



ELEMENTARY Parent Handbook

2026–2027 (K5–5th)

MCA offers Early Learners (Full Day, Full year), Half - Day Preschool, Elementary (K5-5th) Elementary Afterschool Care, and Summer Camp program, all designed to meet the needs of the child at his or her level of development.

Please familiarize yourself with our handbook. It will answer many of your questions concerning our school. There are updates and policies that are new to this handbook. Please disregard all previous MCA handbooks.

Website: Important school information (i.e., handbooks, school calendars, events, and financial information) can be found on the Mauldin Christian Academy website: mauldinchristian.org.

Notice of Nondiscrimination: Mauldin Christian Academy does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, color, religion, or national origin in its dealing with students and their families.

Ministry Statement: Mauldin Christian Academy is a ministry of Mauldin First Baptist Church of Mauldin, South Carolina.

MAULDIN CHRISTIAN ACADEMY MISSION STATEMENT

Our purpose at Mauldin Christian Academy is to partner with parents to provide a solid academic environment, lay a biblical foundation, lead them to understand the value of hard

work, pursue everything with excellence, love one another, and bring glory to God.

OUR VISION

MCA students who understand the value of:

- A strong work ethic
- Striving for excellence
- Viewing the world through a biblical lens
- Loving and leading others
- Bringing glory to God

MAULDIN CHRISTIAN ACADEMY ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM

Role	Name	Email
Director of Operations	David Pearson	dpearson@mauldinfirstbaptist.org
Children's Pastor	Paula Southwell	psouthwell@mauldinfirstbaptist.org
Director of Early Learners	G-na Simmons	gsimmons@mauldinchristian.org
Principal of Preschool & Elementary	Gwen Johnson	gjohnson@mauldinchristian.org
HR & Finance Manager	Ann Parlier	aparlier@mauldinchristian.org
Front Office Manager	Amber Brangman	abrangman@mauldinchristian.org

Elementary Operating Hours

(See School Hours section for daily arrival and dismissal procedures.)

FINANCIAL POLICIES

Re-Enrollment: Begins in January for the following school year for our currently enrolled MCA families. Please check the MCA website for specific dates for priority enrollment and when the enrollment will be open to the public.

If at the time of re-enrollment, there is a balance on the student's account, the student will not be eligible to re-enroll. Re-enrollment fees will apply and secure classroom placement only if

the account balance is current and paid in full.

Re-enrollment fees will be communicated on the MCA website prior to the re-enrollment season.

Payments: All tuition payments **MUST** be made through the online FACTS system. We accept cash, check, MasterCard, and Visa debit and credit cards for incidental fees.

Insufficient Funds: A fee of \$30 will be charged for insufficient funds. If the insufficient funds charge occurs more than twice, the account will be considered delinquent. If the insufficient funds occur a third time, a fee of \$60 will be charged to your account. More than three occurrences of insufficient funds in one school year may result in your child's dismissal from that MCA program.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

All returning student accounts must be paid in full by June 1st to maintain their position in next year's class. If a balance remains on June 1st, the student will be placed on a waiting list for their class until the balance is paid in full.

Withdrawal from MCA: A one-month notification in writing must be given directly to the business office when a child is being withdrawn from the program during the regular school year. A communication with the EL Director or Elementary Principal should also occur to discuss the details behind the student's withdrawal.

In the event a one-month notice is not given, the parents will be charged for an additional month's tuition.

Withdrawal at any time after enrollment or re-enrollment will incur a \$300 withdrawal fee. ALL admissions fees are non-refundable. This policy was initiated during the 2025-2026 admission's season.

Afterschool Care (ASC)

Afterschool Care (ASC) is an option we make available to those elementary school children that need additional care in the afternoon. This program is **ONLY** available to students who are actively enrolled in the ASC program and have paid the registration fee. The program runs from 2:30 PM-5:45 PM, Monday – Friday during the school year. ASC fees are charged weekly, regardless of number of days needed in a week.

