



ANNA'S HOUSE

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annashouseschool.org

PARENT HANDBOOK

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Introduction to the Parent Handbook

The Parent Handbook describes the philosophy, the policies and the procedures of the Anna's House. Since the Handbook serves as a valuable and informational resource, all parents are encouraged to read it in full and to refer to it as needed. Parents are always invited to direct questions about the Handbook or ANNA'S HOUSE policies to the Director.

We are parent's partners in your children's education. We see their school experience as a continuum of the parents' nurturing and goals, recognizing that we merely build on the strengths parents have fostered. We recognize the importance of forming a close partnership with parents because meaningful communication among the parents, teachers and administration provides the consistency necessary for the guidance of children. Children feel supported when they see their parents actively participating in school life through school meetings, teacher conferences, school gatherings, work days, and fundraising events. In these contexts children see that their school is valuable to their parents.

Anna's House is a new school and relies on its families to contribute to its healthy operation. Information regarding our volunteer system will be provided for parents. Parents' volunteer hours provide essential services to the school and opportunities for making new friends and getting to know other families.

History and Organization

Anna's House (AH), Inc., is a not-for-profit corporation established on February 15, 2019 in Staunton, Virginia, by Christi Crittenden, educated through a quality Montessori program as a preschooler, worked her way through college as a Preschool teacher at a traditional early childhood educational program, First Baptist Church in Huntsville, AL and has served as the Director of three other educational programs before opening Anna's House. Christi first served as a director at First Place, a program of First Presbyterian Church in Montgomery Al. She later served as the Executive Director of Woods Creek Montessori and most recently served as the Director of Fishersville United Methodist Child Development Center.

The Board of Directors has fiscal responsibility for the school. Its role is to guide the overall development of the school and support the Staff in implementing the Anna's House method of education. Ideally, the Board is comprised of 12 members with non-ANNA'S HOUSE-affiliated community members. The Executive Director and staff are responsible for the daily operation of the school and for maintaining the integrity of the Anna's House philosophy and curriculum in the classrooms.

Anna's House is non-denominational Religious Exempt program open to children of all backgrounds, without discrimination in regards to race, religion, gender, nationality or economic and educational background. The school desires as much diversity among the children and staff as possible. Anna's House is known for its academic excellence, and for it's personal attention to students, in an atmosphere of innovation, while embracing kindness and care for all.

Our Purpose

Anna's House recognizes that all children are born with a yearning for learning and growing. The school therefore, desires to provide an environment and curriculum designed to facilitate the development of the whole child. Our goal is to allow each child to experience the joy of learning in a supportive and stimulating environment, develop self-esteem and work toward realizing their full potential in all areas of life. We believe an inherent part of our mission is to provide this opportunity to all children regardless of race, religion, gender, nationality, or economic and educational background.

Anna's House serves children from 2.5 through 5th grade.

In an effort to accommodate the needs of our families, AH provides an After School program for children. Summer camp is also offered in the summer; more on this to come.

Mission

Anna's House is a Religiously Exempt non-profit school for children, ages two and a half to twelve years. Anna's House is staffed with teachers who will assist in caring for each individual's growth; spiritually, physically, mentally and socially in a nurturing environment. It will seek to foster a love of learning, independence, and self-confidence in an atmosphere of mutual respect.

Educational Philosophy

The staff of Anna's House believes that our role in the development of a child is to provide an atmosphere that respects each individual child and gives precedence to nurturing their spirit, and mind. We will cultivate an environment that encourages self-discipline, builds self-esteem, and enables us to nurture the growth of the whole child (body, mind, and spirit). Each child is encouraged to work within a healthy classroom structure which provides an atmosphere of order and respect. We commit to create a positive environment, focusing on academic excellence, providing quality curriculum and lessons, and nurturing each child as the child develops his or her own powers of critical analysis, creative problem solving, and information retention. We find that project based learning and the capacity for sharing loving and understanding responses to others is our method and creed in all that we do. .

Pedagogical Philosophy

Children by nature are deeply curious. At Anna’s House, we encourage our students’ curiosity through intentional “work” and “play.” We believe that all children can and should work hard, play hard, be kind to each other, and sleep well at night!

The research says—and we know in our hearts—that every child is capable of absorbing and sharing real knowledge about the world and themselves when given the opportunity. At Anna’s House, therefore, children practice lifelong learning skills in the context of a knowledge-rich, liberal arts curriculum. Even our youngest children learn about science, art, music, mathematics, geography, history, and literature—and have fun doing it! From the moment our children walk in the door until the moment they leave, we nurture their hearts and minds by teaching them content knowledge and nurturing their skills to gather and share their knowledge respectfully with one another.

At first we ask them to speak, draw, or dictate to a teacher or peer about what they are learning. Later, as they learn to read and write, they share their knowledge by speaking and writing with and for one another, their teachers, and even the wider Anna’s House and Staunton communities. We know that by building our students’ confidence in this way from the very beginning of their school years, we are equipping them to be lifelong learners who communicate respectfully with the people that they work and play with throughout their lives.

Our Curriculum

Literacy

Reading and writing are not skills that develop naturally in children. Children must be taught to read and write, and we must teach them based on the science of successfully teaching reading and writing. Using the Wilson reading sequence, we teach our children to read by first teaching the sounds (phonemes) and then the letter and letter combinations (graphemes) that represent those sounds. At the same time, we build students’ love of literature and content knowledge through literary and content-rich “read-alouds” and decodable texts that contain the sounds and letters as students learn them. By practicing active listening and speaking skills, even our youngest students cultivate a climate of respectful civil discourse that pervades all the grades. Pre-readers may dictate or draw, but will soon find themselves happily writing about their knowledge, and supporting their opinions with evidence from their own research on a wide variety of topics.

Science, Geography, History, and Civics

In students’ nascent years, and even as they grow, much of our curriculum in these critically important areas will be conveyed in the literacy block. Through an integrated approach to learning, students will learn these inextricably related content areas as they learn to read and write. We use literary texts, literary nonfiction, as well as essential “informational” texts to convey information about the world, our

history, and our government. We choose texts that deliberately build a “staircase of complexity” so that our students can wrestle successfully with grade level texts about these essential content areas. We also identify texts at a wide range of reading levels focused on the content students are studying so that we can simultaneously meet the needs of struggling students and students who need more challenges.

