

Student-Parent Handbook



**MONROE
CHRISTIAN SCHOOL**
est. 1956
ENGAGE • EQUIP • EMPOWER

Monroe Christian School is a Christ-centered community, engaging, equipping, and empowering God's children for joyful service in His Kingdom.

Monroe Christian School • 1009 W. Main St., Monroe, WA 98272
Phone: 360-794-8200; Website: www.monroechristian.com

Welcome to Monroe Christian School!



Admissions Procedure

We warmly invite you to join the Monroe Christian School family. When you are ready to apply, the steps to enroll are as follows:

1. If you have not already done so, contact us for an application packet, or download the documents from our website: www.monroechristian.com.
2. We accept applications year round, so please call to verify that there is room in the desired class.
3. Read this Student-Parent Handbook thoroughly and let us know if you have any questions.
4. Complete and submit the forms listed below and pay the Registration Fee.
5. Should placement testing be deemed necessary, schedule testing with the Administrator.
6. The Administrative Assistant will contact you to schedule an appointment with the Administrator and one or more MCS Board Members. During this meeting, we will verify that the expectations of the school, student, and parents are understood, address any special circumstances for your child, and get to know your family. This is a great opportunity to ask any questions you may still have about our school. (The interview is not necessary for Preschool and Pre-K applicants.)
7. If enrolling for the Fall, you will be informed of Parent Night/Curriculum Night. This is a required meeting for all parents.
8. Attend New Parent Orientation near the beginning of the school year.

You will need the following documents to complete the enrollment process:

- ☐ Enrollment Form
- ☐ Tuition Payment Agreement
- ☐ Extended Care Agreement, if applicable
- ☐ Tuition Schedule
- ☒ Student-Parent Handbook
- ☐ Preschool, Pre-K, Kindergarten informational brochure, if applicable
- ☐ Smart Tuition application (unless paying in full)
- ☐ Immunization Form (current form provided by MCS)
- ☐ Records Transfer Request, if applicable

Please contact the office (360-794-8200) if you need any of these documents or are unable to locate them on the website.

Our Mission Statement

Monroe Christian School is a Christ-centered community, engaging, equipping, and empowering God's children for joyful service in His Kingdom.

Our Vision Statement

We at Monroe Christian School partner with Christian homes and churches to nurture and equip God's children. We recognize that Jesus Christ is sovereign over all creation and has created each child with unique abilities, gifts, and talents. Our purpose is to develop and encourage growth in every area of their lives; spiritually, intellectually, emotionally, socially, and physically, according to God's Word and relying on the Holy Spirit. Through this process, children will develop a Christian perspective of life that will enable them to critically weigh the issues of the day and lead them into faithful stewardship of God's world and into a life of joyful service.

"Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – His good, pleasing, and perfect will." Romans 12:2 (NIV)

Philosophy of Monroe Christian School

Monroe Christian School was established for the purpose of providing a school that would teach a way of life compatible with that held at home. The establishment of the Christian School rejects the secular philosophy that man is the center of the universe and acknowledges God as the Creator of all things. It establishes the Word of God as the plumb line for all learning. Monroe Christian School believes that our lives, as Christians, are lived within the Kingdom of Jesus Christ here on earth. This "world and life view" does not separate us from the present world, but helps us see it in the light of God's Word as revealed to us by His Holy Spirit.

The instruction at Monroe Christian School is aimed at showing how to lead a life of service to God and our fellow man within the framework of the world in which we live.

The aim of Monroe Christian School is academic excellence in the tradition of both Christianity and education. Providing the best education within a Christian context is the goal of the leadership and staff at Monroe Christian School. Through textbooks, instruction, and staff members, the students are led to understand how the truths of the Kingdom differ from the world in which they live.

Monroe Christian School Knights are . . .

Knowledge Builders

Networkers

Innovators

Gospel Believers

Helpers

Thinkers

Solution Seekers

See descriptions on the following page.

Knowledge Builders

- Take responsibility for learning by actively listening and seeking understanding in each subject area.
- Aim for the highest standards in accord with their God-given ability.
- Know which subjects reflect their own strengths, gifts, and passions.

Networkers

- Build community.
- Collaborate with others (oral and written).
- Listen to both sides of an issue and speak the truth in love.

Innovators

- Demonstrate curiosity and imagination.
- Combine insights from various subjects.
- Explore current information and experiments to make discoveries with value and meaning.
- Build resilience through risk-taking and setbacks.

Gospel Believers

- Understand biblical themes.
- Know fundamentals of the Christian faith.
- Interpret each subject area through a biblical worldview.
- Communicate effectively the knowledge of Christ to the world.
- Practice the virtues of faith, hope, and love.

Helpers

- Demonstrate initiative.
- Display integrity, honesty, empathy, and respect for others. (Phil. 2:3)
- Assist and lead others into faithful stewardship of God's world and people.
- Serve within and outside of the school community.

Thinkers

- Access and analyze information.
- Interpret information to extract essential knowledge.
- Perceive meaning and significance.
- Infer logically; challenge assumptions.
- Make decisions based on truth, honesty, and empathy.

Solution Seekers

- Define problems.
- Consider challenges from multiple perspectives.
- Critically examine information resources to be used as part of solution process.
- Persevere with resilience to completion.

