1503 South 16th Street

Nederland, Texas 77627

409-727-5444

Parent

Handbook

2020-2021

“Our care of the child should be governed, not by the desire to make him learn things, but by the endeavor always to keep burning within him that light which is called intelligence.”

-Maria Montessori-

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Mission Statement

Our Goals:

* To provide Montessori education to the children according to the principles of Dr. Maria Montessori.
* To cultivate the child’s own desire to learn by making use of the sensitive periods and the absorbent mind.
* To develop self-discipline in a child by allowing freedom of activity and maturity.
* To educate parents about the Montessori Method.

**Welcome**

Dear Parents,

 Welcome to The School of Montessori, Inc. We are excited that you have enrolled your child in our program. We want you to be a partner in your child’s education. We ask that you read the parent handbook and keep it at home for future reference.

 The purpose of the parent handbook is to provide an organized source of detailed information specifically related to ways that families can partner with the School of Montessori to ensure a high quality experience for everyone involved in the education of your child. The school has policies concerning the program and classroom practices. These guidelines have been developed to comply with state licensing standards.

 We encourage parents, grandparents, or other family members to visit our classroom, participate in special events, or share special talents with our students. Your child’s classmates truly enjoy hearing a story read by someone “new”learning a new song, or just having an extra pair of hands to help them in a craft activity. Try to spend some time in your child’s class this year. We think you will enjoy it as much as the children do!

 We hope your experience at The School of Montessori is positive and that you will feel secure leaving your child in our care. We invite each family to become actively involved in all aspects of our program. We look forward to working with you!

Faculty and Staff

Directress Kelly Windhorst schoolofmontessoriinc@gmail.com

Lead Teacher Ashley Jasani

Assistant Teacher Yasmin Abusaleh

Assistant Teacher Alicia Roman

Assistant Teacher Bianca Balderas

Assistant Teacher Gayle Tingle

2020-2021 School Board Members

President: Kelly Windhorst schoolofmontessoriinc@gmail.com

Vice-President schoolofmontessori.vp@gmail.com

Treasurer: Rozmin Meredia schoolofmontessori.treasurer@gmail.com

Publicity: Allison Kondo schoolofmontessori.publicity@gmail.com

Hospitality: Brook Vernon schoolofmontessori.hospitality@gmail.com

Personnel: Waheeda Mithani schoolofmontessori.personnel@gmail.com

Fundraising:: Mellisa Mizer schoolofmontessori.fundraising@gmail.com

Curriculum/

Sectretary: Shannon Burnett schoolofmontessori.curriculum@gmail.com

Program Goals

* To meet each child’s needs while encouraging independence in self care.
* To provide a nurturing atmosphere in which children have respect for others and themselves.
* To provide a calm, warm, loving, nurturing atmosphere for the child to feel secure in.
* To continue the respect and care for equipment that is so much a part of the Montessori method.
* To provide a wide variety of activities within the Montessori curriculum including: practical life, social studies, language, introduction to the community, art, music, movement, science (biology, physics), and dramatic play. Also, to encourage creative work and play.
* To encourage curiosity within each child, giving them room to discover and explore things, in return giving them independence.
* To provide ample opportunity for the use of large motor skills for indoor and outdoor activity.
* To establish an observation system in which notes on children are kept on a daily basis.
* To be supportive of parents, encouraging involvement and open and honest communication while using tact and discretion.
* To develop staff potential through proper supervision by making expectations clear, following through to see the expectations are met, and utilizing staff input and their abilities.
* To encourage staff to be aware of the room and surroundings so that we can make a safe environment for our children.

\***The School of Montessori, Inc. is also the only school in the area that is Recognized through the Association Montessori International, which is the governing board for authentic Montessori programs and helps them maintain the integrity of Dr. Maria Montessori’s approach and life’s work. Please visit AMIUSA.org for more information regarding Montessori classrooms, Montessori in the home, frequently asked questions about Montessori programs, and many more parent resources**.

**Montessori Guidelines for Classroom Management:**

***Control the Environment, Not the Child***

The Montessori Method of education was developed in Italy in the early 1900’s by Maria Montessori. The core philosophy behind the method is that every child is unique, and that their individuality must be respected throughout the educational process. If placed in the proper environment, children will normalize, which means that they will develop into whole, peaceful adults with a love of learning.

**Preparation of the Environment**:

 The Montessori learning environment is referred to as the “prepared environment”. It is designed to afford children the greatest possible independence. Generally there is no junk food served, no computers and nothing broken or unclean. The intent is for the child to be completely free to develop mentally and emotionally in the environment.

**Basic Principles**:

1. Repetition: Children need to be free to repeat an exercise as many times as they wish
2. Independence: Children are encouraged to make discoveries and solve problems on their own.
3. Passion: Children will only learn subject matter that they care about. Anything forced upon them will be forgotten.
4. Do not disturb: When a child is concentrating on an activity, he or she shouldn’t be interrupted.