Mathematics

In our first year, we will use the Everyday Mathematics Program, which emphasizes “real-world” problem-solving skills, but also builds students’ innate mathematical fluency. Everyday Mathematics contains many “hands-on” activities and practical games that make mathematics fun. Because Everyday Mathematics is designed to build students’ mathematical reasoning skills, the program often teaches students several ways of solving a problem—ways that may differ from the way parents learned math. The program, therefore contains useful “parent letters” that explain what students are learning in each unit and offer suggestions for ways to practice the skills outside the classroom and at home.

Art, Music, and Physical Education

Our classrooms will be filled with art and music, integrated into the study of literacy and mathematics, in particular. Not only will students learn about art and art history, they will have many chances to make art every day as they express their learning as well as their imaginations. Many teachers will incorporate singing and dancing into their instruction, offering “brain Brakes” that allow student to move and sing. We will also provide regular outdoor exercise and play.



The School Day

We will begin by operating Monday through Friday from 8:30AM-2:30PM for our academic day and then until 4:30 for after school. Our Calendar will tend to follow Stuart Hall School's calendar, especially for Holidays and Snow Days. A full calendar is available on our website and will be mailed to you via email.

Preparation for School

We ask that parents help prepare their children for happy school days by allowing enough time for dressing and breakfast before school. It is essential that each child has had ample sleep, exercise, rest, and opportunities for recreation with family and friends outside of school. Please keep the teacher and Director informed of any change in family circumstances, major events, or changes in the child's behavior or health. We urge each parent to join us in recognizing the child's efforts and successes during his or her journey towards independence. Parental approval and appreciation are important keys to a child's healthy self-esteem and self-development.

Arrival

Drop-off can be a difficult transitional period for children. Order, routine, and efficiency enable the child to approach these times with greater ease. Anna' House's arrival process is designed to optimize a smooth and positive start to the day for children, parents, and teachers. It is also structured to facilitate the safe and effective flow of traffic and families through our small parking lot.

In order to maximize their opportunity for learning and to prevent disruption of the class in progress, it is important for children to arrive on time and to be in the classroom between 8:30am and 8:45am. It is important that students are not dropped off before 8:30am because teachers will be occupied with classroom set-up and will not be prepared to supervise. Children will be brought to the main entrance door and then escorted to the classroom.

If, on occasion, a child needs to arrive after 9am, we ask that you call the office to arrange for the Director to meet you at the door and she will escort your child to class.

Early Drop Off (Alpha):

Early Drop Off will be offered at this year. This will be offered for regular enrollment as well as drop-ins. Children can arrive as early as 7:30 AM. They must be delivered to the teacher with an adult accompanying them. They may not be left in the parking lot or asked to walk in by themselves.

We will have a team of designated teachers who will arrive early to care for these children.

Departure

At the conclusion of the school program (around 2:30 pm) teachers will help students who will be departing to gather their lunchboxes, coats, papers, and other items in preparation for departure. Children will be taken out to each parent as they arrive and given to the parent at the school entrance.

To accommodate our limited parking situation and to assist students, teachers and parents transition at the end of the day, a 15 minute transition period is provided between the end of the program and required pick-up. The school day ends at a set time (3:30 or 5:00 pm).

Late Fee Policy for Late Pick ups:

Anna's House program ends at 3:00pm or 5:00pm.

For the Academic program ending at 3:00: a late fee will be charged after 3:15. After 3:15pm, the student will be enrolled in after school (Omega).

For the After School program ending at 5:00pm: a late fee will be charged after 5:00pm Thank you~

No child should be dropped off in the parking lot without staff assistance or a responsible adult accompanying her/him.

No car should be left unattended in the parking area.

Transportation

Children are transported to school by the parents or by another person authorized by the parents. When a child belongs to a car pool, all participating parents must give written permission to the school, naming each person who will be driving in the car pool.

Whenever the child is to be transported by someone other than those named at the time of application or in writing thereafter, a written note and/or personal introduction to a staff member will be required from the parent who enrolled the child. Anyone new to the school will be asked to present a photo ID before a staff member will release the child into their custody. The ID should correspond with the name on the written notice received by the parent/guardian. A copy of the ID will be made and the date and the relationship to the child will be noted. The information copy will be placed in the child's file for future reference. Only in the case of an emergency may parents phone and ask that someone other than the person normally specified be allowed to pick up the child. In such a case, there should be verification by both parties as to the arrangements made for the child's transportation.

Snack

Families will provide snack for their own child. Snacks should be healthy and not include significant sugar, candy or sodas.

Lunch

Parent will provide their own child's lunch. Lunches will not be refrigerated or heated. Be sure to pack appropriately. Be sure to add icepacks and use thermoses as needed. Lunch serves as a social opportunity as well as a time to practice grace and courtesy. It is important that, after an active morning, children receive proper nutrition to refuel their body. We ask parents to please pack nutritious foods that the child likes and will eat (whole grain snacks, fresh fruit, etc.), avoiding convenience and highly processed lunch items that may contain hidden sugars, preservatives and food colors. Please pack his/her lunch as much as possible in containers that can be reused in order to reinforce the lesson of "reduce, reuse, and recycle." Rubbermaid type juice and food containers are appropriate. Send just enough food for one child, keeping in mind that sharing is not allowed at lunchtime (including desserts).

While we strongly discourage sugary foods, small treats or desserts may be sent as part of the child's lunch. However, s/he will be asked to save it until the other items in the lunch have been eaten. Uneaten portions will be sent home whenever possible to allow the parent to see what the child does/does not eat. Candy and gum are not permitted at school as they are non-nutritious and they can serve as a distraction to the children.

Rest/Nap Time

While the Pre-K and Kindergartners will follow a general daily schedule that includes a nap time beginning after lunch, the children may rest any time during the day as needed.

These children developmentally and physically may need to rest and will have a rest time consisting of a 30 minute quiet time in which the teacher either reads or story tells to the children or the children may read/look at books by themselves. During this quiet time each child will rest on a mat and be given the opportunity to sleep if needed. After approximately 30 minutes, children who are not sleeping will be invited to look do a quiet activity more focused on language arts or math skills. All children will get up after quiet time and resume a normal afternoon schedule.

Please provide a nap mat for your child in these classes.

