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PARENT HANDBOOK

Revised December 2016

DEVELOPING LEARNERS AND LEADERS FOR LIFE!

The Mission of Mountain View Academy is to honour and nurture the potential of every child. We expand the traditional boundaries of education, taking into account the unique qualities of every student including their level of confidence, emotional readiness, past experiences, as well as their learning styles. We are fostering future generations of accomplished young men and women.

Our mission is to:

- challenge students to achieve their personal best by helping them develop a feeling of self-worth and a belief in their own ability that will allow them to pursue their goals;
- focus on our students' social development to ensure that they are able to interact fully with others and accept responsibility for their own actions and develop awareness of how their actions impact others;
- deliver the curriculum in such a way as to meet the needs of the individual student, enriching the program where necessary;
- recognize parents as partners in education; and
- establish a life-long love of learning.

Mountain View Academy will strive to meet the needs of the twenty-first century family by offering:

- an outstanding education program that prepares each child for the life challenges that they will face;
- a low student/teacher ratio (usually 16:1) to provide undivided care and attention;
- individualized, unique and creative projects that incorporate the Alberta curriculum;
- teachers with diverse academic backgrounds to provide an enriched environment; and
- extensive extra-curricular activities that augment classroom-based learning.

The development of a child's self-esteem is a core component of our school's philosophy and is therefore a pivotal point in the planning and execution of the daily lessons and activities. Options and core academic subjects are all delivered according to our belief in a multi-faceted teaching approach. To promote a sense of belonging and to create a climate of social and economic equality, all children attending Mountain View Academy wear a uniform bearing our logo and colours.

Vision

To prepare students for entry into our rapidly changing society of the 21st century, each student will master the fundamental elements in core subjects; **learn how to learn** through self-directed research, problem solving, communication skills and a diverse knowledge base.

Mountain View Academy's vision includes these aspects:

- ensuring the development and implementation of quality programs and high standards for each individual student;
- accessing all available resources for the individual;
- involving the school community in policy decisions regarding school programs;
- supporting the vital role of teachers; and
- being accountable to the school community.

Beliefs and Core Values

Mountain View Academy is founded on two core beliefs:

- The importance of the individual student and the maximization of the individual's potential by providing intense attention, both academic and personal.
- The necessity for active participation of all members of the school community.

The following belief and core value statements also serve to guide decision and policy-making within Mountain View Academy:

- we believe that all persons deserve to be treated with love, respect and dignity;
- we believe that each person has unique gifts and talents which in collaboration with others advance the learning of each student. As a school we have the responsibility to help develop those gifts;
- we are not just a service provider; we are a community that includes families, students, teachers and staff;
- we value parents as partners in the education of their children in a mutually supportive and respectful environment; and
- we believe that parents are given the responsibility for the education of their children and the school works closely with the family to achieve this goal.



ABOUT OUR PROGRAM

Mountain View Academy provides a secure, nurturing environment with a varied selection of materials that both stimulate and facilitate questions, discussion and interest. By employing active listening skills and taking a genuine interest in answering student questions, we promote the enthusiasm and interest of the children.

In order to accommodate the diverse needs of our students we incorporate a variety of high quality teaching strategies and materials. Careful planning allows all students the opportunity to explore, experiment and develop their thinking skills. We believe strongly in the implementation of hands on activities, and fostering independence, cooperation and constructive work habits in children. We also believe that a blend of small and large group activities encourages the development of appropriate communication skills in a monitored, safe environment to enhance the self-esteem of all students and assist in the total development of each child at his/her own pace.



Background

Mountain View Academy (MVA) was founded in 1996. That year it employed one teacher, and had three pre-school students and one kindergarten student registered. Over the past 20 years the school has continued to grow.

Current Situation

Mountain View Academy currently operates at 3915 34 Street NE and houses a student population of 97 students from **Kindergarten to Grade Twelve**. The school employs nine teachers, two administrators and two administrative support staff. This is our second year in our new location and our stakeholders are delighted that we have found a stable location in which to grow.

The school's administration team currently consists of Miss. Colleen Ryan, Principal and Mrs. Jane Lizotte, Assistant Principal. Both Miss. Ryan and Mrs. Lizotte possess extensive administrative and teaching experience and are looking forward to moving MVA into its next chapter.

STUDENT CHARACTER AND SCHOOL OBJECTIVES

Character Objectives for MVA Students

Character education focuses and promotes the well-being and happiness of the individual. At Mountain View Academy, we believe that by modeling positive behaviour, helping each other, being truthful and not blaming others, will help our students learn to respect themselves and others as they develop into happy, fulfilled adults.

We expect all students to:

- attend school regularly and punctually;
- be ready to work and play at school;
- respect and care for the people around them;
- respect and care for school equipment and property;
- dress according to our school's dress code to promote equality;
- learn neatness and cleanliness;
- exhibit appropriate playground behaviour and play safely and fairly;
- behave courteously at all times, i.e. in the classroom, at the playground and during any other activities off the school premises;
- solve problems peacefully; and
- develop a healthy curiosity for the world around them, creating a lifelong love for learning.