**Classroom Management:**

There are three basic questions that determine if intervention is needed:

1. Is the behavior dangerous to the child or others?
2. Is the behavior destructive to the environment or materials?
3. Is the behavior disturbing the activities of others?

Classroom volunteers should make a special effort to become familiar with:

1. The guidance policy of the school
2. The approach to classroom management and guidance of the teacher
3. The ground rules in the classroom and how they are enforced

**Managing Disruptive, Dangerous or Destructive Behaviors**:

1. Work to establish secure, relaxed, comfortable, warm and supportive relationships with the child.
2. Involve the children in forming rules, resolving conflict and solving problems when practical.
3. Model appropriate behavior.
4. Redirect children with prompt reminders, and by involving them in appropriate activities before a conflict or problem arises.
5. Observe carefully to discover when and why problems may occur and how they might be prevented.
6. Be sure the child understands the limit or rules
7. State the rules ( ex. Remember it is important to follow the directions because we do not want to get hurt, or it is important to stay with work or to stay together, etc.)
8. Offer a choice (Would you like to work on the 7 chain or paint a picture)
9. Logical consequences use a warning if necessary. This is a reminder of consequences already established and clarified prior to the situation (Please use the scissors correctly or you won’t be able to make our craft at craft time/ You won’t be able to join us for outdoor play if you cannot follow safety rules)

Not all steps will be necessary. Often only a reminder is needed.

1. Express appreciation when it is sincerely felt and acknowledge effort and appropriate behavior.

**Protect and Respect**:

1. Respect and protect each learner’s right to learn and grow at their own pace.
2. Respect and protect each learner’s right to choose their own activity or no activity.
3. Respect and protect each learner’s need to have secure and consistent limits for behavior.

**The Role of the Teacher**:

 The teacher is the link between the child and the environment. Montessorians often refer to teachers as guides or directors, because the teacher does not teach in the traditional sense. It is the children who teach themselves through activity. It is the teacher’s role to direct, stimulate, and guide the activity. Through observation, preparation of the environment, presentation of materials, and non-intervention when concentrated activity is in progress, the Montessori teacher directs learning and helps learners teach, build and direct themselves. Another important part of the teacher’s responsibilities is the creation and maintenance of the environment. The teacher’s role is an important one as she plays the role of Motivator, Instructor, Observer, Protector and respecter, Supporter, Exemplar and the Caretaker. The teacher also never stops growing and learning!

**The role of Assistant teachers:**

 Assistant teachers, support staff or parent volunteers frequently work with the teacher and communication is vital. They should try to be open and accepting of leadership and try to share questions, concerns and ideas directly.

 Do:

1. Support and carry our directions
2. Inform the teacher of observation regarding children
3. Report information and concerns parents express
4. Report materials or procedures that seem unsafe
5. Ask for clarification and elaboration or rules, practices and philosophy.
6. To assist in providing a high quality environment.

Do not:

1. Alter the environment or curriculum without directions
2. Talk about classroom concerns to any other person without the knowledge and consent of the teacher.
3. Interpret or make judgements or recommendations regarding children’s behavior to parents.

Enrollment Applications

All children must be enrolled at The School of Montessori, Inc before attending. Once the decision to enroll is made, families must complete the following, signing where applicable, and return these to the school ***prior*** to the child’s first day of attendance:

* An enrollment fee (one-time non-refundable fee of $100.00 for new students and $50.00 for returning students)
* Signed/initialed Admission information
* Signed Parent Policy Agreement
* Signed Discipline and Guidance Policy
* Signed Operational Policy
* Signed Potty Training Policy
* Signed Payment Information Sheet
* Current Immunization Record and Health Assessment with a physician’s signature

Tuition Payments and Fees

Tuition Payments:

* Tuition payments are due on or before the 10th of each month
* All tuition payments will be made using the Brightwheel automated billing system. Payments will be deducted automatically each month from your bank account/credit or debit card.
* You must be signed up with your billing information through Brightwheel.
* A locked drop box is located at the front door for other payments/sensitive paperwork

Fees:

* Tuition past the due date (10th of each month) becomes delinquent and a $25.00 late fee will be charged after each occurance
* Failure to pay outstanding balances after 30 days may subject the student to exclusion from class. Students that are withdrawn may not return to class until their balance is current
* Fees will be added for picking up children late
* **All** fees are non-refundable

Rate Schedule 2020-2021

**Tuition**

Full-Day Students - 8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. - - - - $439/month

Half-Day Students - 8:00 a.m. – 11:45 p.m. - - - $335/month

Extended Care - before 8:00 a.m./after 3:00 p.m. - - $185/month for full day students