The After-School Program (Omega)

Anna's House provides an After-School program from 3:00-5:00 pm for children up to the age of 12. Children participate in outside play, snack, and various projects – arts and crafts, music and movement, and nature activities. Parents planning to have their children in this program on a regular basis may complete the After-School Care Agreement. The cost for this program is listed in your registration packet or is available on our website. There is also a drop-in rate when space is available.

Special Occasions

Field Trips

As part of their school experience, the children may take field trips away from the school. Each parent will be given a Field Trip Permission form for each field trip and it will be placed on file in the office. Though we have a general form on your registration application you will need to sign a new form for every field trip. Special trips usually are planned for a specific time and place and will be announced well in advance of the scheduled date. Parents interested in helping with field trips should speak with the teachers.

All of our field trips are walking trips and are occasionally spontaneous. Information about the walking route and a time of return will be posted for parents who may arrive before the group gets back to the school.

Each adult participating in a field trip is responsible for the whereabouts of the children in his or her group at the destination as well as in the car during transportation. The staff members will be responsible for the care of the entire group and will have a first-aid kit available. We do not plan to have any driven field trips this first year but.... If we go on a driven field trip in the future, each volunteer driver is required to have a copy of his or her license and insurance card on file at the school. The center will not provide transportation. Each child must wear a seat belt or car seat as required by law while in the car and may not ride in the front seat. The driver will be given a passenger list of children before embarking and will be given a telephone number of the destination.

Birthdays

Birthdays are special and fun days in the Anna's House classroom, celebrated to acknowledge the birth and life of the individual child. Each child will have the opportunity to celebrate his or her birthday. The child's parents are invited to bring a nutritious group snack (or maybe something sweet!) along with a pictorial timeline of their child's life, and are encouraged to attend the celebration (after the Pandemic is resolved). All of the children will gather for the celebration, sing a celebratory song, hear about the birthday child's life on Earth and share the birthday snack. We discourage balloons, birthday hats, etc. during this celebration. It is a very calm coming-together of the community to honor the individual within the group.

Holidays

Holidays provide opportunities for cultural extension. They help the children become acquainted with and form a connection to the world around them. As part of the Anna's House curriculum, the children become aware of the rituals and reasons for celebration within their culture and other cultures around the world. Christian holidays will be celebrated and other holidays may be celebrated or acknowledged as a part of culture through books, group discussion, art and craft activities and songs related to the holiday.

Parent – School Communication

Communication

As a part of our best practices of communication, all staff of Anna’s House are required to read the Parent Handbook. One of the keys to a community’s success is the quality of its communication. ANNA’S HOUSE staff will work to keep communication flowing. The website (annashouseschool.org) is also an excellent source of information regarding school events, programs, staff members, and volunteer opportunities.

Parents are encouraged to make every effort to communicate directly with the child’s teacher. The staff encourages all parents to feel free to discuss any questions, concerns, comments and positive aspects of the program with us. We ask that when parents have a concern, they begin by discussing the issue with the child’s teacher. If full understanding is not achieved or if the issue remains unresolved, the Director is available for further discussion.

Parent Conferences –Screenings and Assessments

Regularly scheduled parent conference days take place during the fall and the spring. Parents are also encouraged to request a conference at the close of the school year if desired. These meetings give the teachers and the parents a time to sit together in a relaxed, undisturbed atmosphere and discuss the child’s school experience. This is a time of connection and discovery for the parent and the teacher – both will have the opportunity to learn more about the child and how best to meet his or her needs. During the conference any assessments performed with the children will be discussed.

In addition to the scheduled conferences, parents should feel free to contact the teacher at any time to discuss a question or concern about a child. Conferences may be initiated either by the parents or the teacher at any time mutually convenient. We do ask parents to refrain from initiating conversations about your child when he or she is present. Out of respect for the child, the teacher will gladly talk to any parent on the phone in the evening (before 8 p.m.) or schedule a time when you can meet without your child present.

Classroom Participation (Post Pandemic)

We encourage parents to volunteer skills and talents such as playing a musical instrument or demonstrating a profession or hobby. The point is not to teach but rather to demonstrate and share a passion you may have. Parents may also want to consider volunteering as classroom substitutes. We invite parents to talk with the Director or the teacher about interests they would like to share with the children as well as the days and times they have available.

ANNA'S HOUSE's Parent Volunteer Responsibilities

ANNA'S HOUSE is a not-for-profit school and is reliant upon the participation and assistance of our parents for the well being of our school.

ANNA'S HOUSE's welcomes volunteering or donating to the school. Many volunteer activities can occur outside of the school. The Director and Teachers will reach out to families for support opportunities throughout the year. Volunteering helps to foster a sense of community, and increase equitability across families' contributions to the school.

Helpful Hints for Parents

Inclement Weather

All children should be dressed appropriately for weather conditions (e.g., rain boots, raincoat, mittens, hats, and well-fitting jackets) so that they can have time outside each day. Children who do not have appropriate dress will be asked to remain inside unless backup clothing can be provided from either the child's cubby or the school's supplies.

ANNA'S HOUSE information for weather-related delays and closings. Parents are encouraged to listen to the local television station, WHSV for closings and delays. We will try to list any closing or delay as soon as possible.

In the event that unexpected severe weather develops while the children are at school, the staff will begin calling parents to inform them of an imminent closure. Based on severity of the weather, emergency contacts may be notified if the staff is unable to immediately inform the parents.

Clothing, Labels, Lost and Found

We suggest that the children participate in choosing what clothing they wear to school. We are accustomed to unusual combinations that reflect the children's emerging sense of self. Many families find it helpful for this choice to be made the evening before school. Clothing should be casual enough to be worn without the worry of dirt and stains. It should be comfortable, fit well (cover tummies, arms and legs in cold weather), and allow for the child's independence in dressing.

Please make sure that all sweaters, jackets, and other important items are labeled with your child's last name in indelible ink. ANNA'S HOUSE cannot assume responsibility for children's personal belongings. Misplaced and unmarked items will be placed in a lost and found box. Items not claimed by the end of the school term will be given away. It is a good idea for parents to check their children's cubbies periodically to make sure back-up clothing is still appropriate for size and season. Staff will send home periodic reminders as they become aware that items need to be replenished. In the case of an emergency, the school will use the backup supplies of clothing. Please launder such items and return them to the school as soon as possible.

Favorite Objects from Home

For “nappers”, each child is required to have a top sheet or blanket at nap. Blankets may be brought to school to be used at naptime. If a child has a special nap buddy such as a stuffed animal or doll, the staff will place it in a safe place until rest time. The child may choose to take it home each day or keep it at school.