Skills Objectives for MVA Students

At MVA students will:

- be diligent in pursuing their studies;
- excel in management of their time, money, physical health, resources and talents;
- become self-motivated learners, able to follow the process of critical thinking, communicating and evaluating;
- be able to build skills in conflict management, communication and negotiation;
- develop creativity and effective communication using technology;
- work to be the best of their ability; and
- ready to work while at school.

CODE OF CONDUCT AND PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

All staff and volunteers are required at time of hire or placement to understand and abide by the codes of conduct as set forth by Mountain View Academy. The following standards specify that:

1. I will respect and promote the unique identity of each child and family and refrain from stereotyping on the basis of gender, race, ethnicity, culture, religion, disability, sexual orientation or gender identity;
2. Maintaining confidentiality is important to the success of our mission, our reputation in the community and the privacy of clients and staff. Family files, personnel records, financial information, client information and other related information is considered confidential. I am required to protect this information by safeguarding it when in use, filing it properly when not in use, and discussing it only with those who have a legitimate need to know. Additionally, staff who are also parents, may not access confidential information (as defined above) other than what is required within the scope of their job responsibilities. If approached by members of the news media, requesting information regarding Mountain View Academy, I will refer requests to the principal;
3. I understand that no child shall be left alone or unsupervised while under my care. Supervised is interpreted to mean at least one paid or contracted staff person is present, unless an exception has been approved by the principal;
4. I will use positive methods of child guidance that do not engage in corporal punishment, emotional or physical abuse, humiliation, isolation or the use of food as punishment or reward or the denial of basic needs;
5. I understand that no child may be removed from the presence of staff other than a child's own parent or guardian or other authorized person;
6. I understand that I must maintain professional boundaries with academy enrolled children/families at all times. Staff is expected to keep their personal lives separate from that of enrolled children/families and shall have only limited contact outside of work time and/or work related activities. Staff are to discuss with their supervisor any situation/relationships with enrolled children/families when unclear or questionable;
7. I understand this document shall be placed in my personnel file and that violations of these codes may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination; and

8. I have read and understand the policies and guidelines as set forth in the MVA Staff Handbook.

CENTRE OPERATION

GENERAL INFORMATION

School Hours and Security Measures

Homeroom	8:30 a.m.	students report to homeroom NO EXCEPTION
Classes begin	8:45 a.m.	
Lunch starts	12:00 p.m.	
Homeroom	12:50 p.m.	students must report to homeroom NO EXCEPTION
Classes begin	1:00 p.m.	
Classes end	3:15 p.m.	
Teacher supervised work period (grade 5 - plus)	3:15 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.	

Children must arrive at school no later than 8:30 am. It is important to be prompt in order to participate in all aspects of the program. If, due to appointment, parents will be bringing their child in after 8:45 a.m., they are asked to check in at the office before proceeding to the classroom. If the child is absent, parents are asked to notify the school as soon as possible. On those occasions when parents arrive early to pick up their child, they are asked to wait outside the classroom door until the children are dismissed in order to minimize disruptions during class times. Students who leave early are required to sign out at the office.

ATTENDANCE

Punctuality is a life skill. The responsibility for regular and punctual attendance, which is necessary for satisfactory school progress, rests with the student and parents. Unsatisfactory attendance, including tardiness, will be dealt with according to school policy. This can include referral to the District Attendance Officer.

Procedures to Follow When Absent

Any time a student is away for a day or part of a day, the parent or guardian must **phone the school**. A **written notice** for extended absences must be provided by the parent upon the return of the student to school. Students are responsible for making up missed class time and assignments.

Procedures to Follow When Late

Students arriving late disrupt the teacher and their classmates; therefore lateness is taken very seriously.

Students who are late in the morning or afternoon;

- must report to the school office;
- sign in;
- parents should send a written note explaining the lateness; and
- a record of all lates is kept for the year.

In the event of excessive tardiness, parents will be contacted to meet with the administration and a solution to the problem will need to be developed.

Permission to Leave School

Students wishing to leave the building during school hours due to illness, doctor's appointment, etc. **must obtain permission from their homeroom teacher and sign out at the front office prior to leaving.** Written notification regarding appointments must be sent to the school or parents **must** be contacted before students are released. Students in grade nine to twelve have the privilege of signing in/out at the office to leave campus during the lunch period providing their parent(s)/guardian have signed the Permission to Leave Campus form.

Students in ECS to grade eight may not leave the school grounds during school hours unless accompanied by a teacher or parent. Parents must sign their child out at the office prior to leaving the school with their child during school hours. **Offenders will face disciplinary action.**

Permission for Extended Holidays

Missing an extended amount of school is detrimental to your child's education. MVA provides a fall, winter and Spring Break to accommodate vacations. As a result we ask students to avoid going on holidays during school time.

Please be aware that teachers are not required to supply work while students are away. Students are responsible for catching up on missed curriculum and completing all missed work in a timely manner upon their return.