Holiday care is available on days that are communicated through the Academy calendar which can be found on our website.

On holiday care days, there is an additional fee that will be applied to your account for each day your child attends. This fee includes lunch as well as the additional hours of care.

Late Departure Fees for School Children

A Late Pick-Up Fee will be charged to your account as follows:

Program	Time Window	Fee
Dismissal from School (K5–2nd)	2:30–2:45 PM	\$15.00
Dismissal from School (3rd–5th)	2:45–3:00 PM	\$15.00
Dismissal from School	After listed time	\$1.00 per minute until pick up
Dismissal from Afterschool Care	5:45 PM–6:00 PM	\$15.00
Dismissal from Afterschool Care	After 6:00 PM	\$1.00 per minute until pick up

Note: This fee is to be charged to our school FACTS account. Children who are picked up late on a consistent basis, may be dismissed from the program.

INCLEMENT WEATHER (Applies to All Academy)

MCA does NOT necessarily follow Greenville County School closings or delays during inclement weather.

If weather conditions are such that faculty and staff are unable to get safely to the Academy, an announcement will be made by the following methods:

- WYFF-TV (Channel 4). Please look specifically for Mauldin Christian Academy Early Learners (DC), Half-Day Preschool, or Elementary. News stations WILL NOT air school openings, only delays or cancellations.
- Email from the school
- FACTS Parent Alert Text
- Dojo message from classroom teacher

In the event of a school delay, doors will open at the ANNOUNCED TIME. There will no early arrival on these days.

WE DO NOT PRORATE OR REFUND TUITION ON DAYS SHORTENED OR MISSED DUE TO INCLEMENT WEATHER.

DISASTERS AND EVACUATIONS

If a disaster should occur such as a gas line break, MCA has evacuation plans and a designated student pick up location(s). Parents may receive emergency information through:

- **FACTS Parent Alert system**
- **Class Dojo**

Parents may pick up children after all students and staff have been accounted for. Cooperation by all persons during an emergency will make procedures more efficient and secure for all involved.

PARKING LOT SAFETY GUIDELINES

- **Please ENTER and EXIT the MCA parking lot SLOWLY.**
- **ENTER ONLY** through the entrance areas and **NOT** the **EXITS**
- **If you are arriving late, past designated carline times, please park to walk your child into the Academy main entrance. Please do not park under the drive-thru portico area, regardless of the time. (THIS AREA IS FOR EMERGENCY VEHICLES ONLY)**
- **Please use a DESIGNATED PARKING SPACE** before exiting your vehicle.

The safety of our students and parents is the highest priority. DRIVE SLOWLY!

PERSONAL PROPERTY / SCHOOL PROPERTY

Students are expected to respect the property of others as well as of the Academy and Mauldin First Baptist Church.

Students are urged to label all personal items.

Electronic devices (phones, tablets, smart watches, Smart devices), anything with internet or texting capabilities, are not to be brought to school without permission. With permission, they are to be housed in the student's backpack during the school day.

Fake guns, water guns, knives, or weapons (simulated or real) are not permitted.

Students are to respect the property of teachers and other students. Students are not to enter a teacher's desk or classroom unsupervised.

Students are to respect the appearance and care of the facilities by not defacing the property and by keeping the grounds litter free. Damaging property may incur disciplinary consequences and financial liability.

STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

Recognizing that the process of education is enhanced by a safe and orderly environment, and to govern the behavior of students when they are in our care, the staff and administration have adopted the following code of conduct for our students. Please discuss these with your child and make sure he/she understands how they apply to everyday life at Mauldin Christian Academy.

1. Govern (take care of) yourself.

Honor and respect the rights and feelings of others in order to honor God.

Honor and respect the property of others and our environment.

Bullying is not tolerated at MCA. This includes consistent physical contact, teasing, rudeness, insults, and cyber bullying.

Within this framework, each class, with guidance from the teacher, has their specific rules to meet the needs of the classroom environment.

