



MONROE COUNTRY
DAY SCHOOL

Student HANDBOOK

2024-2025

Table of Contents

Philosophy.....3

Curriculum.....4

Contacts.....5

Nondiscriminatory Policy.....6

School Hours.....6

Before and After School Care.....6

Attendance.....6

Check In/Out.....7

Change of Address.....7

Withdrawal Policy.....8

Lunch/Snacks.....8

Illness.....8

Student Conduct.....9

Grading Elements.....12

Graduation.....13

Dress Policy.....14

Visitors/Volunteers.....16

Field Trips.....17

Lost and Found.....17

Internet Usage.....16

Electronic Devices.....18

Emergency Procedures.....18

Student Calendar.....19

Our Mission Statement and Philosophy

*Developing community leaders through creative learning,
independent thinking, and selfless service to others.*

At **Monroe Country Day School**, our philosophy is that:

- children grow in character and become independent thinkers through a balance of scholarly enterprise and active participation in service learning and the arts.
- talented, dedicated and passionate teachers who hold high expectations and find fulfillment in their work are the greatest mentors for our students.
- students succeed because they have been taught to strive for excellence, value hard work, think critically, collaborate productively, express themselves thoughtfully, step outside of their comfort zone and overcome challenges.
- our students bring a variety of perspectives, personalities, and passions. This diversity makes the school a community where each can learn from all.
- we are privileged to be educating the next generation of leaders for our community, our city and our nation. We know that their success depends upon their...
 - integrity
 - capacity for managing complexity
 - adaptability and perseverance
 - confidence in embarking upon ambition undertakings
- students have different skills and learning styles. We create a learning environment that allows children to progress according to their potential.

Our Curriculum

Core Knowledge Curriculum Series

You learn something new by building on what you already know. The more you know, the more you are able to learn.

- *Core Knowledge Foundation*

E.D. Hirsch, Jr. is the founder and chairman of the *Core Knowledge Foundation*. This foundation believes in knowledge-based schooling that puts the emphasis of early education on teaching and learning a core of broadly shared knowledge that builds strong foundations for later learning.

The *Core Knowledge Foundation* provides a challenging and engaging curriculum series with the *Core Knowledge Sequence*. This sequence enhances accountability by providing a clear outline of what children are expected to learn in each grade level, preschool through eighth. It also provides a common ground for communication between parents and educators.

The first and second grade reading curriculum is sometimes supplemented with *Cupp Reading Curriculum*. It was designed by Georgia native, Dr. Cindy Cupp. The program integrates the five research-based reading strategies; phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension.

As recommended by the *Core Knowledge Sequence*, we use *Saxon Math* for grades K - 12. This curriculum has been delivering proven results for over 30 years. The *Saxon Math* curriculum has an incremental structure that distributes content throughout the year. This integrated and connected approach provides deep, long-term mastery of the content and skills.

Contact Information

Monroe Country Day School

602 East Church Street, Monroe, GA 30655

office@monroe.school

770-267-8955

Founder and Director

Dr. Rita Dickinson

director@monroe.school

Assistant Director

Pam Arnold

parnold@monroe.school

Admissions Director

Christy Jones

admissions@monroe.school

High School Coordinator

Paige Hood

phood@monroe.school

Office Manager

Janalyn Waldroup

office@monroe.school

Notice of Nondiscriminatory Policy

MCDS admits students of any race, religion, color, creed, national or ethnic origin or gender to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, creed, national or ethnic origin, gender, sexual orientation, or disability in administration of educational policies, hiring, admission, scholarships or loan programs, athletic or any other school-administered program.

School Hours

Students may enter the building beginning at 8:10 a.m. Classes begin at 8:25 a.m. and students are dismissed at 3:00 p.m. each day.

Before and After School Programs

Before School begins at 7:45 a.m. Afterschool begins at 3:20 pm and ends at 4:30. This time will be used to work on homework and participate in afterschool activities. Cost for before school is \$8 daily or \$35 weekly and afterschool is \$18 daily or \$85 weekly. Families enrolling multiple children in after school care will be charged \$15 daily or \$70 per week.

Attendance

School achievement begins with regular attendance. Habitual absences that impact student learning will be addressed by the Director.

Make up work will be given upon return to school.

Tardy

Students need to be on time to school. However, students who arrive late to school must report first to the office before being admitted to school. Students need to bring a note explaining the reason for the tardiness.