Extended Medical Absences

Medical absences over five days require a medical note. Homework can be picked up at the office or sent home with another student. Please remember that it is the students'/parents' responsibility to catch up on missing homework and arrange extra tutorial times with teachers, if needed.

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Mountain View Academy strives to provide an inviting and nurturing environment for your child. We are proud to work in partnership with our families and invite any comments or suggestions that you may have concerning the program or your child. We have an open door policy to welcome you in at all times. It would be appreciated if parents make an appointment so that the school is able to devote enough time to address the concern.

1. If at any time you are dissatisfied with the service that we offer, we encourage you to speak to your child's teacher.
2. If you are not satisfied after doing so, please refer this matter to the principal who will deal with the situation immediately.
3. In the event of an unsatisfactory solution being reached, at this stage, you can be referred to the Board of Directors. This referral can be made in writing and an appointment will then be made for a meeting at the next Board meeting. All complaints are confidential and all information will be recorded. The Board Chair will acknowledge receipt of the referral and make arrangements for all information to be heard and make a decision regarding the situation.

Use of Parent Volunteer Drivers for Field Trips

Staff members or parent volunteers that drive children, other than their own, must have the liability insurance of **at least \$2,000,000** on their vehicle.

For safety reasons, we require that all vehicles transporting children to and from field trips have seat belts that are in proper working condition and that parents provide the school with their children's car seats or booster seats, if required by law, when they are to be transported in another vehicle.

All parent volunteers will be required to obtain, at their cost, a Police Information Check from either the Calgary Police Service or the RCMP. This must be submitted to the office prior to volunteering. Please contact the office for more information.

We are honoured that you have chosen Mountain View Academy for your child(ren) and in order for us to provide the best experience we ask that you:

- encourage your child to have a nutritious breakfast before they come to school; and
- if your child will not eat at home please bring in a breakfast for him/her, particularly if he/she arrives at school early.

PLEASE INFORM THE FRONT OFFICE AND YOUR CHILD’S TEACHER IN WRITING OF ANY CHANGES TO THE FOLLOWING PERSONAL INFORMATION AS SOON AS THE CHANGES OCCUR:

- home telephone number, cell number and/or address;
- work telephone number and/or address;
- emergency contact name, telephone numbers and address;
- health conditions; and
- family situation.

It is essential that we are able to reach you or a designated adult at all times in case of an emergency situation. It is also important for us to be aware of any household changes or transitions your child may be experiencing. This will enable us to be supportive, empathetic, and understanding of your child’s individual needs.

Outstanding Accounts

Fees are due and payable on the dates indicated in the most recent fee schedule. A \$35.00 fee will be charged in the event of a cheque returned due to insufficient funds. If payment is delinquent beyond 30 days, interest at 1.5% per month or 18% per annum is charged.

Withdrawal of a Student

It should be noted that the obligation is to pay a full year’s tuition and **no reduction or remission will be allowed in the case of temporary absence, withdrawal or dismissal (no exceptions)**. We are committed to providing the parents and students of Mountain View Academy with the highest quality of education. Staff is hired according to our registered student numbers at the beginning of the school year. The small nature of the school means that mid-year withdrawal of a student’s funds could have a substantial impact on the quality of the education for those students remaining, if this guarantee was not honoured.

ALL PAYMENTS AND FEES ARE NON-REFUNDABLE

Court Orders and Custody

Provincial law maintains that both parents have access to their child unless there are legal documents which define the restrictions. In situations involving child custody disputes or restraining orders, a copy of the court order **must** be in the child’s file. We cannot prohibit contact with either parent without a current court order. It is the responsibility of the parent to ensure the school is provided with all court documents.

Pick Up of Children

Only people whose names appear on the registration form and the “Authorization Form for Child Pick Up” will be permitted to pick up your child, unless a written note is received specifying otherwise. Staff will ask for proof of identification (photo I.D. required) from any individual not authorized or from any individual they do not know. Otherwise, the child **will not** be released.

CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

Confidentiality is a necessary requirement for all staff employed by Mountain View Academy and for parent volunteers. Due to the sensitive nature of information that you may acquire, it is imperative that you keep sensitive information confidential. For this reason you will be asked to sign a “Confidentiality Agreement” which is strictly enforced. Any information about children or their families must be shared on a “need to know” basis. Conduct and questions of major concerns should be forwarded to the principal. Protection of the interests of each child and family is vital in maintaining a standard of professionalism and privacy.

Please strive to be supportive of the school’s efforts by avoiding negative or malicious discussions about the school. Together we can achieve great child care and education for our children. Stay positive and focus on the needs of the children.

POLICE INFORMATION CHECK

All staff members and parent volunteers who have unsupervised access to students are required to have a current Police Information Check. A letter can be provided by the school in order to be eligible for the \$15 rate for volunteers.

HARASSMENT POLICY

At Mountain View Academy we strongly believe in human dignity and the protection of our employees from the possibility of harassment, whether sexual, racial, ethnic, or any other type. Harassment in any form, verbal, physical, or visual, is strictly against our policy and will result in corrective action up to and including discharge.