 $200/month for half day students

**Miscellaneous Fees**

Waitlist Application Fee per child - - - - $50 new students/one time

Enrollment Fee - per child - - - - $100 new students/one time

 $50 returning students/one time

Maintenance Fee - per child - - - - $40/month

Supply Fee - per child - - - - $10/monthly

AMI Dues - per child - - - - $20/annually

Tuition Insurance Fee if tuition is not paid in full by Sept. 10th $125.00 annually

Missed Work Day - 1 work day required per family

 per semester - - - $75/per day missed

Missed Work Hours - 10 work hours required per family

 per semester - - - $15/per hour missed

Late payment Fee - per payment not received by

 the 10th of the month - - $25/per occurrence

Stay and Play per hour before and after school times $10/per hour

**Discounts**

Sibling Discount - per child after oldest child - - 10% off/per month

Full Year Pre-pay - payments must be received by Sept. 1 - 10% off entire year

Semester Pre-pay - payments must be received by Sept. 1

 and Jan. 1 - 5% entire year

Daily Schedule

Extended Care - - - - - - - 7 a.m. - 8 a.m.

Arrival Time - - - - - - - 8:00 a.m.

School Begins - - - - - - - 8:00 a.m.

Snack Time - - - - - - - 9:00 a.m.

Morning Work Period - - - - - - 8:15 a.m. -11:15 a.m.

 (Work with Montessori Materials)

Circle Time - - - - - - - 11:15-11:30 a.m.

 (Pledge of Allegiance, Calendar)

Outside Play time for half day students - - - - 11:30 a.m.- 12:00 p.m

Half Day Student Pick Up Time - - - - 12:00 p.m.

Lunch - - - - - - - 12:00 p.m.-12:30 p.m.

Nap/Quiet Time for Half day Extended Care students - - 1:00 pm- 2:30 p.m.

Afternoon Work Period - - - - - 12:30-2:30 p.m.

 (Work with Montessori Materials)

Outside Play Time for full day students- - - - 2:30-3:00 p.m.

Full Day Student Pick-up Time - - - - 3:00 p.m.

Extended Care - - - - - - - 3:00-6:00 p.m.

 Afternoon Snacks - - - - - - 3:15-3:35 p.m.

 Singing, Crafts, Story Time,

 Gardening and Snack Preparation - - - - 3:40-5:00 p.m.

Extended Care Pick-up - - - - - - 6:00 p.m.

**Pick-up/Drop-off and Parking**

**Drop-off**: You will be dropping off your child using the side door/semi circle driveway. Beginning at 7:45 am, a car line will form on Ave N facing 15th street and continue on the front side of the school down 16th St. (please do not line up prior to 7:45 am) A teacher will greet you at the car, take your child’s temperature while they are still in the car using our contactless thermometer, and then help your child out of their car seat. Parents please remain in the car. Parents/other adults in the car, will be required to wear a mask at drop off. The teachers will sign your child in and escort them into the building where they will wash their hands upon entry. Our school day begins at 8am, so to avoid disrupting the classroom, students will not be allowed to enter the school after 8:15 unless prior arrangements have been made with the director. If a student arrives after 8:15, you will need to park in the front parking lot and have your child walk to the door.

**Pick-up**: Pick up procedures will follow the same car line formation starting on Ave N facing 15th st and continuing down 16th st. Parents/adults in the car will be required to wear masks at pickup. Parents will stay in the car at pick up, just like at drop off. A teacher will sign your child out, walk them to the car, and assist them with buckling in their car seat. Please have your child’s name visible in the windshield to help with the ease of pick up. Half Day students will be released at 12 pm and Full Day students will be released at 3pm. Should you need to pick up your child early, please send a brightwheel message letting the staff know. The staff member assisting with drop off/pick up will sanitize her hands between each car.

For ease of transition and to help our car line flow smoothly, please have your child practice buckling and unbuckling themselves from their car seat.

**Drop-off/pick-up for extended care students**:Extended Care students dropping off before 7:45, please park in the parking lot facing 16th st. and stay near or in your car once you have gotten your child out. Let them walk to the door on their own. If for some reason you need to walk your child to the door, you will be required to wear a mask. Please do not leave until they have entered the building and the teacher has given the ok. The extended care teacher will take their temperature using our contactless thermometer, sign them in and escort them into the building. Parents picking up after 3:30, please park in the semi circle parking lot and walk to the door under the long awning. Ring the bell next to the door and step back. The teacher will release your child to you. Parents/adults are required to wear a mask at pick up.

**Parents/family members will not be allowed into the school building unless it is an emergency**.

 If someone new is picking up your child, please let us know by either a phone call or Brightwheel message. A Driver’s license will be needed to show proof of identity if the person picking up is not listed as an approved pickup. It is the School of Montessori, Inc. policy to only release children to authorized individuals; therefore we must emphasize the importance of keeping contact information current and accurate. Proper notification and picture ID is required at all times. If any changes occur (address changes, telephone number changes, pick-up authorization, etc.), please let the school know ASAP.