Excused Absences

1. Illness of the student.
2. Death in the family.
3. Other emergency or set of circumstances which in the judgment of the Director constitutes a good and sufficient cause for absence from school.

Check in and out Procedures

- Parent or designated person must come to the office to check the child in or out.
- In order to ensure student safety, identification must be provided.

Change of Address

Please notify the office when there is a move or change of phone numbers during the year.

Withdrawal Policy

A Withdrawal Request form must be completed for students who withdraw from Monroe Country Day School. All unresolved balances and past due amounts must be paid before MCDS will provide the form. It will be sent electronically to the parent/legal guardian who enrolled the student. This person must sign and submit the form. The amount of tuition you owe will be determined by the date of withdrawal on the form. A form submitted for students with unresolved balances or past due amounts will not be accepted. Students enrolled at least one day within a month will be charged tuition for that month. You will continue to be charged tuition until the form is submitted. MCDS requires 48 hours to process withdrawal requests. Once your tuition amount has been determined, you will be notified as to an amount you owe or an amount you are to be refunded. Annual and bi-annual payment plans will be issued a refund for the days not attended. Any monthly payments that have been made will be forfeited. If tuition is owed, MCDS will not forward records to the new school until the balance is paid.

Lunch and Snacks

Students will need to bring lunch and a snack daily. Healthy lunches and snacks are encouraged, as well as water bottles. Water is available for students. Please remind students to not share food unless approved by the teacher. Some students have food allergies and precautions must be taken.

There will be days when lunches will be available from local restaurants. Students will be notified several days beforehand and be able to pre-order.

General Illness

Students should be kept home if sick. Should a student become sick at school, the student will be sent to the office. If the student appears too ill to participate or considered contagious MCDS will notify the child's parent or emergency contact and

request that the child be picked up. If a child has a fever, the child is not permitted back to the program for 24 hours after the fever has subsided without medication.

Student Conduct

There are two basic rules for student conduct:

1. Follow the directions given to you by an adult
2. Respect

Respect can be defined in the following ways...

- A. *politeness, honor and care shown toward someone or something*
- B. *the feeling you show when you accept that different customs or cultures are different from your own and behave toward them in a way that would not cause offense*
- C. *to admire someone for their abilities or qualities*

We believe that children are capable of developing strong personal integrity. It is our goal to help students develop a positive “moral compass” in a Bully-Free Zone.

Agency, Choice, and Accountability

At Monroe Country Day School, children are encouraged to make choices based on mutual respect in an atmosphere of caring with the knowledge that their actions will have consequences for themselves and for other people.

We value the role that agency (the ability to make one’s own choices), choice (actually making your own choices) and accountability (enjoying the real, natural benefits and consequences of our choices) play in developing morality. We help children develop their internal “moral compass” by teaching strategies designed to create positive relationships.

These principles can only work when children understand what behavior is expected of them and when they are free to experience the attending benefits or consequences in a consistent way. Creating an environment of clear expectations, respect for free agency and consistent accountability is among the

most important (and most difficult) work we do as parents and teachers. However, we can never expect, nor should we want, to command children in all things. Rather, we need to teach children correct principles and let them govern themselves within developmentally appropriate limits.

Positive Discipline

We recognize that children often experiment with behaviors - some are testing the limits, others are expressing an emotional need, or they may truly believe that the choice they made was correct.

In dealing with students who display misbehavior, we look for the opportunity to teach positive alternatives. Consequences for misbehavior focus on long-range results and not short-term punishment.

Students are directly involved in exploring their behavior, how it affects others, and what they can do to solve problems in appropriate ways.

A positive discipline approach does not imply lack of consequences. By holding children accountable for their choices, they experience natural consequences while being afforded the opportunity to change. We endeavor to look at the child rather than just the problem. What works for one child doesn't necessarily work for all children. Collaboration, cooperation, and support from parents are an essential and required part of our positive discipline process.

Discipline Procedures

Classroom

The classroom is the most effective place at school for discipline. Teachers can develop a unique relationship of respect and trust with their students and an understanding of their needs.

Minor Misbehavior

The classroom teacher handles minor misbehaviors by helping the student measure their behavior against defined expectations. This is done one-on-one, in class meetings, or by guiding peer-to-peer conflict resolution.

