



Mainspring Academy  
2022-23 Parent-Student Handbook

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Front Office Hours: 8:00-4:00pm  
School Hours: 8:30am-2:30pm  
Extended School Day Hours: 7:30-8:30am, 3:00-5:30pm

## Key Personnel

Dina Parisi, M.A.

Head of School

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Director of Programming (Remote)

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Director of Student and Community Affairs

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## Board of Directors

Kristine d'Esterhazy, Board Chair

Lisa DiFranza Esq., Vice Chair

Ritche Redondo, Treasurer

Melissa Johnson, Secretary

Matthew Simpson, Director

Dr. Mohammed Touheed, Director at Large

### ***Notice of Nondiscriminatory Policy as to Students***

*Mainspring Academy admits students of any race, color, national, and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national, and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic or other school administered programs*

## Section 1: School History, Mission, and Values

### Who We Are

Mainspring Academy was established in 2015 as a non-profit independent school serving students with a wide range of development and intellectual differences. Our program is highly intensive and specialized with the goal of students eventually transitioning into least restrictive educational and adult program environments. Serving grades K-12, we provide a curriculum focused not only on traditional core academics, but on functional academics that support progress in the areas of vocational, independent living, and social skills development. At Mainspring we take a multi-faceted approach that includes behavioral education, mental and emotional health, and hands- on experiential learning.

Our highly integrative educational model includes:

- Individualized Learning Plans for each student
- Daily Living, self-help, and hygiene instruction
- Behavioral intervention
- Teaching/modeling of coping skills and self-regulation
- Play/leisure and social skills instruction in a group setting with similar peers
- Community Based Instruction (CBI) and field trips
- Sensory integration
- Computer lab
- Resources that include art, music, yoga/exercise on a rotating schedule
- Pre-vocational/vocational training
- Transition support
- Collaboration with private therapy teams, schools and parents

Mainspring Academy is recognized by the Florida Department of Education as a registered and approved private school. We comply with all state standards for safety, employment, and facilities protocols. We are approved for participation in the FES-UA and FTC scholarship programs administered through Step Up for Students and AAA Scholarship Foundation.

Our leadership consists of a volunteer Board of Directors with a broad range of business, finance, marketing, and legal experience and Master's level administrators with expert experience in behavior, education, and non-profit leadership and development.

## Mission

Mainspring Academy's mission is to provide quality, individualized education in a safe learning environment where children with intellectual and developmental differences can thrive.

## Values

- **Teamwork:** We believe a student's success is a collaborative effort. We take input from previous schools, parents, and private therapists to tailor education plans that will set the path for student progress.
- **Communication:** Clear communication is vital to student, staff, and organizational success.
- **Personal Growth:** At Mainspring the expectation is that everyone learns and grows. Students, Parents, Staff and Administrators embrace the concept of life-long learning and instill that same belief as their children learn and grow
- **Safety:** Providing an environment that is safe, both physically and mentally, is of the highest priority at Mainspring Academy.
- **Integrity:** Honesty and students dignity is at the core of our ethical code.
- **Tenacity:** We strive for students to make progress, regardless of their challenges.

## Section 2: Academic Program

### Classroom Design

Classrooms at Mainspring are uniquely designed to provide each student the necessary tools to make academic and behavioral gains. The goal at Mainspring is always to eventually transfer the student to a less restrictive environment where the skills they have learned with us can be generalized. The time trajectory for this kind of transition is dependent on many factors, and in many cases the student will stay at Mainspring until they reach adulthood.

Because the classroom environment is focused on much more than core academics, our teachers come from a wide variety of educational backgrounds including special education, psychology, applied behavior analysis, communication sciences, mental health, and early childhood education. In addition, many of our teacher's assistants are credentialed as Registered Behavior Technicians. This diverse level of experience allows our team to address your child's needs from a broad view while individualizing each intervention and teaching strategy.

Students are assigned a classroom based on their Present Level of Performance (PLOP). This information is fluid, and will change throughout the school year, but may not result in a change

in classroom placement. In general, classrooms consist of students with similar learning and behavior profiles and who are within a 3 year age range and grade level. The average classroom ratio is 6 students to 2 educators, with additional support coming into the classroom as required.

## Matrix of Support

Students at Mainspring will be thoroughly observed and evaluated to determine the level of support needed for them to function within the classroom setting. As part of that evaluation process, they will be periodically assessed across five (5) domains areas: Curriculum and Learning, Independent Functioning, Behavior, Communication, and Health. Each domain will be scored with a number rating based on met criteria within each domains levels, and the individual domain ratings will be combined and averaged to determine an overall rating. Based on this rating, we will determine the student's level of needed support for success in the classroom, which determines the student's tuition rate (tier level). While the majority of our students remain at the tier 1 support level, some students will need additional supports to be successful in our setting.

A student's matrix score will be periodically assessed to determine if the student's needs have changed due to growth/progress, or on the contrary if additional support is needed. If a student's matrix score changes in any domain, parents will be notified via email and a team meeting will be scheduled to discuss the changes and any impact the changes will have on the individual student or family.

A summary of each domain is as follows:

**Curriculum and Learning:** The curriculum and learning domain considers the level of support a student requires in order to fully participate in their academic plan. It takes into consideration whether a student is able to learn in a small group setting with minimal support, if they simply require additional remediation, or if they require direct, 1:1 support for all learning activities. Since all students at Mainspring require accommodations/modifications of some type, it considers the level of accommodation or modification, and the time and personnel it will take to implement that level of support.

**Behavior:** This domain examines the level of intervention needed to address a student's behavior, as well as the frequency and intensity of their behaviors. Specifically it takes into consideration the level of risk to student safety, as well as the personnel required to minimize that risk. Students who exhibit high intensity and/or frequent self-injury or aggression, require

time-out protocols, frequently elope, or exhibit destructive behaviors will receive a higher rating in this domain than students who can be easily redirected within the classroom setting.

**Communication:** The communication domain specifies the level of prompting and support needed for a student to be able to communicate his or her needs and wants throughout the school day, as well as their ability to follow verbal, written, and picture image instructions and routines. Students using Alternative Augmentative Communication (AAC), PECS, sign language and other alternative communication will be evaluated based on their independence and appropriate use of using their preferred communication modality. Students who are speaking will be evaluated on how functional their language is when it comes to requesting wants and needs, personal identification, and reciprocal conversation.

**Independent Living:** This domain considers the student's ability to navigate familiar environments and care for themselves without additional support from caregivers or school staff in relation to what would be appropriate for their age. Students who have higher support needs will be evaluated based on the level of prompting (least to most) in order for them to complete skills such as grooming and hygiene, walking from one location to another independently, and maintain personal safety and security.

**Health (Special Consideration):** The health domain is an area of special consideration in our Matrix of Support designated to students who may need assistance to maintain their health within the school day. Students who require regular, PRN, or emergency medication administration from our medication trained staff will have points assigned in this domain. In addition to medication, students who are medically fragile or have needs for conditions that have either regularly occurring symptoms or emergent symptoms will be evaluated in this area. Essentially, students who require additional staff support for medical needs within the school day, will be evaluated in this area.