We find that toys from home sometimes cause distraction and dissension among the children, and they often become damaged or lost. ANNA’S HOUSE cannot be responsible for toys from home and if a child brings one to school, it will be put on a shelf out of reach. It is helpful for parents to explain that the school has plenty of enjoyable activities for the child and that his or her toys can wait safely at home or in the car. Items that are brought in for sharing with the class for show and tell should be educational. All books must be deemed appropriate before they will be read to the whole group.

We recognize the extent to which children are bombarded with fantastic images. They seem to be surrounded by cartoons, super heroes and monsters, and adaptations of fairy tales. While some of these animations are harmless and delightful diversions, others can be scary for children who are trying to distinguish fact and fantasy. ANNA’S HOUSE strives to create an environment that is protected from all images that may cause confusion for the children. We work to provide an atmosphere in which children are free to think and act creatively while being grounded in reality. This framework provides a firm foundation for children as they explore their own imaginative abilities. Because we want to encourage children in their creative endeavors, we appreciate the parents’ support in keeping the commercially created images (even the positive ones) out of the classroom.

Favorite Materials from School

Occasionally, a child is so enamored by the materials and bits and pieces of the activities at school that they find their way home in pockets or lunchboxes. We are delighted to know the children are so happy and interested in their work at school that they would like to continue the process at home, but we do need to keep all of the materials in order to give everyone a full Anna’s House school experience. We ask parents to bring any unfamiliar objects to school so that we may determine whether it is a missing component of the classroom materials. There will be no disciplinary action taken with the child. We will thank him or her profusely for helping us restore the material or activity to its most useful place.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Non-Discrimination and Values Policy

This school does not discriminate in enrollment or hiring with regard to race, gender, religion, or national origin. Our policy is to encourage diversity and internationalism, as well as non-violence, kindness to others, and an awareness of ecological and social responsibility

Application for admission may occur at any time during the year and children may enroll when there is a classroom opening. Therefore, parents are encouraged to place their child's name on the waiting list if space is not available at the time of application. Waiting list status is obtained by submission of the Wait list and payment of the fee.

Anna's House philosophy encourages a mixing of age, gender, and ethnicity. ANNA'S HOUSE is mindful of maintaining that balance of children when filling available spaces. Priority status is granted to ANNA'S HOUSE Alumni and siblings and to the staff of VSDB. Subsequent available spaces will be filled from the waiting list.

Admissions Policies

Initial Inquiry: A call or personal visit may be made to the school to gather information about ANNA'S HOUSE. A brochure about the school and other Anna's House information is available to the visitor or can be sent in the mail at that time. (Post Pandemic) Interested parents are invited to schedule a classroom observation to see how Anna's House actually works in the classroom. Questions can be asked and answered by the classroom teacher immediately if the circumstances allow, or you may speak with the director at the time of your visit or by appointment if necessary.

Application: Families interested in ANNA'S HOUSE may request a Waitlist Form or download it from the website. Once this form is completed and received with the non-refundable wait list fee, the child's name will be placed on the waiting list for enrollment until an opening becomes available. A time will be scheduled for the family to meet with the appropriate teacher and visit the classroom.

Waitlist Procedures

ANNA'S HOUSE waitlist does not operate on a simple first-come, first-served basis for several reasons. First, our physical space and licensure regulations place limits on the number of children within narrow age groups that can inhabit each of our classrooms. Also, Anna's House classrooms need to be balanced across several dimensions in order to function best. Priority in enrollment is given to siblings of current and alumni ANNA'S HOUSE students and also to Stuart Hall siblings and VSDB employees.

Although the ANNA'S HOUSE Director is happy to speak to families about their status on the waitlist, it is impossible to communicate a child's "place" on the waitlist due to the reasons outlined above.

Waiting list status is obtained by submission of the Waitlist form and payment of the fee.

Enrollment Procedures

The reenrollment process for the next academic year begins in March. Reenrollment forms and fees must be turned in by March 31st. Upon acceptance, a deposit towards your first month's tuition is also due with your registration. This is a nonrefundable fee that will be applied towards your August tuition payment and guarantees your placement.

Open enrollment for the next academic year begins April 1st. The registration fee and Registration Form must be turned in by April 31st. Upon acceptance, the nonrefundable deposit towards the first month's payment for newly enrolling students is also due with registration and guarantees your child's placement.

For students enrolling at other times, when placement in the school is mutually agreed, a date will be scheduled for the child to begin school. All forms, the registration fee and your first payment towards your tuition will be due at least **two weeks** prior to the child's first day at school. Current forms, complete with fee schedules, are available on the ANNA'S HOUSE website.

Forms required for enrollment:

- 1) ANNA'S HOUSE Enrollment/Registration Form
- 2) Proof of Identity (copy of birth certificate, passport, adoption papers)
- 3) Commonwealth of Virginia School Entrance Health Form (including Immunization record)
- 4) Discipline Policy Form

Classroom Transitions

*Although parents are welcome to express preferences regarding their child's classroom placement and transitions, these decisions are firmly in the hands of ANNA'S HOUSE staff members who are able to integrate the many child- and school-level factors that are relevant to the process. **Children entering Kindergarten must be 5 years old on or before September 30th.***

Financial Policies

The Financial Agreement confirms the commitment of the parents or guardian to pay the contracted tuition and fees in full for the August to June academic year. In this agreement, each parent or guardian assumes financial responsibility for tuition and fee payment. Withdrawals may be made at the end of a semester and families will not be responsible for further payments if our Withdrawal Policy is followed.

For working parents who choose to deduct the cost of tuition on the IRS form 1040, the Federal Tax ID number for ANNA'S HOUSE is **#84-1814792**.

Tuition and Fee Policy

Because ANNA'S HOUSE is a non-profit school, tuition is our greatest source of income and the foundation of our operational budget. The tuition allows us to continue to provide the highest quality educational program for the children, and to recruit and retain the best staff for the school. In order for

ANNA'S HOUSE to maintain a sound financial footing, full and prompt payment of your tuition and fees is essential, and appreciated.

Tuition is due and payable as contracted by the parents on the Enrollment Agreement. The school makes every effort to keep tuition and fees at a minimum despite the high cost of Anna's House materials, qualified staff, and annual inflation. A minimal increase in tuition is to be expected each year. Nevertheless, the cost of Anna's House education exceeds the tuition charged, and the school incorporates fundraising as a necessary part of its budget to keep fees as low as possible and to provide scholarship assistance as needed.