Statement of Faith

- Triune God:** We believe in one God who exists eternally as three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- God the Father:** We believe that God created and continues to uphold the world by His Word. We also believe that He is the exalted Lord of the universe and the Creator of all things. He gives life to all things and actively preserves His handiwork. In Christian education, the child comes to learn about the Creator God through His creation.
- Jesus Christ:** We believe that through Jesus Christ, the power of sin has been broken and we are reconciled to God through Him. Jesus calls us to the building of a Christian church, culture, and way of life. Therefore, it is the task of the Christian school to help our children build a biblical foundation for living.
- Holy Spirit:** We believe the Holy Spirit renews our hearts to love God and our neighbors. He directs our understanding to know God, ourselves, and our world. It is through yielding to His counsel that we develop in our Christian walk.
- The Bible:** We believe the Bible is the inspired Word of God. God reveals Himself in the Scriptures, the Old and New Testaments. The Bible is the basis for all of our relationships, thoughts, and activities; therefore, the Scriptures are also our guide in the education of our children.
- Man:** We believe man is created in the image of God to enjoy fellowship with his Creator. Man reflects, in his person and work, the excellence of his Maker.

History of Monroe Christian School

Monroe Christian School was founded in **1956** by a group of Christian men and women of the local Christian Reformed Church desiring to be obedient to the commands in Scripture for their children to be rooted firmly in their faith. Monroe Christian School was established for the purpose of providing a school that would teach a way of life compatible with that held at home.

The establishment of the Christian School rejects the secular philosophy that man is the center of the universe and acknowledges God as the Creator of all things. It establishes the Word of God as the plumb-line for all learning. Monroe Christian School is dedicated to the biblical understanding that our lives, as Christians, are lived within the Kingdom of Jesus Christ here on earth. This “world and life view” does not separate us from the present world but helps us to see it in the light of God’s Word as revealed to us by His Holy Spirit.

The school began with its first classes in the back room of that church, New Hope Fellowship. It quickly outgrew those facilities, and four acres of land were purchased and a four-classroom building was constructed at our present location on Main Street in Monroe.

Growth of the student body continued through the **1960’s and 1970’s**, so the school building was once again expanded; this time to eight classrooms. In the **1980’s** the school added kindergarten to its well-established first through eighth grade program. The early childhood education program (preschool) was added in **1989**. In **1992**, the school purchased an adjoining piece of property to accommodate even more growth. In **2000**, five classrooms and a teacher workroom were added to the school. In **2010**, a covered sports court was built, and building updates continue as the school grows or the needs arise.

In **2013**, the school opened the doors of Monroe Christian High School, a unique hybrid school, blending on-line classes and traditional instruction, offering personalized learning plans for each student. MCHS was housed in the same facility as MCS. It started with a 9th grade class, then in **2014**, 10th grade was added. MCHS was discontinued after 2015 due to less than anticipated enrollment.

Our **2014-15** year brought the addition of our “Little Lambs,” a 2-1/2’s class to introduce children to our school. This program is offered when there is sufficient enrollment. MCS also offers a variety of sports to 5th-8th graders, has an annual Christmas program along with the Annual Auction, Touch-a-Truck, and Walk-a-Thon. There are family events, Bible studies, student support groups, and other activities which vary from year-to-year based on need and the leading of the Holy Spirit. The ongoing accreditation process keeps many stakeholders active in the life of the school.

Monroe Christian School continues to be maintained by Christian men and women of all denominations who desire to give children the opportunity to receive a Christ-centered education based upon the infallible and inspired Word of God; the Bible.

The instruction at Monroe Christian School empowers students to lead lives of service to God and our fellow man within the framework of the world in which we live. Providing the best education within a Christian context is the goal of Monroe Christian School in partnership with the parents. Through this quality education, the students are equipped and empowered to lead God-honoring lives with a solid foundation.

Accreditation

In 2011, Monroe Christian School earned its accreditation status through Christian Schools International (CSI), as well as with the National Council for Private School Accreditation (NCPSA). Accreditation is an ongoing process with reaccreditation every five years. This is another way of assuring an excellent education for all students.

Monroe Christian School “Society”

WHAT is the Monroe Christian School Society?

When the school was established in 1956, the term often used to designate the governing body of a group was “society.” The term is still used today, as “Monroe Christian School Society” is the legal name of the school. So, “Society” is simply the legal name of the governing body of Monroe Christian School. The Society elects the School Board and approves the annual budget.

WHO can be a member of the Society?

Parents are eligible to become Society members if they have a child at MCS and meet the constitutional requirements. All MCS parents are highly encouraged to become Society members.

HOW does a parent become a member?

The Society accepts new members at the Annual Society Business Meeting. Parents who wish to become voting members of the Society must attend the Annual Society Business Meeting and sign the Membership Roster. The full Society then votes to accept new members during the meeting.

WHEN does the Society meet?

The Society has a yearly business meeting in May/June, along with other meetings that are called by the School Board to discuss unanticipated issues, seek approval for building/expansion projects, or other business, as needed.

WHY do we have a Society? What are the responsibilities of its members?

The ability of Monroe Christian School to fulfill its mission is dependent upon the participation of a unified, committed, and informed group of parents willing to make the best decisions for the life of the school. Attendance and participation at Society meetings, involvement in various school committees and parent clubs, and volunteering at the school all help MCS fulfill the goal of partnering with parents and churches in making Christian disciples. In addition, parents are encouraged to attend and be involved in a healthy, well-balanced church with their children. Finally, it is expected that when problems or questions arise concerning teachers, students, or the school, these conflicts be dealt with in a Biblical manner, full of grace and respect for all involved.