Repeated Misbehavior

Notice of Concern — If a student does not respond to the teacher’s discipline techniques, we use a 3-step warning process for non-violent or non-offensive misbehavior:

1. Verbal reminder of expectation.
2. Verbal warning that a written Notice of Concern recorded will result from another misbehavior.
3. Notice of Concern written/texted; student is sent to the office.

Office — When the above steps have been taken, or when a serious misbehavior is displayed, the concern is passed to the administration. The Director and/or Assistant Director will discuss the problem with the child, review the behavior and how it affects other students and the learning process, and explain the consequences of continued misbehavior.

Notifying Parents — The administrator reviewing the child’s behavior will notify parents of the meeting and will encourage parents to discuss the matter with their child and with the teacher. Depending on the circumstances, the teacher and administration may request a conference with parents to develop strategies to help the child change their behavior.

Discipline Notice — Violent or offensive misbehavior results in a Discipline Notice and an immediate referral to an administrator.

Further Behavioral Consequences

Suspension

In the event of a Discipline Notice or third Notice of Concern, a student may be sent home for a “cooling off” period before the parent conference takes place. A student will be suspended immediately for aggressive or seriously inappropriate infractions, whether physical, verbal, or in social media/text messages. The period of suspension will depend on the circumstances of the event.

Parent Conference

Parents are required to meet with the teacher and the Director or Assistant Director to discuss the misbehavior and to devise strategies for helping the student.

Behavioral Probation

The student may be placed under Behavioral Probation during which any further misbehavior is subject to termination of enrollment. Please note that in the judgment of the administration, and depending on the nature of and circumstances affecting a behavioral infraction, the disciplinary process may be modified accordingly.

Termination of Enrollment

The natural consequence of not being able to behave appropriately within the school community, despite an earnest effort to encourage and facilitate change, is to find a new school. If a student continues inappropriate behavior, Monroe Country Day School will immediately terminate his/her enrollment.

We hope that a student will recognize and choose the benefits of appropriate behavior rather than the consequences of misbehavior. We want children to understand the clear relationship between our expectations, their freedom to make choices and the subsequent consequences or benefits that follow these choices. A child's successful journey through Monroe Country Day School depends on a healthy and cooperative partnership between the school and the child's parents. In the event that the school is unable to establish this essential cooperative partnership, or in cases where parents are unwilling to support the school's expectations, decisions, and actions, the child's enrollment may be terminated at the sole discretion of the Director. If a student's enrollment is terminated, there will be no tuition refund.

Grading Elements

Factors used to determine student grades must include the following items

- Informal assessment of performance
- Classwork

- Project participation and completion
- Formal assessments

Graduation

Monroe Country Day School holds a graduation ceremony each May to recognize those students who have met the requirements for matriculation from high school.

Georgia requirements for graduation are as follows:

College Preparatory Diploma

4 units of English Language Arts

4 units of Mathematics

4 units of Science

3 units of Social Studies

1 unit of Health/PE

7 units of elective courses of which 2 should be Foreign Language

General Diploma

4 units of English Language Arts

4 units of Mathematics

4 units of Science

3 units of Social Studies

1 unit of Health/PE

5 units of elective courses

We work closely with each individual student to plan a course of study appropriate to their future plans.

MCDS Honor Graduates

Must have a cumulative GPA of 3.75 or above

Must not have any failing grades on transcript

Grades computed in GPA will be from completed coursework at MCDS or in Dual Enrollment (transfer grades from other high schools do not count in the average)

Honor graduates, Valedictorian, and Salutatorian will be computed after first semester of the senior year (see below)

Selection of Valedictorian/Salutatorian

The senior with the highest weighted cumulative numerical grade point average at the end of the first semester who is also eligible for the HOPE scholarship shall be named Valedictorian; the senior with the second-highest weighted cumulative grade point average at the end of the first semester who is also eligible for the HOPE scholarship shall be named Salutatorian. If there are no HOPE eligible graduates, these designations are moot.

In the case of Co-Valedictorians (first honor graduates with identical averages), there shall be no Salutatorian.

Senior classes with fewer than five graduates will have a senior class speaker rather than a designated Valedictorian. Senior classes with fewer than four graduates will have a celebratory luncheon rather than a formal graduation ceremony.

Monroe Country Day School reserves the right to determine if a Valedictorian/Salutatorian will be selected for the graduating year.

