

## The Visitation Academy Mission Statement

Visitation Academy is a community of students, religious, faculty, staff, parents and alumnae that exists to educate children and young women and to receive and share Jesus as Mary did in her visitation to Elizabeth.

In an environment which values excellence in scholarship, spirituality, leadership and service, this Visitation community encourages students to develop their unique gifts.

As students learn to live Jesus with gentleness, humility, joy and freedom, they are prepared to continue to grow and to respond to others, the Church and the global community.



**Lower School  
Parent-Student Handbook**

**2008-2009**

Live + Jesus  
Registration for Visitation Academy After Care Program  
2008-2009 School Year

Visitation Academy offers high quality after-school care to students in Montessori and Grades 1 through 6.

*Program Details:*

- After Care is available on all regular and most early dismissal school days.
- Students are escorted to After Care at 3:15 and may remain until as late as 6:30 p.m. After Care hours begin at 11:30 on Early Dismissal days.
- The program is based upon an understanding and respect for each student's individual needs and unique personality. The Program Director is an experienced professional with a background in education.
- The program offers a variety of group and individual activities for students of all ages in a nurturing, no-stress environment.
- Students receive a snack each day. On Early Dismissal days, the students receive lunch and a late afternoon snack.
- Activities take place in Room 214, in the Lower School playroom and on the Lower School playgrounds (weather permitting).
- There will be no After Care when school closes early due to inclement weather.

**Visitation Academy After Care Registration**  
2008-2009

Student(s) Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Student(s) Grade(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Full-Time \_\_\_\_\_ (Please bill me \$2,400 in August, 2008 \_\_\_\_\_ OR  
Bill me monthly \_\_\_\_\_)

Part-Time \_\_\_\_\_ (Please circle days M T W TH F)

Please return this form to Visitation Academy, ATTN: Nancy Eads, Business Office,  
3020 N. Ballas Rd., St. Louis, MO 63131.

Welcome to the one hundred seventy-sixth year of Visitation education in St. Louis. The spirit of the Visitation and of this Parent-Student Handbook is the spirit of our founder, Saint Francis de Sales: “**Nothing is so strong as gentleness; nothing is so gentle as real strength.**” We interpret this as a firm but gentle approach to the education and development of your children in an environment that values excellence in scholarship, spirituality, leadership and service. A special emphasis is placed on the Salesian philosophy and Visitation charism as our students are challenged to “Live Jesus.”

The Parent-Student Handbook includes our mission statement, philosophy, academic policies, school procedures and regulations. All policies, procedures and regulations are intended to help each student grow in individual freedom, personal responsibility and self-discipline. Parents must read this handbook, discuss it with their children and keep it available as a reference throughout the year. We believe that the unique partnership between parents and teachers at Visitation Academy creates a special environment of shared faith and values which develops the whole person. We look forward to the new year with enthusiasm and excitement. We thank you for entrusting your children to us.

**Statement of Philosophy of Visitation Academy**

Visitation Academy is a private Catholic school educating young boys, girls and young women ages 2 – 18. The Lower School includes a co-ed Montessori preschool program and an all girls grade school program through Grade 6. The Upper School offers a challenging college preparatory program for young women Grades 7 through 12.

Visitation Academy is a ministry of the Sisters of the Visitation whose way of life expresses the spirituality of the founders of their Order, St. Francis de Sales and St. Jane de Chantal. These saints encouraged all to “Live Jesus” with optimism, gentleness, joy, humility and inner freedom. The Mission of the Academy mirrors Mary’s visitation to Elizabeth: her acceptance of Jesus in her own life and her commitment to carry Him to others.

This receiving and sharing of the Lord is our model as a community whose interaction encourages the growth and development of each student. We seek to recognize each student as unique and to help each realize his/her potential. We challenge each person to develop self-discipline rooted in inner strength and gentleness as well as awareness of self and of others.

Through curricular and extracurricular activities we provide opportunities that promote spirituality and integrity, critical thinking and scholarship, leadership and service, responsibility and respect for life and the environment. As members of the Visitation Community we help the students and each other develop identities as integrated persons embodying Christian values.

VISITATION ACADEMY OF ST. LOUIS  
Parent Witness Statement

Student \_\_\_\_\_ Grade \_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian \_\_\_\_\_

At Visitation Academy we believe that parental involvement is essential in maintaining a quality school. We believe that parents should reflect on their privilege and responsibility as primary educators of their children. We expect all members of the Visitation community, administrators, teachers, staff, parents, and students to Live Jesus in their thoughts, words and actions.

You are asked to sign this parental commitment form stating that you support the following expectations of school parents. In reviewing these expectations, it is essential that you reflect on and rededicate yourselves to the mission and philosophy of Visitation Academy.

1. Living Salesian Values

As members of the Visitation Community,

- we believe in and accept our responsibility as the primary role models for our children
- we will teach our children by word and example to have a love, respect and concern for the needs of others
- we will participate fully in religious education and sacramental preparation as provided by the Academy

2. Cooperation with Administrators/Teachers

As members of the Visitation Community,

- we will be respectful of school staff in our words and actions
- we agree to allow our children to accept the responsibility for their actions
- we will implement and support school recommendations regarding academic and behavioral needs of our children
- we recognize it is our responsibility to have our children at school on time
- we will insure that our children follow the dress code as stated in this handbook
- we will read school communications as sent home in monthly mailings, weekly Wednesday folders, and posted on the intranet
- we recognize that unnecessary absences are an injustice to our child, her classmates and her teachers

3. Home Life

As members of the Visitation Community

- we will be respectful of other parents and children
- we will provide an environment that enhances Salesian Values
- we will monitor time and quality of homework/study
- we will provide an environment of consistency, structure and routine to empower our children to become successful students
- we have read Visitation Academy's Acceptable Use Agreement and will monitor technology usage at home

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Toddler students need to bring:

- Four diapers or pull-ups or two pairs of underpants if potty trained.
- Clothing change: shirt, pants and socks for boys; socks and underwear for girls. Red or gray leggings may be worn under uniform dresses.
- One large box of tissues.