## Individualized Learning Programs (ILPs)

Mainspring Academy recognizes that each student has a unique profile of strengths, experiences, and support needs. Due to these unique differences, every student will receive an Individual Learning Program (ILP) to outline their present level of performance in the 5 support domains listed in our Matrix of Support, identify accommodations and modifications needed for the student to be successful in the school environment, and set meaningful goals to guide student progress. The ILP is rewritten each school year and is a fluid document that should be revised and changed as students master goals. Additionally, when data and progress monitoring

shows that students are not making sufficient progress, goals may be modified or changed to be more attainable for eventual mastery.

ILPs are written by the classroom teacher with extensive input from the student's parents, treatment providers, and administrators. Mainspring Academy has two types of ILPs (Standard and Transitional) in order to better serve the various stages of student's academic life. The following sections describe what is included in the different ILPs:

## Standard ILP Content

The ILP contains seven components:

- 1. Student Information:** Personal data such as address, previous school placement, age, gender, and diagnoses.
- 2. Family Information:** Parent names and contact information
- 3. Considerations of Special Factors:** Identifies if student has limitations identified by IDEA for special consideration when creating ILP content. These limitations include: behavior, limited English proficiency, blindness or visual impairment, communication needs/deafness, and the need for assistive technology in order to be successful in the academic environment.
- 4. Present Levels of Performance (PLOP):** This section is the most important component of the ILP document. The PLOP is updated annually for the purpose of providing baseline data from which ILP goals are derived as well as reflecting results of evidence-based assessments. Baseline information and PLOPs are created for each of our Matrix of support domains.
- 5. Annual Goals and Objectives:** These are the goals that your child will work on throughout the year to drive progress and development. Goals are written meeting the SMART criteria: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Timely. When formulating goals assessment scores, teacher data and impressions, and parent and provider input will be considered.
- 6. Parent Input and Comments:** This section is completed at the ILP meeting and summarizes parents' concerns, priorities for skill acquisition, and approval or disapproval of annual goals presented by the team.
- 7. Signatures:** All attendees of the ILP must sign the ILP at the end of the annual ILP meeting and each time that an addendum meeting is required prior to the annual review date.

## Transitional ILP Content

Transitional ILPs use the same format as standard ILPs except for key differences in the section related to goal domains. Since Transitional ILPs consider life span skills, the areas of concern are focused on the skills needed when students eventually leave the academic setting. In addition to most of the domains mentioned above, PLOs on transitional ILPs will include:

- 1. Self-Advocacy:** Addresses the need of students to be aware of the accommodations and modifications needed across all settings and environments, as well as how to advocate for those services.
- 2. Vocational:** Focuses on skills that prepare students for the supported workplace such as completing daily routines and tasks, following listener instructions, community resource awareness, and maintaining a clean appearance.
- 3. Functional Academics:** Targets skills that are based in core academics but are applicable to real-world settings.

## ILP Meetings

Students will be provided with an individual learning program within 45 school days of enrollment at Mainspring Academy. The only exception to this is our primary and early education students, whose prior learning experiences have often been in 1:1 clinic-based or home-based settings. In these cases ILP creation can take up to 90 school days, with the first 30 school days focused on rituals and routines, the next 30 school days focused on assessments and baseline data collection, and the final 30 school days focused on ILP creation and implementation.

Parents are required to attend all ILP meetings as active participants. Mainspring will make every effort to accommodate parent schedules, however after 3 unsuccessful attempts to schedule an ILP meeting, the proposed ILP will be implemented. Parents should recognize that student success is directly related to collaboration between the home and school setting and that refusal to take part in the process of developing their child's learning program may impact future enrollment at Mainspring.

## Transition Planning/Meetings

In addition to ILP meetings, administrative staff will periodically hold meetings with parents of students who are over the age of 16 to begin discussing plans for their child's transition into adulthood. The frequency of these meetings will increase as the student ages or as the urgency to transition becomes more prevalent. While Mainspring does accept students up to the age of



22, in some cases it may be recommended that the student transition into another setting prior to that age due to our program no longer fitting their needs. Regardless of when a student is transitioned out of our program, planning for adulthood is a process that takes time and diligent planning. It is our hope that by holding structured and collaborative meetings focused on the student's unique support needs and skills, that the transition from school to adult services is smooth for both the student and family.

## Student Progress

Student progress will be formally documented each quarter. All students will receive a progress report mid-quarter, and a report card at the end of each 9 weeks. Due to the unique learning profiles of our students, Mainspring does not use the traditional letter grade system. Rather, we use the data we have collected to determine the level of mastery toward each ILP goal. Grades will be expressed using the following:

**Mastered (M):** Student has mastered entire goal or a benchmark of the goal

**Progressing (P):** Student is making sufficient progress toward goal completion. Typically students receiving this mark are expected to meet mastery criteria within the school year.

**Minimal Progress (S):** Student is not making sufficient progress. Teacher to monitor and determine if the goal needs to be altered or changed to obtain a pre-requisite skill prior to next progress reporting period.

**Not Addressed (NA):** Students may receive this mark for several reasons. The most common reason is because it is a benchmark that the student has not reached for the overall goal. Other reasons include behavior prohibiting student from working on the goal and absences.

In addition to the above letter grades, Mainspring Academy provides participation ratings that align with Florida's access points system. These marks reflect the level and quality of student participation in learning on a sliding scale based upon the student's individual learning style.

## Suspension/Expulsion

In rare situations, administration may make the decision that Mainspring is no longer able to provide academic services to a student. Reasons for academic suspension or expulsion include but are not limited to:

- Student behavior that is high magnitude and high frequency, and/or outside the scope of what is appropriate or safe for our classroom settings or requires excessive 1:1 or crisis level intervention.
- Refusal of parent to cooperate with school policies including but not limited to: sick policies, administrative policies, and policies related to collaboration and or adherence to an action plan from parents.
- Excessive absenteeism and/or tardiness
- Inability of the school to meet the needs of the child, whether the needs are less intervention or more intervention.
- Parent's disrespectful or disparaging behavior toward administration, staff, other parents or children.
- Failure to pay tuition and fees

Mainspring administration makes all efforts to avoid suspending or expelling students. Even in the rare cases that we are forced to make these hard decisions, we make all efforts to help the family transition to another environment.

## Section 3: Daily Operations

### Arrival and Dismissal

School hours are from 8:30am to 2:30pm Monday through Friday.

All students must be dropped off and picked up in the supervised carline in front of the building. Parents must remain in the car during carline. Staff will help students in and out of their car seats and seatbelts. The following procedures are in place for carline:

- Morning carline begins at 8:25am and ends at 8:45am. Afternoon carline begins at 2:20pm and ends at 2:45pm. Parents are prohibited from dropping off children early unless they are enrolled in the extended school day program. Parents who pick their children up late will be charged \$1 per minute beginning at 2:50pm. After 3:00pm parents will be charged the full extended day drop-in rate of \$60.
- Drivers should remain alert in carline. Use of phone or other distractions is strictly prohibited.
- Car should be placed in "Park" while staff is assisting your child.
- Once your child is out of the car and under the supervision of staff, please use extreme caution as you pull off the carline and leave the parking lot.
- If you need to come into the building, please park in a space past the carline drop off area and walk in from the sidewalk.
- Staff are not able to have more than brief conversations about your child's day in carline. If there is a pressing issue, please call the school and we will address your issue.

