless of exclusion. A student may return to campus earlier if they go and receive the vaccination for the current outbreak.

Illness. A child who becomes ill during school hours will be monitored for a period time. If symptoms of illness continue to persist, the parent will be contacted to pick up the child as soon as possible. Your child **MUST** be symptom/fever free and/or on prescribed medication for a period of 24 hours before returning to school. For your child's protection, and for the protection of other staff and students, Foundations Christian Montessori Academy adheres to following health guidelines:

- Has a fever within the last 24 hours, children will be sent home immediately with a fever of 100 degree or above and may not return to school until they have been fever free for a 24-hour period
- Has diarrhea; children with 2 abnormally loose bowels/diarrhea in a single school day will be sent home immediately and may not return to school until they have been free from diarrhea for a 24-hour period
- Has vomiting; children with 2 or more cases of vomiting in a previous 24-hour period, or 2 incidents of vomiting in a single school-day, or unless the vomiting is determined to be due to a non-contagious condition
- Is sneezing or coughing excessively due to a viral, bacterial, or allergen illness, and is causing the child to become red or blue in the face or to make a whooping cough
- Has difficult or rapid breathing
- Has nasal discharge that is cloudy, thick or yellow/green (if a child has continuous drainage that is clear, but affects classroom hygiene, the child will be sent home)
- Unusually dark urine and/or gray or white stool
- Yellowish skin or eyes
- Seems tired, cranky, or "under the weather" (often a sign of an impending illness)
- Has infected eyes, especially red eyes with discharge and drainage, or matting of the eyelids (must be examined by physician and approved in writing for return to school)
- Has the presence of any rash (must be examined by physician and approved in writing for return to school, rash must not be communicable)
- Any exposed, open sores that are raw and/or bleeding must be treated and kept properly covered
- Any child diagnosed with impetigo, ringworm, scabies or strep throat may be allowed to return to school after completing 24 hours of appropriate treatment
- If the child has any of the following conditions: wheezing, lethargy, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing or other signs of illness
- If the illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in class activities and/or results in greater care need, than the staff is able to provide, without compromising the health and safety of other children

Any child suspected of having a communicable disease, infectious disease or a contagious condition shall be placed in a designated isolation area and parent will be notified immediately. The child shall not return to school until the symptoms of the illness are no longer present or a written statement from a physician is given to the school. Re-admittance to school for the following communicable diseases shall be:

- **Chicken Pox** - all lesions are dry and crusted
- **Impetigo** (blisters with honey-colored crust) – may return at least 24 hours after the start of medication. If there is no improvement in 24 hours, the child must be removed from school and reassessed by the physician
- **Conjunctivitis/Pink Eye** – includes redness with burning/itching and discharge from the eye, student may return to school 48 hours after the start of medication and no drainage present
- **Ring Worm** – medical identification and treatment required, lesions must be completely covered until all lesions are healed
- **Hepatitis** – physician's statement required for re-admittance
- **Strep Throat** – student may return to school 48 hours after the start of oral medication or 24 hours after an injection
- **Lice or Scabies** - (See Lice and Nit Policy below)

These conditions have been dictated the Department of Children and Families Administrative Codes and is enforced by the Sarasota County School Board and Licensing agencies.

Lice and Nit Policy. In the event lice or nits are discovered in a child's hair, the child will be sent home immediately for treatment as recommended by their pediatrician. Foundations Christian Montessori Academy will treat areas, equipment, and furnishings where the child has been in contact. The child may return to school after a 48-hour period, and after treatment has been initiated and verified. Parents must provide verification of treatment by submitting a product box top, empty bottle or a signed statement from the parent that a treatment has occurred. Each child is required to be rechecked by Foundations staff prior to return to classroom. The No Nit Policy, means that if nits or eggs are still in a child's hair, even after treatment, the child will not be allowed to return to school and will be sent back home until the child is completely nit and/or egg free. A 10-day retreat process is required and must be verified. Parents must complete the Lice Treatment agreement form and must comply with all processes in order for their child to return to school.

Medication Administration. No medication will be dispensed by Foundations Christian Montessori Academy personnel without written authorization, this includes OTC medication as well as prescribed. All medicine sent to school must be given to **FRONT OFFICE**. Do not leave medication of any kind in your child's backpack or lunch box. Before any medication is administered, a Medication Authorization Form must be filled out completely, must be signed and dated by the parent/guardian and must accompany a doctor's medication order. Medication must be sent in the original container with the physician's instructions clearly marked on the outside. Medication must also be made specifically for children. You can ask your pharmacist to divide some medication, so you can leave it here, without having to remember to pick up and bring back each day. No over-the-counter medication made for adults will be given to any child. The state regulations specifically indicate that any school can refuse to administer medication. Foundations Christian Montessori Academy has agreed to administer medication to help our parents. If any parent causes confusion or fails to cooperate with our procedures, Foundations reserves the right to refuse to administer medication after giving that parent notification of our refusal policy.

Medication Authorization Forms are available to download from our website, www.foundationscma.org.

Hand washing. Children and staff wash their hands upon arriving at school daily. Children and staff wash their hands before eating, and after using the bathroom, and blowing their noses. Proper handwashing techniques are taught to each child.

Handling bodily fluids. All staff members are trained in universal cleaning procedures to protect the children and themselves from possible contamination from bodily fluids

Cleaning and sanitizing. Nap mats are sanitized weekly. Equipment and materials are regularly cleaned and sanitized to minimize the spread of disease.

Controlling infection. The school uses disposable paper products to control the spread of disease. If the staff notices a child showing symptoms of an infectious disease, we send the child home immediately. When waiting for parent/guardian pick up, the child will be removed from the other children and be in a separate room under staff supervision, as available. The school will contact the Health Department to discuss course of recommended action for this particular illness. We post signs, including symptoms, at classroom doors and institute special daily disinfection procedures.

Expectations for Behavior

We are educating children and we know that often their inappropriate behavior is the result of frustration, impulsiveness or thoughtlessness rather than cruelty. If we can address these issues as a community early and provide the children with tools for handling anger, thinking before speaking or acting, and being empathetic when dealing with others, it is our belief that we can provide a learning environment in which each and every child feels secure and loved. It is therefore that emphasis is placed on:

- **Parents as Partners-** It is the family's obligation to read and to follow the Community Expectations for Behavior. Failure to attend conferences, reply to communications regarding behavior, seeking outside services and the like could lead to the suspension and/or expulsion of the student. It is vital that the student receives support. Regular communication is fostered in order to address any emerging difficulties in a timely manner. Please notify the school as soon as possible if any significant changes occur in your family's life. Your child's teacher will be happy to schedule an appointment if you would like to discuss this matter in detail. These events could include: Loss of a family member, including pets Moving or staying somewhere other than home (relative/friend's) for more than one-day Change in family environment (separation, divorce, new baby) Changes in health including adding or stopping medication. In this way, issues do not accumulate, and high-level incidents are prevented.
- **Parents as Role Models-** A parent is the most important teacher in a child's life. Children observe and imitate the behavioral responses that are used by the significant adults in their environment. Parents who are respectful and kind to others, especially their own children, are likely to see that the same behavior is reciprocated. Demonstrating a variety of healthy responses to frustration and set-backs, as well as modeling effective problem-solving techniques and non-judgmental communication are especially valuable to students who are still learning to establish their own self-control.
- **Fostering skills-** It is our belief that skills such as learning to listen carefully, to calm oneself, to generate suggestions, to imagine someone else's point of view, etc. must be taught and cultivated both at home and at school. Therefore, adults, must look for the underlying reasons for a given behavior instead of reacting to the surface situation.

Discipline Policy

Foundations Christian Montessori Academy uses the Positive Discipline approach that is designed to teach young people to become responsible, respectful and resourceful members of their communities. Positive Discipline teaches important social and life skills in a manner that is deeply respectful and encouraging for both children and adults (including parents, teachers, childcare providers, youth workers, and others). Recent research tells us that children are "hardwired" from birth to connect with others, and that children who feel a sense of connection to their community, family, and school are less likely to misbehave. To be successful, contributing members of their community, children must learn necessary social and life skills.