Please label all personal items, including headbands and bows.

Visitation Academy Wellness Program Policy Statement

There is no doubt that children need access to healthy foods and opportunities to be physically active in order to grow, learn and to become all that God intended. It has also been proven that good health fosters student attendance and effective learning. Visitation Academy recognizes the relationship between student well-being and student achievement as well as the importance of a comprehensive wellness program. Therefore, Visitation Academy has developed a Wellness Program to achieve the following goals:

- Students will have access to a variety of nutritious and appealing foods that meet the nutritional requirements of the U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans and appropriate time to eat nutritional foods.
- Students will be provided opportunities, support and encouragement to be physically active on a regular basis while in the school setting.
- Students will be provided health, nutrition and physical education to foster lifelong healthy eating and physical activity.
- Students will flourish within a clean, safe and healthy environment.
- The Lower School maintains a peanut aware environment.

Release of Student Information

Visitation Academy is committed to working together with parents, teachers, students and outside service providers, agencies, or schools, when appropriate, in order to provide a learning environment in which students can be successful. When it is necessary to release or exchange information regarding a student with any agency or service provider outside of Visitation Academy or another school, the following requirements must be met:

- Parents must sign a release of information form as requested by Visitation Academy.
- Information (i.e. rating scales, observation forms, school records, etc.) will be submitted by Visitation Academy directly to the outside agency, service provider, or school. A record of this release or exchange shall be kept in the student's file.

## KINDERGARTEN

Additional Information for Kindergarten:

**All day program for students in Kindergarten begins August 21.**

### Admission Statement

Students who are 5 by August 1 are eligible for admission to the Kindergarten Program.

Kindergarten students need to bring:

- Extra pants, hat and gloves for cold weather recess. These items are kept at school.

**Please label all personal items.**

### Kindergarten Lunch

Lunch is provided by the Academy and is included in the tuition. Please advise the Lower School Office if a special menu is required.

### Baptismal Celebrations

Kindergarten students celebrate their Baptismal date with a special week of activities.

## FULL DAY

Additional Information for Full Day:

All new Full Day students begin August 19 and 20 from 8 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. After Care is available.

All returning and new Full Day students begin August 21 from 8 a.m. - 3:15 p.m.

### Admission Statement

Students who are 3 by August 1 are eligible for the Full Day Program. The program is designed for 3 and 4 year-olds.

Full-Day students need to bring:

- A small blanket and a small crib size pillow. Please label all personal items. Items must fit in a 15 quart bin.

### Montessori Full Day Lunch

- Lunch is provided by the Academy and is included in the tuition. Please advise the Lower School Office if a special menu is required.

## TODDLER

Additional Information for Toddlers:

### Admission Statement

Children who are 2 by August 1 are eligible for the Toddler Program.

## WHERE TO CALL - WHOM TO SEE

- To report your daughter's absence anytime before 7:45 a.m.  
Mrs. Gayle Lund (Administrative Assistant)  
314-625-9118
- For matters concerning student behavior or academics first contact individual teacher through the Main Switchboard 314-625-9100 or call the Direct Dial Number listed in the Directory
- To discuss a student's health or medical problem  
Mrs. Lois Poepsel (School Nurse)  
314-625-9129
- For matters dealing with financial aid  
Mrs. Susan Struna (Staff Accountant)  
314-625-9115
- For matters dealing with counseling, testing or academic progress  
Mrs. Trish Walther (Academic Counselor)  
314-625-9196
- To inquire about billings and payments of accounts  
Mrs. Nancy Eads (Staff Accountant)  
314-625-9113
- To report a change of name, address, or phone number  
Mrs. Gayle Lund (Administrative Assistant)  
314-625-9118
- To discuss admissions  
Mrs. Ashley Giljum (Admissions Director)  
314-625-9102
- Melanie Harmon (Lower School Admission Coordinator)  
314-625-9155
- To inquire about After Care  
Ms. Carol Jacobs (After Care Coordinator)  
314-625-9280

Ms. Mimi Francisco, Lower School Principal, has an open-door policy and welcomes dialogue and suggestions. Parents are encouraged to call as needed, 314-625-9117.

Visitation's family-like environment encourages open and honest communication between school and parents. The school is a constant advocate for each student, and discussions about successes as well as concerns are encouraged. Teamwork between parents and teachers/administrators promotes positive growth for all students.

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### Holiday Parties

Each year parties are scheduled to celebrate Halloween, Christmas and Valentine's Day.

Class representatives work together with the department coordinator to plan and carry out parties, including refreshments and activities. Every parent is invited to attend and contribute to one party.

- Reminder: Please limit contributions to one sweet item and the remainder from the healthy snack list.
- Lower School maintains a peanut aware environment.
- Kindergarten students celebrate holiday parties in the Montessori classroom.

Healthy Snack List (suggested items): ice fruit cups, pudding, yogurt, pretzels, dried fruits, fruit smoothies, granola bars, bread sticks, cheese, graham crackers, low fat pudding, baked chips, trail/cereal mix, fruit cookies, low fat/calorie cookies, low calorie soft drinks, sport ice teas, fruit based drinks that contain at least 50% real fruit juice, water and decaffeinated drinks. For more ideas please refer to the Visitation Wellness Website on the intranet.