(Continued)

Monroe Christian School "Society" - continued

To become a member, one must meet the following two constitutional requirements:

1. Agree that the purpose of the Monroe Christian School Society is to establish and maintain a school or schools for the dissemination of instruction to children, such instruction should be directed toward the end that these children may occupy their places worthily in society, church, and state.
2. Agree that the basis of this Society is the infallible Word of God as interpreted by the Ecumenical Creeds & Reformed Confessions. The Society is governed by the following guiding principles:
 - a. That all things have been created to the end that God may be glorified in and through them;
 - b. That God, by His wise covenant arrangement has appointed parents to be responsible for the training of the child(ren) to the end that God in His glory shall be central and supreme in life's total experience;
 - c. That the training of the child shall be continued under the parent's responsible supervision in a school that carries out the basic God-honoring, God-centered program begun in the home.

School Board

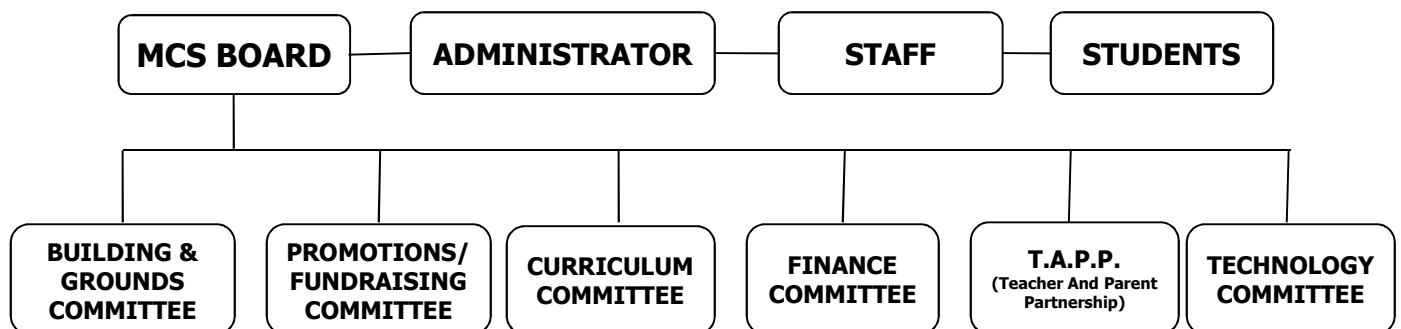
The Monroe Christian School Board is responsible for governing the school. The MCS Board envisions MCS as a growing dynamic source of Christian education for our children and our community. It is the prayer of the Board that each student graduating from MCS will succeed academically and be equipped to serve the Lord, to love fellow human beings, and to care for God's creation.

Each year, new Board members are elected at the annual business meeting to replace the retiring Board members. The Board is the legally responsible, decision-making body of the Society. It adopts regulations and makes policies concerning MCS. It is responsible for staffing, policies, standards of conduct, collection and dispersion of funds.

The School Board is made up of members who show evidence of:

1. Their personal salvation by faith and daily walk with God.
2. Belonging to the community of Christ by holding membership in and faithfully attending and participating in the life of a church that is faithful to the Scripture and whose teaching and doctrine and education is consistent with the school's statement of faith.
3. Understanding the Reformed Faith as reflected in one or more of the following ways:
 - a. Training and education in the Reformed Creeds.
 - b. Christian day school or college training.
 - c. In-service or pre-service training provided by the school.
4. A gift for leadership in administration and discernment, and an ability to motivate and encourage others.
5. Understanding of and demonstrating support for the school's mission, educational creed, purpose, and goals.
6. Consistency between word and deed by enrolling their own children in a CSI school, unless an exception must be made for children with special needs.

MCS Organizational Structure



School Hours

Kindergarten – 8th Grade:

School Doors Open	8:00 a.m.
School Begins	8:30 a.m.
School Ends	2:55 p.m. – Kindergarten – 1 st Grade 3:00 p.m. – 2 nd – 5 th Grades 3:10 p.m. – 6 th – 8 th Grades

Preschool:

AM Class (2 days)	8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
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PreKindergarten:

AM Class (3 days)	8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
Full Day Class (3 days)	8:30 a.m. – 2:50 p.m.

Extended Care:	Available 3:00 - 6:00 p.m. for ages 5-12 (must be pre-registered)
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School Day Routine

1. Students are expected to follow the same dismissal/pick-up routine every day after school. If this routine is to be changed at any time, parents must either write a note and send it to the office with the student or email or call the school office. If an adult arrives to pick up a child other than the legal guardian and without previous notice, a call will be made to the legal guardian as well as checking I.D. Your child's safety is our first and foremost priority.
2. Please make after-school (pick-up) arrangements with your child before he/she comes to school. ***Students are not allowed to use the school phone, nor allowed to use personal cell phones during school hours.*** Student messages can only be delivered in an emergency.
3. Our teachers have requested that parents only come into the classrooms if pre-arranged with the teacher during school hours or are scheduled to volunteer in the room, beginning at 8:30 a.m. This helps the teacher maintain the flow of the school day so your children receive the most of the day.
4. Though we know it's not always possible, please make every effort to schedule doctor, dentist, orthodontic appointments for your children during non-school hours.
5. If you must pick your child up before school is dismissed, please email, call, or send a note to the **office** (not the teacher) that morning. When you come to pick your child up, please park in the parking area (**not** the roundabout), then come to the office to sign him/her out. The office staff will bring him/her to you in the office.
6. We strive to provide the best education possible for your child, so we sincerely appreciate your cooperation in helping the school day flow smoothly for both teachers and students.