Positive Discipline is based on the understanding that discipline must be taught and that discipline teaches. FIVE CRITERIA FOR EFFECTIVE DISCIPLINE include:

- 1) Helps children feel a sense of connection. (Belonging and significance)
- 2) Is mutually respectful and encouraging. (Kind and firm at the same time.)
- 3) Is effective long - term. (Considers what the child is thinking, feeling, learning, and deciding about himself and his world – and what to do in the future to survive or to thrive.)
- 4) Teaches important social and life skills. (Respect, concern for others, problem solving, and cooperation as well as the skills to contribute to the home, school or larger community.)
- 5) Invites children to discover how capable they are. (Encourages the constructive use of personal power and autonomy.)

Positive Discipline teaches adults to employ kindness and firmness at the same time, and is neither punitive nor permissive.

The tools and concepts of Positive Discipline include:

- Mutual respect. Adults model firmness by respecting themselves and the needs of the situation, and kindness by respecting the needs of the child.
- Identifying the belief behind the behavior. Effective discipline recognizes the reasons kids do what they do and works to change those beliefs, rather than merely attempting to change behavior.
- Effective communication and problem-solving skills.
- Discipline that teaches (and is neither permissive nor punitive).
- Focusing on solutions instead of punishment.
- Encouragement (instead of praise). Encouragement notices effort and improvement, not just success, and builds long-term self-esteem and empowerment.

Based on our philosophy and approach to discipline:

1. Children shall never be subjected to discipline which is severe, humiliating or frightening.
2. Discipline shall not be associated with food or toileting.
3. Spanking or any other form of physical punishment is strictly prohibited.
4. Consequences should be natural or logical
 - a. Natural Consequences - A natural consequence is anything that happens naturally, with no adult interference.
 - b. Logical Consequences - Logical Consequences are: Related, Respectful, Reasonable, and Helpful. Related means the consequence must be related to the behavior. Respectful means the consequence must not involve blame, shame or pain; and should be kindly and firmly enforced. It is also respectful to everyone involved. Reasonable means the consequence is reasonable from the child's point of view as well as the adult's. Helpful means just that-it helps rather than hurts.

Foundations teachers and staff are trained in Positive Discipline through the reading of the Positive Discipline in the Classroom book, as well as the staff DVD training series.

The Academy believes that through teaching accountability, respect, and obedience, students will develop Christ-like attitudes. The partnership of home, church, and school is instrumental in accomplishing these goals.

Pledge of Honor

"We, the students of Foundations Christian Montessori Academy, pledge to work hard, respect each other, and accept responsibility for our own actions. With Christ at the center, we will do our part to make our school a caring, constructive, and safe place to be."

Conduct on School Sponsored Trips/Activities

Students attending school sponsored trips or activities are bound by the same standard of conduct that is required of students at school. Teachers are expected to instruct and remind students often that they are representatives of Christ and Foundations, and that attitude, behaviors, and actions should reflect a Christ-like witness on and off campus.

Hallway Rules

Students and adults in the hallways are expected to be mindful of classes in session. Hallways should be a quiet place during school time.

Biting Policy

Children sometimes bite other children. Although not all children bite, biting is considered a normal stage in a child's development. Children may bite for a variety of reasons, rarely with the intent to hurt another child. Biting may occur for any of the following reasons:

- Teething – Older infants are often cutting teeth and it hurts. Chewing on something relieves the itch and stops the pain momentarily.
- Sensory Exploration – Older infants are very good at using all of their senses to learn about the world. The "oral mode", an important style of learning for infants, continues into toddlerhood. They bite everything, not just their playmates.
- Cause and Effect – Older infants are eager explorers. They are constantly studying cause and effect. Biting produces a predictable response. Often, the response is dramatic: there is a lot of noise and attention from adults.
- Self-Assertion: - This is probably the most common reason older infants bite. It is a way to express frustration when they do not yet have the language skills to do so.

School staff takes action to reduce the number of biting incidents, including providing access to teething toys, providing numerous sensory exploration activities, providing opportunity to explore cause and effect and offering toddlers options and alternatives to reduce frustrations.

When a child is bitten, that child is immediately comforted and the bite is washed with soap and band aid applied if skin is broken. The biter is told very firmly and in a strong voice that "It is not okay to bite. Biting hurts very much." If possible, the teacher will try to encourage the child that was bitten to use her/his words to express their feelings to the biter. The biter is

then redirected to another area of the classroom with neither positive nor negative attention given. An incident report will be written and given to parent/guardian.

If several biting incidents occur within one day, the child's parents will be called and the parent will have to pick up the child from school. The child will be permitted to return the next day. Should biting incidents continue for a prolonged amount of time, the school will arrange for meeting(s) with the family, the classroom teachers and the school administrator. These meetings will involve reviewing all documentation, Incident Reports, internal classroom logs, conversations between school and home, etc. Just as each child is different, each biting episode is also different. Every effort is made to support the child and their family as well as balance the needs of the other children in the community. While no child is ever excluded permanently from our program because of biting alone, we do reserve the right to require a child to change environments or leave the school for whatever time is agreed upon until this phase has passed.

Parent Notifications

Parents or their authorized emergency contacts will be notified immediately of any severe accidents, injuries or illnesses. Behavioral incidents will be communicated on a case by case basis depending on the seriousness of the incident. The classroom teacher will determine this and will communicate with you either immediately by phone or at the end of the school day for less serious matters. Incident reports will be written and given to parent for review and signature.

Child Abuse & Neglect

Foundations Christian Montessori Academy will document any **significant change** in a child's pattern of behavior or physical condition in the following process: 1st incident – written documentation for file, 2nd incident – written documentation for signature and parent notification, 3rd incident – written documentation and notifying proper authorities. All schools, child care centers, physicians and others who work with children are required by law to inform Child Protective Services at the Department of Human Services of any suspected abuse or neglect of children. By law, a suspicion of child abuse generally means that the reporter has "reasonable cause to believe" or "reasonable cause to know or suspect" that a child is being maltreated physically, emotionally or mentally.

Employee Screening

All Foundations Christian Montessori Academy employees are subject to level two criminal screening through the local, state, and national agencies as mandated by the State of Florida.

Smoke Free School Zone

All school areas are to be considered a Smoke Free Zone. For the safety of all children and staff, please refrain from smoking while on premise.

Cell Phones

Use by Parents. For the safety of students, Foundations Christian Montessori Academy prohibits the entry of personal cellular and/or digital devices beyond the entry lobby. At drop off and pick up, cellular and/or digital devices should be left in vehicle or placed in holding basket at reception desk. In addition, please do not use your cell phone while you are in the parking lot. It only takes a moment for a child to dart out in front of or behind your vehicle. We ask that you focus your attention on the safe arrival and dismissal of children.

Use by Students. Cell phones, cameras, and any other hand held electronic items are prohibited on school property, unless permission has been given by administration to bring them to class for a special event. Students found violating the cell phone policy will have the phone confiscated. A confiscated cell phone will only be released to parents by administration. Teachers are expected to enforce this rule and notify the office. If a student travels to/from school on foot, bicycle, or by public transportation and brings a cell phone, the cell phone must be checked into the school office upon arrival at school and must remain there during school hours.

Computer and Internet Use

Computers and laptops including all programs, files, pictures, and e-mail are considered Foundations property. Computers may only be used with permission and for school purposes. Foundations reserves the right to track network use and review all files created or accessed on school computers. Inappropriate use of the computer system includes but is not limited to:

- Accessing inappropriate websites
- Accessing the Internet without permission
- Any other use interpreted by administration as detrimental to the student, faculty, staff, or school
- Initiating or perpetuating gossip, harassment, slander, or cyber-bullying
- Sending messages with inappropriate content
- Game sites
- Any social networking site
- Personal e-mail or chat rooms

Staff and/or students using computers inappropriately may have their privileges revoked by administration. If students inadvertently access an inappropriate website, they shall leave the site immediately and report the incident to the supervising teacher to avoid a consequence.

Building Security

Foundations Christian Montessori Academy maintains a secured facility. All access doors are under lockdown at all times. Each visitor is permitted access to the facility after an administrative verification and authorization. All visitors must submit personal identification and obtain a visitor pass before receiving access to the facility.

Foundations Christian Montessori Academy will never release a student into the care of any person whose name is not on the enrollment form and /or Pick-up List. Although a name may be on the enrollment form and/or Pick-up List, a pictured identification, preferably a current driver's license must be presented to the attendant, teacher, or office personnel if they do not personally know you. All parents and/or designated pick-up person(s) should be prepared to show proper identification if asked. This is not meant as an inconvenience, but is done for the protection and safety of your child.