### Birthday Celebrations

Parents are invited to attend birthday celebrations. Montessori parents are sent a note about birthday celebrations prior to each student's birthday and are asked to fill out a birthday poster. Birthdays are celebrated in the Half Day Montessori class for all Full Day and Kindergarten Montessori students.

Parents are asked to send a commercial prepared food "treat" for their student's birthday. (Refer to items listed in the healthy snack list). Treats should be the same, rather than several different kinds. Candy, cupcakes or large cake cookies that need to be cut are not acceptable. Do not send party favors or balloons.

Some students also have parties at home. We will be happy to send home invitations if all the classmates are invited.

Summer birthdays are celebrated on a specified day. Parents are notified one week prior to the celebration day. June birthdays will be celebrated in December, July birthdays in January and August birthdays in February.

### Emergency Information Card

Parents of all students are required to fill out an Emergency Information Card and return it to the Lower School Office by the first day of school. This information is very important for our records. Please notify the school if this information changes, 314-625-9118.

A written physician's order for any prescription medication is required and must include the student's name, reason for medication, dosage and time interval to be given. Over-the-counter medications are only given when the permission slip is signed by a parent, with appropriate medications circled and dosage stated. The following medication will be kept on hand for students: Liquid/Tablet Tylenol; Liquid/Tablet Ibuprofen; and Benadryl. Teachers are not allowed to dispense medicine of any kind.

**Illness**

Students are taken to the Nurse's Office if there is fever, vomiting, diarrhea, rash of undetermined origin, signs of pink eye, head lice or other circumstances as seen fit. In such cases, parents are called. In the case of temporary distress, such as a headache or stomach-ache, the student has the opportunity to rest and parents generally are not called.

The student may return to school under the following circumstances:

- Temperature is normal for 24 hours.**
- No rash exists or a note from the doctor stating student is not contagious.
- Regular diet for 24 hours following vomiting/diarrhea.
- Absence of pink eye symptoms or antibiotic treatment has been started.
- Absence of lice eggs or nits with treatment.

**Any student not meeting these standards will be sent home.**

**Security**

Lower School circle entry doors are locked at all times. Entry into the building can be made by ringing the doorbell at the Lower School entrance or through the front entrance at Door 4.

**Observation**

Parents are invited and encouraged to observe their child in the view room from October through April. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday are scheduled observation days. Observation rooms are available by appointment only. Contact the Lower School Office at 314-625-9118 to schedule an observation.

**Parent/Teacher Conferences**

- Conferences are scheduled twice a year, once in the fall and once in the spring.
- Conferences are scheduled in February for upcoming Kindergarten students.
- Conferences may be scheduled any time upon request.

**Behavior Changes**

Please notify the teacher if something happens in the home that is out of the ordinary or might affect a student's behavior.

**Questions and Concerns**

To insure accurate information about questions or concerns in your student's class, please contact the teacher first.

**GRADES (1 - 6)  
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## GRADES 1-6 SCHOOL EXPECTATIONS

### DRESS CODE

#### Uniform

Full uniform consists of:

- a navy blue jumper
- navy blue shorts
- short sleeve Viz polo shirt or white long sleeve Viz turtleneck
- plain white socks, navy blue or white knee socks or navy blue or white tights
- navy leggings, navy yoga pants (may be slightly belled at bottom) and navy straight leg pants (need to come to ankles)
- **required** red monogrammed sweaters (Grades 1 and 2); **required** monogrammed sweatshirts (Grades 3 - 6)
- school uniform shoes

Uniform shoes may be purchased at Laurie's Shoe Center.

Each student's uniform should be clean, in good condition, and should be clearly marked with the student's name.

- Sweat pants are not considered appropriate to wear under the uniform during the school day.
- Pajama bottoms are NOT to be worn at any time.

#### Jewelry/Make-up

Jewelry is limited to a watch (no bracelets), a religious medal or cross on a chain, a ring and small earrings. Only small stud or small hoops are acceptable. Make-up of any kind or lip gloss is not permitted.

#### Clothing on Cold Days

On cold days all students go outside to play for at least a short time. Students must wear clothing appropriate for cold weather. Cold weather clothing includes coat, long pants, neck scarf, warm hat and gloves. When the temperature falls below 20 degrees, students do not go outdoors.

#### Out of Uniform

Students may come to school out of uniform on designated special occasions. Attire must be modest and appropriate for the occasion. Appropriate attire consists of skirts, slacks, capris, Bermuda length shorts, blouses, sweatshirts, sweaters and t-shirts. Short shorts or short skirts, tank tops and halter/spaghetti strap tops are inappropriate for school. Jeans may be worn when specifically stated by the Lower School Principal. **Students are still required to have tennis shoes on out of uniform days.** Students will not be permitted to attend class if not dressed according to the dress code guidelines. Parents will be notified and asked to bring up appropriate clothing.

#### Early Dismissal Schedule

A few dates are designated on the school calendar as early dismissal days. These days call for a 11:30 dismissal. The Montessori schedule is as follows:

- A.M. Half Day Class 8:00 - 9:30 (1/2 day)
- P.M. Half Day Class 10:00 – 11:30 (1/2 day)
- Kindergarten and Full Day 8:00 – 11:30 (No Lunch Served)
- Toddlers 8:00 - 9:30
- After Care is available upon request. Lunch is served.

#### Snow Schedule

On days when weather warrants the use of a snow schedule because of dangerous conditions, the entire school begins at 9:20 a.m.