MONEY

1. Any money submitted to the teacher for processing is to be in envelopes clearly marked with the child’s name and designated use.
2. Please do not combine cheques.
3. We will not accept loose money brought in by students.
4. Please adhere to deadlines.

HOLIDAYS AND CLOSURES

Refer to school calendar on the MVA website.

LEGISLATION

Mountain View Academy strictly adheres to the following government Acts:

1. **Alberta Tobacco Reduction Act:** subject to section (5), no person shall smoke
 - (a) in a public place;
 - (b) in a workplace;
 - (c) in a public vehicle, or
 - (d) within a prescribed distance from a doorway, window or air intake of a public place or workplace.

2. **Child Care Licensing Act**
12(1) A license holder must ensure that no person smokes on the program premises.
Schedule 1 AR 143/208

(2) No staff member shall smoke at any time or place where child care is being provided.

PERSONAL ITEMS

As an educational institution, non-school-related items are not allowed (i.e. toys, games, skateboard, etc.). All personal items should be labeled. All electronic devices should be secured at all times. MVA is not responsible for lost or misplaced items. Students who choose to bring their cell phone to school must use it responsibly. Before classes begin all electronic devices must be secured in their locker. Non-academic use of cell phones and Ipods is **strictly** prohibited. Ipods may be used at the discretion of the classroom teacher and only during quiet work times or during study hall. **Violation of this policy may result in the confiscation of the device.**

UNIFORM

All uniform items must be purchased from:

Elegant Design and Clothing Manufacturing Inc.
Bay 11, 1420 – 40 Ave. N.E.
Calgary, AB T2E 6L1
Phone: 403 250-8747
(ed@elegantinc.ca)

Uniforms are to be clean and pressed (no rips or missing buttons).

Formal Uniform:

- full uniform must be worn for one week after holidays, on field trips, during examinations and for special functions;
- students not wearing their form uniforms will not be allowed to participate in special school functions; and

- black leather dress shoes are mandatory; ladies may wear dress sandals during the warmer months (no flip-flops or boots please), heels not higher than 5 cm.

Boys Formal Uniform Pieces (mandatory)

BOYS K-4	BOYS 5-8	BOYS 9-12
navy dress pant	grey dress pant	grey dress pant
navy crested cardigan or vest	navy crested cardigan or vest	navy blazer with MVA crest
white dress shirt (long or short sleeve - must be tucked in)	white dress shirt (long or short sleeve - must be tucked in)	white dress shirt (long or short sleeve - must be tucked in)
plaid tie (clip on)	plaid tie	plaid tie
black leather belt	black leather belt	black leather belt
black leather dress shoes	black leather dress shoes	black leather dress shoes
navy socks	grey socks	grey socks

Girls Formal Uniform Pieces (mandatory)

GIRLS K-4	GIRLS 5-8	GIRLS 9-12
plaid tunic	plaid kilt	grey kilt
navy crested cardigan or vest	navy crested cardigan or vest	navy blazer with MVA crest
white dress shirt (long or short sleeve – must be tucked in)	white dress shirt (long or short sleeve - must be tucked in)	white dress shirt (long or short sleeve - must be tucked in)
plaid tie (clip on)	plaid tie	plaid tie
navy tights	navy knee high socks/tights	grey knee high socks/tights
black leather dress shoes	black leather dress shoes	black leather dress shoes

Skirts may be worn no higher than where the tips of the fingers fall when standing straight with hands at sides.

Facial piercings are not permitted, with the exception of a small stud.

Hair is expected to be clean and well groomed. Hair colour must be a naturally occurring hair colour (no blues, greens, etc.). Students in violation of this policy will be sent home until natural colour is restored.

Please note: students found in violation of the uniform policy will receive one warning. If there is a repeated violation, the student will be asked to wear full uniform the next day. A third violation will result in the loss of the next free dress down day.

Casual Uniforms:

- undershirts must be plain white or navy;
- running shoes can be worn on casual uniform days; and
- school crested golf shirts (long sleeved or short sleeved) may be worn on casual uniform days.

Dress Down Apparel

The last Friday (some exceptions) of each month is a non-uniform day. Students are expected to dress in an appropriate manner for school. Cut-offs, short shorts, tank tops, spaghetti straps, immodest clothing or t-shirts with inappropriate pictures/phrases are **NOT** acceptable. Students wearing inappropriate apparel will be asked to change. No caps, hats, or coats may be worn after entering the building and must be kept in student lockers or on coat hooks. Health regulations mandate the wearing of proper footwear in school at all times.

Physical Education Clothing

Middle school and high school students are required to wear appropriate physical education clothing (i.e. running shoes, t-shirt, shorts, sweatpants, graffiti is **NOT ACCEPTABLE**). It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that he/she has the appropriate P.E. attire to change into at school. Parents of elementary students are required to communicate with the teacher regarding “changing” policies for their child’s grade. Please ensure that **running shoes are non-marking**.

HOMEWORK

Mountain View Academy believes that in order for students to be successful they need to develop the habit of doing homework on a regular basis. Homework begins in kindergarten at five minutes per night and generally increases by five minutes each year until grade ten. High school courses are semestered and require more homework.