Communication regarding your child's day will be sent directly from the classroom teacher each school day. This policy also pertains includes updates from the any therapists working with your child. Please coordinate communication with the team during other times.

- Changes in transportation must be in writing and reported to the front office no later than 1:45pm. This will allow us to disseminate the message to carline staff and greatly reduces confusion and delay for all students during dismissal.
- All persons picking up students must be listed as an approved adult in the child's transportation form. Mainspring will not release students to anyone without prior approval from parents or guardians.

## Late Arrival/Tardiness

Students who arrive past 8:45am must be walked in by their parent or caretaker and signed into the tardy log. Learning begins promptly at 8:45am for all classrooms. Students who arrive late are missing out on opportunities for skill development and interrupting the flow of learning for other students. Students with more than 5 late arrivals within a quarter will receive an attendance notice. If a student has more than 20 late arrivals per year, a parent meeting with the Head of School will be required to discuss the impact on learning.

Parents who have special circumstances that prohibit them from getting their child to school on time should provide a signed and dated letter to the Head of School stating the reasons for the late arrival with the expected time that the student will be at school each day, and should include any supporting documentation for those reasons. The Head of School will determine if the reason is sufficient to make accommodations to the student's schedule, or if the schedule conflict is such that it will impact scholarship compliance. This letter will be kept in the student file, and should be updated by the parent as necessary.

Students who are periodically late for reasons such as medical appointments should provide a doctor's excuse on a letterhead upon entry to school. These letters will be kept in the student file.

## Early Dismissal

Mainspring Academy has two scheduled early dismissal days during the school year. These are the day before Winter break and the last day of school. On these days students will be dismissed for carline at 12:00pm. There will be no extended day services on early dismissal days, so parents should plan accordingly.

## Early Pickup

Parents who must pick their student up early for reasons such as appointments should notify the school as early as possible so that the student can be ready and there is minimal interruption to

the class. For medical appointments, a doctor's excuse should be provided upon return to school the following school day.

Parents who must pick their student up early on a regular basis should provide a signed and dated letter to the Head of School stating the reasons for the early pickup with the expected time that the student will leave school each day. The letter should also include any supporting documentation for those reasons. The Head of School will determine if the reason is sufficient to make accommodations to the student's schedule, or if the schedule conflict is such that it will impact scholarship compliance. This letter will be kept in the student file, and should be updated by the parent as necessary.

## Late Pick Up

Students must be picked up in carline by 2:45 pm each day. After 2:45 pm, parents will need to park their car and enter the building to retrieve their child.

Parents who are running late to afternoon pick up should notify the school as soon as possible so that the front office can notify classroom staff. Parents who arrive after 2:50 pm will be charged an initial rate of \$1 per minute for the first 10 minutes. At 3:00 pm parents will be charged the full extended day drop in rate of \$60.

Parents are advised that repeated failure to arrange pick up for your child may result in the school notifying the Department of Children and Families or local law enforcement out of concern of neglect and abandonment.

## Attendance

Student attendance at school is paramount to their progress. Students on scholarships such as the FES-UA scholarship are required to meet strict attendance guidelines and as such the school has a formal attendance policy. Guidelines of this policy are as follows:

- When students are absent the parent is expected to use the parent's corner attendance notification on the school website and let us know the reason for the absence
- The notification should include the dates of absence and reasons for absence. In cases where the student has visited a doctor and has been advised not to return to school, a note from a doctor indicating the dates of absence may be uploaded. These notes will be kept in the student file as documentation of the absence. Failure to provide a note within 48 hours of return to school will result in the absence being considered unexcused.
- In the event a notification is not received for the absence, the absence will be considered unexcused.
- Parents of students with more than 5 unexcused absences in a quarter will be required to meet with the Head of School. Students with more than 10 unexcused absences will be placed on final warning. If absences exceed 20 during the school year, without justifiable and documented reason, the student will be considered for removal from the program.

- Parents will understand that excessive absenteeism not only hinders student progress, but also impacts student scholarships. In the case of FES-UA, students who miss excessive school may be required to return scholarship funding to their chosen funding organization. This in turn will result in the full amount of tuition being paid out of pocket by the parent.

*\*Note: Absences related to COVID-19 exposure and illness will not count against a student. Please see our COVID-19 policy for further instruction.*

## Extended School Day

Mainspring Academy offers both morning and afternoon extended school day for our students. This is a limited space program and an application must be submitted for review before entering the program. Available space and the appropriateness of the program for the student will be the determining factor for entry to the program. Consideration for student safety is at the forefront of our planning for extended day. For this reason, some students may not be a good fit for the program. Reasons for application denials include behavior, level of independence with toileting, and general ability to function in a 5:1 ratio.

Extended day costs are separate from tuition and it is an application based program with its own policies and procedures. Please contact the school for more information or to obtain an application.

## Special Events

Throughout the school year, Mainspring holds many special events meant to enrich the students' educational experience. These include holiday events, cultural fairs, open houses, Special Olympics and more. Mainspring will make every effort to ensure that our events are inclusive for all students. In some situations, the school may ask a parent for help in making accommodations for their child. Examples include bringing special foods, equipment, or providing backup transportation for their child. Special events are meant to be fun learning experiences. We encourage all parents to participate by volunteering or attending as they are able (see parent participation).

## Field Trips

Field trips are a way for students to practice what they have learned in school out in the community with the support of school staff. Students will be transported by contracted bus or school van to their field trip location. In case of problems with behavior or health out in the community, at least one additional staff vehicle will be driven so that the student can be transported back to school.

Parents must have a signed field trip permission slip with any payment turned into the school by the deadline notated on the field trip form. Failure to turn in the permission slip on time will

result in your child being unable to attend the field trip. In this case, due to limited staffing, your child will need to be picked up from school prior to departure for the field trip and kept at home for the school day.

At times, due to issues such as weather, venue closures, and staff illness, field trips much be rescheduled or cancelled. In these cases parents will be reimbursed or their payment will be applied to a later date.

Staff is required to keep student demographic sheets and emergency contacts with them at all times during a field trip. In case of emergency, the Head of School or his designee will travel to the field trip location or location of emergency and notify parents as soon as the emergency details are clear.

## Lunch

Students should bring a healthy lunch, and at least 2 healthy snacks with them each school day. A water bottle should be kept at school for refilling throughout the school day. If a parent orders lunch to be delivered to the school, we ask that the order arrive 10-15 minutes before the classes scheduled lunch. Parents who forget lunch will need to arrange for lunch to be brought the school. While the school usually has small snacks available for emergencies, these snacks will not be enough to satisfy the needs of a child exerting energy for a full day.

Microwaves are available for students to heat up lunches. As much as possible, we would like for students to be able to heat their meals up on their own. We ask that meals be easy to heat, have simple directions, and generally take no more than 1-2 minutes to warm.

Students will have opportunities to have small snacks throughout the day. Parents should provide snacks that are easy for their child to eat independently.

Students in our extended day programs are welcome to eat breakfast or afternoon snack during the designated time in the cafeteria. For students in extended day, we encourage you to provide extra extended day snacks to store at school in case the student eats their after school snack during the school day.

## Dress Code

Students should be dressed in comfortable, clean, and appropriate clothing. We highly recommend that student wear sneakers or other closed-toe shoes to prevent injury. Since many of the activities that our students participate in can be messy, we do not recommend that students wear expensive clothing or shoes.