- A.M. Half Day Session 9:20 - 11:20
- P.M. Half Day Session 1:15 - 3:15
- Kindergarten and Full Day 9:20 - 3:15
- Toddlers 9:20 - 11:20

#### School Cancellation

Should the Administration decide to cancel classes because of inclement weather or any other emergency, parents will be notified by an automated voice messaging system as well as by announcements over the radio stations KMOX 1120 and KTRS 550 AM, and television stations KTVI Channel 2, KMOV Channel 4 and KSDK Channel 5. School cancellation information is also posted on the main page of our website. If there is a special need to check with the school, parents may call 314-625-9267 for recorded information. If a closing for Visitation is not announced by 7:30 a.m., school will be in session as usual.

The judgment of any parent unable to bring a student to school because of weather conditions, even when school is open, is respected.

On days when weather warrants closing school during school hours, you will be notified by an automated voice messaging system. Radio and television stations will be contacted.

If school is closed, all after school extracurricular activities will be cancelled as well as After Care.

#### Absences

Parents are asked to call the Lower School Office by 8 a.m. to report a student absence, 314-625-9118.

#### Health Certificate

All new students and students entering Kindergarten are asked to present a physical examination record to the Nurse's Office by August 1. Students without signed health forms may not attend classes.

#### Medicine

Any medication a student takes, including inhalants, must be kept in the Nurse's Office.

Students are expected to arrive on time. When a student is tardy, he/she misses an important part of the class. Orientation and instructions are given at that time. Furthermore, tardiness does not teach the student the courtesy of being on time.

### Dismissal

Classes are dismissed from the Lower School entrance in the circle drive. Carpool procedures are designed for the safety of the students. Carpool drivers should drive all the way around the circle. Students must stay on the sidewalk until an adult puts them in the passenger side of the car. Carpool drivers are asked to pull around to the school parking lot to buckle up the students. This procedure eliminates traffic jams. To avoid crowding or confusion in the foyer, **drivers are asked to remain in the car.**

Morning dismissal is 11 a.m. and afternoon dismissal is 3:15 p.m. Families who do not pick up by 11:15 are charged \$1.00 per minute until the student is picked up. Students who are not picked up by 3:30 join the After Care Program as a “drop-in” and are charged accordingly.

### Carpools

Each parent is asked to provide the names of persons authorized to pick up their student, as well as the names of all students in the carpool. Every family receives a yellow carpool tag to use at dismissal.

Please send a note to school informing the teacher of the following:

- A student will be picked up by someone other than the regular carpool.
- A student will go home with another student.
- A student will be picked up early.
- A student will be taken out of school for a period of time longer than 2 days.

Students are only sent home with an authorized person. Students are not permitted to go home with another student unless the school is informed.

### Daily Schedule

Arrival of A.M. Half Day Class:	7:55-8:00
Dismissal:	11:00
Arrival of P.M. Half Day Class:	12:10-12:15
Dismissal:	3:15
Arrival of Kindergarten and Full Day:	7:55-8:00
Dismissal:	3:15
Arrival of Toddler Class:	7:55-8:00
Dismissal:	11:00

### Dress Code Consequences

The faculty and staff will be diligent in enforcing the dress code. Dress code infractions will be recorded on the responsibility card/purple slip.

### Book Bags

#### **Grades 1-3**

Each student should bring a school bag and a two-pocket folder for homework and notes. Folders are kept in the school bag. The school bag should be small, such as a tote bag with handles or small backpack. No items (key chains or hanging toys may be attached). Gym bags, rolling book bags and other large bags are not permitted due to limited storage space.

#### **Grades 4-6**

Tote bags, backpacks and roller bags may be used to carry supplies to and from school. **Backpacks or roller bags must fit in the lockers. Lockers are 9 inches wide x 14 inches deep.** Backpacks or roller bags may not be used in the classroom.

### Phone Calls

Students are not permitted to call home with regards to homework, supplies or after school activities. This policy encourages responsibility.

**Messages will not be delivered to students during school hours except in cases of emergency.** In case of emergency, parents are asked to contact the Lower School Office at 314-625-9118 who will in turn contact the student. Please note, arrangements for homework, dismissal and transportation are not considered emergencies and should be made in advance in writing to the homeroom teacher.

### Cell Phones

The use of cell phones by students during the school day is prohibited. Any cell phone found or heard will be confiscated.

### Toys/Electronic Devices

Toys and electronics devices are not permitted at school and will be confiscated.

### Hallway Expectations for Grades 1-6

1. Walk quietly.
2. Stay to the right.
3. Be courteous of others.
4. Hold doors for others.
5. Greet guests.
6. Wait for a teacher before entering a classroom.

### Lunchroom Expectations for Grades 1-6

1. Use your manners at all times.
2. Only eight people to a table and do not save seats.
3. Lunchroom conversation should be with those at your own table using quiet voices.

4. Sit appropriately in the chair.
5. When you are finished, empty your tray and return to your seat.
6. Remain seated until your table is dismissed.
7. Your area should be clean and your chair pushed in when you are dismissed.
8. No food or drink may be taken from the cafeteria

### Recess/Supervision

The school provides supervision for students on the playground only during scheduled recreation periods. Students are required to follow all playground rules for use of equipment, play areas, etc. The use of the school playground at any other time is prohibited.

All students are expected to go outdoors for recess. Students play outdoors unless it is below 20 degrees, rainy or windy. Students may be excused from recess with a note from the physician ONLY. Students sit in the vestibule near the playground door.