SOCIAL MEDIA / ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION

Because we want to follow the example of Jesus to demonstrate kindness and respect to others, communication between all parties on social media, emails, text messages, phone calls, and face to face communication should reflect honor and respect.

Our code of conduct for our students also applies to all faculty, staff, administration, and parents. When users have doubts about whether a particular electronic communication is or is not appropriate, they are urged to consider whether it would be acceptable to say or present the same material face to face.

Negative comments on social media (Facebook, Instagram, text messages, etc.) by faculty, staff, administration, students, or parents will not be acceptable and will be addressed.

Photographs of children other than your own should not be posted on any social media without the express written permission of a parent.

STANDARDS FOR ENROLLMENT

Enrollment in Mauldin Christian Academy (MCA) is a privilege, not a right. Parents should understand that continued enrollment and re-enrollment of their children is dependent on their support of the school, its faculty and staff, and our mission and policies.

Based upon our purpose and mission, Mauldin Christian Academy's standards are designed to identify students who:

- Demonstrate average or above average aptitude and/or achievement.
- Are socially and emotionally well-adjusted.
- Are amenable to correction and instruction.
- Are motivated to learn-
- Have parents or guardians who are supportive of MCA's mission and goals.
- Have parents or guardians who will meet financial obligations.
- Desire to attend MCA

Meet minimum age requirements:

- To enroll in K5, a child **MUST** be 5 on or before September 1st
- To enroll in 1st grade a child **MUST** be 6 on or before September 1st

Age requirements will be **STRICTLY** enforced

STUDENT RECORDS

Mauldin Christian Academy will keep records of attendance, health, and fees of each child. Changes in addresses and telephone numbers, both work and home, must be provided so that we can reach parents immediately if needed.

If for any reason your child transfers to another school, we will assist you in having your child's permanent record transferred to the school in which he/she will be attending. Student records are not released to parents but sent directly to the new school upon written request. Requests from the school by phone are not accepted.

Records will not be released for any student with an outstanding account balance.

SCHOOL HOURS

School begins promptly at 8:00 AM. Any student who is not in their classroom at this time will be marked as TU -Tardy Unexcused.

Morning car line is available beginning at 7:30 AM and ending at 7:55 AM.

Students arriving after 7:55 AM must enter through the Academy Front Office. Parents are required to park and walk their child into the building.

Any elementary student who has a sibling in our Early Learners program may walk in with their parents. They will need to walk to their classroom independently.

Any student with a preschool sibling may be dropped off in the preschool car line. The elementary student may walk their sibling to the classroom, then immediately go to their own classroom. (BUT – a preschool student may NOT be dropped off in the elementary car line.)

Afternoon Carline: K5-2nd grades, begins at 2:15 PM and ends promptly at 2:30 PM.

Afternoon Carline: 3rd-5th grades, begins at 2:30 PM and ends promptly at 2:45 PM.

Failure to be on time for your child's designated car line will result in a late fee being applied to your school account.

Lower elementary students with an Upper Elementary sibling will be taken to the 2:30 carline for pick-up.

(Late fees will apply if your student is picked up late)

ATTENDANCE

MCA will follow the South Carolina regulations concerning the number of days a student can legally miss each school year. A student is allowed no more than 10 absences, (excused or unexcused) during the school year. This will be enforced, except in cases of extended chronic illnesses when verified by a physician and/or absences that are due to an emergency approved by the elementary principal as excusable. If a student misses more than 10 days, they must be evaluated by the administration to make the decision whether they are prepared to promote to the next grade level.

When a student returns to school after being absent, he is required to bring a written excuse to the school office, signed by the parent or guardian. A doctor's statement must be present for a medical excuse. All written excuses are kept in the student's permanent record. Students are expected to make up all missed work for any absence. In the case of a planned unexcused absence, such as a family trip, the elementary principal must be notified in advance. School work will be sent home prior to the trip and will be due on the first day the student returns unless the elementary principal determines otherwise.