All students should be dressed in clothing that they can manage. While Mainspring Staff will assist should a student have an issue with donning or doffing clothing, our goal is for them to manage this task independently.

Students should be dressed with personal safety, dignity, and the comfort of self and others in mind. Clothing that constantly falls down the backside, shorts that are shorter than mid-thigh, and tops that drop and expose chest are not appropriate for school. Girls that have developed breasts should wear a bra or camisole under their shirt. We also suggest that girls wear bloomers or shorts under dresses. All students should be wearing undergarments that are clean and comfortable. Under no circumstances should students wear clothing with foul language or offensive messages to school.

If a student comes to school dressed in a fashion that violates this policy, parents will be called to bring an appropriate change of clothes or take the student home.

## Change of Clothes

All students, regardless of age, are required to keep 2 changes of clothes at the school. We recommend leaving items that are not of value to you. Even though many of our students do not have toileting accidents, other situations occur where the student may need to change their shirt or pants. If a situation occurs where the student needs to change their clothing and the parent has not provided a change of clothes, the parent will be called to bring in clothing for the student to change into.

## Hygiene

Students should be bathed with clean hair and teeth when at school. Students who have reached puberty should wear deodorant every day. Our students are very active during the school day and will sweat and get dirty. Nails should be clean and trimmed regularly. Parents must make sure that students are properly cared for, or are caring for themselves when appropriate, when it comes to personal hygiene.

In addition to hygiene activities at home, students will practice good hygiene at school. All classes have a hygiene block during the school day. All students have a personal hygiene kit provided by their parents. Your classroom teacher will notify you of the supplies needed for your hygiene kit.

Parents should be advised that as mandated reporters, staff is required to report cases of suspected neglect to the Department of Children and Families. Neglecting your child's hygiene on a consistent basis is grounds for a report to be made. In cases where the student is having behaviors at home that prevent the parent from successfully completing hygiene routines, the parent should reach out to the Head of School so that we can make suggestions or determine if there is something that we can work on during the school day that would help the situation.

Students who are still toilet training or girls who have started their menstrual cycle and use disposable briefs/pull ups or feminine hygiene products should keep an ample supply of changing materials at the school. While the school does often have extra, we cannot guarantee

we will have these products on hand for the student. Classroom staff will notify parents when the supply is getting low.

## Supplies

A school supply list will be sent prior to school starting. This list will include supplies that the entire school uses. Please do not label these supplies. These supplies should be dropped off by the first day of school.

Your classroom teacher will communicate the students individual supply list prior to the first day of school. These supplies will be for individual students and classroom use.

Throughout the school year, the school may ask for parents to send in additional supplies. We appreciate parent's support in sending in these items.

## Section 4: Communication and School Community

### General and Student Specific Communication

At Mainspring we believe that clear and timely communication is paramount to student success. The School works very hard to keep parents informed and the lines of communication open. As a result, we use a variety of communication modes to keep parents informed of school events and activities:

- The "Parents Corner" of our website, [www.mainspringacademy.org](http://www.mainspringacademy.org) is a wonderful source of information and covers many of our daily procedures, provides copies of forms/releases, contains links to our Social Media, and many other topics that concern parents and students. All parents should visit this area and familiarize themselves with it.
- Our monthly newsletter will be sent to all parents and other interested parties each month. The newsletter contains highlights of the previous month and provides information about upcoming events and activities.
- Our social media pages on Instagram and Facebook are constantly updated with pictures and updates on school activities. This is one of the best ways to see the school in action and get a sense of Mainspring's culture. In addition to our main Facebook page, we have a specific Facebook page for Mainspring parents to share information and ask questions.
- Email will often be used by administrative and front office staff to communicate important information. Parents should be sure to update the school with any email address changes as soon as possible.

### Class Dojo

The primary mode of communication regarding your child's day will be through Class Dojo. Class Dojo may be accessed by app or by website. All teachers are required to regularly update Class Dojo with class information as well as send daily home notes indicating any important information regarding the student's day. Parents can send messages back to the classroom staff



when necessary. The Class Dojo platform is time-stamped, allowing for parents, teachers, and administration to see when communication occurs and when it is read. We encourage all parents to use this as the primary source of communication to classroom staff, as it will be the primary source of communication to parents.

### Email

Classroom staff often use email as a more formal communication method or if additional parties, such as outside providers (ABA, OT, Speech, etc.) need to be a participant in the communication.

Administrative and front office staff will use email as their primary communication source. Parents are encouraged to send administrative staff questions regarding school policies, events, and concerns, but for details on happenings within the classroom they will be better served communicating directly with the classroom teacher.

Parents should be advised that all staff is required to answer emails within 24 hours or 1 business day. Days that the school is closed for business are not considered business days and parents should not expect a response until the school reopens. In addition, all staff, including administrators are not required to answer emails when they are on scheduled PTO or home sick. If a parent is noticing that they are not receiving an answer to an email within 24 hours or 1 business day, and did not receive an “out of office” response, they should email [info@mainspringacademy.org](mailto:info@mainspringacademy.org) and the information will be disseminated to an appropriate staff member who can help them.

### Phone

Phone calls to the front office should generally be reserved for urgent information that needs to be disseminated to staff. Under no circumstances is a teacher or paraprofessional able to leave their class in order to take a parent call during school hours. If a parent wishes to have a phone conversation with the teacher, they should ask the teacher to call them at a pre-arranged and mutually agreeable time.

Administrative staff take phone calls as they are available during the school day. All non-urgent messages will be returned within 24 hours or 1 business day.

Parents will be advised that both classroom and administrative staff are encouraged not to provide their personal cell phone number to parents. There are many reasons for this including:

- Privacy of school and student information
- Administrators are not able to hold staff accountable for information disseminated
- Consideration for personal, “off-duty” time of Mainspring Academy employees.

In cases where a staff member chooses to share their cell phone information with parents against the strong recommendation of the Head of School, the school will not be held responsible for any information disseminated. If a parent receives a text message from the

personal cell phone any of our staff, they should be advised that the message is not approved, nor should it be considered official information.

## Communication of Parent Concerns

Parents will utilize the proper channels of communication and respect the knowledge and training of staff at Mainspring Academy. Parents are encouraged to discuss any concerns with their child's progress, learning program, or differences in opinion with the classroom teacher prior to contacting the Head of School or other administrative staff. Misunderstandings and problems are often a result of a lack of communication between those involved and ultimately affect the child. All parent initiated contact, including phone messages, emails, and Dojo messages will be responded to within 24 hours or 1 business day, with school closures and holidays taken into consideration.

If a parent concern escalates to a complaint against a staff member, the following steps should be taken:

1. A timely email should be sent directly to the Head of School with specific information regarding the incident or problem.
2. The Head of School will gather information from both the parent and the staff member to investigate the issue.
3. The Head of School will schedule a phone call with the parent to share what they found through their investigation, if appropriate the Head of School will encourage a mediation meeting between the staff and parent.
4. If the issue calls for additional training for staff, the Head of School will follow up with the parent on how, when, and why that training will happen.

Complaints against the Head of School should first seek resolution through communication between the Head and the parent or complainant. If the parent is unable or unwilling to resolve the issue directly with the Head of School, they may request review of the complaint by the Board of Directors. They should be in writing and sent by mail to the school addressed "Board of Directors". Requests for Board of Director reviews may take up to 2 weeks for processing.