Homework is an extension of the classroom and reinforces the lessons of the day and gives students extra drill in areas where practice is needed. It helps to develop good work habits, time management and planning. Homework must be completed to the best of each student’s ability and meet required deadlines.

AGENDAS

To help students stay organized, each student is provided with an agenda at the beginning of the school year. The agenda is used for documenting homework and can also be used as a communication tool between the school and the home. The agenda must be brought to each class. All parents are expected to check and sign the agenda on a daily basis.

CHILD/ADULT INTERACTION POLICY

Interactions between children and adults provide opportunities for children to build trust, to develop an understanding of self and others, and to encourage respect for the feelings and rights of others. All interactions between children and adults will be respectful and supportive of each child’s gender, language, ethnicity and family composition.

CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM

If a student is caught cheating and/or plagiarizing:

- a. the teacher will discuss this offence with the student;
- b. the student will receive an immediate zero on the assignment or test;
- c. parents may be called for a meeting with administration and the teacher;
- d. the offence will be documented and filed in the student's cumulative file; and
- e. administration will take the necessary steps to justly determine the appropriate consequences.

CHILD ASSESSMENT POLICY

All age groups are assessed formally and informally to ensure that the teachers plan their curriculum, goals and activities to support individualized learning. Our teachers observe, record and document children's development, participation and learning throughout the year. The assessments are ongoing, systematic and gathered from natural play activities and realistic setting that reflects children's actual performance.

The staff at MVA uses a variety of methods such as observations, checklists, rating scales, and individually administered tests. The assessment results are used to benefit children by forming sound decisions about children, teaching and program improvement. When assessments identify concerns, appropriate follow-up, referral or other intervention is used. Our formal assessments are done three times a year (November, March and June). All our assessments are kept in the child's portfolio, which follow the child from year to year to show the progress in cognitive, language, physical, social and emotional areas of development that are consistent with our program curriculum and philosophy.

Our families are part of the assessment process with regular communication, partnership and involvement. Formal assessments are followed up by scheduled parent/teacher conference.

CHILD GUIDANCE POLICY

Mountain View Academy's primary goal is to educate, **not to discipline**. However, we understand that we need to ensure the children are protected, safe and healthy and to ensure that the rights of others and the school are protected. Keeping in mind that there are acceptable and unacceptable behaviours, we make sure that any child disciplinary action taken is reasonable in the circumstances.

We believe that children learn more effectively when desirable behaviour is encouraged or rewarded, rather than that inappropriate behaviour is punished. When undesirable behaviour is punished, the children only know what they should not be doing rather than learning what constitutes positive behaviour. We utilize "teachable moments" and interactive play to teach social skills and encourage children to respect themselves and others through the application of appropriate behaviour.

Preventative Measures Taken to Encourage Positive Behaviour

- One of the simplest ways to accomplish this is by being sincere and specific when **praising** students allowing them to experience recognition for their good behaviour;
- Staff members **show interest** and are closely involved with what students are doing, enabling them to encourage or praise positive behaviours, such as cooperation and politeness, as they occur;
- **encouragement** on the part of the staff not only clearly communicates to students what desirable behaviour is but reinforces it as well;
- the staff consistently **models positive behaviours** and states requests in a calm and positive manner so that students are more apt to comply;
- **redirecting** to a more appropriate activity and offering alternative options is also used as preventative means for curbing negative behaviours;
- our program provides students with **outlets**, such as physical exercise, for the release of energy, thereby reducing the potential to exhibit negative behaviours such as aggression and;
- in summary, the staff provides a kind and understanding atmosphere that involves helping children to develop self-control and self-direction skills. A balance of fairness, flexibility and firmness are necessary in achieving positive questions or concerns about this policy or any other aspect of Mountain View Academy's program that you, as a parent, may have.

Students who become involved in unacceptable behaviour will be subjected to certain disciplinary action. Depending upon the behaviour and seriousness of the problem, one or more of the following actions will be undertaken by the school.

1. Informal Talk

School personal will talk to the student and try to reach an agreement regarding how the student should behave.

2. Detentions

After school, noon hour, or recess detention(s) may be assigned to a student to correct inappropriate behaviour. It will be the parents/guardians responsibility to ensure the student has transportation.

3. Loss of Privileges

The student is denied the opportunity to participate in school activities.

4. Communication of Inappropriate Behaviour to Parents

School personnel will communicate the inappropriate behaviour to the student's parents by email, phone or in a meeting at the school. The goal will be to intervene and eliminate the behaviour.

5. Parent Conference

A formal conference is held between the student/parent. During this conference, agreement is reached as to how the behaviour will be corrected.

6. Suspension

Suspensions are made only when it is necessary to remove the student from class or school. In the event of a suspension, a formal letter will be sent to the parents and original signed copy will be placed into the student's cumulative file.