Students arriving to school later than 11:15 AM will be counted absent for the day. Students leaving prior to 11:15 AM will be counted absent for the day.

Classwork missed because of an absence can be made up on the student's return to school. Teachers are granted discretion in setting deadlines for make-up work. Make-up work for

unexcused or non-medical absences, in the excess of the ten days, will be at the discretion of the elementary principal.

LATE / TARDY

Your student must be in the classroom by 8:00 AM or they will be marked as TU – Tardy Unexcused. Parents must park and walk their child into the Academy Front Office entrance. Students do not need to get a tardy slip; just walk straight to class independently.

Students are allotted 5 tardies per quarter. 6 tardies will result in one absence on the student's record.

Encouragement: As a means of striving for excellence and displaying a strong work ethic, we desire to assist our students in understanding the importance of being punctual. This is a lifelong lesson and should be cultivated during the elementary years.

EARLY DISMISSAL

NO EARLY DISMISSALS will be granted after 2:00 pm since students may already be preparing for carlines.

When it is necessary for your child to be dismissed early, please send a note, dojo message, or email to the teacher, or call the main school office, explaining why your child needs to be dismissed early. Parents can come into the school office and wait for their student. At that point your child will be called to the office, and you will sign them out.

STUDENT DROP OFF

The first day of school you may walk your student into their classroom between 7:30-8:00 and at 8:00 we will ask that all parents depart so our school day can begin. After the first day, a teacher and student safeties, will be present at carline drop off in the back of the church to direct your child into the building. Please allow your child to get out of the car and walk in on his/her own.

Morning carline begins at 7:30 AM and will end promptly at 7:55.

THE GOAL: Our students should be in their class and prepared for the day no later than 7:55 each day.

ELEMENTARY STUDENT PICK UP

K5 -2nd grade Carline begins at 2:15 and ends at 2:30. This carline is located on the church office side of campus where there is a covered drive through. Those with older siblings will be taken to the 2:30 carline dismissal. Any student not picked up by 2:30 may be picked up in the Academy Office. A late fee will be applied to your account.

3rd–5th grade Carline begins at 2:30 and ends at 2:45. This will be in the area next to the playground under the covered drive; the same location as morning drop off. All students will utilize the car line for dismissal. Parents should not exit their vehicle during car line.

During car line, children not enrolled in the Elementary program are not allowed to be on the playground; they must remain in the car with an adult.

PICK UP AUTHORIZATION

Only persons authorized by the parents/guardians may pick up a student.

We must have notification when someone other than a parent will be picking up.

In the event of divorce, separation, etc., a court order must be provided specifying the custodial parent.

The custodial parent is the only person from whom the school will accept a list of authorized persons to pick up a student.

We do not allow non-custodial parents to pick up a student unless authorized to do so, in writing, by the custodial parent.

We require identification even when the person's name is on the authorized list.

If a parent plans to have someone not on the list pick up a student, the school must be notified in writing; otherwise, no access to the student shall be given. Verbal permission will be accepted in EMERGENCY SITUATIONS ONLY.

If notification has not been given, no student will be released until the parents have been contacted.

People authorized on the Emergency Form are for emergency contacts only when the parents cannot be reached.

DRESS CODE

Mauldin Christian Academy dress code guidelines are based on both modesty and providing guidelines for our students to learn to dress appropriately for learning in the classroom and being prepared for PE and the playground.

If a child's outfit does not meet the dress code, a parent may be called to bring a change of clothes.

The Elementary dress code will consist of the following basic guidelines:

Bottoms - Shorts, capris, skirts, skorts are permitted but must be no shorter than 2.5 inches from the top of the kneecap. This is approximately the width of a dollar bill.

If skirts or dresses do not have built in shorts, please have them wear shorts or leggings underneath. We want to ensure our students are appropriately covered and modest whether they are sitting on the floor in a classroom or playing outside at recess.