## Volunteering

### Parent Volunteers/Volunteer Requirement

All parents are required to volunteer a minimum of 10 hours per school year. There are volunteer opportunities for all skill sets and talents throughout the school year by way of special events, volunteer work days, and other activities. In addition to volunteering at the school, Mainspring staff often have volunteer projects that can be completed at home. Parents often find that volunteering at the school builds friendships with other parents who understand their unique family dynamic, which eventually leads to social opportunities outside of school.

Families who do not wish to give their time are able to pay \$500 annually or \$50 per hour in lieu of volunteering. In addition, in kind donations can be made toward the volunteer hour requirement. Please see our volunteer policy in the enrollment packet or on our website for more information.

All volunteers who wish to work directly with students must undergo a Level 2 background check that will be kept on file at the school.

### Student Volunteers

Mainspring Academy often receives requests for student family members who are minors to complete volunteer hours for various educational and extra-curricular activities. In such cases, the student volunteer will be provided with a volunteer hour log that they are required to have filled out and signed by the supervising Mainspring employee. Student volunteers are responsible for the management and tracking of their hours. In addition, requests for recommendation letters, character surveys, or other forms related to consideration for recognition such as scholarships or program acceptance, must be made by the student volunteer. Parents requesting this information directly from school staff will be directed to have the student volunteer reach out via email, phone, or letter.

Minor volunteers under the age of 14 or grade 9 must be supervised by a parent or responsible adult over the age of 18 while volunteering at the school.

### Volunteer Conduct

Volunteers at Mainspring Academy will carry out their support with cooperation and comradery at the forefront of their purpose. Any behavior from volunteers that puts Mainspring Academy in bad light or makes students, staff, or other volunteers uncomfortable will be cause for volunteer privileges to be revoked. In such cases, parents will be required to pay the monetary equivalent of their remaining volunteer requirement.

### Volunteer Questions

All questions regarding volunteering at Mainspring should be directed to the Director of Student and Community Affairs.

## Fundraisers

As a non-profit entity, Mainspring Academy periodically holds fundraisers and fundraising events throughout the school year. In general, there will be one staff led fundraiser, one parent-led fundraiser, an end of year campaign, and a Board-led fundraiser. Parents are strongly encouraged to solicit support through their personal friends, family and co-workers. In situations where a parent has a contact that would like to make a large contribution or sponsorship, they should contact the Director of Student and Community Affairs to arrange these interactions so that proper acknowledgment can be given to the donor.

Parent involvement in our fundraising efforts is fundamental to our success in program growth and expansion. We appreciate donations at all levels as all contributions eventually lead to program improvement which in turn enriches the academic experience for our students.

## Birthdays and Holiday Celebrations

Children celebrating birthdays are invited to share a treat with their class. Parents should contact the classroom teacher several days prior to schedule the time/date and to get a list of allergies and diet restrictions. We will not be able to honor birthday celebration requests without prior planning.

Other holiday celebrations are held during the school year, many of which call for parent attendance and support. These events are fun and exciting for all in attendance. In order to ensure that all involved have a great time we ask the following:

- Refrain from giving food directly to students as many of our students have dietary restrictions and allergies that can be life threatening.
- Please recognize that all of our students have varying levels of communication, cognitive, behavioral, physical and sensory differences. Parents should refrain from making judgments, assumptions, or comparing students. All students should be included and celebrated while at Mainspring Academy.
- If a student is having behaviors, or in extreme cases a behavioral crisis, parents should listen to staff instructions and stay out of the way. All staff at Mainspring receive extensive training in behavioral intervention and know how to respond to the situation.
- Parents should refrain from taking or posting pictures of students other than their child, as many of our students are on the “no photo” list.
- Please refrain from staring or asking questions. If you have questions or concerns about why staff responded in the way they did, you may ask those questions directly to the Head of School. Under no circumstances will information regarding a student, their diagnosis, or their behaviors be shared with anyone other than student’s parent.

## Staff Babysitting/Respite Care

Mainspring Academy understands the difficulty many parents have with finding a babysitter, respite care, or personal care attendant for their child. The School often receives requests from families to ask staff if they are interested in providing care to their child.

As part of our personnel handbook, staff are prohibited from providing at-home care to any student that they work directly with in the school setting. In addition, staff who do provide these services to parents are doing so on their own accord and as a separate entity from Mainspring Academy. Parents will recognize the line between home and school and understand that Mainspring holds no responsibility for what happens outside of school walls and that staff are not designees of the School when providing caregiving services. As such, the School will not request for specific staff to provide at-home care (including before or after school

transportation), but will send out general messages to the entire staff that a parent is looking for a caregiver. Beyond that general message, the school will not be part of any caregiving arrangements.

Employees and Parents will understand that when these caregiving arrangements take place that any discussion regarding Mainspring Academy, its students, employees, policies and programs is strictly prohibited while serving in any role not covered in the Mainspring Personnel Handbook. Failure to adhere these guidelines is a serious offense and will be treated as a violation of school policy.

## Parent Education and Information Sessions

Throughout the school year Mainspring will hold several parent education and information sessions. Topics of these sessions may include but not be limited to; financial planning and special needs trusts, community services, scholarship information, and Medwaiver and other government funded programs. Parents of all students are encouraged to attend these session as they will be relevant to most students.

## Respect of Others

Mainspring Academy is a non-sectarian, private school that serves a diverse student population. Mainspring takes great pride in this diversity. We understand that with diversity comes a range of political, social, and religious beliefs that may not always align. These topics are typically outside of the scope of our mission. We ask all parents to refrain from having intense political or social conversations at school events, meetings, or in passing conversations with staff as they are often a source of stress and discord among parents and staff. Insistence on bringing up these topics at the school may result in eventual student suspension, or in extreme cases, expulsion due to parent conduct.

## Clinical Providers/Provider Policy

Mainspring Academy recognizes that many of our students benefit or require clinical services to be successful in the academic environment. Parents are welcome to send in private therapists to support their child, or provide consultative services to staff. All clinicians providing services at Mainspring are required to sign our provider policy, provide a Level 2 background check to be filed on campus, and pose for a picture taken by Mainspring staff, in order to enter the building. Therapists are required to provide a plan outlining their work with the students and to collaborate with administration and staff on student goals for success in the academic environment. Therapists will recognize that our goal is always for a student to be able to independently navigate the school, and eventually move on to a less restrictive setting, and that at times this may require scaling back of therapy services or rearranging schedules. Parents and therapists will recognize that ultimately Mainspring has the choice to approve or deny services during all or part of the school day. For more information on our provider policy, please request copies of our provider documents from the front office.

## Section 5: Health, Safety, and Wellbeing

The care, welfare, safety and security of our students is our first priority at Mainspring. Policies are created with the physical and emotional health and safety of students and staff with an understanding that as a result of their learning and developmental differences, our students do require extra consideration and accommodations. Parents will understand that while this handbook covers the most commonly encountered topics related to our health and safety policies and protocols, this is not an all-inclusive list of the preventive measures put into place in order to keep students and staff safe and healthy.