INCLUSION POLICY

“Inclusion is elegant in its simplicity and, like love, awesome in its complexity”

Marsha Forest

According to the Canadian Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms, “All individuals must be treated equally, regardless of their race, nationality or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age, or mental or physical disability. The Canadian Human Rights Act also states “employers and service providers are required to accommodate special needs, including those of people with disabilities, short of undue hardship.”

Human Resources

The staff of Mountain View Academy understands and agrees to support inclusive practices as outlined in the Inclusion Policy.

Programming

The staff adapts the environment and routines as necessary to meet the needs of the children enrolled. The staff develops flexible programming that can be adapted as needed.

Confidentiality

All staff has signed confidentiality agreements upon hire. Staff is aware that they will receive and have access to confidential information about children and families and they agree to keep this information in strict confidence.

Partnership

Mountain View Academy works collaboratively with parents and outside service providers to ensure that the needs of the children are met. We will, with the consent of the parents, refer children to outside service providers when we feel, or the parents feel, that a child may require additional support.

Admission/Registration

All families interested in registering their child are dealt with in a fair and equitable manner.

Transitions

Children with special needs may require extra support when transitioning to a new age group. It is preferred that children move to the next age group as their same-age peers.

Withdrawal

If the school is having difficulties meeting the child's needs, we will ensure that:

- all families asked to withdraw are dealt with in a fair and equitable manner;

- the notice of withdrawal is consistent with the Withdrawal Policy of the Academy and is the same for all families;
- reasonable care has been taken in assessing the child’s needs and the program’s ability to support those needs; and
- special need resources and outside agency support have been exhausted prior to the Notice of Withdrawal.

CULTURAL DIVERSITY

Cultural awareness is knowledge and understanding of cultures different from your own. These differences include the ways people celebrate holidays, make medical decisions, dress and develop gender identities. It is the policy of Mountain View Academy to respect the individuality of all children and adults involved in our service and to promote positive attitudes to differences of culture, race, gender, language, financial circumstance or membership of a minority group. We believe that it is best to teach cultural awareness as early as possible in a child’s life to promote tolerance and discourage violence.

It is imperative that:

- recruitment and employment of staff will comply with all relevant equality legislation;
- our service is open to all families in the community;
- a range of activities is chosen to reflect various differences in cultures, gender and ability;
- the staff checks all materials to ensure that they challenge stereotyping and positively and accurately reflect cultural and racial diversity; and
- special dietary needs of children and adults are catered for.

We will challenge any statements or behaviour by anyone in the service which are racist or sexist or which reinforce stereotypes or which are in any other way derogatory to an individual or group.

WELCOMING, CARING, RESPECTFUL AND SAFE TEACHING AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENT POLICY

PART I

Consistent with its mission and vision, the Mountain View Academy Society Board is committed to a safe, caring, respectful, inclusive, equitable, and welcoming learning and teaching environment for all students.

All students have the right to learn and work in an environment free of discrimination, prejudice, and harassment. This right is guaranteed under the

- *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*;
- *The Alberta Human Rights Act* as amended March 10, 2015. In addition, the *Alberta Human Rights Act*, includes the right not to be discriminated against by reason of race, national origin, colour, religion, or gender identity or gender expression. Legislation also

provides as a fundamental right the “right of parents to make informed decisions respecting the education of their children;” and,

- Requirements of the *Alberta School Act* (and upon Proclamation the *Education Act, Section 35.1*) that provide for measures that support the equality and non-discrimination of students who may belong to minority groups, including sexual orientation.

PART II

The Mountain View Academy Society Board will not tolerate harassment, bullying, intimidation, or discrimination on the basis of a person's actual or perceived differences or gender identity or gender expression.

The Mountain View Academy Society Board believes that all students have the right to:

- be treated fairly, equitably, and with dignity and respect;
- have their confidentiality protected and respected;
- self-identification and determination;
- freedom of conscience, expression, and association;
- be fully included and represented in an inclusive, positive, and respectful manner by all school personnel;
- have equitable access to the same supports, services, and protections provided to heterosexual students and their families;
- have avenues of recourse (without fear of reprisal) available to them when they are victims of harassment, prejudice, discrimination, intimidation, bullying, and/or violence; and
- have their unique identities, families, cultures, and communities included, valued and respected within the school environment.

PART III

The Mountain View Academy Society Board is committed to implementing measures that will:

- define appropriate expectations, behaviours, language, and actions in order to prevent discrimination, prejudice, and harassment through greater awareness of, and responsiveness to, their harmful effects;
- ensure that all such discriminatory behaviours and complaints will be taken seriously, documented, and dealt with expeditiously and effectively through consistently applied policy and procedures;
- improve students’ understanding of the individual lives of minorities, including sexual and gender minorities, and their families, cultures, and communities; and
- develop, implement, and evaluate inclusive educational strategies, professional development opportunities, and administrative guidelines to ensure that minorities including gender minorities and their families are treated with respect and dignity in all aspects of the school community in a manner consistent with the school’s mission and vision.