As part of our efforts to keep your child safe, ALL parents, legal guardians, and authorized pick-up persons MUST complete the Authorized Pick-Up and Volunteer Affidavit form. Additional copies of this form are available to download on-line at www.foundationscma.org.

Visitors and Volunteers

We welcome and encourage visits to the school from parents, outside teachers, prospective families, and the larger community. When you visit the school, please sign in at the office. Anyone interested in visiting or volunteering in a classroom must complete the Volunteer Affidavit and must be processed through our Raptor Technology Visitor/Volunteer Management System. All visitors/volunteer must check in with the office and sign the visitation log before entering the facility. Volunteer Affidavits are available in school office. ALL parents, legal guardians and authorized pick-up people are required to complete the Volunteer Affidavit. Volunteers who serve more than ten hours per month must submit an application, appropriate background screening and fingerprinting, undergo center orientation to include crisis management, emergencies, and daily operations, as well as appropriate training

Bullying and Harassment

All children, teachers, and parents, must be free from harassment and bullying in our school. Bullying, by definition, is the repeated, targeted, and deliberate aggression conducted by an individual or a group against other(s). Harassment, by definition, is to annoy persistently or to create an unpleasant or hostile situation by uninvited and/or unwelcomed verbal or physical conduct. Children and adults alike, may not be cruel and/or abusive to each other in any way in our environment. If you believe an incident of harassment or bullying has occurred with, please report it immediately to either your child's teacher or administration. The school will investigate and take appropriate action.

Emergency Preparedness

In any emergency situation, student safety is of primary concern. As a result, Foundations is a lock-down facility. Emergency Preparedness Guides are posted in every classroom. Teachers and students follow a strict emergency preparedness routine. Parents are reminded that emergency contact information for students must be current at all times. Parents are expected

to provide updated contact information as applicable. If an actual emergency arose, teachers or office personnel would contact parents as quickly as possible.

Fire Drills. Foundations Christian Montessori Academy observes strict monthly fire drills. Teachers will familiarize their students with the proper exit routes and train them to follow the prescribed protocol which ensures safety for all. Everyone must evacuate in the building as quickly and quietly as possible during a fire drill. The building must be cleared within minutes. Teachers should familiarize themselves with the evacuation routes posted in each classroom and all common areas. Teachers on break are responsible for escorting any "loose" students to the nearest available evacuation area, if the students' areas cannot be reached. While the building is being cleared, the head of school and designees will check each class to ensure that every student has been accounted for. No one may re-enter the building, until the 'all-clear' has been given.

Emergency Information Emergency contact information for all faculty, staff, and students is kept in the school office and can be accessed by all members of administration. Student contact information is distributed to each classroom teacher at the beginning of the school year. Teachers are expected to treat this information with strictest confidentiality.

Storms & Inclement Weather. Students will not be dismissed early due to inclement weather or storm warnings. However, parents, guardians, or other designated adults may pick up students early. Foundations Christian Montessori Academy generally follow the closing decisions of Sarasota/Manatee County Public Schools. Please check local news stations for updates. Should school closure become necessary, teachers are responsible for taking student information home and contacting parents as directed by administration.

Thunderstorm & Tornado - At the first sign of lightning, all students should be inside the building. If conditions warrant protective measures to be taken, students will be ordered away from windows to appointed shelter areas. Release of students will be discouraged, until severe weather passes. Parents may contact the school office for information.

Hurricane - School will be closed. Foundations follows Sarasota/Manatee County Schools' closure policy; post-storm inspection of facility will be conducted, before students return to school. Reopening of school will follow Sarasota/Manatee County Schools' policy when possible and will be posted on alcapro.com. When possible, families will be contacted by phone.

Flooding - School will be closed, if the flooding occurred prior to 7:00 a.m., parents will be notified by teachers or school officials of Extended School closure as applicable.

Other Drills and Emergency Responses. All other emergency responses are separately detailed in the Emergency Preparedness Guide posted in all classrooms.

Communication

We believe that good communication is a key to the success of our school. Parent communication can come in several formats:

School Calendar. The calendar of events for the school year is available on our website: (www.foundationscma.org) Changes and updates are made monthly on the calendar and are also communicated to you through our text alert notification system.

Voicemail. The main telephone numbers at each campus have voice mail capabilities. Voicemail is also convenient for leaving us after-hour messages. We check voice mail regularly throughout the day.

Email. In our ongoing efforts to be more conscientious in the use of resources, most communication between the school and home will be made electronically. All regular correspondence from the school will be sent via email. Please make sure you keep us informed of any changes in your email. All classrooms and administrative staff members have an e-mail address. Administrative and classroom emails can be found our website, www.foundationscma.org.

Family Text Messaging. Foundations Christian Montessori Academy used a text messaging alert system to notify our families of events, closures, emergencies, as well as individual classroom notifications. At the start of the new school year, or upon enrollment mid-year, your child will be assigned to a specific classroom. Simply text the appropriate **code for your child's classroom** to 81010. Classroom codes are as follows:

Chestnut Room	@chestnutrm	Great Oak Room	@greatoakrm
Juniper Room	@juniperrm	Magnolia Room	@magnoliarm

Mahogany Room
Maple Room

@mahoganyrm Mangrove Room
@maplerm Sequoia Room

@mangroverm
@sequoiarm

Foundations Christian Montessori Academy also uses a Foundations 911 text alert system to notify ALL parents/guardians/emergency contacts/authorized pick up persons if there is a school wide emergency. This alert will only be used in the event of a school-wide emergency to ensure that all families are able to be reached regardless of location and/or availability. The regular classroom text system will continue to be used for day to day announcements and is not necessary for all emergency contacts and/or pick up persons, BUT all parents/guardians should be registered to receive these alerts.

To receive Foundations 911 text, simply text **@fa911** to 81010.

Website. Foundations Christian Montessori Academy has its own website. General information, the calendar of events, important forms, and other useful Montessori links can be found at our site: www.foundationscma.org.

Social Media. Social media can serve as a bridge between the school and the broader Foundations community. Foundations Christian Montessori Academy provides information about school events as well as other items of interest to the community via an active Facebook page. We encourage you to 'Like' us on Facebook and to share our information with your community of family and friends. <https://www.facebook.com/foundationscma/>

Parent/Teacher Communication. Communication with your child's teacher is of the utmost importance to us. We do ask that in order for you to have your questions answered and your message heard, that you support us in the following manner:

- Phone - You may call and leave a message for your child's teacher. Phone calls are generally not sent to the classroom as it is disruptive. The teacher will return your call when possible. If your message is urgent or time sensitive, it will be relayed immediately.
- Emails - Teachers have limited opportunities to view emails during the school day as they are with your children. Please allow 24 hours for your child's teacher to reply. If you are in need of a teacher's immediate response, please continue to call the Front Office.
- In person - Please understand that teachers are supervising children throughout the day and cannot carry on a conversation at arrival, dismissal or during class time. These conversations can be meaningfully held with a scheduled meeting. If you wish to make an appointment with your child's teacher, please call the Front Office and we will be happy to arrange a time.

Other Communication Methods include parent information boards, newsletters, electronic notes or paper notes home, event flyers, and RenWeb notifications.

Change of Address

Whenever you change your address, home phone, work phone or emergency notification information, be sure to let us know. Please log in to your RenWeb account and update your family information. In addition, to updating your account, be sure to notify the school office directly. Both the office and the teacher emergency records need to be up-to-date. This is a State requirement and, of course, it is beneficial for your child's safety and protection.

Problem Resolution

We believe that open communication and supportive relationships between home and school are imperative for the full development of the child. However, we know that we are all human and things don't always go perfectly to everyone's satisfaction. Occasionally there might be issues, misunderstandings, conflicts, or communication confusion between parents and the school. If you have questions or concerns that you want to address, please start by contacting your child's teacher to set up a time for a conference. If you are not comfortable with the outcome of that meeting, you are encouraged to contact the Head of School. At some point, the teacher may feel a need to meet with you about your child's development. If so, the teacher will arrange a meeting time with you that is convenient for all parties. The Head of School may be requested to attend that meeting.

Parent Ideas and Suggestions

At Foundations Christian Montessori Academy, we strive to always provide the highest quality programs and care for our children. The best way for us to monitor our performance is by hearing from you! Parent surveys are available to download,

on our website, www.foundationscma.org. Please feel free to complete a survey at any time during the year. After completing your survey, please submit to the front office. Please know that each survey will be reviewed and your opinions, suggestions and ideas will be considered by school administration. Some issues and/or ideas may need to be reviewed and approved by the School Advisory Council.

