Montessori Academy

PARENT HANDBOOK



Toddlers-Sixth Grade

Parent Acknowledgement Form

School Parent Handbook

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Student Name (Please Print)

Address\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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Phone #\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

This Parent Handbook was created to promote an understanding of the policies and procedures at Montessori Academy.

The information in this Parent Handbook applies to all activities occurring on school grounds, school buses, and during any school related activity. It is important that parents and students are familiar with these expectations.

Please remove this page, sign it, and return it to the Principal. It will be added to your child’s permanent file. Your signature means that you have received this Parent Handbook and understand the policies and procedures of Montessori Academy.

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I have read and understand the policies and procedures in the Montessori Academy Parent Handbook. I agree to abide by them as will my child(ren).

Parent/Guardian Signature Date

Parent/Guardian Signature Date

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**Mission Statement**

Our mission is to provide a carefully planned, stimulating environment utilizing Maria Montessori’s teaching methods which will help children develop within themselves the foundational habits, attitudes, skills, and ideas which are essential in creative thinking and learning. We strive to open our student’s minds to develop self-confidence, discover academic excellence, and find joy in life-long learning.

**Goals**

The Montessori curriculum varies at the different levels of our school (Toddler, Primary (Preschool-K), and Elementary (1st-6th), but the goals are consistent throughout all programs.

* To enter into a partnership with parents in the education of their children
* To encourage self-motivation and self-discipline
* To lead children to mastery of precisely identified intellectual, social, and physical skills
* To develop a positive attitude toward School and learning
* To develop a positive self- image
* To build the basic skills necessary for a lifetime of learning
* To develop and foster an abiding curiosity
* To foster compassion and respect for others
* To develop habits of initiative and persistence
* To develop socially acceptable behavior
* To develop each child’s innate, ultimate potential through high self-expectations
* To develop a child’s love of learning through a process which is FUN and ENJOYABLE to the child

**Curriculum**

Montessori represents both a philosophy and method of education. Our school focuses on the development of each child’s full potential by using teacher specifically trained in the Montessori Method and Philosophy for the level they teach.

Our teachers use both concrete teaching materials and a well-defined curriculum that personalizes the education unique for each child and through each three year cycle from the Primary program and both levels of Elementary.

The use of multiage environment has a multitude of benefits that are immediately recognized when observing a typical classroom. Younger children in each grouping have the opportunity to observe and model themselves from their older peers as they work. Older students are able to reinforce their own knowledge by explaining or demonstrating what they are doing and assisting their younger peers. The final year in our three year cycle is the most empowering to the students both socially and academically. Each student can learn and develop at their own pace and our curriculum allows for accommodations on many levels of abilities and complexitities.

Montessori teachers are specially trained to observe and design lessons based on each unique child’s interests and love of learning. Teachers are responsible for preparing the educational environment within each classroom and for differentiating lessons to meet the individual needs of their student learners.

**Family Commitment**

Fundamental to the operation of this school is the expectation that all members participate and support the school whenever possible. Teachers value the assistance and participation of parents in the classroom and beyond the classroom. Both parents and students are enriched by parental involvement in school activities. In addition, our Boise Montessori PTO assists in special programs and helps the school meet short and long term goals. Families are expected to contribute to our school in a way that fits their family on an annual basis.

**Admission Process**

1. **Tour and Observation**

Montessori Academy encourages families to tour and observe our school in action prior to enrollment. Tours are given by the Principal and Assistant Principal. At the conclusion of the tour

1. **Application**

Interested families are encourage to complete and submit an enrollment application along with a non-refundable $80.00 fee. Enrollment applications include application form, Tuition Agreement, Fee Schedule, Pre-Enrollment Modification Inquiry form, Consent & Waiver Form, Certificate of Immunization Status, and Medical History Form. When all requirements are met, an interview appointment will be made.

Applicants coming from other schools (K-6th), must additionally submit birth certificate and current progress reports from previous school. When records are received an interview appointment will be made.