Tops

- No tank tops or spaghetti strap tops for girls.
- No sleeveless shirts for boys
- No offensive comments or pictures are allowed on shirts such as skulls, Sponge Bob, inappropriate language, etc.

Shoes – Shoes with backs should be always worn

- No flip-flops or sport sandals
- Shoe heel height must be no more than 1 inch.
- Tennis shoes must be worn on PE days.

Hats (girls or boys) are not permitted to be worn inside the building. An exception would be during special days or events as designated by the school.

All clothing should be in good repair (no holes or frayed material).

Hair of a non-human color is not permitted.

ACADEMICS

MCA provides a rigorous academic environment with the purpose of leading our students in developing a strong work ethic, striving for excellence, and viewing the academic world through a biblical lens. We desire for our students to learn to work hard and not quit, even when the task at hand may seem difficult. Developing GRIT will allow our students to overcome many obstacles in their lives.

Grading Scales

Program	Scale	Details
Kindergarten (K5)	E / S / N / U	E Exceptional Progress; S Satisfactory Progress; N Needs Improvement; U Unsatisfactory Progress
Elementary (1st–5th)	A–F	A 90-100; B 80-89; C 70-79; D 60-69; F 0-59

BIBLE / HANDWRITING / SOCIAL STUDIES / SCIENCE

In K5-2nd, the following letter marks will be used:

E = Exceptional Progress

S = Satisfactory Progress

N = Needs Improvement

U = Unsatisfactory Progress

HOMEWORK

Homework is an integral part of the educational process at Mauldin Christian Academy. It is given to extend the learning experience within the classroom or given for practice that will help reinforce concepts taught in the classroom. Even though homework is an essential part of independent learning and the formulation for lifelong study skills and habits, we believe there should be a balance in the types and amounts of homework.

Reading and Math are important parts of homework as well as memory verse memorization and spelling/vocabulary lists.

Beginning in 1st grade, students will be given agenda notebooks to write daily assignments and upcoming test dates. The classroom teacher will check each student's homework agenda to confirm that it is accurate before it goes home. They will initial or mark the agenda each day. That will help you, the parent, to know that the teacher has confirmed that the agenda is complete.

Late Homework Not Related to an Absence: When a student fails to turn in homework, on time, 11 points will be deducted from the grade. If necessary, 10 more points will be taken off for each additional day the assignment is overdue.

Late Homework Related to an Absence: When five days or fewer are missed, the student is expected to turn in homework assignments within three days.

STANDARDIZED ACHIEVEMENT TESTS

A nationally recognized standardized achievement test will be administered each spring to grades 1st-5th. Parents will be notified of the test dates so they can help prepare their student for the testing days.

Parents will receive a copy of the test results by mail during the summer months.

PROMOTION AND RETENTION

Regardless of where a child has been in school before, academically passing a grade is required to promote to the next grade level. The final responsibility for the promotion and retention of an individual student rests with the Academy Children's Pastor and the Elementary Principal. The decision to promote or retain will be based on the teacher's recommendation, grades, mastery level in the basic skills areas, mastery of curriculum objectives, emotional and social stability, and mental ability. The decision will be made based on what is best for the student.

PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATION

There are several ways in which teachers and parents communicate about a student's academic progress or class activities.

- Class Dojo
- Class newsletter
- E-mail (your child's teacher will supply you with their school e-mail address)
- Daily notes sent with homework or agenda.
- Weekly folder

There are also organized events throughout the school year, to facilitate communication between teachers and parents.

- Meet The Teacher (August)
- Parent Teacher Meeting (End of August)
- Scheduled Parent/ Fall Teacher Conferences
- Individual Parent/Teacher Meetings as requested.

If a parent has a concern regarding their child, or a classroom issue, they will first need to contact the teacher directly to address these concerns.

If a problem or issue cannot initially be resolved with the teacher's input and suggestions, then the parent may contact the Elementary Principal and ask for additional support.

The Head of School (HOS) may be asked to get involved if the issue mandates further administrative input.