A 5% sibling discount on the lesser tuition for currently enrolled siblings is a benefit we offer our families.

Between the first day of school and the end of the formal school calendar, no reduction in tuition or make-up days are granted for absences due to vacation or illness, as the school continues to hold the child's space and to meet fixed costs of school operation.

Payment invoices will be emailed to each family's home approximately two weeks (mid month) before the next month's tuition is due (the 1st of the following month). Payments can be mailed to the school, or may be taken directly to the office.

Tuition Payment Plans – Tuition is not a monthly payment. It is a yearly fee that we offer three ways to pay.

ANNA'S HOUSE offers three payment tuition plans.

- Full Year (single) payments are due on or before August 1st. This payment is nonrefundable.
- Semester (two) payments are due on or before August 1st and December 1st. This payment is nonrefundable. There is a small fee associated with this payment plan.
- Annual tuition may be made in ten installments. Payments are due August 1st through May 1st. This is not a payment for monthly tuition. This is a way to spread out this fee for your convenience. There is a fee associated with this payment plan.

If a family receives financial assistance no other discounts may be applied.

Late/Missed Payment Policy

ANNA'S HOUSE understands circumstances arise that may cause payments to be late or missed. If this is a concern or if an emergency financial situation arises, the parent/guardian financially responsible to the school should take the initiative to discuss payment problems with the Director immediately, preferably, before any payments are missed. It may be possible to work out a mutually beneficial payment plan.

Unfortunately, there are also times when the late payments accumulate beyond one month. ANNA'S HOUSE has developed a policy meant to protect the school from the loss of expected income, and the families from further penalties, as follows:

1. ANNA'S HOUSE annual tuition is available to be billed in ten (10) equal payment cycles from August through May.
2. Invoices are emailed by the 20th of each month and payments are due on the 1st of each month.
3. Payments received after the 5th of the month are considered late and a \$75 late fee will be assessed on the following month's tuition invoice.
4. If a payment is not received by the 30th of the month, it is considered missed. The family will be sent a Letter of Notification of further action. The Board of Directors will be notified of the situation.
5. In the event payment is two (2) months in arrears, the family will be asked to withdraw the child until full payment is remitted. If no payment has been made after three (3) months, the child will be withdrawn from the school's enrollment roster and another child will be offered the available place in the classroom. The matter will be turned over to a collection agency or small claims court for final resolution.

Withdrawal Policy

Withdrawals may be made at the end of the school year.

Discipline Policies

The term "discipline" comes from the word 'disciple' and means, literally, 'to teach'. Our approach to discipline is to help children learn they are responsible for what they do and that their actions and choices have consequences. When a child is disruptive, a teacher will offer support and understanding, including an attempt to help the child understand his or her own behavior and to find alternative approaches to solving the problem. If a child is experiencing difficulty, he or she is given time and peace to think about the situation, to express his or her honest feelings, and to come to an increased understanding about it. As the situation becomes resolved, the child is invited to join the teacher in constructive activity as a means of re-integrating into the classroom. The adults take care to relate to the children according to their age, developmental level and temperament.

No physical punishment is used at the school. Discipline is not associated with food, nap- time, or toileting. The teachers will work with the children to help them learn to use words to express themselves rather than acting out or becoming passive when they are disturbed. If unacceptable behavior persists, the teacher will consult with the child's parents. The belief is that through parent-teacher cooperation and consistency, improved behavior will result.

Our approach to discipline is to help children learn that they are responsible for what they do and that their actions have consequences. Often the consequences of a child's actions are good, but sometimes they are not. We present 3 basic ground rules to the children in the class to guide them along the way:

*We take care of ourselves.
We take care of each other.
We take care of the environment.*

Each of these rules is explained the first day of school and reviewed and practiced in the group lessons throughout the year and individually as appropriate. Whether a problem involves only two people or the whole class, we try to help the children learn how to solve problems on their

own. We encourage children to come to a mutual resolution through talking about the problem, listening to each side and understanding the differing points of view. There is no physical punishment or disciplinary action administered to the child. There is no verbal abuse. No belittling remarks are used with the child.

Discipline Procedure

1. The child is **asked** to correct his or her behavior by a positive restatement of the rule.
2. The child is **told** to correct the behavior.
 - a. Children are often redirected
 - b. Given choices
 - c. Given positive reinforcement
 - d. Given empathy
 - e. Allowed to experience natural and logical consequences
 - f. Encouraged to problem solve
 - g. A child will also be encouraged to find the words to express themselves
3. The child is **removed** from the group until s/he feels ready to rejoin the group.
4. If a problem persists beyond three consecutive days parents are contacted to discuss strategies/ ideas to help the child and to support the desired behavior change with the teacher. At this point procedures regarding serious and recurring misbehavior will be enacted.
5. If the above steps fail, help from a professional may be suggested.
6. The Teacher records serious or recurrent misbehaviors as they occur as documentation for possible further disciplinary action

Parents are asked to sign a statement of our disciplinary procedure, to ensure their understanding of our stated policy. A copy of the signed form will be placed in the child's file.

Serious & Recurring Misbehavior

Serious misbehavior is defined as being damaging, disturbing, or dangerous to self, others, or the property of the school. Recurring misbehavior is defined as inappropriate behavior persisting after four weeks of focused strategies towards misconduct. Examples include but are not limited to: verbal or physical abuse of peers, teachers, or staff members; malicious name calling; refusal to do work; out of control hitting and kicking; temper tantrums; throwing objects; damaging materials; hitting, biting, scratching, kicking or pinching others.

Biting cannot and will not be tolerated. Regardless of the reason for the child's choice to bite (e.g., aggression, frustration, etc.), a discussion between the children involved and a staff member will take place. In most cases, the biter will be removed from the environment immediately. The staff member will write up an incident report notifying the parents of both children. The parents of the child who bit another child should be talked to in person, if possible when given the incident report. If the biter attempts repeated behavior in a given day or bites hard enough to break the skin, the staff member shall use his/her discretion about calling the parents and sending the child home immediately.