Foundations also has a special box that is housed in the front office that can receive your survey, ideas, comments, prayer requests, and/or family needs. It is our mission to do all we can to establish good relationships with each family and be available to discuss your interests, ideas, comments, complaints; and we seek to assist in supporting your family through special workshops, presentations, and prayer.

Partners in Education (PIE)

Foundations Christian Montessori Academy loves to connect with our families, and is always in need of parent involvement for special events, classroom lessons, fundraising, and more. Opportunities to join our Partners in Education program are made available at the beginning of the year during orientation or when individual interest arises. PIE (Partners in Education) is comprised of all parents who have children attending Foundations and is organized by our Director of Community Events.

Uniforms and Dress Code

All Foundations Christian Montessori Academy **Primary, Elementary, and Middle School** students **must** wear school uniform shirts to school every day. Uniforms include: **uniform shirt, uniform jacket, and PE uniform**. Uniforms must be purchased through Children's World Uniform Supply only. Additionally, ALL students will need to purchase **no-slip, grip socks** that will be worn inside the classroom, which is a shoeless learning environment. Socks are available at Children's World Uniform Supply for your convenience.

*Children's World Uniform Supply
4525 Bee Ridge Road, Sarasota
or order on-line at www.childrensworlduniform.com.*

Appearance and Hygiene. It is Foundations desire to represent the Lord, and ourselves with dignity and care. Uniforms must fit properly, be well maintained, and attractive in appearance. Middle school boys shall be cleanly shaven. Middle school girls may wear light make up. Upper Elementary and Middle School students **must** maintain basic hygiene including daily showers, washing hair, and the use of deodorant. Each upper elementary and middle school student should pack a small plastic pencil box with personal hygiene items, that will be labeled and stored at school for use as needed.

Uniform Code and Guidelines. All Primary – Middle School students must wear school uniform top every day. Skirts must not be shorter than the top of the knee in length; shorts must be at least fingertip in length. Students must wear appropriate undergarments at all times. Older girls must make sure cleavage is covered at all times. Leggings and/or tights may not be worn alone. No spandex or yoga pants. During the winter season, students may wear long sleeved shirt or turtleneck underneath their uniform shirt. Students may wear uniform navy-blue sweaters or sweatshirts. Non-uniform jackets may be worn to school but must be stored in cubby while in class. School uniform jacket is the only permitted jacket to be worn inside of the classroom during the winter season or for comfort. Any inappropriate logo or design (i.e. rock stars, skulls, political statements, etc.) on external winter wear must not be worn to school.

Hair. All students' hair must be well-groomed at all times. The following hair guidelines are to be adhered to with promptness:

- **Extreme haircuts and styles** – Afros, extensions, cornrows, designs, etc. are to be of neat, well-maintained appearance. Spikes, Dreadlocks, Mohawks, and Faux-hawks not permitted.
- **Long hair** - Boys who wish to keep hair below collar length, must keep it tied back, and out of eyes at all times.
- **Extreme colors** - General rule for colored hair is that it must be that of a natural shade. Extreme colors must be temporary and may be only worn with special permission (spirit day or special event).

Socks and Shoes. All programs in both the Children's House and Upper School conduct classes in a shoeless learning environment. This means students shoes are removed, left outside of the classroom, and/or stored in cubbies or lockers. All students must wear no-slip grip socks while in the classrooms. Students must also have appropriate shoes for school outdoor activities such as sneakers or other casual rubber soled shoes. Clogs, crocs, party shoes, or sandals are not allowed, as they are not safe for gross motor play or physical education classes.

Jewelry/Accessories. - Jewelry and accessories that distract from academics or may get caught on playground/school equipment are not allowed. Girls hoop earrings must not exceed the size of a quarter. Boys may not wear earrings. Chain or wallet belts are not permitted. Accessories, including but not limited to, hats and sunglasses, are not permitted to be worn inside of any school building or classroom.

Clothing and Extra Items. Dress should allow children freedom to engage in a wide range of activities. Please help your child select clothing and shoes that allow freedom of movement. All children have outdoor playtime and/or physical education every day and should dress accordingly. Younger children should wear clothing that enables them to dress themselves easily. Students in our Infant, Toddler, and Primary classes should be sure to have a full set of extra clothing, including socks and underwear. Please put all items in a plastic bag labeled with your child's name.

Out of School Uniform Policy

In the event a student arrives to school out of uniform, does not have no-slip grip socks, or forgets to bring PE uniform, the following consequence(s) will be implemented:

No School / PE Uniform

In the event a student comes to school out of uniform, the student will be required to dress out in a school issued PE uniform for the day. Before end of school day, student will dress back out into non-uniform attire and a \$3.00 cleaning fee will be assessed.

No Non-Slip Grip Socks

In the event a student arrives to school without non-slip grip socks, the student will be issued a school pair of non-slip grip socks. Student will be charged \$5.00 per pair issued.

*Note – Uniform Code and Guidelines have been created to ensure that the learning environment remains just that, an environment for learning. *Important – The 2017-2018 School Year will be a uniform transition year. We will allow the use of both the old uniforms and the new school uniforms.

Snacks and Lunches

Snack is a social interaction in the Montessori setting. The practical life tasks built into the child's snack experience further reinforce the cultivation of independence and problem-solving abilities. During each month, your child will have the opportunity to bring in community snack to be prepared and served by the children. There are so many wonderful skills your children will learn throughout this process. We recommend sitting down with your child to plan the snack they would like to contribute, then help with putting together a list of items to bring. Taking a trip to the grocery store to choose out the items is usually the highlight of their experience. We will give you suggestions on items to share so our children experience a variety of tastes and textures. All snacks meet/or exceed USDA guidelines, as required by law.

All children staying for lunch need to either purchase a school lunch or bring a lunchbox each day. Please provide meals that include the important basic food groups. Please be sure to send nutritious lunches your child will eat and enjoy. Please do not send candy, pop or sugary foods. We discourage prepackaged foods (i.e. Lunchables, Hot Pockets, Chef Boyardee, etc.). We are unable to send your child's leftovers home due to health regulations, but we will send notes home, so you are informed of what and how much your child is eating. Refrigeration is only available for Infant bottles, so all lunches boxes must contain a cool pack to ensure proper temperature for perishable items. You may use thermos bottles if you wish. Please do not permit your student to bring gum, soda, caffeinated beverages (energy drinks or tea), or candy to school. Please ensure that your student's lunch/snack is clearly labeled with their first and last name.

The list below provides diverse ideas for healthy foods that can be prepared and packed for your child's lunch and snack:

- **Breads:** bagel, baguette, bread sticks, crackers, English muffin, focaccia, pita bread, pizza bread, rice cakes, rolls, sandwich bread, tortillas
- **Spreads & Condiments:** almond butter, apple butter, avocado (mashed), banana (mashed), brie cheese, cashew butter, cream cheese (low-fat), goat cheese, honey, hummus, jam (spreadable fruit), ketchup, mayonnaise/mustard, peanut butter, pesto, pizza or tomato sauce, pumpkin butter
- **Fillings:** carrots (shredded), cheese (lite/low-fat), chicken, chicken salad, egg salad, hardboiled egg, nitrite-free hot dogs, lettuce, shrimp salad, sliced avocado, sliced cucumber
- **Fruits:** (fresh & dried) apples, apricots, Asian pears, avocado, bananas, blueberries, cherries, cranberries (dried), dates, figs, mango, papaya, pears, prunes, raisins, grapefruit, grapes, kiwi, melon, nectarines, orange sections, peaches, pineapple, plums, raspberries, strawberries, tomatoes
- **Vegetables:** asparagus, beets, bell peppers, bok choy, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, celery, cucumbers, eggplant, green beans, lettuce, mushrooms, seaweed (nori, wakame, hijiki), shelling peas, snap peas, soy beans (edamame), spinach, squash, sweet potatoes, yams, zucchini

- **Treats:** applesauce, baked chips with salsa, dried fruit, fruit bar, fruit leather, granola, popcorn, pretzels, trail mix, yogurt with fruit

Source: wastefreelunches.org

Naps and Quiet Time

Infants. Infants nap according to their own schedules. If an infant should fall asleep while being rocked, lightly bounced, or in middle of play, they will be put in their beds to continue their sleep. Infants arriving at school sleeping in their car seat will be removed and placed in their bed. Infants will be placed on their backs to sleep on their beds. Infants are provided a firm, tight-fitting mattress in their bed that meets current safety standards. There will be no pillows, bumpers, comforters, sheepskins, stuffed toys or other fluffy products placed in the bed with the infant. Children never share a bed at the same time. We understand that routines may be different at home and that some children have unique situations (e.g.-twins who may sleep together in the same bed). However, we must follow licensing guidelines and adhere to the above stated policies. It may or may not be difficult for some children to adjust if they are used to sleeping in a different position or with a parent/sibling. Foundations Christian Montessori Academy is a certified Safe Sleep Center, and adheres to the safety standards set forth by the Safe Sleep Sarasota Initiative.