Chapel

Our weekly school-wide Chapel is an essential part of our program wherein we engage, equip, and empower our students to live in our larger school community. We choose one overarching biblical theme each year and explore this through songs, messages, Bible passages, and activities.

In chapel, students are empowered to:

- ☐ share their gifts through song and drama
- ☐ create cross-grade relationships by sitting with chapel buddies
- ☐ memorize Bible verses
- ☐ serve by running the sound and video equipment

We are equipped with the truth from a central message from the theme each week which is then continued in grade-level discussions in each classroom. We build community when we are all in one place hearing the same message. We are equipped with common understandings that help us use the same language to live in unity.

Chapel also allows the students to experience “church.” Even our youngest students learn to be active participants in the Body of Christ. We do not sit passively. We engage in worship, are equipped by the teaching, and are empowered by the Holy Spirit to go out from our school community to share the Good News with our world.

Parents are always welcome to join Chapel!

School Closures / Schedule Changes

When there is inclement weather or an emergency, MCS follows the Monroe Public School decision regarding the schedule changes and/or school closures. Below are your resources to determine the status for a particular day:

1. Tune in to KING-5 or KIRO-7 TV, or log on to one of their websites: www.king5.com or www.kirotv.com.
2. Call Monroe School District at (360) 804-2950. This line provides a message with the current status.
3. Log on to www.flashalert.net and search for Monroe School District.
4. As soon as the decision to close school or change the schedule has been confirmed, a text message will be sent to parents’ phones.
5. If it is known ahead of time that school will be closed the following day, an announcement will be sent out via email or text.
6. If there is a 2-hour late start, Preschool and A.M. PreK will be cancelled.

Lunch at School

Lunches are provided by the parents. Please be sure to label lunchboxes and any other containers sent to school. Milk punch cards may be purchased in the office and are monitored by the classroom teacher.

School Communication

MCS publishes a weekly newsletter, *Knightly News*, which is sent home weekly via email. It is also posted on the school Facebook page, and a link is sent out via text. The newsletter keeps parents informed of activities, schedule changes, calendar events, special announcements, and special programs. Please make sure to read this newsletter each week.

School phone directories are distributed near the beginning of each school year. You have an option on the registration form to be included in the directory or not. The MCS Directory, and all contact information therein, is to be used for school purposes **only**.

Arrival and Dismissal

Students may arrive no earlier than 8:10 a.m. and leave no later than 15 minutes after school is dismissed. (Parents with students at different dismissal times are asked to pick all children up at the latest dismissal time.) Before and after these times, the school exempts itself of all responsibility and liability for the students. Children remaining 15 minutes past their class's dismissal time will be taken to Extended Care, and parents will be charged at the current rate. Parents need to park and sign the child out in the E-Care room when they arrive, no exceptions.

School Telephone

Students may not use the school phone. Students may not be pulled from a class to speak on the phone unless it is an emergency. Parents are asked to make all necessary transportation or after-school activity arrangements for their child before school. Students may not use cell phones to make these calls; cell phones must remain off during school hours and until the student is off school property. **All student/parent communication must go through the office until the students are released to the parents for the day.**

Drop-off & Pick-up (Roundabout and Parking details)

There is no parking anywhere within the roundabout or the approaching drive, including the cut-out by the trash containers and the interior lane of the roundabout. The curbs are painted red.

Between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., there is NO PARKING allowed in the above areas, even when it is not a pick-up/drop-off time. We must keep these areas clear for emergency vehicles and large delivery trucks during the school day. If you need to come to the office, drop something off for a student, or leave your car for any reason, PLEASE PARK either on the south side of the parking lot (interior lot), on the grassy strip by the field, or in the parking lot of the New Hope Fellowship church across the street from the school.

The “reserved” parking spots on the east side of the building are for staff from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The reason is that it can be dangerous backing out of those spots, and our teachers park for the entire school day, thus eliminating unnecessary danger. *If those spots are “open,” that staff person may be on a quick errand, so please do not park there.*

When picking up or dropping off children in the roundabout, please use the lane closest to the school. Do not pull into the center lane for drop-off or pick-up. The center lane must remain open for cars to pull into after dropping off/picking up their children from the other lane. Please pull as far forward as you can, even if there are no other cars in the roundabout.

At arrival and dismissal time, ***please remain in your car*** – staff and/or volunteers will help get your child and gear into or out of the car. Staff will be reminding you of this if you forget. (Exception, preschool parents may find it necessary to help staff with their child.)

Please arrive at the proper time to pick up your child. If you are more than 5 minutes early, please park until pick-up time, then enter the circle. If you have students who are dismissed at different times, please either arrive at the LATEST time and pick them up at the same time OR park and walk over to get the earlier student from the teacher, then enter the roundabout to get the later student at his/her dismissal time. Please do NOT remain in the roundabout between dismissal times.

If you need to go in to the school for any reason or you need to talk to a staff member that is outside, even for “just a second,” PLEASE PARK in one of the designated parking areas.