### Playground Expectations for Grades 1-6

1. No balls in the mulch area.
2. No running in the mulch area or on the playground equipment.
3. No throwing ground cover.
4. Always sit and slide down the slide feet first. Do not jump off the side of the slide, climb up the slide or stand on the slide.
5. Wait on the platform until it is your turn to use the slide. Do not lean over the edge.
6. Only one person is allowed on the monkey bars at a time. Do not sit on top of the monkey bars or walk underneath when someone is going across them.
7. Never hang upside down on any equipment.
8. Do not stand on the parallel bars.
9. Do not swing on the pull-up bars. Do not sit on the pull up bars.
10. Stay off the fence.
11. Ask permission from a supervisor to leave the playground area.

### Chapel Manners

1. Enter respectfully and take Holy Water carefully.
2. Bow or genuflect before entering the pew.
3. Always keep the kneelers down.
4. Participate in Mass by singing and saying responses clearly.
5. Greet the persons near you quietly for the Sign of Peace.
6. When you receive Communion, make a throne with your hands. Keep hands joined when you return to your pew. Kneel down and talk to Jesus until Father sits down.
7. Simply exit the chapel. Do not take Holy Water when leaving.
8. Take Mass programs home.

### Bringing Things Home From School

On occasion students may accidentally bring home an item that belongs to the school. Usually these items are small but vital parts of classroom exercises and are difficult, if not impossible, to replace. Examples are small puzzle pieces, animal models, glass beads and small cylinders. If this should occur, the item should be returned to school.

### Recess/Supervision

The school provides supervision for students on the playground only during scheduled recreation periods. Students are required to follow all playground rules for use of equipment, play areas, etc. The use of the school playground at any other time is prohibited.

All students are expected to go outdoors for recess. Students usually play outdoors unless the temperature is below 20 degrees, rainy or windy. Students may be excused from recess with a note from a physician only.

## **SCHOOL PROCEDURES All Montessori Students**

### Beginning of School

Montessori: August 19 and August 20;  
New Montessori students only (including new Kindergarten students)  
A.M. Half Day class meets 8 - 9:30 a.m.  
P.M. Half Day class meets 10:00 – 11:30

August 21:  
All Montessori Half Day, Full Day and Kindergarten students begin regular schedule.

Toddlers: Week of August 19;  
Designated MWF Toddler Class  
Group A meets 8 - 9:15 a.m.  
Group B meets 9:45 - 11 a.m.  
Designated T/Th Toddler Class  
Group A meets 8 - 9:15 a.m.  
Group B meets 9:45 - 11 a.m.

August 25: All Toddlers begin regular schedule.

### Carpool Drop-off

Parking in the circle drive is strictly prohibited. Doing so not only causes traffic issues, but more importantly, safety concerns. The circle drive is for “Drive Thru” traffic only.

### Arrival

Students enter through the Lower School entrance in the circle drive. Parents/drivers are responsible for getting students to classrooms. There is no supervision until 7:55 a.m. or 12:10 p.m. If this is a problem because of Lower School or Upper School siblings, please contact the Lower School Principal.

## SCHOOL EXPECTATIONS

### All Montessori Students

#### Uniforms

All students should be in full uniform each school day. Full uniform for girls consists of:

- a sailor dress with bloomers
- white or red turtleneck
- white or red socks
- knee socks
- tights
- red uniform shoes
- red monogrammed sweater
- In cold weather the girls may wear red or gray uniform leggings under their uniform.

Uniform shoes may be purchased at Laurie's Shoe Center.

Full uniform for boys consists of:

- long or short navy pants
- white or red polo knit shirt or turtleneck
- red monogrammed sweater
- white or navy socks
- uniform shoes

Uniform shoes may be purchased at Laurie's Shoe Center.

Students are expected to be in full uniform on the first day of school.

#### Identifying Clothing

All clothing articles, including coats, should be clearly and permanently marked with the student's name.

#### Extra Clothing

All girls should bring an extra pair of panties and socks; boys should bring underpants, shirt, trousers and socks. The extra items should be put in a plastic Ziploc bag and marked with the student's name. All students, except toddlers, are expected to be potty trained.

#### Bringing Things to School

The first week of school each student should bring a box of tissues.

Jewelry is not acceptable for school; the only exception is small pierced earrings. Umbrellas are also unnecessary. Toys and dolls are not permitted at school.

#### Tote bags

Tote bags will be supplied by the school for students. No items (key chains or hanging toys may be attached). Students should not bring backpacks of any kind.

#### Student Rights and Responsibilities

**Right:** I have the right to be treated with honesty, kindness and compassion.

**Responsibility:** I have the responsibility to treat others with honesty, kindness and compassion; this means that I will treat others with respect.

**Right:** I have the right to be safe.

**Responsibility:** I have the responsibility to make the school safe by not hurting anyone with words or actions.

**Right:** I have the right to expect my property to be safe.

**Responsibility:** I have the responsibility not to take, hide or destroy the property of others.

**Right:** I have the right to hear and be heard.

**Responsibility:** I have the responsibility to help maintain a peaceful school so that everyone can learn.

#### Student Code of Conduct

Students of Visitation Academy are expected to Live Jesus in their thoughts, words and actions.

The students will:

1. Be kind, courteous and honest.
2. Respect the good name of others.
3. Respect the property of others including the building, grounds and classroom materials.
4. Come to school on time and in proper uniform.
5. Be prepared and prompt for all classes.
6. Listen attentively in class.
7. Respect and follow all school rules including classroom, hallway, lunchroom, playground, and chapel.