Toddlers. Toddlers are offered the opportunity to take a nap in their classroom every day. Foundations Christian Montessori Academy provides the foam base mat for each child and the parent is responsible to purchase the cloth nap mat that is place on top.

Primary. Primary students benefit from scheduled periods of rest. This rest may take the form of actual napping or a quiet time for children staying all day. At Foundations, all children under four are required to take a nap. Children who do not fall asleep will have a quiet rest time that may involve but is not limited to looking at books, listening to tapes, or other such quiet activities. Naps are available to all children if they need or want rest during the day. Kindergarteners are not required to nap and do not need to provide nap mat.

Foundations Christian Montessori Academy requires all toddler and primary families to purchase their child's fabric nap mat at Children's World Uniform and Supply. Foundations provides a plastic, padded, floor mat for all toddler and primary students. All bedding will be sent home on Fridays for washing and returned to school on Monday. Please label your child's nap materials.

Outdoor Play

Our program is designed to include outdoor play in all seasons. Students who stay in school all day need fresh air, exercise and free time on the playground. Students will have a minimum of 60 minutes of outdoor play per day. For our infant, toddler, and primary students, we must maintain appropriate teacher to student ratio at all times. Therefore, we are not able to have a staff member stay inside with one or two children who are sent to school with a cold, lingering ear infection, etc. Your child should be well enough to participate fully at school if he/she is in attendance. In the winter our students will play outside if the wind chill factor is above 40 degrees; if it is below that temperature, they will stay inside.

Elementary students may go outside in colder weather at the discretion of the teacher. Please be sure your child has appropriate clothing for outdoor play: sturdy, warm and easy to put on. Also, label ... label ... label. Please label everything you send to school. Children often do not recognize their own clothing. Labeling helps your child and us to sort out the myriad items that come into the School each day. Use names, not initials, and mark in an easily-read place.

We encourage parents to apply sunscreen on their child BEFORE bringing them to school to ensure proper sun protection. Children may also bring a hat or visor to help protect them from the sun. It is the parents' responsibility to apply sunscreen and/or obtain a doctor's written authorization for the application of sunscreen. A medical authorization form must also accompany the doctor's written prescription.

Due to the extremely warm temperatures here in Florida, it is requested and required, that each student bring a water bottle to school every day to ensure the hydration of each child. Please label water bottles DAILY, with child's first and last name, per State and County licensing.

Foundations Primary, Elementary, and Middle School programs also includes daily recess and physical education classes. Students will need to purchase PE uniform to wear on PE days. PE uniforms are available at Children's World Uniform and Supply.

Playground Use

Foundations Christian Montessori Academy has been blessed with a beautiful and amazing playground. The playground is reserved for the use of Foundations students and classes during designated school operating hours. Unfortunately, personal use of playground during school operating hours is not permitted. If families wish to fellowship after school, there is a local community right around the corner (Longwood Run Park).

Personal Possessions

Children often want to bring favorite possessions to school, but we ask parents to discourage this practice. We welcome books, items made by the child, or objects related to culture, science, or nature as part of a classroom experience such as "group sharing." Sharing these items with other children in the class will become a part of the classroom learning experience. We do not allow children to bring toys, playthings and electronic devices including cell phones into the classroom. If your child asks to bring a toy or other personal property, simply explain that such items are not allowed at school. Please do not send valuables, including money and label all items that are sent to school. We do allow children to bring a comfort object with them for nap time and that can either be kept in the school bag or kept with the nap blanket depending on whether the item will travel to and from school. Foundations will not be responsible for lost or damaged personal items

Please label ALL uniforms, nap mats, water bottles, jackets, and any other personal property. If the article is labeled, we will be able to appropriately return the lost item to the student.

Lost and Found

A Lost and Found station is in the main front office. All unlabeled and unclaimed items will be disposed of periodically.

Prohibited Items on Campus

Cell phones, iPads, tablets, iPods, MP3 players, radios, CD/DVD players, electronic games, cameras, or any other hand held electronic items are prohibited on school property and field trips, unless permission has been given by administration to bring them to school for a special event. In order to ensure a safe and secure educational environment for all students, Foundations reserves the right to search student property including lockers, backpacks, purses, desks, clothing, etc. without students' or parents' express permission (registration of the child constitutes such parental permission), if reasonable suspicion exists that there has been a violation of school policy. Prohibited and/or illegal items will be confiscated by administration, and students may be subject to prosecution. These items include, but are not limited to the following:

- Weapons of any sort – including play or pretend guns, knives, and similar items
- Alcohol / Drugs and/or drug paraphernalia
- Any other illegal items

School Property

Montessori materials are costly to replace. With this in mind, if you notice that your child brought home one of these items, please return it to the school so that other children may still benefit from the material. The absence of the item may render the entire set unusable. In the case of lost or damaged items and/or school property, parents will be expected to reimburse the school for replacement.

Student Supplies

Please know that there may be additional student supply items requested depending on the individual needs of each classroom and program. These items will be placed in your child's welcome packet, which is distributed at parent orientation, on the first day of school, or on the first day of special classes and/or enrichment programs.

Infant Students

- Family Pictures - Please include a picture of child, mom, dad, siblings, grandparents, pets, etc.
- Plant (make sure it is safe for children)

- 5 Crib Sheets (one-time purchase)
- 10 Burp Clothes (one-time purchase)
- Complete Change of Clothes (5 sets) - Includes top, bottom, bibs, and socks)
- Bottles, formula, food, feeding utensils, diapers, and wipes provided by parents

Toddler/Pre-Primary Students

- Fabric Nap Mat (with attached blanket and pillow, **MUST** be purchased at Children's World Uniform Supply on Bee Ridge Road
- 1" Plastic Nap Mat (red/blue)
- No-slip, grip socks (to be worn inside the classroom)
- Water Bottle
- Family Pictures - Please include a picture of child, mom, dad, siblings, grandparents, pets, etc.
- Plant (make sure it is safe for children)
- Complete Change of Clothes - Includes top, bottom, underwear, socks and shoes
- Diaper/Pull Ups and wipes provided by parents

Primary Students

- School Uniform - Shirts, Jacket, and PE clothes - Available at Children's World Uniform Supply on Bee Ridge Road
- Fabric Nap Mat (with attached blanket and pillow, **MUST** be purchased at Children's World Uniform and Supply on Bee Ridge Road
- 1" Plastic Nap Mat (red/blue)
- No-slip, grip socks (to be worn inside the classroom)
- Water Bottle
- Family Pictures - Please include a picture of child, mom, dad, siblings, grandparents, pets, etc.
- Plant (make sure it safe for children)
- Complete Change of Clothes – placed in plastic shoe box container
Includes top, bottom, underwear, socks and shoes (does not have to be a school uniform)

Elementary and Middle School Students

- School Uniform - Shirts, Jacket, and PE clothes - Available at Children's World Uniform and Supply on Bee Ridge Road
- No-slip, grip socks (to be worn inside the classroom)
- Water Bottle
- Back Pack
- Low-Light Plant/Succulent (make sure it is safe for children)
- Family Pictures - Please include a picture of student, mom, dad, siblings, grandparents, pets, etc.
- Flash Drive on Lanyard (UE and MS students only)

****NOTE:** Primary and Lower Elementary students may wear their PE uniforms to school on their scheduled PE days. Upper Elementary and Middle School students will bring PE uniforms to school and dress in/out for PE classes.

Baby Sitting

Parents recognize the nurturing quality of our staff members and naturally wish to invite them to baby-sit. However, we require that our staff members not contract privately with families of currently enrolled students. Please do not ask any members of our staff to baby-sit for your children.