Staff members are stationed outside after school to make sure children get safely into their cars. Please do not call them away from their duties, but rather, park in a designated parking area and wait for them to dismiss all of their students before talking with them. Or you may leave a message at the school office for them to call you.

The staff members on duty will only dismiss children to the parent or designated ride.

Please respect the “Handicapped Parking Only” signs and set a good example for our students about following rules and laws. Thank you.

Attendance Policy

Students and their parents are responsible for maintaining prompt and regular attendance as prescribed in Washington State's Compulsory Attendance law RCW 28A.27.01. Daily attendance and active participation in each class is a critical part of the learning process for all students. Students and parents must accept full responsibility for regular school attendance. The school best serves all students and the learning process by establishing clear attendance expectations, consistent consequences, and timely reporting of student's attendance patterns.

When students are absent, they miss critical instruction for understanding key concepts and fall behind quickly in completing assignments. Good school attendance correlates positively to good academic achievement. Coming to school every day, being on time, completing daily school assignments, are important life skills for now and the future.

When students are tardy, they miss critical information/direction given by the teacher at the beginning of the school day, prayer, lessons, etc. In addition, when students enter the classroom late, this causes significant distraction to the teacher and other students and detracts from the smooth start of the school day.

Students are expected to be at school, in their classroom, and in their seat prepared to begin the school day by 8:30 a.m. If a student is not seated and ready to begin, he/she will be considered tardy. Any tardy student must go to the office and get a Tardy Slip.

For purposes of this policy, a "tardy" is defined as arriving after 8:30 a.m., an early dismissal or late arrival, or missing any part of the school day. Under this definition, if a student accumulates 8 tardies, this will be counted as a full-day absence. (If a student misses half of a school day, it will be counted as a .5 day absence.)

After five (5) absences, a notice from the Administrator will be sent home to parents. This notice must be signed and returned to the office the following school day.

Any student accumulating 15 absences during the school year will be subject to an MCS School Board Review.

Injury and Illness

In order to keep our school as healthy as possible, we ask that parents observe the following.

In the event of an injury or illness while at school, we will contact the parent, guardian, or emergency contact person for the child. That person **must pick up the child and take him/her home**.

Children with any of the following symptoms **must be kept home or will be sent home** if already at school:

Appearance and Behavior	Unusually tired, pale, lack of appetite, confused, or irritable
Eyes	Thick mucus or other draining from the eye; Pink Eye
Fever	Temperature of 100 degrees or more
Nasal discharge/cough	Continuing nasal discharge and/or chronic cough
Sore Throat	Especially with fever, swollen glands, a cough
Diarrhea	Please keep home - student may return to school after there have been no episodes for 24 hours.
Vomiting	Please keep home – student may return to school after there have been no vomiting episodes for 24 hours.
Rash	Body rash with fever or itching
Ear Infection	If no fever, does not need to stay home; however, the child should see a healthcare provider
Lice	Children may not return to school until they have been treated and are free of lice and nits (eggs).

Any student taking antibiotics may return to school after 24 hours on the medication, if his/her symptoms are significantly reduced.

It is the parent's responsibility to notify the school office immediately if their child contracts a communicable disease such as measles, mumps, chicken pox, meningitis, MRSA, etc.

Medication

If your child needs prescription medication administered at school, doctor's instructions and written parent consent must be provided to the office. A Medication Authorization form is available in the office. All medication must be in the original prescription container with the student's name and the name and dosage time of the medication. All medications, prescription or over-the-counter, may only be administered by office staff.

Immunizations

All students are required by law to provide proof of immunizations on the provided form before attending school.

Appearance

“Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.” I Cor. 6:19-20 (NIV)

“Or didn’t you realize that your body is a sacred place, the place of the Holy Spirit? Don’t you see that you can’t live however you please, squandering what God paid such a high price for? The physical part of you is not some piece of property belonging to the spiritual part of you. God owns the whole works. So let people see God in and through your body.” I Cor. 6:19-20 (The Message)

In our effort to model ourselves after Christ and live according to His Word, the school has established appearance guidelines for our students. Though we realize that the students’ wardrobe choices are an important statement of their individuality, as a Christ-centered institution, we require that clothing choices promote a healthy lifestyle. Clothing and accessories must not detract from the learning environment. The following are examples of inappropriate clothing:

- Shirts that bare the mid-section; pants that are too low
- Clothing that is too baggy, too restrictive, or too revealing (For **5th-8th grade girls**, leggings/jeggings/yoga pants may be worn only with a long shirt covering hips and upper legs)
- Clothing that promotes or advertises ungodly items or lifestyles
- Clothing that allows undergarments to be seen
- Shirts and dresses with spaghetti straps or that are strapless
- Shorts, skirts, dresses that are above fingertip length
- Clothing that exposes too much skin (i.e., excessively ripped or sheer clothing)
- Pajamas / Sleepwear / Slippers (except for designated special days)

This is not a complete listing; therefore, teacher discretion will be used. If a student’s clothing is deemed inappropriate, his/her parents will be contacted for a change of clothing.

Accessories must not be distracting to other students or to the learning environment. Earrings are allowed at school for girls. No body piercing is allowed. All headwear (baseball caps, hats, hoods, bandanas, costume-type headwear, etc.) and sunglasses are permitted outdoors only.