#### Discipline Procedures

Violations of the Students' Responsibilities, School Expectations or Code of Conduct will be met with consequences that escalate with the seriousness and repetition of the infractions. These consequences may include, but are not limited to, offenses listed in this handbook. Any behavior that disrupts the learning environment or does not support the values of Visitation may result in disciplinary action. Attentive to our mission as a Christian community, we will respond to individuals and each situation in accordance with the philosophy and spirit of the school.

Respectful and orderly behavior is expected in all circumstances from all students. Each student has a personal responsibility to contribute to a Christian learning atmosphere through her behavior choices. Therefore, in the case of a student's misconduct, one or more of the following actions may be taken depending upon the seriousness of the misconduct:

- mark on responsibility card/purple slip
- teacher conference with student

- detentions (Thursdays at 7:00 a.m.)
- principal conference with student
- teacher/principal conference with student and parents
- suspension
- probation
- expulsion
- other action as deemed appropriate

### Purple Slip/Responsibility Card

Purple slips will be used to inform parents of their child's progress in meeting school expectations. Parents are asked to sign the notification form, discuss the infraction with their child and return it to the homeroom teacher the next day.

Responsibility Cards are given monthly to each student to monitor her progress in meeting school expectations.

## GRADES 1-6 SCHOOL PROCEDURES

### Carpool Drop-off

Parking in the Circle Drive is strictly prohibited. Doing so not only causes traffic issues, but more importantly, safety concerns. The circle drive is for "Drive Thru" traffic only.

### Arrival

Supervision in the Lower School Library begins at 7:00 a.m. for students who arrive early. Supervision for students in grades 4-6 is on Menard Deck after 7:30 a.m. **All students should be in the building by 7:50 a.m.** At that time students are dismissed to classrooms.

Students should be in the classroom by 7:50 a.m. and be prepared for homeroom by 8 a.m. Attendance is taken each day at 8 a.m. Students are expected to arrive on time.

If students arrive after 8:00 a.m. they need to report to the office to receive a tardy slip. Orientation and instructions for the day are given at that time and late arrivals disrupt beginning exercises. Furthermore, the tardy student does not learn the courtesy of being on time. Tardy days are recorded on each student's permanent record and on the student's responsibility card.

Excessive tardies may result in:

- detention (Grade 4-6)
- letter from principal
- conference with principal
- sign in requirements of the parents

When a student is late or must leave school for any reason, the student must report to the Lower School Office and sign out or in before leaving or being admitted to class. These occurrences are also recorded on the student's permanent record.

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## GRADES 1-6 Educational Support Program

At Visitation Academy we are committed to the educational success of each student within the context of a rigorous college-preparatory curriculum. Students can expect to receive appropriate and realistic adjustments within the parameters of the school's financial and human resources. In order to receive adjustments, the following criteria must be included in the student's diagnostic evaluation:

- The examiner's credentials are clearly stated and appropriate for the learning difference that is being diagnosed. A release of information must be signed in order for Visitation Academy to communicate with the agency that has completed the evaluation.
- The evaluations should be no more than three years old for students in grades nine through twelve and no more than five years old for students in grades kindergarten through eight. A current ISP (Service Plan) will serve as documentation if the student is evaluated through the public school.
- The evaluation must include relevant educational, developmental and medical history.
- The testing should be comprehensive. It should include measures of cognitive ability, current achievement, and information processing and evidence that alternative explanations were ruled out.
- There should be a specific diagnosis of a learning difference (i.e. learning disability, ADHD, language disorder).
- When an examiner diagnoses a disability, the functional limitations resulting from the disability for this student should be clearly described. It should also describe specific recommended accommodations.
- A copy of the evaluation on letterhead from the examiner must be kept on file in the Learning Consultant's office.

Once the information from the evaluation has been reviewed, a team will develop an appropriate Learning Profile for the student to be implemented at Visitation Academy.

## Dismissal

Classes end for Grades 1 - 6 at 3 p.m. At that time, students prepare to go home. Dismissal begins at Door 7 at the back of the school at 3:15 p.m. All students not picked up by 3:30 are taken to the Lower School Office. At 3:45 students are taken to the After Care Program and will be charged the "drop-in" rate of \$22.00 per hour.

Any student in Grades 1 - 6 who carools with an Upper School student must submit a note to that effect to the Lower School Principal. Students are released at 3:15 to designated Upper School students waiting on Menard Deck. Students are expected to leave school grounds at that time. Parents picking up these girls are dismissed from the circle drive. Students not picked up on Menard Deck by 3:30 p.m. are taken to the Lower School Office and sent to Aftercare after 3:45.

Each parent is asked to provide the names of persons authorized to pick up their students as well as the names of all students in the carpool.

**Every family receives a yellow carpool tag to use at dismissal.**

The After Care Program is available if after school care is needed. Drop-ins will be accepted.

## Required Written Communication

We ask for your patience and cooperation in following these procedures, which are intended for the safety of your children. All notes need to be written on paper and delivered to the homeroom teacher. While email is convenient to send, we cannot guarantee that messages sent are received in a timely fashion.

Please send a written note with your child to school informing the teacher if:

- a student will be picked up early. This will avoid classroom disruption.
- a student will be taken out of school for a planned absence.
- a student will not be able to participate in physical education. If the student will not be able to participate for more than one day, a physician's note is required.
- a student will be picked up by someone other than the regular carpool.
- a student will go home with another student.
- a student will need to be a "drop in" with Aftercare.

## Early Dismissal Schedule

A few dates on the school calendar are designated as early dismissal days. These days call for an 11:30 dismissal. Lunch is not served on early dismissal days.

After Care is available upon request. Lunch is served. After Care is not available on the last day before Christmas holidays begin or the last day of school.