Child Custody Issues

Foundations Christian Montessori Academy is dedicated to the total development of each unique child. We believe that all children need a loving, supportive family. When a family separates, it is especially difficult for the children. Their loyalties are torn as they love and need both parents. The school will be supportive, open, and welcoming to both parents. We will remain neutral in conflicts between parents.

School records, conferences, meeting information, educational materials and similar items are available to both parents. Parents should try to schedule joint conferences with the teacher, but accommodations can be made for separate conferences. Parents, regardless of the custody arrangement, are entitled to information about the activities of the school and access to certain records.

The school will not limit a parent's access to his/her child unless there is a court order on file in the child's records at the school limiting or specifying conditions for a parent's access to the child.

Foundations Christian Montessori Academy follows Florida law regarding parental rights unless custody documentation exists that has been issued by a Florida court of law. In Florida, natural parents have equal rights unless a current, signed custodial agreement says otherwise. Florida law supersedes the laws of any other country or state regarding custodial rights. It is solely the responsibility of the parent to give us copies of all documentation regarding custody arrangements for your child. It is the school's responsibility to remain neutral in custody issues. In the event of a disagreement, only parents and/or legal guardians will be allowed to pick up children from school. If there are any discrepancies in the provided information, the enrolling parent will be contacted regarding the immediate situation. In the event the terms are not acceptable by either parent and/or legal guardian, Foundations staff will not hesitate to call 911 and request an officer be sent to oversee the situation and ensure the full intent of the family law.

Toilet Learning

Toilet learning starts with readiness signs, and is not learned through a reward system. Toileting is a skill that needs to be learnt. It cannot be taught overnight. The key to toilet learning is teaching not training the child. Learning on their own is reward enough for them to be able to independently help themselves in remaining clean or not soiling themselves.

Allow the child to learn on their own with a bit of support and help from the adult with the use of toilet training pants and clothes they can independently put on themselves. Toilet learning is linked to the child's self-esteem; so genuine verbal praise is important. There are no 'accidents' during toilet learning, only lessons.

Academic Readiness

Academic readiness is not an issue at Foundations Christian Montessori Academy. In our early childhood programs, your child will not be evaluated as one of the criteria for enrollment. Whether your child knows colors or numbers is irrelevant. Of greater importance, the teacher is concerned about the whole child: his/her ability to communicate and to cooperate, and eagerness to accept and seek out new experiences.

Do not attempt to push your child into "readiness." Make new experiences available, but do not attempt to force him/her inappropriately. This kind of pressure can produce anxiety and cause some fear.

A special orientation session that we hold for new students allows the teacher an opportunity to get to know your child. It also provides the perfect climate for your child's introduction to Foundations Christian Montessori Academy.

Observations, Screenings and Assessments

In our efforts to meet the needs of each individual student, Foundations Christian Montessori Academy use the Ages and Stages Questionnaire as well as Montessori Assessment Checklist to document student development and progress. We conduct these observations, screenings and assessments in the fall, winter, and spring. These assessments are a process of gathering information about children to support their learning. Teachers obtain useful information about each child's knowledge, skills, and progress by observing, documenting, analyzing, and evaluating work samples, behaviors and accomplishments over a period of time. There are simple yet significant differences between screenings and assessments. Screenings quickly capture a glimpse of a child's health and developmental status via the use of standardized screening instruments. Assessments are a continual process that occurs throughout a child's enrollment in that tracks the child's developmental progress. Screenings are used to make judgement(s) about children in order to determine if a referral for further evaluation is necessary. A screening does not lead to a conclusion about whether a child has a developmental or health condition; however, the results of the assessment or evaluation may help lead to a diagnosis.

At Foundations, the success of your child, in all areas, is of utmost importance. These screenings and assessments are vital to the process of helping your child achieve their highest potential. We use the results from our observations, screening and assessments to assist in developing weekly lesson plans by targeting and planning specific activities to encourage growth and development and to strengthen and support areas that are weak and/or delayed. If there are any areas of concern, we believe that by taking a proactive approach by both the teacher and the parent, every child will have the opportunity to succeed. Therefore, parent conferences are scheduled at the conclusion of each assessment period. As part of the enrollment process, ALL parents are required to sign an acknowledgment and consent to student observations, screenings, and assessments.

Special Services

Although Foundations Christian Montessori Academy is a mainstream educational facility, occasionally we discover that a student may develop the need for special services. These needs may be physical, developmental or psychological. We have been working with children for a long time. We are trained to spot needs that affect the child's ability to learn and socialize successfully in a classroom setting. We will recommend evaluation and professional consultation. The school does not contact or contract for outside services. It is the decision and responsibility of the parents to make those arrangements. We make every attempt to provide space for private tutoring and other services contracted for by parents with other organizations. However, we have limited space. All requests for private tutoring space must be made through the office.

Developmental and Behavioral Referral Process

Foundations Christian Montessori Academy staff follows the outlined procedures in order to address and assess specific developmental or behavioral concerns of our children, in efforts to reduce student suspension or expulsion:

1. Teacher notices concern with a specific child and makes the administration and parent(s) aware of concerns. Teacher will document and save incident/behavioral reports.
2. Administration asks teachers to observe and document interactions of child in the classroom. Teacher is to keep a separate, confidential journal on behavior and/or learning patterns, interactions with other children and staff, academic behavior, play behavior, and time spent "dealing" with the specific child. (Administration will determine length of observation) Teacher will keep both the administration and parent(s) informed.
3. Administration will observe in appropriate setting (classroom, playground, etc.) and document interactions for to establish a timeline and pattern of consistent behavior.
4. Teacher will conduct appropriate screening by using ASQ, ASQ-SE, or DECA. Results will be documented, and an IEP will be developed with teacher and administration.
5. Administration, the teacher, and the parent(s) will conference about observations and recommendations, and also about any sudden change(s) in behavior, family/home situations, present all documentation and offer strategies for home and school, recommend community resources and outside professional intervention. At this point, the administration, teacher, and parent(s) establish and agree on individualized behavioral and/or educational plan for home and school. Plan is documented and monitored by teacher and parent(s). Teacher and parent(s) remain in close communication and adjust plan as needed. A follow up conference is planned.
6. At the follow up conference, parent(s), teacher and administration will discuss child's individual plan. If developmental/behavioral concern continues despite school interventions, parent MUST seek outside professional intervention or continued enrollment is at risk.
7. If despite the efforts of #1 - #6 of the developmental/behavioral concern continues and is perceived as an unmanageable school situation and one that the school is not equipped to handle and/or the parent(s) offer no assistance or cooperation, the child's enrollment will be revoked, and student will be expelled.
8. In the event that a child's behavior or development is so extreme, and is causing or could cause injury to him/her self, others or Foundations staff members, immediate dismissal of the child may be required.

Foundations Christian Montessori Academy reserves the right to dismiss any child, at any time, for any cause, at their own discretion.

All incidents will be documented on an incident report form. This form will be signed by the teacher and given to administration for review and verification. Parents will be made aware of incidents and conferences will be scheduled to review IEP for the child. Foundations Christian Montessori Academy uses The Florida Center for Development, as well as Therapeutic Potentials for additional screening and observations of students with developmental and/or behavioral concerns.

Animals on Campus

Animals, including turtles, iguanas, ferrets, birds, cats and/or dogs are NOT PERMITTED on our school property including the parking lot, building, or playground per state law. Occasionally a "pet" may be brought in for "Group Share," but must receive prior approval, by administration, before bringing to school. As part of our science centers, we do house LIVE ANIMALS such as fish and hamsters for the children. If your child is allergic to any animals in our centers, please inform his/her teacher immediately. Proper hygiene and hand washing is practiced after handling or coming in contact with any of our animals.

Orientation

The first days of the new school year are devoted to the children who are new to our environment. Orientation is a crucial component in your child's successful introduction to the class. Please plan vacations, appointments, etc., around these important days. Please see the School Calendar for dates and times. Orientations will be held for both new families and returning families.

Parent Education

Great Beginnings. This parent education program is open to our families as well as members of the broader community. The program provides free parenting classes led by area professionals. Sessions will cover a broad range of topics. Watch for information about upcoming sessions.

Getting Your Child Ready for Montessori. Transitions are important. We want to help you and your child make a seamless transition to the Montessori classroom. This is a special session before school starts that gives you helpful tips for the start of this new learning adventure. Working with teachers and other parents you will gain insight on Montessori philosophy and learn practical techniques to prepare for the first days of school.