Hair must be conservatively styled, well-groomed, and neat. The student’s eyes must be able to be seen (not covered). Hair may not be dyed unnatural colors (blue, red, green, orange, purple, pink, etc.), permanently or temporarily except for designated special days.

School guidelines will always lean to the conservative, and if there is a difference of opinion as to what is appropriate, the Administrator’s decision will be final.

Behavior Code

We expect our students to abide by the following standards:

1. Each student is to respect the authority of God, his/her parents, teachers, and all other staff persons in positions of authority. (Romans 13:1-2)
2. Each student will treat classmates and staff with respect. (Philippians 1:2-4)
3. Each student will conduct him/herself in school and out of school, both with and without supervision in such a way that brings honor to God, the school, the family, and him/herself. (Proverbs 17:17)
4. Each student is expected to be honest, dependable, and cooperative. (Proverbs 12:17)
5. Each student will help keep the buildings and grounds neat and clean by picking up after him/herself.

Student Discipline

We believe we are all in the process of becoming conformed to the image of Christ by the renewing of our minds. As a Love and Logic school, this philosophy emphasizes that children are to be loved unconditionally while simultaneously held accountable for their behavior. Students will be taught to be solution seekers.

We expect all teachers to carry out the above-noted “Behavior Code” faithfully by observing students in and beyond the classroom, resulting in consistent expectations. The following standards describe how our school handles behavior issues, in general.

1. Teachers clearly teach their students expectations for behavior at the beginning of the year, discussing a few simple rules, why these rules are important, and the consequences for breaking the rules.
2. Our staff is expected to be as fair, firm, and consistent as possible in both encouraging and correcting students.
3. Except when public correction is clearly necessary, students are corrected in private.
4. The Administrator will be consulted for advice as teachers see the need.
5. Our staff practices these four criteria for good Biblical discipline: instruct, correct, make restitution (right the wrong, if possible), and reassure.
6. Our staff models and upholds the school’s rules beyond the classroom--in hallways, on the playground, and at school events.
7. Our teachers will call parents the same day that an issue arises for help in guiding their child’s behavior; the earlier the child is corrected, the sooner the child learns the habit of appropriate behavior.
8. We persistently explain the biblical reasons for discipleship: it honors Christ; it serves other people (courtesy, caring, listening), it demonstrates obedience to God and his appointed authorities, and it witnesses to others what true peace is.
9. We do not practice corporal punishment at MCS. Teachers will never strike a child in any way; only restrain younger children who may be harming themselves or others.
10. Most of all, our teachers seek to model respect.

The Bible makes it clear that the purpose of discipline is the redirection of a person’s path and the restoration of relationships.

(continued)

(Student Discipline – continued)

Colossians 3:12-17

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. (NIV)

Reconciliation

We are Christ's Ambassadors:

2 Corinthians 5:17-19

Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

Conflict is a part of life. It doesn't stop at the front door of the school. Conflict causes us to grow if we resolve it properly. At Monroe Christian School we practice reconciliation in every aspect of our school day. First, we lead children to become reconciled to God by introducing them to His love and offer of salvation. We also practice reconciliation as conflict resolution between students, teachers, administration, and parents. When we offend or are offended in our community, we follow "the Matthew 18 principle."

Matthew 18: 15-16

If your brother or sister offends you, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over. But if they will not listen, take one or two others along, so that 'every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.'

We encourage students, families, and MCS staff to first work out conflict together. We remind each other to privately work out problems without tattling or gossiping. If we can't work it out on our own, we go together to a trusted authority (teacher, Administrator, Board member) one level up the authority ladder. We speak gently, take responsibility for our part, and point out concerns. We do not speak harshly, exaggerate, or blame. In this way we can ask forgiveness, extend forgiveness, and are reconciled to one another.

By modeling this behavior in our homes, churches, and at school, we are training our students and empowering them to know what they believe, why they believe it, and how to share it. Reconciliation is the goal in any disciplinary issue at MCS.

Items Not Permitted at School

The following, though **not all-inclusive**, is a list of items not permitted on school grounds or at any sponsored school event (also applies to Extended Care):

- Cell phones (**must be kept in backpack and turned off until student is off school property**)
Note: Jr. High students may use their phones only for class-related research during class if permission is granted. They are not allowed to take and/or post photos during school (except yearbook students if taking photos specifically for the yearbook) or for any other purpose. Misuse of cell phones will result in consequences; i.e., having phone taken away. Cell phones may **not** be used to contact parents while students are on school property. All parent-student communication must be handled directly by office staff.
- Gum (only with teacher permission)
- Toys, except as specifically permitted by a classroom teacher for a special occasion
- Skateboards/Roller Blades/Scooters
- Video/Electronic Games or any other electronic devices
- Water Guns
- Weapons of any kind
- Drugs/Alcohol

Note: The school, nor its staff, is responsible for loss or damage of any item brought to school. Please use discretion.

Report Cards

Report cards are distributed at the conclusion of each trimester for Grades K-8. Grading scales and marks vary by grade group and are explained on the report cards.