**Late Pick-up policy**: The School of Montessori is opens at 7 a.m. and closes promptly at 6 p.m. We allow a 15 minute grace period at the end of the morning and afternoon sessions. Any parent whose child is enrolled in the half-day program which ends at 12 p.m. will be charged $10 an hour after 12:15 p.m if their child has not been picked up. Likewise, parents whose child is enrolled in the full-day program which ends at 3:00 p.m., will be charged $10 an hour after 3:15 p.m if their child has not been picked up. Parents who pick their child up from Extended Care after 6 p.m. will be charged $1 for every minute past 6 p.m. which can be paid directly to the staff members present at that time. Timely pick up is important to the staff and children.

**Child Custody Issues**: It is the schools intent to meet the needs of children, especially when the parents may be experiencing difficult situations such as divorce, separation, or remarriage. However, The school cannot legally restrict the non-custodial parent from visiting the child, reviewing the child’s records, or picking up the child unless the School has been furnished with correct legal documents. Copies of these court documents must be kept in the child’s file at all times.

\*The same policies apply for Summer Extended Care should it be offered

**Visitors**: Under normal circumstances, we love visitors at Montessori, however, under our enhanced safety procedures, visitors will not be allowed into the building, other than those with legal authority to enter, such as law enforcement officials and licensing personnel.

Breakfast and Lunch Information

Breakfast:

 For extended care children who bring their breakfast to The School of Montessori, breakfast is from 7:00 a.m.- 8:00 a.m. All breakfast items will be put away by 8:00 a.m. for class time to begin. Please send your children with only nutritious breakfasts. Please no sugary foods such as donuts, etc.

Lunch:

 If your child stays for lunch, please send a nutritious balanced lunch that your child will enjoy.

Please send your child with a closed water cup labeled with their name for use throughout the day and at meals. We provide both dairy and nut based milk (almond) during lunch and snack times in a 1 time use cup if your child should want something other than water.

 **No Carbonated Drinks!**

Please prepare all foods for eating (fruits already cut if needed etc.) We will reheat in the microwave if needed.

 **Please do not send glass containers**

Please label and keep lunch boxes clean and sanitary

 \*\*\*We are a peanut free school, so please do not include peanut products or products containing peanuts when packing your child’s lunch

**\***Please visit these websites for healthy lunch ideas:

<http://www.parents.com/kids/nutrition/lunch/healthy-school-lunches-snacks>

<https://www.100daysofrealfood.com/school-lunches/>

Allergy Information

 Please let us know about any special conditions or food allergies that your child may have, and notify the school as soon as any changes in allergies occur. Food Allergy and Anaphylaxis Emergency Care plan must be on file for all children with Doctor diagnosed food allergies.

Dress Code/Uniforms

 Our dress code consists of a uniform made up of a school shirt and bottoms of your choice (skirt/pants/shorts)

 Any shirt from the current or past school years is acceptable.

 Every Friday is free dress day, and the children may wear what they choose. Please make sure it is clothing that is easy for your child to move and play in.

 Please only send children in comfortable shoes, suitable for outdoor play. Please NO flip flops or boots as they can be difficult for the children to play in. Please also do not send your child in light up shoes as they are very distracting due to the nature of the children’s floor work. To cut down on germ spread, please only send your child in shoes they can put on themselves. Please, do not send shoes with laces unless your child can tie them themselves.

Birthday Celebrations

 The moment of your child’s birth is the beginning of their personal lifetime. It is of great importance and a time for celebration. You can help us prepare for this celebration in the following ways:

 Please let our directress know which day you would like to celebrate your child’s birthday (Summer birthdays can be celebrated any time during the Spring)

 Write the story of your child’s life including where they were born, lived as an infant, when they learned to sit, crawl, etc. and any other special events. Involve your child in making a poster that includes pictures from each year of life that shows changes in growth, ability, appearance etc. (Poster will be returned)

 Birthday Celebrations usually take place in the morning around 11:15. The children are gathered together as a family and the child is honored in a traditional candle and global ceremony. As the child’s story is told, they walk around the candle for each year of life. This is a beautiful celebration, but not a party. For the time being, we will not be allowing family into the school for the ceremony, but will still celebrate your child with our traditional ceremony.

 **Please do not send any birthday snacks or treats.** Teachers are more than happy to send home birthday party invitations, but we ask that each child receives one. We can also send digital invitations through Brightwheel.

Holiday Celebrations

 The School of Montessori loves to celebrate different holidays throughout the year. Our students look forward to these celebrations and always have a wonderful time. We strive to keep all holiday celebrations Montessori focused and less on the commercial aspect of the Holidays.

 Please look for notes/sign up sheets from our Hospitality board member when it is time to start planning the holiday celebrations. (Celebrations will not include sugary snacks)

Planned Holiday celebrations are: Halloween, Thanksgiving Feast, Christmas, Valentine’s, and Easter.