1. **Parent and Student Interview**

The interview is an informal way for parents and the school to become acquainted with each other and share pertinent information. It is the final step prior to a student’s first day at school. Teachers will meet privately with parents and offer students a short visit in their new classroom.

1. **Enrollment**

Priority enrollment if given to currently enrolled families and siblings. Open enrollment begins mid-February or later if space is available. Placement decisions are within the discretion of the Administrative and Admission Team. Once a child is accepted, complete enrollment is determined by submission of the complete application, immunization records, and submission of signed enrollment contract and payment of tuition deposit. No student is considered enrolled in the school until all documents and funds are received.

1. **Bussing**

Montessori Academy offers a bus for transportation of Elementary students for fieldtrips. A small fee for bus useage is billed to accounts included in the fieldtrip costs.

**Curriculum**

**School Policies**

1. **SCHOOL HOURS**

Toddler Half Day Program 9:00 am-12:30 pm

Toddler Full Day Program 9:00 am-3:00 pm

Primary Montessori Half Day 9:00 am-12:30 pm

Primary Montessori Full Day 9:00 am-3:00 pm

Kindergarten 9:00 am-3:00 pm

Elementary (1st-6th) 8:30 am- 2:45 pm

Early Care 7:00 am – 8:30/9:00 am

After School Care 2:45 pm -6:00 pm

The school is open daily from 7:00 am – 6:00 pm

**The school Office is open from 8 am – 6 pm, Monday through Friday.**

1. **SCHOOL DAY**

Montessori Academy is open and supervised daily from 7:00 AM – 6:00 PM, excluding holidays, professional development days observed during the year, and parent teacher conference days. If you child remains at school past the designated closing time, 6:00 PM, you will be charged a late fee of $5.00 per minute as designated in your fee schedule. Departure time is determined by when the students exit the building with their parent/guardian.

1. **STUDENT ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL**

All children must be signed in and out daily when arriving and departing from school. Parents and/or students can sign in and out daily utilizing the check in/out computers located in each hallway. Please ensure that arrival and dismissal times are observed. Late arrivals are disrupted to classrooms.

In order to comply with state licensing requirements and safety/supervision of your child, a parent or authorized representative must check students in and/or out when dropping off or picking up children. No child will be released to anyone other than his/her parent without prior written authorization. If written authorization has not been received by the school, Montessori Academy will call parents to confirm alternate release arrangements and to obtain oral authorization of those arrangements before the child is released. Authorization can be granted on the emergency information form, but make sure to include a note anytime changes in dismissal are made.

1. **PERSONAL POSSESSIONS**

Books or other educational materials that might be of interest to other children or support classroom learning such as items from nature or other countries are welcome in the classrooms. Be ensure that the item is clearly labeled. Sharing items in class will become a part of the classroom learning experience.

We do not allow children to bring toys, playthings and electronic devices including cell phones into the classroom. If a child brings a non-educational item, it will be stored in your child’s bag/backpack until dismissal. We do allow children to bring a comfort item with them to nap with. This can be kept at school inside their napping material or will travel to and from school. Please return any unfamiliar items (i.e beads, small cubes, little boxes) that your child brings home; they may be a part of our school materials.

1. **RULES FOR VEHICLES WHILE ON SCHOOL GROUNDS**

The safety of our children is paramount. We require all parents to adhere to the following rules of the road while on campus:

* All vehicles must obey the 5 miles per hour speed limit at all time on school property.
* Parents are asked to park in designated parking spaces only.
* While on school grounds, pedestrians always have the right of way.
* Vehicles ignitions MUST be turned off and keys removed while parked on school grounds.
* Children may NOT be left unattended in a vehicle at any time for any reason. If you have a sick or sleeping child and need to pick up another child, please alert the office staff and if we are available we will assist in gather your child in school.
* The drive thru lane is for Elementary curbside drop off or curbside pick up that has been prescheduled due to appointments, sick/sleeping siblings, or other.
1. **NAP TIME/QUIET REST**

It is the policy of the school and state licensing requirements that all children five years of age and younger have a minimum of 20 minutes of rest if they are in care for more that three hours. Children will rest of mats. Parents will need to provide a crib sized sheet to cover the mat as well as a small blanket that will fit inside the Montessori Academy nap bag. During this nap/rest time children may be listening to classical music, a read aloud book, or independently read or look at books. Napping material will be sent home weekly to be laundered.