Whenever there appears to be consistent discipline problems, every effort will be made by the teachers,

assistants and the Director to work with the child, parents and any professional involved. Of course, it is of vital importance that regular communication between parents and teachers be maintained during this time period. If after three weeks of focused strategies towards a change in behavior the child is still exhibiting serious and recurring misguided behavior, the parents are again contacted and the following procedure is explained. If, after all avenues have been followed, the child is not responding positively, dismissal may be warranted.

Sexual Harassment:

No child or staff member will be subjected to any form of sexual harassment or intimidation by child or staff member.

Prohibited Punishment Styles:

The following punishment styles are strictly prohibited at Anna's House. Physical Punishment or infliction of pain

- Humiliation or intimidation
- Ridicule or name calling
- Coercion
- Threat or mental abuse
- Withholding food, water or bathroom privileges

Procedure for Consideration of Dismissal

1. Any time after the beginning of the 4th week of focused strategies the teacher will raise the possibility of the child's dismissal with the Director.
2. If/when the child continues their misguided behavior after the first incident, the teacher will request a verbal conference with the parents, as well as present to the parents a written report of the child's actions/ experience in the classroom. At that time, the teacher will discuss the child's situation and the possibility of his/her suitability of an Anna's House classroom for this particular child. It may be advisable to explain to the parents that any more similar incidents will result in removal from school for the remainder of the day, and subsequent days if the behavior continues. Parents will be notified to pick up their child.
3. Upon returning to school, if the child again disrespects social rules, removal from school for the remainder of the day plus an additional one day suspension will result.
4. The full Board will hold a special session, whereupon the Director, with advisement from the child's teacher, will present a recommendation for or against the child's dismissal. The Board will make the final decision. Once all avenues are employed, such as intentional efforts with the child, discussions with the parents, and work with professionals/experts in the matter of concern, the teacher and the Director will discuss the advisability of asking the parents to withdraw the child from the school. Such a request should only occur if all efforts fail and/or the parents do not cooperate with the efforts of the school or the school truly cannot meet the educational, physical or emotional needs of the child.

Required Withdrawal

When students enter Anna's House it is understood that both they and their parents agree to support all the rules of the school as outlined in the Parent Handbook and other communications to the families while the child is enrolled in the school. In situations involving repeated violations of school rules or continued disruptive behavior, or if at any time the child's influence is considered harmful to the other children, the environment or the staff, the school reserves the right to require the child's withdrawal.

If it becomes clear that ANNA'S HOUSE is unable to meet a child's academic, emotional and social needs, the school reserves the right to require a change of environment to ensure the child's success and well-being.

Statement of Custodial Parents Rights:

- Appropriate paperwork such as custody papers is required if a parent is not allowed to pick up the child. Otherwise the parent is allowed to pick up the child.
- NOTE: Section 22.1-4.3 of the Code of Virginia states that unless a court order has been issued to the contrary, the noncustodial parent of a student enrolled in a public school or day care center must be included, upon the request of such noncustodial parent, as an emergency contact for events occurring during school or day care activities.

Health Policies

Illness

Children who are ill (vomiting, fever over 100 degrees or diarrhea) are required to remain at home until **24 hours after the last symptom**. If your child has a specific illness that requires the use of an antibiotic he or she must stay at home until 24 hours after the first dosage or until the illness is no longer contagious. **Please** observe these rules when it comes to an ill child to avoid spreading the illness to other students and/or teachers.

A child should not be in school if any of the following conditions exist:

- A temperature registering above normal (100 degrees). A child's temperature ***must*** be at normal temperature, without fever-reducing medication, for 24 hours before returning to school.
 - *Note:* Even if the temperature is caused by a non-contagious illness, the child *cannot* attend school as fever indicates that the body is under stress or is fighting an infection. In this condition, complications can easily arise; therefore, the school cannot assume the

responsibility of monitoring sick children.

- An unidentified or contagious rash
- Conjunctivitis/ pink-eye
- Sore throat, persistent cough, or breathing difficulties
- Fresh cold with a profuse, cloudy discharge from the nose
- Child not well enough to play outside
- Two or more diarrhea
- Any type of contagious disease

Should a staff member observe a child with any of the above conditions or feel that the child is too ill to participate in his or her class activities even without symptoms, the Lead Teacher will be notified immediately to assess the child's condition. If the Teacher feels that the child cannot adequately participate in the classroom environment, she will notify the Director who will then notify the child's parents or the emergency contacts.

PLEASE READ OUR PANDEMIC POLICY FOR FURTHER INFORMATION.

Parent or Responsible Person Contact Procedure

1. A staff member will attempt to call the parents as soon as it is determined that the child is too ill to remain at school.
2. If the staff member or Director is unable to speak with the parents, she will leave a message or a callback phone number if possible.
3. If after 15 minutes contact has not been made with the parents, the staff member will attempt to contact them again.
4. If after 30 minutes from the original call, contact has still not been made with the parents, the staff member will begin calling the emergency contacts in the order listed on the Emergency Card.
5. Staff has discretion to alter this timetable depending on the seriousness of the situation.

Administering Medication

Prescription medication will not be given until staff members have obtained Medication Administration Training. (MAT) Once staff receive training in (MAT) the following procedures will be followed:

Only Anna's House employees who have Medication Administration Training (MAT) are allowed to dispense medication. There are strict guidelines that must be followed for the storage, dispensing, and disposal of medications. They are as follows:

1. Whenever possible, it is best that medication be given at home. Dosing of medication can frequently be done so that the child receives medication prior to going to child care, and again

when returning home and/or at bedtime. The parent/guardian is encouraged to discuss this possibility with the child's health care provider.