Due to lack of space, we invite parents and families to attend the Christmas and Easter celebrations only, and attendance for those will be subject to current regulations and safety procedures.

Special Events

 Grandparents' Day Celebration: All students will take part in “Goodies with Grands” honoring their grandparents at the end of October/ beginning of November.

Mother’s Day Celebration: All students will take part in a Mother’s Day celebration honoring their mothers on the Friday before Mother’s Day.

Father's Day Celebration: All students will take part in “Donuts with Dad” honoring their fathers and father figures the week after the Mother’s Day Celebration.

End of Year Celebration: It is great fun and an excellent way to close the year. All parents are invited to this celebration which takes place on the last day of school.

Monthly Enrichment Programs: Each month our Curriculum board member will schedule a special program for someone to visit our school and present the children with a special lesson, such as Dental hygiene and Fire safety awareness. If you have any ideas for these programs, please contact our Curriculum board member. **All special events will be subject to change depending on current health regulations.**

Fundraising Opportunities

We will hold 2 big fundraisers this year, one in the fall and one in the spring. Please look for information from our fundraising board member regarding how you can help. We encourage every family to participate in each fundraiser to help raise money to support our school!

Ongoing Fundraisers-

 Primary.com and the School of Montessori have partnered in their new Primary Gives Back Program. Use our link [www.primary.com/school/Nederland](http://www.primary.com/school/Nederland) to contribute 15% of your purchase to help raise funds as you shop for your kiddos Back to School essentials (sizes newborn-big kid 12). No logos, slogans or sequins. Use the discount code NEDERLAND for 20% off your first order. Free, fast shipping is included. The website and discount code are available all year long.

Tax Deductible Contributions

There are several ways you can help support our school that are also tax deductible. Please consider visiting the following websites to help support our school!

Amazon smile- When purchasing through Amazon.com, please go to smile.amazon.com and select School of Montessori Inc. as your charitable organization and a portion of your purchase total will go towards our school.

Office Depot- When purchasing items through Office Depot, please provide the school’s ID # 70230940 at checkout and the school will receive 5% in credits back towards free supplies. (Our ID number can also be found by searching on the Office Depot website under the school supplies tab)

Brightwheel

 Our School uses brightwheel for all parent communication and tuition invoicing and payments. Please make sure you have downloaded the app, and that any person that you have designated as an approved pickup for your child has also downloaded the app. Specific codes will be given to each family member/approved pickup for sign in/sign out purposes. Make sure you have notifications turned on for the app as most of the time, messages from the school are only communicated through Brightwheel.

School Website

Please visit our schools website at <http://schoolofmontessori-nederland.org/> for a digital version of this handbook, as well as important forms and information about our school.

Social Media Accounts

Facebook: Our school’s Facebook page is ‘The School of Montessori-Nederland TX’. The URL is [https://www.facebook.com/schoolofmontessoriTX](https://www.facebook.com/The-School-of-Montessori-Nederland-TX-169270623158396/) . Please feel free to share it with your friends and tag our school with any pictures you might post relating to our school!

Parent Facebook Group: We have a private Facebook group just for parents of current students. We use this both to share Montessori related information, but also to stay connected as a community. If you are not already a member of the group, please send a brightwheel message and we will get you connected!

Work Hours and Work Days

Work hours- Each family is required to complete 10 work hours per semester. A log to record your hours is located in the back of your parent handbook, and extra copies are available in the work hour log book in the office. Ways to earn hours include: doing laundry and buying groceries for snacks, volunteering to assist with material prep (at home), and attending parent meetings and workshops (Meetings held on Zoom will count towards your hours). Failure to complete work hours will result in a $15 charge per hour missed.

Work Days- There will be a work day held each semester to help make improvements to the school. These work days are held on a Saturday in the Fall and Spring, and at least one member of each family is required to attend each work day. These work days are not only very important for helping maintain our school, but are also a great chance to meet other parents. Work days **do not** count towards your semester work hours, and failure to attend a work day will result in a $75 charge. You must stay for AT LEAST 2 hours each work day to receive credit. Currently, the fall work day will be on hold given the current health regulations.

Open House

We will hold 2 open houses this year, one in the Fall and one in the Spring. We encourage all family members to attend and see what your child has been learning about. This also gives you a chance to see the Montessori classroom in action and meet other parents. Please check your child’s school calendar for exact dates! Our fall open house is currently on hold given the current health regulations.

Parent Meetings

 We will have several parent meetings throughout the school year. All parents are highly encouraged to attend these meetings to learn valuable information about your child’s learning and to discuss important topics pertaining to the school year. Attendance at these meetings will count towards 2 work hours per meeting that you attend. Please check your child’s school calendar for exact dates and times. Brightwheel messages will also be sent home closer to the dates of the meetings. Meetings held over Zoom will count towards required hours.