1. **HEALTH POLICY**
2. **Immunizations**

Idaho School Immunization Law (IDAPA 16/02/15) requires all children seeking entry to a public or private school, must meet immunization requirements PRIOR to attendance. No child will be admitted without proof of immunization status.

Idaho Law allows parents/guardians to claim an exemption from immunizations for their child for medical, religious, or personal reasons. ALL exemptions must be documented on the official State of Idaho Department of Health and Welfare exemption certificate and signed by the families physician. Exemptions forms are mandated to be updated annually.

 **IDAPA CODE: 16.02.15 (http://adminrules.idaho.gov/rules/2001/16/0215.pdf)**

Immunization Records include the following:

1. Complete and up-to-date medical record from the family physician
2. Compete and up-to-date medical record from IRIS (Idaho Immunization Reminder System)
3. Compete and signed Idaho State Exemption form.
4. **Illness**

Montessori Academy must protect all children, parents, and staff from communicable diseases. Our Illness policy is in place to prevent the spread of illness to others, reduce the possibility of the recuperating child returning to school before the child is fully recovered from the illness, which in turn, could develop into a more serious illness, and to prevent the spread of colds, flu, and diarrhea common of children in school settings.

Children should remain home if the following occur:

1. Child develops or is sent home from school with a fever of 100 degrees or more.
2. Vomiting within the previous 24-hour period
3. Diarrhea within the previous 24-hour period (this will include recurring episodes of diarrhea at school (minimum of 2 episodes)).
4. Heavy colored nasal discharge
5. Persistent cough or sore throat
6. Cold or Flu Symptoms (persistent cough, sore throat, sneezing)
7. Rash within the previous 24-hour period
8. Child “not well enough to go outside”
9. Behavior that is atypical of the child

In general, children not well enough to go outside should stay home. Children sent home from school with any of the above symptoms may NOT return to school the following day. Children sent home with rashes will need a Doctor’s note to return to school.

1. **Medication Administration**

Idaho guidelines and Montessori Academy policy agree that the administration of medication during school hours is the ultimate responsibility of the parent and not the staff. Parents may come to school to administer medication at any time.

Montessori Academy will cooperate with the family in overseeing administration of medication during school hours if the following requirements are met:

1. Montessori Academy is provided with a signed written statement from the parents and/or the physician indicating the name of the medication, the times and amount of the dose, and the time period within which the medication is to be taken at school.
2. The Medication must be properly labeled and delivered to Montessori Academy by an adult. Properly labeled means medication is in the original container (over the counter) or in a fully labeled pharmacy container. All medications will be stored in the office and not with the child (includes cough drops) unless it is an emergency response medication as outlined below. When Montessori Academy assumes the responsibility of overseeing administration of medication, it will be overseen by the Office Administration. A record of the medication, time given, and dosage will be recorded.
3. Montessori Academy will NOT administer injectable medication at anytime with exception to Epipen.

Students with Epipens must have an allergy action plan developed by parents and primary physician. The action plan must be on file at the school and staff must be trained on the action plan by the parents.

1. **Food Allergies**

Due to peanut and nut allergies, Montessori Academy is a peanut free school. Do not bring any food to share that contains nuts or peanuts (e.g., birthday treats, holiday parties, etc) Our peanut policy focuses attention on peanuts because they are the most common culprits in severe food allergies.