2. The first dose of any medication should always be given at home and with sufficient time before the child returns to child care to observe the child's response to the medication given. When a child is ill due to a communicable disease that requires medication as treatment, the health care provider may require that the child be on a particular medication for 24 hours before returning to child care. This is for the protection of the child who is ill as well as the other children in child care.
3. Medication will only be given when ordered by the child's health care provider and with written consent of the child's parent/legal guardian. A "Permission to Give Medication in Child Care" form is attached to this policy and will hereafter be referred to as Permission Form. All information on the Permission Form must be completed before the medication can be given. Copies of this form can be duplicated or requested from the child care provider.
4. "As needed" medications may be given only when the child's health care provider completes a Permission Form that lists specific reasons and times when such medication can be given.
5. Medications given in the Center will be administered by a staff member designated by the Center Director and will have been informed of the child's health needs related to the medication and will have had training in the safe administration of medication.
6. Any prescription or over-the-counter medication brought to the child care center must be specific to the child who is to receive the medication, in its original container, have a child-resistant safety cap, and be labeled with the appropriate information as follows:
7. Prescription medication must have the original pharmacist label that includes the pharmacist's phone number, the child's full name, name of the health care provider prescribing the medication, name and expiration date of the medication, the date it was prescribed or updated, and dosage, route, frequency, and any special instructions for its administration and/or storage. It is suggested that the parent/guardian ask the pharmacist to provide the medication in two containers, one for home and one for use in child care.
8. Over-the-counter (OTC) medication must have the child's full name on the container, and the manufacturer's original label with dosage, route, frequency, and any special instructions for administration and storage, and expiration date must be clearly visible.
9. Any OTC without instructions for administration specific to the age of the child receiving the medication must have a completed Permission Form from the health care provider prior to being given in the child care center.
10. All medications will be stored:
 - a. Inaccessible to children such as, inside a bag with a child proof locking zipper.
 - b. Separate from staff medications
 - c. Under proper temperature control (A small lock box will be used in the refrigerator to hold medications requiring refrigeration.)
11. For the child who receives a particular medication on a long-term daily basis, the staff will advise the parent/guardian one week prior to the medication needing to be refilled so that needed doses of medication are not missed.

12. Unused or expired medication will be returned to the parent/guardian when it is no longer needed or be able to be used by the child.
13. Records of all medication given to a child are completed in ink and are signed by the staff designated to give the medication. These records are maintained in the Center.
14. Non-prescription topical ointments (e.g., diaper cream or teething gel), sunscreen and insect repellent require a form signed by a parent and can be administered by any staff member.

Parents whose children have any known allergy or disability should alert both the Director and the teacher to the specifics of special needs..

Injury Procedures

Accident Report: For injury including cuts, scrapes, and splinters, the teacher will handle the problem and inform the parent upon arrival. At this time the parent or guardian will be asked to sign an Accident Report, which a staff member will have completed. Parents will be informed and given the opportunity to come to school and make their own assessment for injuries that appear to be more than a routine occurrence.

Incident Report: An Incident Report documents a child's involvement in dangerous, damaging or aggressive behavior toward themselves, others, or the environment, either physical or emotional. A parent will be asked to sign the report whenever their child is involved in an "incident" of inappropriate behavior. Children's names will be kept confidential, and will not be noted in the incident report.

FOOD POLICIES

Parents are responsible for providing daily lunches for their child and snacks for their child. All food should be nutritious and healthy. Please avoid foods containing dyes, preservatives, chemical additives, corn syrup, excess sugar or salt, or hydrogenated oils/fats. There is current research linking these items to the increase in childhood disorders including obesity, allergies, asthma, diabetes, attention-deficient hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), attention-deficient disorder (ADD), and the increase of autistic spectrum disorders including autism, anxiety, and obsessive-compulsive behavior, and parents are encouraged to speak with their physician and/or nutritionist regarding this research and making healthy food choices.

Allergies: *Several children have known food allergies.*
Please do not bring in any foods containing nuts.

Please bring in **only** those foods listed by your lead teacher.

A complete list of acceptable food including Brand Names, as well as a list of common food allergens is available through the office and your child's classroom/s.

Parent's of children with known food allergies are encouraged to review these lists and will be given advance notice of upcoming special occasion treats planned for your child/s classroom allowing time to prepare special foods at home for your child for these events. Should an unplanned occasion arise in which treats are brought in, their child's teacher or the Director will notify parents of children who have diagnosed allergies and the parent may decide how the situation should be handled.

Please speak to the Director if you have any questions regarding this policy.

Lunch

Lunch serves as a social opportunity as well as a time to practice grace and courtesy. It is important that, after an active morning, children receive proper nutrition to refuel their body. We ask parents to please pack nutritious foods that the child likes and will eat (whole grain snacks, fresh fruit, etc.), avoiding convenience and highly processed lunch items that may contain hidden sugars, preservatives and food colors, and to pack the lunches as much as possible in 'child-friendly, easy-to-open-and-close' containers that can be reused in order to reinforce the lesson of "reduce, reuse, and recycle." Rubbermaid type juice and food containers are appropriate. Send just enough food for one child, keeping in mind that sharing is not allowed at lunchtime (including desserts), due to the possibility of unknown food allergies.

While we strongly discourage sugary foods, small treats or desserts may be sent as part of the child's lunch. However, s/he will be asked to save it until the other items in the lunch have been eaten. Uneaten portions will be sent home whenever possible to allow the parent to see what the child does/does not eat. Candy and gum are not permitted at school as they are non-nutritious and they can serve as a distraction to the children.

Special Occasions

Special snacks will not be allowed until after the Pandemic has been resolved. In the future this will be our policy.

If parents are interested in providing a special snack for a child's birthday, it would be best for them to choose the week of his/her birthday for providing snacks for the class, or make arrangements with the corresponding parent to trade weeks. The birthday snack can be an exceptional (non-snack menu item) treat, although parents are encouraged to avoid chocolate and treats full of sugar, corn-syrup, preservatives, and additives. Safe, nutritious treats/snacks will be made available for those children who have food allergies, are on special diets, or are not permitted to eat sweets.

Sunscreen

If your child needs sunscreen, please apply it to them before coming to school. Sunscreen may be reapplied at school with a written note from the parents to include time of application. Sunscreen must be supplied by the parent and must not have expired. All expired sunscreen will be disposed of. Teachers will keep a written record of applications for each child. Sunscreen will be kept out of the reach of children.

Bug Repellent

If your child needs bug repellent, please apply it to them before coming to school. Bug repellent may be reapplied at school with a written note from the parents to include time of application. Bug repellent must be supplied by the parent and must not have expired. All expired bug repellent will be disposed of. Teachers will keep a written record of applications for each child. Bug repellent will be kept out of the reach of children.

Safety Policies

Suspected Abuse/Neglect

By law staff are required to report any suspected cases of child abuse and/or neglect. If a child attends school with an unusual physical injury or in an unusual emotional state, the staff will:

1. Consult each other regarding their observations
2. Discuss the issue with the child's parent/guardian
3. Reserve the right to consult social services regarding further courses of action

Every effort will be made to protect the confidentiality of the child/ family.

Lost or Missing Child Procedures

Extensive efforts are made to secure the physical safety of the children while at school. If an occasion should arise when a child is unaccounted for the following steps will be taken.