### Health

#### Cleaning and Sanitation of Learning Environment

Practicing and encouraging good health habits are a continuous activity for both staff and students. A clean, sanitary environment is a basic necessity of promotion good health. Each employee is responsible for the daily and ongoing cleaning of their own work space. This included sanitizing materials and equipment; cleaning and sanitizing all flat surfaces and frequently touched items daily, and removal of garbage and debris. Our janitorial staff comes each school day to clean and sanitize the bathrooms and cafeteria, remove trash, and clean floors. In addition to these measures, our vocational students are tasked with class jobs such as sanitizing door knobs and cleaning the cafeteria tables before and after lunch.

#### Handwashing

Students are provided ample opportunities to wash and/or sanitize their hands throughout the school day. For students that have not mastered handwashing, this is skill is often one that will be an initial target skill on their learning program. Staff are required to wash hands any time they use the restroom, and any time they enter the restroom to assist a student. If a student requires toileting assistance from a staff member, the staff will wear protective disposable gloves and immediately wash their hands after glove disposal.

#### Illness

Any student that is feeling ill or exhibiting symptoms of illness should stay home. If your child exhibits any of the following they should NOT attend school:

- Fever of 100.4 or higher
- Colored discharge from nose
- Discharge from mouth
- Discharge and redness in the eyes
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Sore throat
- Loss of their sense of smell or taste
- Muscle aches

- Vomiting or diarrhea
- General malaise or lethargy that impacts their ability to participate
- The student is currently awaiting results of a COVID-19 test

Student must be free of ALL symptoms for **48 hours** or have a doctor's note clearing them for attendance at school.

When a student displays illness during the school day, a parent will be contacted to pick up their child. The parent is expected to pick up, or arrange pick up, of the student within one hour of notification.

Parents must be considerate of the health and welfare of not only their child, but the other students, families, and staff at Mainspring. Refusal to abide by our illness policy, or refusal to pick up their child if the school determines the student has met criteria to be sent home, could result in the student's suspension or expulsion from the school in cases where there has been multiple violations. In addition, as mandated reporters, the school may determine that the Department of Children and Families must be notified to report child neglect or abandonment.

#### Medication

Mainspring Academy will administer non-prescription and prescription medication to students as long as the parent has a completed and signed medication profiles sheet filed with the school. All non-prescription medication should be in its original labeled container and the medication profile should include information on when and how much medication is to be given to the student. Prescription medication must be in a pharmacy labeled package or bottle with the student's name and clearly labeled indications, instructions, and expiration date. Medication that has expired will not be administered to students and parents will be asked to come pick up expired medication.

Parents must physically bring medication into the school and hand it to a medication trained staff. Staff that is not trained in medication administration will not take medication from parents. Under no circumstance should medication be sent to school in a student's backpack, lunchbox, or within the student's possession. Parents will communicate exclusively with the medication trained staff, and not with their child's classroom staff regarding medication. In addition, if the parent needs medication to go home for any reason they must come pick up the medication in person. Medication will not be released to students. If a parent does not come pick up unused medication within a given time period, the medication will be destroyed.

Parents will be notified via email if their child's medication requires refills. Parents are expected to provide the refilled prescription in a timely manner and notify the school if there are any administration changes. If a child is required to take the medication with a certain type of food or liquid, or requires specific supplies or medical equipment, the parent is responsible for providing the items.

Emergency medications such as seizure, asthma, and allergy medications are kept in a locked box in a central area of the school. Unlike daily routine medications, ALL staff are required to undergo training in emergency medication administration. If the student experiences an event that requires the use of their emergency medication, and that supply is depleted, the student will not be allowed back to school until the emergency medication has been refilled. (Note: Due to supply shortages and other barriers with Epi Pens, exceptions will be made for maintaining expired meds on campus)

PRN medications for behavioral episodes will only be used after the parents, classroom staff, and administrative team have agreed on a crisis criteria. The criteria is measured objectively i.e. target or precursor behavior lasting certain amount of time.

Medication administration at Mainspring is taken very seriously. Under no circumstances will exceptions be made to the medication policies indicated on health and medication forms that all parents are required to sign as part of their annual enrollment packet.

### Allergies

Mainspring Academy takes extreme measures when dealing with students with allergies, particularly those with life threatening symptoms. While we are diligent to ensure that students are not exposed to their allergen, and follow the recommended guidelines of the students allergy plan, we cannot guarantee that the student will never be exposed to an allergen while interacting in the learning environment. All allergies that require treatment must be documented in the student's medical profile indicating the allergy, the intervention, and the symptoms. In addition, parents should fill out an "Allergy Action Plan" if the student may require treatment for allergic reactions. In cases where the student requires medication, including Epi-Pens and other emergency medications, the parent must fill out the required medication forms and provide the medication in a pharmacy labeled container with the student's name. While non-emergency medication will only be administered by our medication trained staff, emergency medication administration training is provided to ALL staff employed by Mainspring.

Students with food allergies, such as nut allergies, will have a sign posted outside of their classroom. In cases of severe nut allergies, accommodations can be made to have the student sit separately from others in the lunch room. In addition, Mainspring Academy makes sure that all staff is aware of student allergies and has a policy that food should not be shared unless it has been verified that the student is not allergic to the food being shared.

In the event a student is showing symptoms of a life threatening allergic reaction, 911 will be called. The school will then notify the parent. If the ambulance arrives prior to the parent, a staff member that is familiar to the student will travel to the hospital with them.

### Seizures

Parents whose children are diagnosed with epilepsy or have previously (regardless of time) had a seizure should fill out a "Seizure Action Plan" to be added to the student's medical profile. If the



action plan requires an emergency medication to be administered, the parent should provide the name, dose, and instructions to the seizure medication. In addition, parents should include information regarding seizure triggers such as flashing lights, computer screens, or physical activities.

In the event a seizure does happen at school, all staff are trained to respond and trained in emergency medication administration to treat the seizure. Staff will begin timing the seizure as soon as it is noticed in order to determine when medication should be administered or 911 should be called.

In cases where a student has had a grand-mal seizure at school, we do require students to go home and rest for the day. As long as no seizure has happened in the interim, students are permitted to return the following school day.

### Community Outbreak- COVID-19

Administrative staff monitors illness within the school to look for patterns of community spread. In situations where there are many students out with the same illness, parents will be notified and the school will be cleaned and disinfected prior to allowing students back at school.

For COVID-19 specifically, the school will use contact tracing procedures to determine when students must test and isolate. Individuals in the school who test positive, or are exposed to a person who tests positive with COVID-19 will be required to follow our COVID-19 response guidelines. For reference, a person is considered exposed when they have been within 6 feet of the infected individual for a cumulative 15 minutes within a 24 hour period. Please use the following guidelines to determine when an infected or exposed individual can return to campus:

#### **Experiencing any symptoms on our illness policy related to COVID-19:**

- Individual will stay home and return when they are symptom free for 24 hours or ...
- Individual will provide a physician's note clearing them for attendance at school or...

#### **Exposed to a person positive with COVID-19:**

Exposure is within six feet for a cumulative 15 minutes within 24 hours. Your exposure day is day 0. If you are exposed, here are the guidelines:

- **Able to fully mask for duration of school day:** May return to school. Wear mask for 10 days, test on day 5. Continue to monitor for symptoms.
- **Unable to fully mask for duration of school day:** Stay home for 5 days, if asymptomatic, test on day 5. Return to school if negative, if positive start over as day 0 and follow guidelines for positive test below.

