



# CMA Handbook

*Student/Parent Handbook 2023-2024*

## VISION

Our vision is to produce passionate, proficient, and productive members of society who love the Lord and fulfill His purposes on earth with exceeding knowledge and understanding in their area of talent, giftedness, and calling.

## MISSION

Christian Ministries Academy is a student ministry associated with Christian Ministries Church that partners with families in providing a Christ-centered education challenging the child to discover God's truth, love learning, and how to relate knowledge with action. Our goal is to inspire children to embrace and to flourish in their God-given calling as His representatives for truth and hope, bringing reconciliation in their community and the world. The CMC team helps to cultivate the growth of the whole child through academic knowledge, artistic work, and practical skills that help the students grow in independence, godly discipline, and active and outward expression of their faith.

## CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES CHURCH STATEMENT OF FAITH

We believe that salvation is merely the beginning of an exciting and meaningful life with our Lord. Our desire is to come alongside those seeking to grow their relationship with our Creator by providing life growing opportunities. We desire to help grow confident and mature Christians biblically, spiritually, and practically. Click here for more details:

[WHAT WE BELIEVE](#)

## EDUCATIONAL VALUES

### Foundational Truth

At CMA, we believe that reverence and respect for the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. (Prov. 9:10) Our primary concern is the kind of person each student is becoming, over the mastery of particular skills. The knowledge of God, as found in the Bible, is the primary knowledge and the most important focus of our students and team. Without a strong relationship with the Lord, all the knowledge in the world will not lead to fulfillment.

### Children are Persons (a Charlotte Mason philosophy)

Our curriculum is influenced by the belief that children are persons created in the image of God, not products. Every child is born with a thirst, ability, and desire to learn. Children are not a blank slate for the teacher to write upon, nor an empty sack for the teacher to fill; rather, they are a person who needs to be loved, informed, and instructed.

### Learning for the sake of learning

We believe that the objective of the students should be to learn, not to win a prize or get an A. Effective learning occurs when the student wonders and seeks to know more, not merely asking if this topic will be on the test. Students are stimulated to observe, explore and understand. Our objective is to cultivate the students' inherent curiosity about the world around them and to urge them to do their best in every area. ([Galatians 6:4](#))

### Community Engagement

We utilize small class sizes with multi-age lesson times to build a close-knit group of students, families, and church communities who are learning and growing together. "How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity!" Psalm 133:1

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### CMA Hours

Daily drop-off is between 8:45am - 9:00am

Daily pick-up is between 3:00pm - 3:15pm

**CMA operates Monday thru Thursday between 9:00am - 3:00pm**, not including days off. You can find the CMA schedule here: [CMA 2023-2024 ACADEMIC SCHEDULE](#)

### Arrival/ Drop Off Policy

- Please arrive promptly each day to allow students the opportunity to transition into their class and put away their bags.
- Students may be dropped off starting at 8:45am at the front of the building. An optional snack or breakfast can be provided by parent for student to eat, but must be completed prior to 9A.
- Parents are asked not to linger past 9A to not interfere with the morning routines.
- If you are tardy, students must enter quietly to not disturb Morning Assembly.

### Dismissal

- If anyone other than parent is picking up students, our leads need to be made aware prior to pick up or students will not be released.
- If you need to pick up your child early one day, please inform our leads ahead of time to minimize classroom distractions.
- If you arrive earlier than 3PM, please remain in your vehicle until CMA has officially dismissed the students.
- CMA will be closed at 3:15P. We desire to be respectful and good stewards of our rental agreement, so we ask that the playground and field are not used after CMA hours. For surrounding parks, please click here: [Neighborhood parks for after school play](#).

### Attendance

We expect students to show up to CMA on time and ready to learn with all of their needed supplies. If a child needs to miss class, please inform the teacher as soon as possible so make up work can be assembled and made available. Exceeded absences will result in the removal of CMA participation. CMA follows a 90% attendance rate for each student. **Students are required to attend church services regularly. If students are not in regular church attendance, it will result in the removal of CMA participation.**

## **CMA Closures**

If we need to close CMA due to weather, sickness, or other complications we will communicate with parents by phone/text as soon as possible.