## School Cancellation

Should the Administration decide to cancel classes because of inclement weather or any other emergency, parents will be notified by an automated voice messaging system as

well as by announcements over the radio stations KMOX 1120 and KTRS 550 AM, and television stations KTVI Channel 2, KMOV Channel 4 and KSDK Channel 5. School cancellation information is also posted on the main page of our website. If there is a special need to check with the school, parents may call 314-625-9267 for recorded information. If a closing for Visitation is not announced by 7:30 a.m., school will be in session as usual.

The judgment of any parent unable to bring a student to school because of weather conditions, even when school is open, is respected.

On days when weather warrants closing school during school hours, you will be notified by an automated voice messaging system. Radio and television stations will be contacted.

If school is closed, all after school extracurricular activities will be cancelled as well as After Care.

### Snow Schedule

On days when weather warrants the use of a snow schedule, the entire school begins at 9:20 a.m.

### Absences/Vacations

#### **Excused:**

An excused absence includes illness, family emergency or pressing need. Parents are asked to call the Lower School Office (314-625-9118) or email Gayle Lund [glund@visitationacademy.org](mailto:glund@visitationacademy.org) before 7:45 a.m. to report a student absence. It is the responsibility of the student to make up missed homework assignments as well as classroom work. For known excused absences, students may ask for assignments ahead of time. The student has one day for each day absent to make up missed work. When a student becomes ill during the school day, the parents must sign their child out from the Lower School Office.

#### **Unexcused:**

Vacations taken while school is in session are unexcused absences and affect student progress on all levels. If you choose to absent your child from school, please contact the homeroom teacher and the principal in writing at least one week prior to the absence. There is no guarantee you will be given the homework assignments ahead of time. The student has one day for each day absent to make up missed work. Any work turned in after the allotted time will have points deducted as per homework policy.

#### **Unnecessary Absence:**

Some students are unnecessarily absent on test days or when major assignments are due. Unnecessary absences are an injustice to the student, her classmates and her teachers. (See also Homework section.)

### Parent Questions and Concerns

Just as we value the individual differences in children, we also value the individual differences in our teachers. Please respect the individuality in teaching style, evaluation, discipline and homework assignments. We believe that exposing children to a variety of personalities and teaching styles is beneficial and prepares students for the upper school, college and later life. With regard to any questions or concerns, please contact your child's teacher first.

### Observation

Parents are invited to observe classes from October through April. An appointment must be made with the Lower School Administrative Assistant, 314-625-9118.

### Acceptable Use Policy

Students are given a technology handbook outlining our Acceptable Use Policy. Parents are expected to review the student handbook with their children and are expected to sign the Acceptable Use Agreement Form and return to the Lower School Office. The use of technology is considered a privilege. All expectations will be strictly enforced.

### **Acceptable Use Agreement 2008 – 2009**

I understand, accept and agree to abide by the following terms and conditions:

- I have received and familiarized myself with the Acceptable Use Agreement of Visitation Academy.
- I will abide by the terms and conditions of the Acceptable Use Agreement in my use of school technology and computer equipment.
- I understand and accept that the purpose of the Visitation Academy Network is educational, and other uses are inappropriate.
- I understand and accept that the use of the Visitation Academy Network is a privilege and not a right.
- I understand that violation of the Acceptable Use Agreement may result in disciplinary action ranging from a verbal or written warning to criminal prosecution.

We release Visitation Academy and all other organizations related to the Visitation Academy Network from any and all liability or damages that may result from use of the Visitation Network. In addition, we will accept full responsibility and liability for the results of the student's actions with regard to her use of the Network. We release and hold harmless Visitation Academy of St. Louis and all officials, employees or agents and all related organizations from any liability resulting from the student's use of the Visitation Network and we agree to indemnify same for any damages arising out of the student's use contrary to this agreement and the Acceptable Use Agreement.

We understand and agree to the provisions set forth above. I, the parent/guardian of the above, accept all financial and legal liabilities which may result from my child's misuse of the Visitation Academy Network.

## Grading Scale for Grades 4-6

### Code to Grading

A+ =	100-99	Consistently excellent work demonstrating insight, initiative, creativity and scholarship.
A =	98-95	
A- =	94-93	
B+ =	92-91	Consistently superior work demonstrating above average comprehension and performance.
B =	90-87	
B - =	86-85	
C+ =	84-83	Consistently acceptable work demonstrating a satisfactory mastery of basic concepts and conscientious performance.
C =	82-80	
C- =	79-78	
D+ =	77-76	Fluctuating performance, inadequate mastery
D =	75-72	performance below average. Unacceptable.
D- =	71-70	
F =	Below 69	Failing.

For interdisciplinary subjects:

O	= Outstanding
S+	= Above Satisfactory
S	= Satisfactory
S-	= Below Satisfactory
NI	= Needs Improvement

### Progress Reports /Report Cards

**Grade 1-3:** Progress reports are distributed prior to parent/teacher conferences in the fall. Final progress reports are mailed.

**Grades 4-6:** Progress reports for academic subjects are distributed mid-quarter. Report cards are distributed at the end of each quarter. Final report cards are mailed.

### Standardized Testing

- ERB Test (Educational Records Bureau) is administered to Grades 3 - 6 in the fall.
- Stanford Achievement Test (Math and Reading) is administered to Grades 1 and 2 in the spring.
- Otis-Lennon School Ability Test is administered to Grades 2, 4 and 6.

### Parent-Teacher Conferences

- Conferences for Grades 1- 6 will be in the fall and winter.
- Parents or teachers may schedule conferences at any time.