Standardized Testing

The Iowa Assessments (IA) are given to students in 2nd through 8th grade each spring. The results of the testing are used to analyze the strengths and weaknesses in the curriculum, in the classrooms, and in the individual student's academic development. Individual student reports from IA are sent home with parents at the spring Parent-Teacher Conference. Monroe Christian School consistently ranks high in standardized testing when compared to local and national school norms, with most students scoring above grade level.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-Teacher Conferences are scheduled three times during the school year, mid-trimester, for Kindergarten and up. They are required for parents. A schedule will be sent home (generally via email) with your conference time/day one to two weeks prior to the conference dates. This time is set aside for individual communication concerning your child's progress: academic, spiritual, emotional, physical, social. Please make conferencing with your child's teacher a priority. Should there be concerns between scheduled conferences, parents are always welcome to contact the teacher at any time and request a meeting.

Dispute Resolution

Please refer to the “Reconciliation” section of this handbook. The “Matthew 18 principle” as illustrated by Jesus to his disciples in this passage is the same principle that dictates the procedure we practice for conflict resolution in any and all relationships at MCS, including parent/staff disputes. Should parents have a conflict involving their student and someone at Monroe Christian School, we ask that they do the following:

1. Parents should make initial contact with the teacher in a timely manner.
2. Parents should contact the Principal if they feel the parent-teacher meeting is not satisfactory.
3. Parents should contact the School Board President if they feel the parent-principal conference was not satisfactory.
4. The decision of the School Board is final.

We ask that the parties involved keep any dispute and resolution thereof private in order to maintain positive relationships throughout the school (Proverbs 11:12-13, 16:28, 18:8, 20:19, 26:20, 26:20-22; II Corinthians 12:20).

Service Hours

MCS relies heavily on parent volunteers. Parent involvement strengthens parent/staff and parent/child relationships, encourages a sense of ownership, and helps the school keep operating costs down. Work not done by volunteers must be hired out.

Parents of students in Kindergarten through 8th grade are asked to serve 20 volunteer hours per family for each school year; single-parent families, 10 hours per school year; Preschool and Pre-Kindergarten parents, 5 hours per school year.

All volunteer hours worked must be logged in the “Service Hours” log book located in the school office. It is the *parent’s responsibility* to log the hours in a timely manner. At registration time at the end of February, parents will receive a credit on the following year’s registration fee at the rate of \$10/hour for each service hour worked up to the date of registration, up to a maximum of \$200 (\$50 for Preschool/Pre-K).

Here are a few suggestions of ways to help your school and fulfill service hours:

- Recess Duty (double service hours earned)
- Committee: Building & Grounds, Promotions, Fundraising
- Regular classroom assistance, reading groups, lunch duty, etc.
- Class events: field trips, parties, auction projects, etc.
- Library assistance
- Field Day, Family Nights, other events
- Box Tops for Education Programs, Coke Rewards, other similar program
- Auction Committee
- T.A.P.P. (Teacher And Parent Partnership)
- WatchDOGS – a program for fathers to spend a day in classrooms/around the school
- Other needs, as they arise, will be posted in the Knightly News or by classroom newsletters/emails.

Homework

Homework is considered to be an important part of the education program at MCS. Any assignments not finished at school become homework, and this provides students the opportunity to develop self-responsibility, good study habits, and mastery of skills taught. Specific assignments and the frequency of homework will vary according to the discretion of the teacher.

Homework is not sent home “for homework’s sake.” Our students work hard at school, and they need time to be with their families and to be involved in activities. The amount of time a student spends on homework depends on his/her needs, how he/she uses class time, various projects assigned, level of mastery of each subject, and other factors.

Following are the **general guidelines** for homework at specific grade levels:

Grade Level	Bible Verse	Spelling Words	Wordly Wise	Minutes of Reading Day/Week	Expected Time Spent on Homework Each Day
Preschool / PreKindergarten	No homework				
Kindergarten	x			1 children’s book per day (5 books/week)	
1 st grade	x	x		15/day 75/week	10 minutes once a week
2 nd grade	x	x		20/day 100/week	20 minutes
3 rd grade	x	x	x	25/day 125/week	30 minutes
4 th grade	x	x	x	25/day 125/week	40 minutes
5 th grade	x	x	x	25/day 125/week	50 minutes
6 th grade	x		x		60 minutes
7 th grade	x		x		70 minutes
8 th grade	x		x		80 minutes

If your child is **consistently** spending significantly more time than is listed above, please contact the **teacher**. The teacher will work with you and your child to find out why and make modifications, as necessary. The teacher will not know there is a problem unless contacted by the parent. Please go directly to the teacher, rather than to other parents or the Administrator. If a solution is not reached, the teacher and parent(s) together should meet with the Administrator to work out an appropriate solution.

Student Records

1. Procedures:
 - a. Caution will be exercised at all times by faculty and administration in determining what information is to be placed in a student's cumulative file. Any subjective statements based on feelings and perceptions without proof do not go into a student's file.
 - b. Student files are always to be treated with respect and confidentiality. When a parent or student wishes to see the file, he/she may do so in the presence of the school Administrator or his/her appointee.
 - c. Legitimate requests for the transfer of health records are honored immediately. We hold academic records for unpaid fees or tuition.
2. Who has right of access to records:
 - a. Parents or legal guardians have legal right of access to student's records. They may contest what is in the records by contacting the Administrator and ask for an explanation.
 - b. If a former student is 18 years or older, the former student has the right to view the records. Parents must receive permission in writing from the former student or have the former student present to have access to the files.
3. In a divorce situation, the natural parents have the rights to the files, even if one of the parents does not have custody of the student, unless there is a court order stating that the parent does not have access.