Parent Workshops

 The school will host several parent workshops throughout the school year. These workshops will share valuable information on the Montessori Method and ways that you can extend what is being learned at school into your home. Brightwheel messages will be sent home with the dates and times of each workshop. Workshops held over Zoom will count towards required hours.

Parent Conferences

 Parent conferences will be held twice a year (once in the fall and once in the spring) to discuss your child’s progress in the classroom. 1 month prior to conferences, each parent will receive a form to schedule a time to come observe their child working in the classroom. (subject to change given current health regulations) Once you have completed your observation, a conference will be scheduled to discuss what you have observed and answer any questions you might have. The directress is also available for telephone conferences or scheduled conferences throughout the rest of the school year whenever the parent feels a need or when the directress deems one necessary. Do not hesitate to call and make an appointment. However, we discourage “door conferences”. The teacher’s attention needs to be devoted to the children at the arrival and dismissal times. The directress’ door is always open to talk to parents about matters large or small. Please utilize Brightwheel for any messages you need to relay!

Volunteering Opportunities

 There are plenty of volunteering opportunities throughout the year. We will need volunteers to assist with each of our holiday celebrations and often need volunteers to assist with activities or materials that need to be prepared for the classroom. All volunteering opportunities will count towards required semester work hours. For the time being, volunteers will not be allowed in the school building, but opportunities to help from home will be shared.

 The school’s board is also a great way to be involved with your child’s school. Several positions are available, so please contact a current board member or our directress if you are interested in joining the board. Board positions count towards all of your work hours.

You may visit our school at any time during the hours of operation to observe your child, the school’s operation, and program activities, without having to secure prior approval. Any important information concerning your child, the school’s operation, programs, etc. will be posted in the glass window, on the whiteboard inside the front door or sent home with your child. In addition, reminders will be sent throughout the year to notify you of any updates or events. (Until further notice, parents will only be allowed in the school under emergency circumstances)

Teacher Substitutes

Every so often, one of our teachers is unable to come to school due to sickness or other circumstances, and we need a substitute. Any parent wishing to substitute for a teacher will be required to fill out a form, submit a background check, complete a cpr/first aid training, and complete an 8 hour pre service training course. Information and forms will be sent home in the first few weeks of school to parents who wish to become substitutes. Substitutes will be paid on a daily rate, and will need to stay for the teachers entire shift.

Guidelines to become a full-day student

This is the decision of the lead teacher when the student reaches a certain academic and maturity level. Promotion is not based on the students age or time spent in our Montessori program.

Language- Geometry-

Knows the sounds of letters Identifies triangle, circle, square and rectangle

Identifies lower case letters Cutting-

Names the beginning and ending sounds in words Cuts on a straight or curved line

Prints their first name General knowledge-

Identifies colors Knows their phone number

Numbers and numerals- Remembers their parents’ names

Recognizes numbers 0-10 Knows their address

Associates quantities with symbols 1-10 Remembers their birthday

Counts 1-50

Writes 1-10

Sickness and Absences

Please do not bring sick children to school. No child will be accepted if he or she appears sick or has a fever (oral temp 100.0 or higher) **A child must be fever free for 24 hours without the aid of medicine before returning to school**. Remember that you would not like another parent to send their sick child to school and expose your child to an illness.

 Any communicable disease which your child contracts (such as measles, mumps or chicken pox) must be reported to the school. The child should not return to school until medical evaluation determines that the child is no longer communicable and is able to participate in school activities. Notes will be posted and sent home whenever an exposure to communicable diseases has occurred. If a child does become ill while at school, he or she will be isolated and the parents will be given a call to pick up the child. This also includes head lice. The child must be nit-free and all children returning after having head lice must be checked before they attend class. Please see the end of the handbook regarding Covid-19 policies.

 Medications- Parents must sign a consent form before medicine is given at school (per state regulations). Medicine to be given while at school must be in the original container, labeled with the child’s name, doctor’s name, dosage and time to be taken. Parents must administer the first dose of new medications at home. No medicines may be sent in lunchboxes or backpacks. They must be handed directly to a staff member for safe keeping (ex. Cough drops) We do not give breathing treatments at school.

 Absences- Tuition and fees are based on enrollment and not on attendance. To maintain a reserved space for your child, tuition and fees must be paid during the absence of a child due to illness, holidays, vacation or any other reason.

Medical Emergencies

 Parents will be notified through a phone call. In the case of an onset of a critical illness or injury:

1. Emergency personnel will be notified (911)
2. The physician named by the parent will be called
3. For non-emergencies a report will be sent home at the end of the day

Hearing and Vision Screening

 The health department requires that all children entering preschool who are four years of age to be screened for vision and hearing difficulties within a year of enrollment or 120 days after enrollment. Hearing and vision screening will be offered by the school for those children who will be turning 4 and older.