## **Program Payments**

CMA payments are due by the first Tuesday of each month. There is a 5 day grace period before a \$25 late fee is added per each student. Payments can be paid via check, cash, or online. We ask parents to cover the processing fees associated with credit cards used online. There are no processing fees for checks, cash, or Zelle. Please make checks payable to CMC. There will be no refunds once payments have been processed.

## **Cafeteria Information**

*Breakfast* - Students can bring breakfast from home, if desired. Breakfast must be eaten at the table provided and needs to be finished by 8:55A.

*Snacks* - Snacks will be eaten at 9:45A. Please provide a snack for your child that can be eaten easily during a read-aloud/activity. Dry snacks are preferred. Snacks that require to be heated or utilize a utensil are not allowed.

*Snack ideas: Veggie straws, a box of raisins, fresh fruit in a ziplock, popcorn, cheese stick, trail mix, granola bar, sliced apples, grapes, or beef jerky.*

*Lunch* - CMA can only accommodate packed lunches at this time. Lunch is 12:05 - 12:35p.m. Students should bring their lunch in an insulated bag along with their water bottle, as mentioned in the school supply list.

## **Cell Phone Policy**

Cell phones or other electronic devices should be turned off and not be used during CMA. If a parent needs to contact their child for any reason, please contact the Church office or a lead. Any phones or electronic devices taken up during school hours will be kept by the teacher and can be picked up by the parents after dismissal.

## **Birthday Celebrations**

Birthdays are special occasions and are warmly celebrated at CMA. If you would like to bring a special treat for the class, please coordinate with the teacher ahead of time so we can take allergies into consideration. Please do not pass out birthday party invitations on CMA campus unless you are inviting the entire group.

## HEALTH AND EMERGENCIES

### Administering Medicine

CMA will only administer medications that are approved by the parents on the “Medical Action Plan” document. If medication needs to be administered on a regular basis, CMA must have those medications with written instructions on how/when to use them.

### Illness Policy

Any student with the following symptoms will be asked to stay home or picked up from CMA as soon as possible:

- \* Fever of 100.5 F and above
- \* Diarrhea
- \* Vomiting
- \* Nausea
- \* Severe cough
- \* Unusual yellow color to skin or eyes
- \* Skin, eye lesions or rashes that are severe, weeping, or pus-filled
- \* Difficulty breathing or wheezing
- \* Complaints of severe pain
- \* Thick, green mucus that continues to flow throughout the day

If your child is not feeling well in the morning, please observe them closely before sending them to CMA and risking the health of other students. If your child develops any of these symptoms while at CMA, you will be called immediately. If a child has mild symptoms, such as seasonal allergies, that do not impair their functionality, the child may remain in the classroom and the parent(s) notified when they pick up their child.

If your child is diagnosed with any communicable disease (chicken pox, whooping cough, fifth disease, pink eye, head lice, etc.) please report this to us as soon as possible. Students may return to school when released from the doctor with proper documentation.

### Injuries and Medical Emergencies

If your child receives a mild injury while at CMA, we will promptly notify you. If a more serious injury occurs requiring immediate medical attention, parents and the emergency medical personnel will be notified immediately.

## ACADEMICS/ OVERALL GROWTH

### Curriculum

CMA's curriculum and philosophy of education are based on the works of Charlotte Mason, a 19<sup>th</sup> century British educator. Mason's philosophy and methods are based on her biblical worldview of children, families, God and education. A Charlotte Mason education includes first hand exposure to great and noble ideas through books in each subject, rather than rote memorization of dry facts. Besides books, students are exposed to great minds through art, music and poetry. Living books, rather than textbooks, are used to convey ideas that will engage the students and foster their love of learning.

### Student Work and Evaluations

CMA encourages intrinsic motivation and a growth-oriented mindset which frees our students to develop a love of learning. In your typical American classroom, students engage in an assignment-work-completion routine, and in doing so, they develop habits of approaching work. Often the motivation is to finish the assignment at hand, get on to the next task, and do what is required to earn the desired grade. When students work with these ends in mind, they master the assignment-work-completion routine, and extrinsic system imposed by well-intended educators. The process, the act of work itself, takes on a secondary role. This system encourages them to develop habits aimed toward a good-enough outcome-at the expense of working well and doing their best.