PART IV

The Mountain View Academy Society Board is committed to upholding the requirements set forth in Section 16.1 of the School Act:

- if one or more students attending a school operated by a board request a staff member employed by the board for support to establish a voluntary student organization, or to lead an activity intended to promote a welcoming, caring, respecting and safe learning environment that respects diversity and fosters a sense of belonging, the principal of the school shall permit the establishment of the student organization or the holding of the activity in the school and designate a staff member to serve as the staff liaison to facilitate the establishment and the ongoing operation of the student organization or to assist in organizing the activity.
- for the purposes of PART IV, an organization or activity includes an organization or activity that promotes equality and non-discrimination with respect to, without limitation, race, religious belief, colour, gender, gender identity, gender expression, physical disability, mental disability, family status or sexual orientation, including but not limited to organizations such as gay-straight alliances, diversity clubs, anti-racism clubs and anti-bullying clubs.
- the students may select a respectful and inclusive name for the organization, including the name “gay-straight alliance” or “queer-straight alliance”, after consulting with the principal;
- the principal shall immediately inform the board and the Minister if no staff member is available to serve as a staff liaison referred to in PART IV, and if so informed, the Minister shall appoint a responsible adult to work with the requesting students in organizing the activity or to facilitate the establishment, and the ongoing operation, of the student organization at the school and;
- if a staff member indicates to a principal a willingness to act as a staff liaison under PART IV then:
 - (a) a principal shall not inform a board or the Minister under subsection (4) of Section 16.1 of the School Act that no staff member is available to serve as a staff liaison, and
 - (b) that staff member shall be deemed to be available to serve as the staff liaison.

PART V

When implementing the above policy directions, the Mountain View Academy Society Board will act reasonably in the best interests of the student in keeping with the guidelines outlined by the Supreme Court of Canada.

DEALING WITH CONTROVERSIAL TOPICS IN THE CLASSROOM

Section 11.1 of the Alberta Human Rights Act comes into effect September 1, 2010, affirming in law a parent's ability to have their child excluded, without academic penalty, from instruction, exercises, and the use of instructional materials that deal primarily and explicitly with religion, sexuality, or sexual orientation. The implementation of this new legislation requires that school boards notify parents when students will be receiving instruction that includes subject matter that deals primarily and explicitly with religion, human sexuality or sexual orientation, allowing the opportunity for a parent to have their child opt out. In such cases when a child is exempted from programming under Section 11.1, the child may either: a) leave the classroom or place where the instruction is taking place or where the instructional material being used for the duration of that part of the instruction; or b) remain in the classroom or place where the instruction is taking place without taking part in the instruction or use of instructional material. The Guide to Education for the 2010-2011 school year contains information on the required notification and is posted at <http://education.alberta.ca/admin/resources/guidetoed.aspx>. Information on notification and curriculum implications, as well as questions and answers for parents and the public is available on the Alberta Education website at <http://education.alberta.ca/parents/role.aspx>.

When in doubt, teachers should always inform parents of any controversial topics that might be covered within the curriculum and provide an opportunity for feedback from the parent. Alternative work should be available should either the parent or student request exemption.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

POLICY REGARDING FOOD

- All snacks and lunches should be nutritional in value, for example, fruits, vegetables, cheese and crackers, yogurt etc. and also be sufficient in quantity;
- snacks are eaten during specified snack/lunch time in class or outside during recess;
- staff will be responsible for making sure that the children wash their hands before and after snack time;
- children must be sitting while they eat or drink;
- there will always be a member of the staff supervising and assisting the children during snack/lunch time;
- the kitchen area is off-limits to children except for a specific planned activity, such as baking, where they will be under the direct supervision of a staff member at all times;
- due to the increasing number of children with severe and potentially life threatening allergies, our school is an “**Allergy Aware**” environment;
- each parent is required to provide medical information, including any food allergies, on the MVA student application form; and
- any outside food brought in for class consumption, must have all ingredients clearly labeled.

ILLNESS AND COMMUNICABLE DISEASE POLICY

Illness Policy

In accordance to the City Health Guidelines, parents must keep their children home in the following situations:

- the child has an elevated temperature of over 101° F/40° C or greater;
- vomited with 24 hour period;
- diarrhea (three consecutive loose bowels) with 24 hours;
- eyes/ears have any kind of discharge;
- bronchitis or pneumonia;
- visible rashes that have not been diagnosed by a physician;
- a severe cough, runny nose and/or congestion; and
- any communicable disease including: Impetigo, Coxsackie Virus, Fifth Disease, German Measles, Hepatitis A or B, Meningitis, Measles, Mumps, Pertussis (Whooping Cough), Ringworm, Scabies, Scarlet Fever, Strep Throat, Tuberculosis.

If the child, in the opinion of the staff, becomes ill during the day, you are expected to pick up your child within the hour. In the event that we are unable to reach you, we will call the emergency contact to pick up your child. If a child has discharge from the eyes, a rash or any other ailment that cannot be identified, the **Health Department requires a physician to ensure the child is not contagious.**

We require that parents **NOT** bring their child back to school until at least 24 hours after a fever has broken or when the child has been vomiting in order to reduce the risk of the illness being spread.