On Site:

1. The classroom staff will consult each other regarding the child's whereabouts.
2. The Director will be informed if child not found within 2 minutes.
3. The classroom and playground areas will be searched.
4. The remainder of the facility and adjoining areas will be searched. The Director and Assistants will search for the child while the Lead Teacher remains with the other students.
5. If it is determined that the child is lost or missing (cannot be located within 2 more minutes,) a staff member will immediately call 911 for assistance and the child's parents/guardian– Every attempt will be made to notify an emergency contact immediately. Such words as "emergency" or 911 may be used to convey the seriousness of the situation.

Off Site:

1. The staff will consult each other and any parent volunteers who may be accompanying a field trip regarding the child's whereabouts.
2. Each adult will be asked to remain with the children or to search the building/ surrounding area. At no time will the remaining children be left unattended.
3. After a reasonable search, depending on location and circumstances, a staff member will notify local authorities requesting further assistance. The Director and the child's parent/guardian will be notified immediately following such actions.

Procedures when a child is not picked up at the end of the day

Every effort will be made to contact the parent when a child is not picked up at closing. This will begin immediately, as soon as the parent is one minute late. If parents are not available within 15 minutes, emergency contacts will be contacted. If emergency contacts are unavailable grandparents will be contacted. If grandparents are not available, DSS will be notified.

Emergency Preparedness Plans**Medical Emergencies**

All children enrolled at the school must have on file written permission for Anna's House to authorize emergency care. These cards are located in the classroom and the Director's office. In the case of a medical emergency, the child's parents will be contacted as soon as possible by the director or Lead Teacher. A doctor and hospital preference must be listed in the child's records, with the understanding that ANNA'S HOUSE would have to take into account time factors for deciding the most appropriate course of action in case of any emergency.

Other/General Emergencies

For all other emergencies parents will be contacted as needed.

Emergency Procedures Steps to follow during an emergency.

1. In the event of an emergency the director or designee will be notified as soon as possible regarding the situation and the response to it.
2. An accounting of all children and staff will be kept with the teacher. Teachers will start and end her actions with counting children and matching to attendance list of the day when moving the children.

3. The emergency information on each child and staff will accompany the attendance list during an evacuation.
4. The first aid kits, any medical supplies such as children's medication and emergency supplies will be taken when facility relocates to a safe place or area.
5. A cellular telephone is available to contact emergency agencies, parents and Child Care Licensing.

Fire / Fire Drill Procedure

ANNA'S HOUSE will conduct a fire drill once monthly, as required by VA Standards. The drill will be at varied times of day to ensure all programs are prepared for an emergency. The results of each drill will be located in the office. Evacuation maps are located in each classroom and in the office. All exits are illuminated. All staff members are expected to assist students and visitors in following the procedures.

All classrooms:

Central Meeting Area: Grassy area, near large patio.

EMERGENCY EXIT: **Preschool patio doors**

Secondary Exit: Main entrance doors.

- **Children / Staff should exit through the door that leads directly onto the outside and gather at the Safe Area.**
- If the primary exit door is blocked or inaccessible, then Children / Staff should exit through the Main entrance door and meet at the Safe Area.
 1. Administrator/teacher will ring bell to indicate start of fire drill. Timing will begin upon bell ringing.
 2. Lead staff for each class will retrieve Attendance Log and Emergency Contact List before leaving the building.
 3. All occupants are to walk immediately to the appropriate exit.
 4. All staff is expected to perform a head count of their respective class upon exiting the building and upon arrival at their Safe Area.
 5. All students and staff are to follow their respective procedures for exiting the building as quickly as possible and arriving at their Safe Area.
 6. Lead teachers are expected to stay with their respective class/students.

7. Assistants are responsible for checking bathrooms and classrooms to ensure all children have been safely evacuated from the building, **closing all doors behind them**, before joining their class at the Safe Area.
8. Visitors are to exit the building following the same procedures as the room they are in at the time of the drill and follow students to their respective Safe Area. .
9. When the building has been evacuated and all children/staff are in their Safe Area, the Administrator will verify with all classroom teachers that all students and adults are accounted for and note exit times for each classroom.
10. Administrator/teacher announces the end of drill (code green) and everyone returns to the building.
11. In a true fire, parents will be contacted immediately after all emergency agencies are notified.

Emergency Evacuation Procedures

In the case of an actual emergency where the school grounds must be vacated and all children and personnel evacuated (fire, flooding, electrical problems, eminent danger, etc.), the following procedure will be followed:

1. The Director (or designated staff member) will call **911** to report the emergency situation. After calling 911 the Director will follow the Emergency Evacuation Contact Procedures. Parents will be contacted upon arrival at the Safe Place
2. The Director (or designated staff member) will gather emergency information on children and staff, school roster, emergency kit, and cell phone.
3. The classes will leave through patio entrance for the school and walk out to the grass. If needed, cross VSDB Drive. Staff will assist the children safely across the evacuation path.
3. All staff and children will meet at the Central Meeting Area.
4. The Administrator and available staff will use the Emergency Contact List to inform parents of the evacuation through the parent web system.
5. Parents (or emergency contacts) will called and will be asked to pick up their child from the campus
6. Staff will remain with the children until a parent/emergency contact person comes to get them and signs them out from their respective teacher.

Flooding

In the case of flooding, the same procedure will be followed.

LOCK DOWN PROCEDURE

Shelter in Place

In the case of eminent danger from suspicious persons, tornado, or other outside threat, all classrooms will follow this procedure:

- The director or administrator on site will issue a code “Yellow” (*be on alert*) verbally, intercom or by cell phone if time permitted. Teachers will await further instructions. The director or designated leader will call **911** immediately to request further assistance.
- If necessary, a code “Red” (*lock down*) will then be issued verbally, intercom or cell phone to all classes
- A designated assistant staff member in each classroom will respond by locking down all entrances (windows, outer and inner doors) to their classroom and take a key with them to their designated safe place. Lead teachers and/or remaining staff will assemble all children in each classroom to a designated space where children can be safe and/or hidden until danger is past. Parents will be contacted by teachers and the director in a true emergency during the lockdown as soon as all emergency agencies that need to be informed have been contacted.

All Classes: Hall in center of building not visible to outside.

- When situation is secure, the director or designated administrative staff will issue a Code “Green” (*all clear*) and staff can resume their classes.