Volunteers & Visitors

All visitors and parent volunteers must sign in and out in the office and get a visitor's badge. If a parent needs to speak to a child during class or get the child out of class for any reason, the office staff will get the child from the classroom. Parents are asked to not enter the classroom unless they are volunteering in that class at that time. This is done for the safety of every teacher and student, as well as to limit distractions in the learning environment. All parents must complete a background check.

Field Trips

Field trips are scheduled to enhance the learning that takes place in the classroom. (Only current MCS students/parents may attend field trips; no siblings, please.) All students in the class are expected to attend field trips, as they are part of the curriculum. Throughout your time at MCS, take the opportunity to chaperone. Showing interest in your child/ren's classroom events enhances their learning. When chaperoning, remember:

1. Prior to field trip day, make sure the office gets a copy of your current driver's license and proof of insurance, as well as a current cell phone number.
2. Arrive on time.
3. Introduce yourself to the teacher, who will then introduce you to the students.
4. Listen carefully to the instructions given by the teacher.
5. Know the names and faces of the students placed in your group.
6. Follow the schedule as outlined by the teacher.
7. You are responsible for the safety of the students in your group.
8. The teacher is the ultimate authority; you are a support.
9. Look for the positive in the field trip and in the students you are supervising.
10. Address specific concerns to the teacher.
11. Be helpful and fully involved with the students.
12. Upon your return, log your time in the Service Hours Log Book in the office.

Fundraising

We run a "tight ship" at MCS as we carefully and prayerfully utilize funds with the utmost consideration. The majority of the operating costs of Monroe Christian School are covered with tuitions. However, approximately 15% (more some years) of our annual operating budget is dependent upon faithful supporters of Monroe Christian School. Therefore, we have several fundraising events each year (Walk-A-Thon, Annual Auction, etc.) to fill the gaps that tuitions alone do not cover.

Other than the major fundraisers that support the general fund, we have several smaller outreach opportunities during the year for specific purposes. For example, we have some service-related events such as Food Bank Drive, Quarters for Calcutta, Operation Christmas Child, Pennies for Precious Packages, etc. These vary from year to year. In addition, there may be fundraisers for students to earn money for the Junior High Washington, DC, trip or 5th grade Outdoor Education. T.A.P.P. holds fundraisers such as bake sales to raise funds for items teachers may need in their classrooms but are not covered by the annual budget.

Tuition & Payments

Tuition payments are received through our billing agent, Smart Tuition, unless a family is paying tuition in full. Monthly payments can be made in 9, 10, or 12 installments, all beginning in August. Late payments to Smart Tuition will result in late fees assigned by Smart Tuition. *Smart late fees are applied on the 10th day from your due date and will not be reversed once charged. If a parent is concerned that their payment might be late, they must make arrangements with the MCS Bookkeeper prior to their due date to avoid the late fee.* In addition, a \$35 fee will apply for failed auto-debit or failed checks payable to Smart, and returned checks payable to MCS will result in a \$35 fee from the school. Non-payment of tuition or other school charges/fees, and/or failure to return all properties belonging to the school, will result in report cards and/or student records being held.

- A 3% discount is offered for payment of entire tuition contract by check (1% by credit/debit card) by the assigned date in June (no discount on registration fee).
- Should a family withdraw from MCS prior to the end of the school year, they owe tuition through the month in which they leave, regardless of the number of days in the month in which they attend or the reason they leave (1/10th of the annual tuition).
- Any alternative tuition payment plan other than payment in full or payments through Smart Tuition must be pre-approved by the Finance Committee in writing.

Lost and Found

Make sure that your child's name is on all coats, sweaters, hats, lunch boxes, or other articles brought to school. If the child's name is a lost item, the office staff will return the item to the student. Unmarked lost items will be displayed in the hallway on or under cubbies near the office. Students and parents may retrieve lost items from there. After approximately two weeks, unclaimed items are donated to a local charity. The school is not responsible for any lost items.

School Property

Students are responsible for school property that is lost or damaged through negligence. Parents will be charged the assessed value for the school's cost for replacing the property.

Safety Drills

Fire, earthquake, emergency evacuation drills, as well as "lock down" drills, are periodically performed to help students learn proper actions in the event of a real emergency. Students conduct themselves as though a real emergency was in process. These drills may happen at any time, in any weather, so that students have practice under various conditions.

Legal Custody

A legal document is required to support any questions of custody between parents. Without legal documentation on file, either natural parent is considered to have the right to have access to their child/ren according to the parameters set forth previously in this handbook.

Responsibility for Legal Notification

Monroe Christian School personnel are required by law to report to the Administrator any suspected case of child abuse or neglect. Failure to make the required report is, in itself, a gross misdemeanor. Upon suspected abuse/neglect notification from a staff member, the Administrator will take the necessary steps to ensure we are in legal compliance, as well as biblical accountability for the protection of students in our charge.

Non-Discrimination Policy

Monroe Christian School admits students of any race, color, gender, and national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accepted and made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, and national or ethnic origin in administration of educational policies, admissions policies, financial aid, athletic, and other school-administered programs. Monroe Christian School selects qualified personnel for employment without regard to race, color, gender, age, or national or ethnic origin; but it does reserve the right to use selection criteria in support of its statement of faith, mission, and vision.

***Classroom-specific information
is given to parents on Curriculum Night.***