What to send with your child to school

 The school does not have space to store backpacks for each child. Please pack the following items in a gallon sized Ziploc bag to be kept at the school for emergencies:

 -Pants or shorts -shirt -underwear -socks

 If your child likes to take naps in the afternoon (all half day extended care students), please send them with a rest mat. Due to space restrictions, we can only store mats with the blankets and small pillow attached. Waterproof mats are provided by the school. All children need to bring a pair of rain boots to be left at the school. When it has rained a lot, our outdoor area can become muddy. Boots allow your child to still enjoy the outdoors in wet conditions.

Yellow Weekly Folders- Each Monday your child will take home a yellow folder. The folder will contain activities to practice a home, work/projects completed from the previous week, etc. Please empty and return the folder every Friday.

**Please label all items with your child’s name.**

Minimum Standards

 A copy of the “Minimum Standards for Day Care centers” is available for all parents to review. It contains important information about day-care licensing and suggestions for working with our facility.

Discipline Policy and Operational Policy

 Each parent must sign and return a copy of each form to be on file in the office.

Gang-Free Zone

 The School of Montessori is a “gang-free zone”, if gang activity occurs, the offenders will be prosecuted to the full extent of the law.

Student Withdrawal

If for any reason a child is withdrawn from the School of Montessori, this must be presented to the Directress in writing with 30 days advance notice prior to withdrawal.

Discontinuing Services

 The School of Montessori, Inc, reserves the right to discontinue services to any child if:

* The parents fail to reasonably cooperate with the school in the provision of educational services to their child.
* The parents fail to reasonably cooperate with the school in adhering to all policies.
* The child in question is dangerous to self or others.
* Said child is destructive of property or so disruptive that the education of others is significantly impaired.
* The child requires a more appropriate educational setting to better meet the child’s individual needs.

Problems

Please direct any questions or constructive criticism about our Montessori program to the directress or to our school board. Contact information is located in the front of your handbook.

Vaccine Policy

For students:

 All children entering The School of Montessori must submit updated immunization records as required by the state of Texas which includes: name of child, birthdate, type and date of each vaccine received as well as a parent’s signature. If a child is to be excluded from vaccines, then a certificate of exemption must be presented, which includes a notarized affidavit form issued by the Department of State Health Services. Parents/guardians of exempt students will receive notification that the student may be excluded from school if an outbreak of a disease occurs that they have not been fully immunized for.

For Staff:

 It is the policy of The School of Montessori that its employees receive vaccines which are listed and recommended on the CDC website [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedule/downloads/adults/adultschedule.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedule/downloads/adults/adultschedule.pdf) . At this time, NO vaccines are required. All Montessori staff will be notified of any changes if a vaccine is required.

Abuse and Neglect Policy

 All Montessori staff and parents have a duty to report any child abuse or neglect. All reports should be made to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (TDFPS) or to a local law enforcement agency. Reports can be made anonymously to the Child Abuse Hotline 1-800-252-5400 and TDFPS 409-730-2424.

 The policy is inplace to inform and assist the staff of The School of Montessori. The staff are also required to obtain 1 hour annual training in preventing and responding to abuse and neglect of children to stay in compliance with the minimum standards for daycares in the state of Texas.

Emergency Preparedness Plan

In case of fire, gas leak or any other emergency situation, all staff and students will exit the building according to the evacuation plan and then walk across the street to the Meyer’s Auto and Lube shop (1612 Highway 365 Nederland, TX 77627). The school of Montessori, inc. will use Brightwheel to alert parents of emergency situations, so please make sure that your notifications are turned on. The staff will also contact parents directly to have them pick up students immediately.

 Evacuation instructions will be given to all staff members, displayed by the fire exits, and provided to parents on facility tours as well as explained to parents on orientation night. The directress and the staff will evacuate the children as safely as possible, including the first aid kit, children’s medical release consent forms, class roster, parent contact numbers and children’s medication (if applicable). Students will also practice fire drills monthly.

 The school’s directress or designated staff member will call 911 or the local police station, fire and medical emergency services or poison control (1-800-222-1222). In case of shelter in place, The School of Montessori staff will do their best to make sure that children are safe inside the Montessori school building. The directress and staff will maintain supervision of children until they are released to the parents or guardians. In the event of severe weather/tornadoes, all students and staff will be moved into interior areas away from windows and remain there until the threat is over. If electricity goes out, parents will be contacted to pick up their children immediately. Students will practice severe weather drills four times a year.

 In the event of a hurricane or snow/icy conditions, we will follow Nederland (every odd year)/ PNG (every even year) ISD closing procedures. Watch your local news to discover school closures.