Journey and Discovery. Is an amazing parent educational opportunity allowing parents to experience a Montessori immersion. Your child is in a unique learning environment. It is not just a curriculum; it is a way of working with children. The Journey and Discovery is your chance to experience Montessori for yourself. You will spend time exploring the Primary and Elementary levels of the classrooms. You will go into the classrooms to actually work with the materials just as your child would with the teachers acting as your guides.

Additional parent opportunities are offered during the year. Please refer to notices, text alerts, postings, and newsletters for all additional parent education and support programs.

Parent Observation

All parents are welcome and encouraged to observe our classrooms. Seeing the children at work is to experience the Montessori philosophy in action. To make your observation more meaningful: take a look around the room and notice the amount and diversity of activity; the range of ages; the types of materials; the individual and group activity; and the interaction of the children. Focus your attention on the teacher and notice the composure, the teacher as observer, and the respect the teacher shows each child. Focus your attention on your child and notice the succession of activities; the concentration on work; enthusiasm and self-satisfaction in each activity; and the child's respect for other children, the materials, and the adults.

If you would like to observe a class, we ask that you make arrangements with the classroom teacher and the front office manager in advance to minimize disruption to the classroom and to make sure that the students will be in the room when you visit. When you arrive for your observation, please sign in at the office.

During a formal in-class observation, we request that you adhere to the following guidelines: sit quietly in the observation chairs indicated; try not to make your presence felt; do not initiate conversation; and do not handle the materials. We recommend these guidelines to minimize interference in the children's peaceful environment. Feel free to make notes of items you would like to discuss during your conference with the classroom teacher.

Infants

Parents of infants are welcome at any time to come and visit their child. For mothers who are breast feeding, the infant room provides a comfortable and peaceful area to enjoy that feeding time. However, for older infants, multiple separations from the parent during the day may make the transition to school more difficult.

Toddlers – Middle School

Mornings are best to observe the work cycle (between 9 am-11 am). These guidelines are designed to help optimize your observation visit as well as to allow the children and teachers to continue their normal flow of activity. You will receive a more accurate impression of the classroom environment if it is not altered by your presence:

- No cellphones or photography permitted.
- No children are permitted to observations.
- Remain seated in the chair provided for you or in the hallway.

- Some children may try to engage you in conversation. Simply tell them in a quiet voice that you are here to watch them work. Also, please refrain from asking the children questions.
- Unless the teacher initiates conversation with you, please do not ask her questions at this time. You may always schedule a time to talk with the Head of School or your child's classroom teacher following your observation.
- Observation time should not exceed 30 minutes.
- Please feel free to observe in any environment at Foundations. Inquire in the office about scheduling.

Parent Information Nights

At the beginning of each year each classroom holds an informational meeting for new and returning parents. These parent-only evenings are an opportunity to explain the school and classroom plans, policies and procedures for the new year. Parents have an opportunity to get acquainted, meet all classroom staff, and learn about the specifics of their child's classroom. The teachers will answer questions about field trips, classroom procedures, volunteer opportunities, etc. Dates for the informational meetings can be found on our website at www.foundationscma.org.

Parent and Teacher Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled in the Fall, Winter, and early Spring. Parents are given the opportunity to select a convenient time for the conference. Teachers are available for special conferences as necessary. Speak directly with your child's teacher to make arrangements. We believe good communication between home and school is essential to the best learning environment for the child. Head teachers will periodically make personal phone calls throughout the school year. Parents of children with special needs may request a written daily record which may include food intake, sleeping patterns, elimination patterns, developmental milestones and changes in the child's usual behaviors.

Parents will be provided with a written progress report prepared for you at this time. On these days, teachers will discuss your child's progress. Progress is measured in many areas of growth, such as work habits, interests, social skills within the group, and general response to each area of learning. Time set aside for conferences is a valuable and integral part of the school's relationship and communication with parents. Parents are required to attend and participate in this dialogue.

Open Houses

Children love to share their experiences, so this evening is set aside for the children to show parents and other family members around their classroom. Check the school calendar for the dates of your child's classroom family open houses.

Fundraising

Foundations Christian Montessori Academy's primary source of income is tuition, which accounts for approximately 90% of our operating funds. In order to keep tuition affordable, we depend on financial support from our school community through various fundraisers during the year. Participation by our SA Council, parents, and staff, as well as from the outside community is of great importance. In the past, our fundraising efforts have enabled us to build new playgrounds, renovate classrooms, re-mulch playground, and purchase important and valuable educational materials.

Field Trips and On Campus Experiences

Our curriculum often extends beyond the materials in the classroom. Students will welcome visitors to our school that add texture to their experiences. Each year we invite members of the community to visit and talk with our students. We encourage each family to think about sharing their vocation, hobby or that of someone else with the children.

Foundations Christian Montessori Academy's infant, toddler, and primary programs do not participate in any off-campus trip. We focus on providing campus experiences for these age groups.

For elementary and middle school students, Going Out Excursions offer enrichment opportunities beyond the classroom setting. Some field trips may include all students; others include only one class or age group. These Going Out trips allow children to see, hear, and experience what we cannot offer within the classroom walls. The trips usually relate to the topics being studied, but also may be scheduled to observe steps in a process or places and events that foster community awareness.

We try to give ample notice for field trips. Notification of a field trip is given to the parents at least one week prior to an off-campus event. If you wish to have alternative care for your child for the duration of the outing, you will be responsible for

making these arrangements. The safety and protection of our students is a critical concern to Foundations. Off-campus trips create potential hazards that require us to take special precautions. The School reserves the right to refuse to be responsible for children off campus when past behavior patterns indicate an inability to follow directions and basic rules. If we are concerned about the safety of a child based on observed behavior, development and/or maturity, we may require the parent of the child to take sole responsibility for their well-being during the trip. Teachers and supervisory staff can exclude a child from an outing if this parental supervision is not available. Parent volunteers or privately contracted busing services may be utilized for student transportation for field trips. All children must be secured in a child safety seat or child booster seat, if required by law. All parent volunteers who accompany children on field trips must submit driver's license to be run through our Raptor screening system. Copies of driver's license, insurance card, and driver affidavit must be submitted prior to trip.

Foundations Christian Montessori Academy is in the process of purchasing a school bus. Once the bus has been acquired, all transportation for school outings will be made through the school transportation.

Birthdays

Celebration of Life - The Birthday Walk Around the Sun. In the Primary classrooms, each child is honored in a special celebration called "The Birthday Walk or Celebration of Life," an international Montessori tradition. Parents share in this important occasion by helping their child select photographs from each year of her life and by helping her prepare a written history of milestones reached and fun times had during each year. These milestones are shared as the child walks around the "sun," once for each year celebrated. Parents are invited to participate in this beautiful ceremony with their child. In the Elementary birthday celebrations are handled differently. Your child's teacher can explain how birthdays are celebrated in her class. Children with summer birthdays select a date during the school year to celebrate their birthday.

The Celebration of Life is a wonderful way to celebrate a birthday by honoring your student's life and accomplishments. This birthday is a special event. Our classroom communities honor each special day by focusing on his/her life history. We ask that your family send to school one photo at birth, one at one-year-old, one at 2 years old, etc. You may also send artifacts like a pair of baby shoes, a special book or article of clothing. This celebration is conducted in community. A battery-operated candle is "lit" to represent the sun. Your student's life story begins. They walk once around the circle and "sun" to represent each year of his/her life and pause to hear their accomplishments and successes. You are encouraged to attend. Your student's teacher will offer days and times on or close to their birthday.

Invitations and Presents. If you are planning a birthday party for your child, please do not send invitations to school unless all the children in the class are invited. If your child is attending a party after school, please do not send gifts to school with your child. We have found that these situations can be upsetting for those who are not invited.

Special Snack. You are welcome to bring a small nutritious treat as well. Small muffins and cut up fresh fruit are always popular. Your teacher will also have suggestions. This special event is about your child. Party favors and balloons are not permitted. Please save these for home celebrations.

Chapel

Chapel is held on Fridays at 9:00 am and is considered foundational in fulfilling Foundations mission to help students reach their God-given potential. Therefore, it is imperative that faculty and staff make Chapel a priority. Teachers are expected to stay with their students during Chapel and encourage students to be attentive and participate. Student and staff participation is essential during Praise and Worship and during Chapel presentations. Parents, grandparents, and guardians are welcome to attend.