### Appointments

Only for a real necessity do we excuse a student from school for appointments with medical professionals. When required, the student should present a note to the home-room teacher at least one day in advance. Students must sign out in the Lower School Office and wait there to be picked up. Appointments should be scheduled before or after the school day or on holidays or other days school is not in session. Appointments may be scheduled during lunchtime.

### Health Certificate

All new students and students entering **Grade 4** are asked to present a physical examination record to the Nurse's Office by **August 1**. Students without signed health forms may not attend classes.

### Medicine

Any medication a student takes, including inhalants, must be kept in the Nurse's Office. A written physician's order for any prescription medication is required and must include the student's name, reason for medication, dosage and time interval to be given. Over-the-counter medications are only given when the permission slip is signed by a parent, with appropriate medications circled, and dosage stated. The following medications are kept on hand: Liquid/tablet Tylenol and Ibuprofen; Tums; Benadryl; Halls cough drops and Midol.

### Illness

Students are taken to the Nurse's Office if there is fever, vomiting, diarrhea, rash of undetermined origin, signs of pink eye, head lice or other circumstances as seen fit. In such cases, a parent is called. In the case of temporary distress, such as a headache or stomach-ache, the student is given the opportunity to rest and a parent generally is not called. A school policy note accompanies any student sent home.

The student may return to school under the following circumstances:

- Temperature is normal for 24 hours.**
- No rash exists or a note from the doctor stating the student is not contagious.
- Regular diet for 24 hours following vomiting/diarrhea.
- Absence of pink eye symptoms or antibiotic treatment has been started.
- Absence of lice eggs or nits with treatment.

**Any student not meeting these standards will be sent home.**

### Security

Lower School circle entry doors are locked at all times. Entry into the building can be made by ringing the doorbell at the Lower School entrance or through the main front entrance at Door 4. Visitors need to stop at Lower School office to sign in and get a visitor badge.

## Money

In the event that it is necessary for a student to bring cash or a check to school, it should be placed in an envelope marked with the student's name and the purpose for the enclosure. It is not the responsibility of the school to collect or keep money for anything other than school activities.

## Lunch

Lunch is provided by the Academy. Please advise the Lower School Office if a special menu is required.

## Healthy Snacks

### **Grades 1-3**

A healthy morning snack will be provided by the Academy for students in Grades 1 – 3.

### **Grades 4-6**

Grade 4, 5, and 6 students have a snack break daily. Students should bring a **nutritious** snack. Food must be kept in reasonably sized airtight containers.

**Healthy Snack List (suggested items):** pretzels, dried fruits, granola bars, graham crackers, baked chips, trail/cereal mix, fresh fruit, cheese sticks, 100 calorie packs and water. Visitation Academy is a peanut aware environment. Therefore, you should not bring any snacks containing peanuts.

## Holiday Parties

Each year parties are held for Halloween and Valentine's Day. Class Representatives work together with the department coordinator to plan and carry out parties, including refreshments and activities. Please limit snacks to one sweet treat and the remainder from the healthy snack list.

Healthy Snacks include: ice fruit cup with spoon, pudding with spoon, yogurt with spoon, pretzels, dried fruits, granola bars, bread sticks, cheese, graham crackers, low fat pudding, baked chips, trail/cereal mix, fruit cookies, low fat/calorie cookies, fruit based drinks that contain at least 50% real fruit juice, water and decaffeinated drinks. For more ideas please refer to the Visitation Wellness Website on the intranet.

## Birthday Celebrations

### **Grades 1-6**

All birthday treats sent to school should be ready to serve. All treats should be the same, rather than several different kinds. Birthday treats should be arranged with the teacher at least one week in advance. Beverages and candy are not acceptable. Do not send party favors or balloons. Only one birthday per day will be celebrated.

To avoid hurt feelings, all invitations to parties should be mailed. Likewise, unless the entire class is invited, parties should not leave directly from school.

We recommend birthday parties not be held on school days. It is not acceptable to send birthday gifts to school at any time. Desks and lockers may not be decorated.

Reminder: Lower School maintains a peanut aware environment.

## Library Fines

Library materials may be checked out for two weeks. While students are required to return materials on time, late fees are not assessed. If a book is lost, the student is expected to pay the average price of a new book \$20. If the book is later found and returned to the librarian, the money will be reimbursed.

## Emergency Information Card

Parents of all students are required to fill out an Emergency Information Card and return it to the Lower School Office by the first day of school. This information is very important for our records. Please notify the school if this information changes, 314-625-9118.

## **GRADES 1-6 ACADEMIC POLICIES**

## Homework

### **Grades 1-2**

Students in Grades 1-2 may expect homework assignments most evenings to develop a habit of study and reinforce concepts learned during the day. Homework is expected to be completed when assigned. Students will receive a mark on the responsibility card/ purple slip for late assignments.

Reading is a very important part of learning. Becoming a fluent reader requires daily practice. Students in Grades 1 and 2 are expected to read at least 15 minutes each night.

In case of absence, homework assignments may be made up following the student's return to school. In the case of extended absence, contact the teacher.

### **Grades 3-6**

Students in Grades 3-6 may expect homework assignments most evenings to develop a habit of study and reinforce concepts learned during the day. Homework is expected to be completed when assigned. Ten points are deducted per day for late assignments in addition to receiving a mark on the responsibility card/purple slip. Students are responsible for being prepared for class each day, which includes having supplies and educational materials needed for class.

In case of absence, homework assignments and books are available for parents or siblings to pick up any time between 3:15 and 7 p.m. Homework will not be available for pickup before 3:15. Assignments and books are placed on the student's desk or in the student's locker. (Please refer to Absences/Vacations section.)