The directress or a designated board member will contact licensing as soon as possible (within 2 days) in the event of an emergency that renders all or part of the school unsafe or unsanitary for a child. Local licensing office 409-730-2424 or statewide intake 1-800-252-5400

Covid-19 Procedures and Policies

Each Morning, parents will be asked to go through the Covid-19 Student at home self screening checklist prior to sending their child to school each day. If you can answer YES to any of the following questions, please follow up with your health care provider and let the school know that your child will be absent that day.

Covid-19 Student At Home Self-Screening Checklist

Does my child have any of the following symptoms today?

\_ Fever- 100.0 F or above, with or without fatigue/body aches/chills/headache

\_ Cough \_ Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing

\_New loss of taste or smell \_Sore Throat

\_ Congestion or runny nose \_ Nausea or vomiting

\_Diarrhea

\_ Tested Positive for Covid-19 by one or more laboratory methods

\_ Has had close contact with someone with a confirmed case of Covid-19 in the past 14 days ( Close contact is defined as being directly exposed to infectious secretions, i.e. being coughed on, or being within 6 feet of the infected person for longer than 15 minutes)

Students running a fever of 100.4 or higher must be evaluated by their physician and must have a note from their physician in order to return to school. If the physician recommends COVID testing, students must wait for the results to come back and be cleared by their physician before returning to school. We will follow guidelines from the CDC,, and local officials for students testing positive for COVID. Students must be fever free without the aid of medication for 24 hours before being considered recovered and also remain at home for 10 days from the start of the illness.

If students are exhibiting symptoms of COVID, have been exposed to the virus in their immediate family, has close contact with an infected individual, or have tested positive to COVID, parents will be expected to contact the directress. HIPAA privacy guidelines will be followed. All parents will need to sign an *Assumption of Risk and Waiver of Liability Relating to COVID-19*.

In the event a child tests positive for COVID-19, appropriate contact tracing and family notifications (under HIPAA privacy guidelines) will be performed in accordance with CDC and local orders.The classroom will also be professionally decontaminated.

 Any Students with who either (1) are lab confirmed to have Covid-19 or (b) experience the symptoms of Covid-19 (listed below) must stay home throughout the infection period, and cannot return to school until the school screens the student to determine if any of the conditions below for school re-entry have been met:

* In the case of an individual who was diagnosed with Covid-19, the individual may return to school when all three of the following criteria have been met:
1. at least 1 day (24 hours) has passed since recovery (fever free without the aid of fever reducing medication
2. the individual has improvement in symptoms (cough, shortness of breath, etc)
3. at least 10 days has passed since symptoms first appeared
* In the case of an individual who has symptoms that could be Covid-19 and who is not evaluated by a medical professional or tested for Covid-19, such individual is assumed to have Covid-19 , and the individual may not return to school until the individual has completed the same three-step set of criteria listed above.
* If the individual has symptoms that could be Covid-19 and wants to return to school before completing the above stay at home period, the individual must either (a) obtain a medical professional’s note clearing the individual for return based on an alternative diagnosis or (b) obtain an acute infection test at an approved location that comes back negative for Covid-19

Covid-19 School Precautions

1. **Temperature checks**- Parents will prescreen their children using our Covid-19 At Home Self-Screening Checklist. Upon arrival at school, children will have their temperatures taken using a contactless thermometer before entering the building and will wash their hands as soon as they enter the building.
2. **Masks**- Students under 10 are not required to wear face masks in accordance with current orders, but we highly recommend that all students wear some sort of face covering to help minimize the spread of germs in our school. The teachers are required to wear a face mask, and will encourage students to properly wear their masks. Students will remove their masks while eating and doing outdoor activities. We suggest that for our younger students, the neck gaiter style of masks be used so that the child isn’t having to remove the mask completely, but only pull it down. If the traditional style of masks are worn, we suggest attaching a lanyard to the mask so that it can stay with your child when they aren’t wearing it. This will hopefully discourage the spread of germs by having masks frequently taken off or put down. Facemasks may not have inappropriate images or wording. A clean mask should be worn each day. We suggest having 5 masks and washing them each weekend.
3. **Social Distancing**- Social distancing will be employed when reasonable and feasible, especially when indoors. Tables will be spaced as much as possible indoors, and our outdoor environment will be utilized as much as possible.
4. **Health Precautions**- The classroom and materials will be disinfected with an electrostatic sprayer daily and frequently touched surfaces will be disinfected throughout the day. Tables will be disinfected before and after each use. Students will also have assigned supplies that will only be used by them (as opposed to our normal community supplies) Students will be reminded to frequently wash their hands, but especially before and after meal times, after outside play and after using the bathroom.
5. **Other Precautions-** Children will be required to bring a closed water cup with their name on it each day filled with water. ( we will refill when needed).Please ONLY send water in these cups Dairy and almond milk will be offered during snack and lunch time using single use cups which will be washed and sanitized after use. Snacks will be served either pre packaged or prepared by the teacher and served to the students individually. No family style snacks will be served.