Dress Policy

Good personal appearance, appropriate dress, proper behavior, and cleanliness are vital to each member of the school community. Developing good taste in attire, good grooming habits, and good behavior are a part of the educational program. Students are not only representing themselves and their families, but they are representing the school, especially when out in the community when we have visitors.

Students at Monroe Country Day School are expected to dress in a manner that is supportive of a positive learning environment, free of distractions and disruptions. There is a direct correlation between student dress and student behavior. Students will be expected to observe modes of dress, styles of hair, and personal grooming which are not distracting to other students.

The following rules will be observed regarding student attire:

- It is preferred that jeans and pants not have holes. If worn, however, leggings must be underneath.
- Undergarments (e.g. bra straps, boxers) should not show
- Pajamas and/or pajama pants are only allowed on designated Spirit Days
- Bedroom shoes are not allowed
- Athletic shoes should be worn for PE class
- No crop tops (midriff should not show)
- Shorts must be longer than the shirt with which they are worn
- “Bike shorts” are not allowed
- Hoods and hats are not to be worn in the building except on designated Spirit Days
- Clothing should not promote or advertise illegal substances or violence, nor display obscenity, profanity, or innuendo

Dress Policy for Field Trips

On field trips, students may wear collared shirts (polo or button down) or a school tshirt. **Sweatpants and leggings are not allowed on field trips and are discouraged for**

daily school wear. This includes Monroe Mondays. Inappropriate dress will result in forfeiture of the field trip experience.

The High School Coordinator is charged with the enforcement of the student dress code and is given discretion in the determination of proper and improper dress. Students will be informed if they wear something inappropriate to school; why it is inappropriate and asked to not wear it to school again. Multiple infractions will result in disciplinary action.

Visitors/Volunteers

For safety, all visitors and volunteers are required to report to the office upon arrival and departure.

Field Trips

During the school year, teachers may schedule educational or service field trips. Trips will be announced in advance by the teacher or school office. A permission slip must be signed and returned to the school for the student to attend the field trip. The permission form will provide details of the trip and a way for the parent to sign up to chaperone.

If a student rides in a privately-owned vehicle, Monroe Country Day School's insurance does not cover the child. MCDS administrators and/or teachers are not liable when a student is riding in a privately - owned vehicle.

Lost and Found Items

Items that are found can be turned in at the front office. Students can check the lost and found in the teacher work room for any missing items. Students should report all lost items to the office immediately.

Internet Usage Guidelines

MCDS makes no guarantees regarding the reliability of the data connection. MCDS shall not be liable for any loss or corruption of data resulting while using the Internet connection. MCDS reserves the right to examine all data involved to make sure that all users are in compliance with these regulations.

If a user finds materials which are inappropriate while using MCDS Internet account, no downloading of this material nor identifying nor sharing the location. Be aware that the transfer of certain kinds of material is illegal. No user shall use MCDS Internet to perform any illegal or unethical acts, including the use of the link to gain unauthorized access to other systems on the network. Finally, all users should keep in mind that when they use the Internet, they are entering a global community and any actions taken by them will reflect upon MCDS.

Electronic Devices

Only high school students are permitted to possess cell phones and other electronic devices while on school property during school hours. These devices may be utilized as part of the instructional process as directed by staff members or students may be asked to store the device in a safe place during a class period where the possession of such a device would be distracting. Elementary and middle school students in possession of a cell phone will be required to place it in a staff approved location during school hours.

Emergency Procedures

Our Emergency Operations Plan was updated in September of 2022. For safety reasons, the complete plan cannot be made available to the public. We can, however, provide summaries of this plan at your request.

Each teacher maintains an emergency binder containing the following:

1. Emergency Operations Plan
2. Fire Evacuation Map
3. Safe Areas for Severe Weather
4. MCDS Student Roster
5. Class Roster
6. Class Schedule
7. Health Action Plans
8. First Aid for Anaphylaxis

A fire drill is held monthly. Severe weather and intruder drills are held twice a year.

Procedures are in place for staff to be quickly alerted of emergency situations.

In case of an emergency situation, teachers will text parents to update and tell the next step for reunification with their child. Teachers will inform parents of protocol to pick up students.

Additional safety precautions include camera doorbells at each door, one-way film on door windows, interior/exterior safety alert system, training for staff and additional drills for students.

All exterior doors are kept locked at all times.

Student Calendar

A student calendar is located on our website, www.monroecountrydayschool.com, at the top of the “Happenings” page.