#### **Positive for COVID-19:**

If you test positive for COVID-19, please contact school administration immediately. The day you tested is day 0. There are several options for your return. Follow the following guidelines:

- **Not able fully mask for duration of school day:** Individual will isolate for 10 days. May return as long as there is no fever for 24 hours and other symptoms have improved.
  - **Able to fully mask for duration of school day:** Individual will isolate for 5 days. May return as long as there is no fever for 24 hours, other symptoms have improved, **and** will comply with wearing a mask for the duration of the school day for an additional 5 days.
  - **Negative tests:** Individual tests negative for COVID-19 prior to the recommended isolation period *2 times within 48 hours*.
  - **Physicians Clearance:** Individual receives clearance from a physician to resume activity.
- \* Fever free is defined as no fever for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication**

#### Vaccine and Physical Forms

All students are required to have an updated school physical and vaccine form (or religious exemption) on file at the school. The school will periodically audit these forms. If your child is found to have an expired form, they will need to get updated forms to return to school.

#### Health Inspection/Radon Inspection

Mainspring Academy is required to undergo an annual health inspection as part of private school requirements in the state of Florida. These inspections are conducted by the City of Jacksonville and reported to the state and the scholarship compliance office. Additionally, every 3 years, our building is required to undergo radon testing. These results are also reported to the city and state as part of our scholarship and private school compliance procedures.

## Safety

Maintaining a safe and secure learning environment for our students is a daily activity at Mainspring. Diligence in reporting safety concerns in a specific and prompt manner is expected of all staff. The following policies summarize, but are not all inclusive of our safety policies.

#### Visitors on Campus

All visitors must enter through the school lobby, with no exceptions, and sign in with the front desk receptionist. By entering campus, all visitors agree to respect the privacy and dignity of our students. Any visitor who has not signed in at the front desk will be asked to return to the lobby. Volunteers who wish to work directly with students, without teacher supervision, must undergo a Level 2 background screening under the schools Florida Department of Law Enforcement, VECHS account. If at any time a visitor on campus is in violation of our student handbook, visiting privileges will be revoked.

#### Campus Security

Mainspring Academy follows a single entry and exit policy, with exception to emergencies where individuals in the building will use additional exits to leave safely. Staff, parents, providers and

students are prohibited from entering or leaving the building from any door other than the reception area.

Our interior reception door requires badge or key access. This door should not be propped open before or after carlines have finished each day. If parents notice that the reception area doors are propped, they report this to the nearest Mainspring employee. In these cases, please follow up with an email to the Head of School reporting when you noticed the door propped open and any adults you reported to so that the issue can be addressed for future prevention.

For security reasons, parents are not permitted to walk their child back to class unless there is a prescheduled and justifiable purpose. If a parent wishes to meet with teacher or observe their child in class, they should schedule a date and time to do so. Depending on the situation, parents who wish to observe may be asked to do so my monitoring the class through our camera system. This allows the parent to see their child in the natural environment and minimizes interruptions to the class.

#### Strangers on Campus

Strangers on campus are serious security concerns and all staff are trained and required to speak up and ask unfamiliar individuals who they are and their purpose on campus. Local law enforcement will be contacted in any case where there is a stranger who is perceived as a potential threat to student and staff safety.

#### Student Elopement/Wandering

Many of our students wander and elope as a result of their disability and behavioral challenges. Classroom staff uses extreme caution and periodically performs head counts to ensure that all students are in their learning area.

In cases where a student does wander or elope, a staff call for “All eyes on [Student Name]” is made through our radio system. The staff member who makes the call will also provide detail on what area of the school the student was last seen. Once this call is made, one administrator will get on the camera system to see if they can locate the student, while all other available staff look for the student. If a student not found within 1 minute, local law enforcement is called. The student file is pulled to begin transmitting as much student information as possible to the 911 operator. A staff will be designated to begin driving on the road outside of the school to ensure that the student has not made it out of the parking lot. Once all of these urgent steps have occurred the parent will be called.

Elopement and wandering is one of, if not the most, distressing behavior that we deal with at Mainspring. To date, the school has never met the 1-minute protocol to call local law enforcement for a lost child.

After each elopement or wandering incident, administrators and relevant staff use the camera system to debrief and consider if the situation was preventable and what actions could be taken to prevent the incident from reoccurring.

Mainspring requests that parents who have dealt with wandering and elopement from their children notify the school so preventative measures can be put into place.

### Incident Reporting

All accidents and incidents require documentation at Mainspring Academy. A copy of these reports is sent to the parent for signature and kept on file at the school. The following are the types of reports who may receive:

- **Incident Report:** This is a general report used for incidents that do not require crisis procedures. This report may or may not be accompanied with a body check form. Common incidents reported on this form are as follows:
  - Falls, slips, trips, or other common accidents that happened as a result of playing or moving (requires body check)
  - Cuts, knicks, bruises (requires body check)
  - Student attending school with a scratch, bruise, or other abnormal mark not received at school (requires body check)
  - Behavior that is abnormal, but does not meet crisis criteria
  - Student to Student aggression (Note: other student's information will not be shared in this report)
  - Student needing to use the "Calm down" room without seclusion
  - Other abnormal event that the school deems the parent should know about
  
- **Crisis Report/Seclusion/Restraint:** This report is used for any instance where a student requires crisis procedures such as seclusion/removal from the room or restraint procedures through Crisis Prevention Institute (CPI) procedures. Please see below for our policies regarding CPI and seclusion.
  
- **Body Check:** This is a general form that is used to describe any marks, bruises, or other abnormalities on a student's body. In the vast majority of instances, these checks do not require the staff to look under the child's clothing. In cases where it is determined that a body check under the clothing is required, staff will first call the parent to ask permission. If the parent gives permission, 2 staff of the same sex will perform the body check in a private room with security cameras. If two staff of the same sex are not available, the parent will be asked if they would like us to proceed, or if they would like to come to the school and inspect their child themselves. Body check forms will also be used to indicate any bruising or abnormal marking that staff notices on the child from home.

While general incident forms may not include a body check form, Crisis forms will always include a body check as part of the debriefing process.

- **Property Damage report:** This form is used for incidents that include loss, theft, or damage to school equipment and property as a result of destructive behavior. Per our policy, the first report is considered a warning, the 2<sup>nd</sup> report is will include a 10% fee based on the value of the property, the 3<sup>rd</sup> report will include a fee equal to 100% of the value of the property.

As a rule, if a student shows repeated property destruction behavior toward electronics or expensive items, they will not be given access to those items. Prior to a parent being charged a reimbursement fee, administration will conduct an investigation of the incident to determine if staff used preventative strategies to prevent the behavior.

### Crisis Response

Mainspring Academy staff is highly trained to respond to student behavior. In most cases, student behaviors are managed without having to use crisis response training. At Mainspring, crisis level behavior is defined as sustained, attempted or actual, behavior with the intent to harm oneself, others, or school property. Minor instances of hitting or self-injury that can be blocked and redirected do not fall in this category, and never will be responded to with crisis level procedures. Crisis procedures that the school use are as follows:

#### **CPI**

In order to maintain a safe school environment, it may be necessary to use crisis prevention procedures using the Crisis Prevention Institute's (CPI) non-violent crisis intervention program. The philosophy of CPI is "Care, Welfare, Safety and Security" which will be at the forefront of all crisis intervention at Mainspring Academy. For more information on CPI, please contact our Director of Programming and CPI instructor, Ms. Elizabeth Worrell.