As a parent, if you need to speak with your child's teacher regarding a personal matter, or a subject that may take a little time, please schedule a conference time by contacting your child's teacher after school hours. Our teachers will make every effort to contact you in a timely manner (usually the same day, but no later than 48 hours). Teachers are not available to speak with parents during the drop off and pick up times since they are required to supervise students.

MESSAGES TO PARENTS

Special information for parents may be distributed through your student's book bag via notes or weekly newsletters. Please check your student's book bag for information DAILY.

MAKING A TEACHER REQUEST

Many factors are considered in the placement of students in the classroom. The Administration DOES NOT accept requests for specific teachers for students. If you have specific concerns regarding your child's placement, please contact the Elementary Principal.

CONFERENCES

You will be informed with occasional notes as to your child's progress. If at any time you have a question, we will be happy to arrange a conference. Mandatory Parent/Teacher conferences will be held in the fall.

CHEATING

Cheating will be approached with a restorative end as the goal. MCA is a safe environment for our students to make mistakes and learn from them. We desire for our students to learn that even though they are loved, there are consequences for their actions.

1st – 2nd Grades: 1st offense is a warning, 2nd offense results in a grade of zero for the quiz or test.

3rd Grade and up: 1st offense will result in a grade of zero for test, quiz, etc.

MCA BEHAVIOR PHILOSOPHY

We believe we are instructed to love and lead our students. Loving and leading the student means we are discipling them each day they are in our school.

Discipling our students will:

- **Help students to solve problems based on heart decisions and therefore learn to make wise decisions.**
- **Help students know the character of God**
- **Help students to know who they are in Christ**
- **Help students make wise choices and leave the student with a healthy sense of control**
- **Teach the student that there are consequences for their behavior and teach them to take responsibility for their actions**
- **Demonstrate how to honor and respect one another**

Teachers will:

- **Speak God's Word over the students daily**
- **When appropriate, give choices where she is fine with whichever one the student chooses. (It's a win/win situation for the teacher.)**
- **Create an environment of Honor and Respect from the Teacher to the Student and from the Student to the Teacher. This communicates to the student that**
 - **We are a family/team**
 - **We help each other**
 - **We work together**
 - **We encourage each other**
 - **We respect each other**
- **Make eye contact, redirecting the student**
- **Give the "Teacher Look" ~ Not mean/angry/frustrated, just firm**
- **Use a reward system to celebrate wise choices:**
 - **Verbal affirmations - e.g. I see you being kind, being helpful, not talking even if others are, etc.!**
 - **Non-verbal affirmations such as a wink, thumbs up, fist bump**
 - **Tangible Rewards such as stickers, personal notes, stamps, prize box, candy, certificates, donut day, pizza party**
- **Use activity re-enforcers by finding out what students love to do and use those activities ~ e.g. play a certain game they love, extra recess time, extra learning center time, board games, read extra chapters of your Read Aloud book.**
- **Communicate to the parents that their child is making wise choices**

- Use appropriate Scriptures when correcting in love

Possible Consequences:

- Walk laps on the playground (typically no longer than 10 minutes)
- Reflect on choices with the teacher when given a consequence. Students should verbalize how they could have made a better decision/choice.
- Office visit to the Principal
- Communication to parents

ACTIONS THAT MAY REQUIRE A STUDENT TO BE SENT HOME

- Hitting/Biting/Spitting
- Harmful verbal or physical actions towards another student
- Disrespect towards authority

DISMISSAL OF A STUDENT

Mauldin Christian Academy reserves the right to dismiss a student if:

- The student is disruptive and makes learning difficult for themselves and other classmates.
- The student is unable to keep up with the curriculum.
- Psychological or educational testing indicates that placement at MCA is unsuitable.
- Parent or guardian does not abide by the policies and procedures of the school or tuition and fees have not been paid.

Other issues may arise and need to be determined by the Academy Children's Pastor and Department Head as to the severity of the offense.