Library

It is Foundations Christian Montessori Academy's desire that the library be a valuable resource for teachers and students. A library schedule with library hours and individual class library times will be distributed before school starts. Fines are charged for overdue library books. Report cards are held until all fines are paid.

Books and materials for the library are chosen in harmony with the purpose of the library. Curriculum enrichment is the first priority in acquisition of library materials. Requests by administrator, faculty, staff, and students for materials that directly support the curriculum constitute this category. General circulating and non-circulating reference materials that are not related to the curriculum and materials important in their own right are a second priority.

Reading materials including fiction, drama, poetry, and essays are selected by the librarian and SAC, with additional input from teachers. Additional guidelines for book selection are as follows:

- Authority of the book (biblical vs. non-biblical/Col. 2:8)

- Authenticity of book (content credibility)
- Pleasantness of the book (style, fluency, pictures, etc.)
- Age appropriateness
- Format and technical quality (pages, binding, print)
- Content treatment and arrangement of writing:
 - Can it develop creativity and imagination?
 - Can it provide a significant reading experience?
 - Can it lead to greater understanding of culture and society?
 - Can it provide a significant occasion for strengthening Christian faith?

All students shall have access to the library during the school week. Only Foundations students, faculty, and staff will be allowed to check out materials. Students and staff members using the library must maintain the quiet atmosphere necessary to facilitate learning in a library environment. The librarian will coordinate with the faculty an on-going student-training program of library use and skills.

Television and Video

Foundations Christian Montessori Academy limits the use of video, TV, DVD to media only relevant to enrich or support curriculum. Prior approval from administration is required.

Bridge Ceremony

At the end of each academic school, Foundations Christian Montessori Academy celebrates the success and accomplishments of our transitioning students by hosting our annual bridge ceremony. Instead of graduating and receiving a diploma, the children walk across a bridge to symbolize this profound "passing through." This concrete experience to bridge to the Primary classroom to the Lower Elementary, and the Lower Elementary classroom to the Upper Elementary and the Upper Elementary to the Middle School classroom marks a significant period of growth in a child's life. It is also an exciting beginning to new adventures and discoveries for the student at Foundations. Students from Primary through Middle School will participate with a special presentation. During the ceremony, students in our LE, UE, and MS classes will give a welcome speech to the students bridging up. For our Kindergarten students, there will be a graduation fee to cover cost of their cap, gown, and tassel.

Events, Concerts, and Performances

Foundations Christian Montessori Academy generally has monthly special events for students. Parent participation is always welcomed. Please see school calendar for list of special school events. Foundations also has a love and passion for fine arts. Our students participate in many performance opportunities: Dance, Art, Music LCS Fine Arts Festival, Christmas Program/Concert, Spring Recital, and more.

There are some fees for special concerts and performances, such as costuming, tickets, photos, and trophies.

Fine Arts Enrichment Electives

Foundations Christian Montessori Academy offers a variety of fine arts enrichment programs including dance, instrumental, vocal, and theater through our Visual and Performing Arts program as well as through private lessons. Our students perform in many local venues and community opportunities like the Holiday parade and the Make a Wish Foundation's "Flight to the North Pole". Our students also develop their gifts and talents to participate in annual State Fine Arts Festivals and competitions.

Physical Education

Physical Education is provided for all students in primary through eighth grade. Students must wear school P.E. uniform on scheduled PE day(s). PE uniforms are to be purchased at Children's World Uniform Supply. Upper Elementary and Middle School students who are not dressed in complete P.E. uniforms will be issued a written assignment in lieu of participation. A doctor's note must be provided, if students cannot participate in P.E. Upon approval, they are required to complete an alternative assignment for that day's grade.

Primary and Lower Elementary students may wear their PE uniforms to school on their designated PE day in lieu of regular school uniform. Upper Elementary and Middle school students will need to bring PE uniform to school and dress out for PE classes.

Foreign Language

As part of the Montessori philosophy, we believe that children need to understand that they are a part of a diverse and global world. Foreign language and cultural awareness are becoming an increasingly part of being successful.

At Foundations Christian Montessori Academy toddler and primary students have the opportunity to participate in foreign language study during dedicated time in the morning work cycles. Our formal Spanish classes begin with students from 1st-8th Grade.

During the 60 -90-minute work session, students will learn numbers, the alphabet, parts of speech, expressions, days and months, colors, food, animals, clothes, parts of the body, as well as family and community words in Spanish. This is an opportunity allows students to have fun learning a very useful language. Our 1st – 6th grade students use the Bob Jones Spanish curriculum. Our 7th and 8th grade students participate in foreign language classes online.

Testing

Standardized testing means different things to different people and some educators find data from standardized tests useful in guiding instruction for individual students. Others recognize that education has been adapted to “teach to the test” there for limiting meaningful learning. Montessori educators approach assessment differently. Assessment occurs through the process of keen observation, regular work and conferencing with the student, and through self-correction that is built into the Montessori materials. The teacher is able to observe readiness for new concepts. At Foundations, we acknowledge that checking for understanding is necessary in the learning process, and the ability to effectively negotiate a standardized test is an important skill. Each spring the elementary children participate in the practice of standardized testing for the sake of practice itself. In some sections of the standardized test there will be similarities between the test items and the work the children have been doing in the classroom. In other sections, there will be differences. Students are provided with instruction on test-taking strategies and are given some time to practice the strategies. Parents are provided with the results of the standardized achievement test that is administered.

Foundations Christian Montessori Academy uses the NWEA - MAP as our select choice for our national norm reference test. Measures of Academic Progress® (MAP®) are K – 12 interim assessments that measure growth, project proficiency on high-stakes tests, and inform how educators differentiate instruction, evaluate programs, and structure curriculum.

Computer adaptive MAP assessments reveal precisely which academic skills and concepts the student has acquired and what they’re ready to learn. MAP assessments are grade independent and adapt to each student’s instructional level. Every item on a MAP assessment is anchored to a vertically aligned equal interval scale, called the RIT scale for Rasch Unit—a stable measurement, like inches on a ruler, that covers all grades.

And because the measurement is reliable and accurate, RIT scores serve as an essential data point in a student’s learning plan; educators can see their precise learning level and respond accordingly.

Grading

Elementary and Middle School Students Only. Report cards are sent home at the end of each semester. The academic year is divided into four grading quarters. See school calendar for academic quarter end dates. Quarterly parent conferences will be held to discuss student’s progress.

Students should be encouraged to work for achievement, not simply for grades. Foundations elementary programs do not use traditional grading. Student academic goals should be attainable and should be expected and accepted in accordance with their individual abilities and gifts from the Lord. In the Primary years, children are assessed and evaluated according to their individual progress. It is normal for young children to acquire skills at differing rates and times. The grading and conduct scale are as follows:

Report Card Codes

Level Explanations

- Above Level (AL) - The student is performing and being instructed at an instructional level above what is expected for the current grade placement.
- On Level (OL) - The student is performing and being instructed at the expected instructional level for the current grade placement
- Below Level (BL) - The student is performing and being instructed at an instructional level below what is expected for the current grade placement. The strategies and materials are also below level.

Academic Grade Key

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| • M = Mastered | 80 - 100% |
| • P = Passed but not Mastered | 70 – 79% |
| • L = In the Process of Learning | 60 – 69% |
| • F = Failing, needs review | 59% or below |
| • NA = Not assessed at this time | |

In addition to the level explanations and academic grade key letters, Middle School academic reports of progress will reflect actual numeric percentages.

Effort Grade Key

- E = Excellent: Demonstrates consistent outstanding participation. Strives beyond expectations with class assignments and any homework. Is highly motivated and well organized.
- G = Good: Participates much of the time. Completes class assignments and any homework. Is attentive, motivated, and organized.
- S = Satisfactory: Usually participates. Completes class assignments and any homework. Is attentive.
- N = Needs Improvement: Rarely participates. Frequently does not complete class assignments or homework. Is often inattentive and poorly organized.
- NA = Not assessed at this time.

Homework

Elementary and Middle School Students Only.

Study habits and organizational skills practiced in the classroom should become an integral part of the student's day. In general, homework is designed to be an extension of the work that students do in the classroom. Research projects, reinforcement of learned skills, and enrichment activities each play an important role. The majority of the students' work should be completed within the school day. Any uncompleted work may be sent home to finish and return the following day. Additional homework includes nightly reading with comprehension questions, math facts review, and special research projects.