#### **Seclusion**

Seclusion is defined as placing a student in a contained area, alone, without the ability to leave the area. In general, Mainspring Academy makes all attempts to avoid using time-out/seclusion procedures. While we do have "safe" rooms that serve as private, sterile, and safe environments for students to calm down when escalated, in is our practice to leave the door open so that the student can leave if needed. Leaving the door open, or available for the student to walk out, is not considered seclusion and does not require seclusion reporting. Only in cases of extreme agitation, where CPI procedures are not safe for staff, and the student is exhibiting behaviors that are a danger to themselves and others, will staff prevent a student from leaving the safe room. Repeated incidents that require this level of intervention will result in the student being referred out for alternative placement.

### Fire Safety

Fire drills are conducted every month at Mainspring Academy. A log of our fire drills is kept at the front office. During a fire drill, the fire alarm is sounded and all individuals in the building must go out to the playground or other designated area and await the clearing and walk through of the school. The Fire drill is timed and must take under 3 minutes to be considered a successful drill.

As part of our private school and scholarship compliance procedures, the City of Jacksonville Fire Marshall will provide an inspection each school year. In addition to this inspection, Mainspring hires a private entity to conduct annual extinguisher, exit and emergency lighting, and fire panel inspections. Finally, our building is equipped with fire sprinklers that will be engaged when an alarm has sounded and not been disarmed within a certain amount of time.

## Section 6: Financial Policies

### Tuition Fee Schedule

Tuition for the 2022-23 academic school year is as follows:

Tier 1 Tuition: \$21,000.00

Tier 2: Tuition: \$25,000.00

Tier 3 Tuition: \$28,000.00

Tuition tiers are assigned based on the students matrix of support and are subject to change, up or down, dependent on student's needs throughout the school year.

Other fees that may be charged to students include the following:

- Fees for extended school day services
- Fees for intersession
- Fees for Summer Educational Programming
- Periodic Fees such as field trip and activities
- Parent Participation Fees
- Late Fees or Damage Fees

Mainspring Academy retains the right to reevaluate their fee schedule each school year and raise or lower tuition and fees.

### Tuition Contracts

Each student will be provided with a legally binding enrollment contract once accepted at Mainspring. In order to reserve an enrollment spot for the student, parents must turn in their enrollment contract along with the non-refundable tuition deposit. In rare cases, amendments

to the contract can be made for out of the ordinary situations. It is at the sole discretion of the Head of School to make these accommodations.

Parents will be mindful that their tuition contract is for the entire school year. Mainspring releasing a family from their contractual obligations due to extenuating circumstances will be rare in occurrence. The decision to do so is at the sole discretion of the Head of School.

### State Scholarships

Many students at Mainspring Academy have been awarded a state-funded scholarships such as the Step up for Students Financial Empowerment Scholarship for Unique Abilities (FES-UA). Scholarship funding should be viewed as a payment source. Parents may choose to have the school directly bill their scholarship funding organization, or they may pay their tuition out of pocket then reimburse themselves from their scholarship funding organization. In either case, these payments will be applied to the student tuition balances on a quarterly basis. Parents are responsible for paying any amounts not covered by the scholarship. In general, scholarship payments should be approved within 48 hours of invoice posting. In cases where an invoice to a scholarship funding organization has not been approved within 5 business days, the student will not be able to attend school until payment is provided, a meeting is held with the Head of School to explain the reason for the delay, or the invoice is approved.

### Payment Plans/Payment Policies

Parents must make payments according to their chosen payment plans (monthly, semi-annually, or annually) as indicated on their enrollment contracts and student enrollment packets.

Parents who choose the monthly payment plan are required to keep an active credit card on file at the school. If parents choose to pay by check or money order, they must do so by the due date to avoid their card being charged. Using a credit card for any purposes at Mainspring Academy will result in a 3% convenience fee being added to the transaction. If the school has not received payment by close of business on the indicated due dates, this credit card information will be used to process my tuition payment.

Payments for tuition and program-related fees may only be made in the form of a credit card, personal check, bank check, or money order. Parents are responsible for a \$50.00 fee for any bounced check penalties for paying with a check that has been returned due to insufficient funds. After a second incident of bounced personal checks, parents will be required to use bank checks, money orders, or an active credit card.

All late payments at Mainspring Academy will result in a fee of 10% of the payment due, for each week late. Exceptions beyond two instances of late tuition and program-related fees are rare and must be approved by the Head of the School in writing that details the terms and expectations for payment. If payment information changes due to loss, fraud, insufficient funds, and any other

circumstances, parents are responsible for promptly notifying school administration prior to any payment due dates and completing a change in payment request form, which can be found on the Parent Corner of the Mainspring Academy website [www.mainspringacademy.org](http://www.mainspringacademy.org).

#### Unpaid Obligations

Unpaid obligations may result in the suspension of students from the school or its programs until payments are fulfilled. In addition to being responsible for their out of pocket tuition expenses, parents are responsible for unpaid obligations due to scholarship delays or related issues. Additionally, failure to arrange for timely payment by approving scholarship invoices from their chosen scholarship funding organization within 48 hours of submission, may result in late fees and/or the suspension of the student from the school or its programs until payments are fulfilled.

Regardless of the actual payer of any amount owed to Mainspring Academy, parents remain solely responsible for all tuition, fees, and additional programming costs for students. Please be advised that all past due fees must be paid prior to records or release if the student withdraws.



## 2022-23 Parent-Student Handbook Acknowledgement

I, the parent/guardian of \_\_\_\_\_, have read and reviewed the Mainspring Academy 2022-23 Parent-Student Handbook. Since the information contained in the handbook is subject to change, I acknowledge that revisions will occur throughout the school year. All such revisions will be communicated through parent group emails and memos sent home with my child. I concede that revised information may supersede, modify, or eliminate existing policies and programs.

I understand that the policies outlined in the Parent-Student Handbook serve as a contractual agreement between the School and the family to enhance student success. I agree to support and encourage my child's social, emotional, behavioral, and academic development by adhering to these policies and working collaboratively and respectfully with my child's team.

### **Assumption of Risk, Waiver, and Agreement to Hold Harmless**

I understand that enrollment/attendance/visitation at a special needs school such as Mainspring is not without risk to my child, as well as to myself, members of my family or my guests, due to the nature of extremely and inherently challenging and unpredictable behavior for children diagnosed with developmental disabilities. Challenging behaviors to which such persons will be exposed are inherently difficult to foresee and/or control and may be the cause of injury, even when handled with the utmost of care.

I, on behalf of myself and all such persons mentioned above, hereby waive and release Mainspring Academy and agents from any and all liability of any nature for injury and or damage resulting from enrollment/attendance/visitation at the School, specifically including from the actions of special needs students. I assume the risk of any damage, or injury to any such persons mentioned above, while my child attends the School or other functions for or related to the School, and shall hold the School harmless for any related liabilities, claims or damages.

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Parent, Legal Guardian

Date

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Mainspring Academy Administrator

Date