Your child should return to school when they are well enough to participate in outdoor activities. Children are not permitted to stay inside, as staffing does not allow for this. The child will be allowed back to school following a doctor's examination and provision of a note indicating that the child is free of any disease.

Communicable Disease Policy

Any parent or staff member who knows or has reason to believe that a child may be suffering from a **communicable disease** is required to report their suspicion to school administration.

If a staff member is the one to suspect that a child might have a communicable disease the school will notify the parent or person responsible for the child at once and report this information or suspicion to the **local health authority**. Parents will be required to **immediately** remove their child from the school in order to minimize the risk of transferring this disease to the other children.

For more information, the school has a publication from Calgary Health Services about communicable diseases and the signs and symptoms to look for. Please contact the school office if you wish to obtain a copy of this publication.

First Aid

Mountain View Academy requires at least two staff members have their **Standard Child Care First Aid & CPR/AED. Classes are offered every few years at the school for the staff, parents and students.** In the event that a child is injured at the school, staff members, to the best of their abilities may give the child emergency first aid. A parent or other emergency contact listed in the application form will be immediately notified. If a child is deemed to be a high medical risk, the school will call **9-1-1** for emergency assistance.

The staff will complete an incident/accident report whenever such an accident or other type of incident occurs at the school. This report will be shown to the student's parents and they will be asked to sign it as a means of acknowledging the incident, and return it to the school.

Health Care

All parents are required to provide the school with medical and emergency information by completing the appropriate form. This form contains the child's Alberta Health Care number, family doctor's name, phone number, medical/allergic conditions, previous hospitalization and/or surgeries or if medication is given on an ongoing basis.

ADMINISTRATION OF MEDICATION POLICY

Mountain View Academy policy regarding the administration of medication to any child on the school premises, under the age of 16, follows these rules:

1. A teacher may administer or allow the administration of medication to a child only where:
 - a. the written consent of the child's parent has been obtained;
 - b. the medication is in the original labelled container; and
 - c. the medication is administered according to the labelled directions.
2. Where medication is administered to a child, the following information is recorded:
 - a. the name of the medication;
 - b. the time of administration;
 - c. the amount administered; and
 - d. the initials of the person who administered the medication.
3. MVA must ensure that:
 - a. all medication is stored in a locked container that is accessible to children; and
 - b. medication that may be needed in an emergency is stored in a place that is inaccessible to children.

- A staff member must discuss the administration procedure of any medication with the parent. Parents must also complete and sign the “**Medication Administration Record**” form indicating the times the medication is to be given, as well as the dosage; and
- Should the medication be required in the evening, it is the parent’s responsibility to take it home at the end of the day.

*Medication **that may be needed in an emergency** (epipen, puffers) is stored in a place that is inaccessible to children and is **not locked**. All medication must be clearly marked, accompanied by a consent form and the child’s picture.

SCHOOL CLOSURE POLICY INCLEMENT WEATHER

The decision to close the school is made by the principal of Mountain View Academy. This decision will be made before 6:30 a.m. and is reserved for major emergency situations and severe weather conditions. Even when the Academy is open, parents must determine their own individual travel risks and make an independent decision regarding school attendance. At times, the school may close before the end of a school day due to severe weather conditions; parents will be asked to pick up their children early.

In the event of a school closure, the following steps will be taken:

1. a call will be made to the student’s home number;
2. if there is no answer, a message will be left and a call will be placed to the cell number on file. A message will also be left;
3. a mass email notification will be sent to all families; and
4. information will be posted on our Facebook page.

It is extremely important that in the event of severe weather, parents are checking for updates regarding the status of school operations.

The decision to keep students in from recess will be made on a daily basis by the principal. In general, all students will be kept indoors when the wind chill exceeds -20° C.

School administration will monitor wind chill readings on cold days through Environment Canada’s Weather information: www.weather.gc.ca

Wind chill is a measure of the rate at which the wind cools warm objects to the surrounding air temperature, measure in watts per square meter. Wind chill will not cool an object below the actual air temperature, but it will cause an object to reach air temperature more quickly than it would with no wind. Any object with heat in it, including the human body, is affected by wind.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION

School floor plans with regular and alternate routes marked are posted in all classrooms.

Emergency Evacuation Procedures

In the event that an emergency requiring evacuation should occur during school hours, each teacher will direct his or her class to the nearest exit in a calm and orderly manner. Both staff and children will be familiar with these evacuation procedures by having practiced them during the regular **fire drills**.

If necessary to evacuate the building for any reason during inclement weather, accommodation would be provided at Walmart Logistic located at 3400, 39 Ave. N.E. (cafeteria). Parents would be advised by phone of the circumstances and whether children need to be picked up immediately or if dismissal will be at the regular time.

REVISIONS TO HANDBOOK AND CONTRACT

There will a yearly revision to this handbook and the accompanying contract. All families will sign a new contract each year. We reserve the right to make changes in rates and policies as we deem necessary. You will be notified, in writing, of any changes that may occur. Every attempt will be made to give at least two weeks' notice of any changes.