CMA places the highest value upon daily interactions with each student, their own report of knowledge, comprehension, and critical thinking through narration, and student portfolios. Because of our teacher-to-student ratio, teachers have the benefit of knowing each child as a person and can monitor progress, set expectations, and develop lessons that are appropriate for each student. Narration (reflecting/communicating back what they understood) is used across subject areas, with each student narrating back a lesson or piece of literature. This provides students the ability to retain what they have learned through practical communication.

### Leadership Requirements

Teachers at CMA must be born-again believers and actively engaged in the life of the church. All CMA teachers are passionate about our philosophy and pursue ongoing learning opportunities through conferences, books, and ongoing leadership training to strengthen their biblical worldview.

## **Standardized Testing**

Although standardized testing is not our preferred method of assessment, we do not shy away from this process. Upon requests, CMA can administer the Stanford Achievement Test to students at the end of their seventh grade year. While these tests are not effective in measuring the full educational value of a student's growth in learning, they do offer a means for us to compare our students' progress in reading, math, and language skills with national norms. The test results will not affect the child's grade level placement. The parent has full freedom to opt-out from these tests if desired. PSAT/NMSQT will be offered when students are in the 11th grade to provide the opportunity for scholarships, if desired by the student or parent.

## **Discipline**

Students at CMA are expected to come to CMA ready to learn and respond to the lead of the teacher. Our desire is to train students. Natural consequences are used as much as possible for inappropriate behavior. Here are a few examples:

- Sloppy work will result in them spending extra time correcting their work. Work needs to be done with their best effort, so if their best is not done, students will be asked to do it again or complete another assignment.
- Negative outburst will result in student missing class until the outburst is resolved. This could include missing a snack, recess/pe, delayed lunch, or suspension.

Disrespect toward any teacher or student will be addressed accordingly. If the student is continually being disrespectful and is not willing to change, then CMA administration has no other option than to remove the student from enrollment.

Our goal in every disciplinary situation is reconciliation and restoration, not separation and condemnation. Classroom interventions, a private conversation, jogging instead of playing outside, a meeting with parents and teacher are all strategies used in training our students. If a student is unresponsive to the teachers or administration, the child will be sent home. Consistent difficulties in discipline generates the discussion to determine whether the school/parent partnership is strong enough to continue to educate the child. CMA will not tolerate a student who is not willing to remain within the guidelines of CMA policy.

## **PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT/ STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Parent's Role**

CMA does not intend to replace the role of parental education and discipline; rather, we desire to walk alongside in the teaching and training of young minds. Our goal is to help equip and empower families to fulfill their God-given responsibilities as parents. Parental involvement is essential to CMA's discipleship model and we desire to keep communication open and consistent.

### **Enrichment Trips**

We desire to extend learning beyond the walls of the classroom, provide opportunities for curriculum connections, and explore the wonderful places Houston has to offer. CMA will provide enrichment opportunities, in which parents can join in an outing. During these outings, parents are responsible for their individual child(ren) as well as snacks, restroom breaks, lunch, etc. These events are merely opportunities, and are not mandatory.

### **Clothing Requirements**

We desire for the students to be able to dress comfortably and in attire that is appropriate for a wide variety of activities. For younger students, soft pants with an elastic waist are best.

- Please refrain from sending your child to school with clothing that has fantasy, scary, or super hero characters (i.e. Sponge Bob, Avengers, Star Wars, etc.)
- Students should wear tennis shoes, leather oxfords, crocs, or other shoes that firmly adhere to your child's foot. Please save cowboy boots, flip-flops, and rain boots for other "special" times.

I have read the CMA Handbook in its entirety. I agree to abide by the CMA standards and policies, those listed here, along with parameters set by the administrative team. My child has also been made aware of the standards and level of expectations that they are held responsible for. My signature below confirms I have read, understand, and agree to CMA standards.