Our food allergy policy is not a guarantee that a student never experience an allergy related event at school. Our policy’s goal is to decrease the risk of a life threatening event and reflects the school strong value on respecting individual differences.

1. **Nutrition Policy**

***Why do we have a Nutrition Policy?***

Childhood and adolescence are critical periods for health and development as the physiological need for nutrients increases and the consumption of a diet of high nutritional quality is particularly important. Eating habits, lifestyle and behavior patterns are established during this period that may persist throughout adulthood.

Patterns of eating have a significant influence on health and well-being. A healthy diet during childhood and adolescence reduces the risk of immediate nutrition related health problems of primary concern to school children, namely obesity, dental caries and lack of physical activity. In addition, young people who healthy eating habits developed early in life are more likely to maintain them and thus be at reduced risk of chronic ailments such as cardiovascular diseases, cancer, type II diabetes and osteoporosis in adulthood.

Healthy nutrition improves child well-being and learning ability, leading to better academic performance. Evidence shows positive links between children who are well nourished and improved learning, attendance, behavior and consequently child-teacher relationships

***How do I tell if a Food fits our Nutrition Policy?***

Think Five—the more color and variety the better! Nutrition dense lunches contain protein, fruit, vegetables, whole grains, and a treat (note from a parent).

***Ingredients are they important?***

If you include a pre-packaged item in a lunch, flip over and review the nutrition information. We would like all items to list sugar as the 5th ingredient of higher in the list. So if that granola bar covered in chocolate lists sugar as the 1st-4th ingredient, it does not meet our requirements. Please save those for at home treats or snacks.

Some easy option ideas for lunches are:

**Protein:**  turkey breast, chicken breast, hardboiled egg, beans, nut butters (not peanut butter), string cheese, cottage cheese, and yogurt. However, not all yogurts are created equal and many have 21-28 grams of sugar per serving. Please choose a yogurt that is 9 grams or less like YoYo Baby or YoYo Kids by Stonyfield. Plain Greek yogurt with berries and a touch of honey is a treat!

**Fruit:** blueberries, apple slices, plums, grapes-something easy to eat and they love!

**Veggies:** carrots, cucumber, celery sticks, bell pepper sticks are all easy finger foods. If you child is a dipper add some hummus or natural ranch dressing.

**Whole Grain:** whole grain crackers, pita bread, whole grain breads and tortillas

**Treat:** A quick note or drawing is a great way to connect with your child while you are apart.

**Birthday Treats**

Birthdays are synonymous with cake, ice cream , cupcakes, and other sugary treats. Our school goal is to honor those birthdays in a special way.

Classrooms celebrate birthdays by highlighting the timeline of their life, how many times around the sun, student of the day, and parents are welcome to supply a “treat”. We ask you save those typical birthday treats for the at home celebration or party with friends celebration.

***Ideas to send to school:***

Fruit kabobs

Meat and Cheese kabobs

Rainbow Fruit bowls

Unsweetened applesauce cups

100% fruit juice popsicles

Whole grain tortilla wraps

Whole grain English muffins pizza

Apple Nachos (apple slices treated with lemon juice and a non peanut butter dip

Chips and Dip

Veggies and Dip

Pita Chips and Hummus

Your Child’s favorite lunch or dinner item to share

From a child’s perspective being the “star” of the day and bringing a special treat for the class is celebrating and important.

1. **NONDISCRIMINATION**

**Anti-Discrimination Policy**

It is the policy of Montessori Academy that no person be excluded from participating on the grounds of race, creed, color, sex, religion, disability, national origin, sexual orientation, or income.

**ADA Policy/Special Needs**

In addition to having a policy of non-discrimination, Montessori Academy strives to include all children, including those with special needs, and will attempt all reasonable solutions before denying or terminating any child with special needs. We currently work with children who have a variety of special needs and most of our sites are wheel chair accessible. We encourage parents of children with special needs to communicate with staff about a child’s needs. We will make every reasonable effort to have our staff trained to work more effectively with each child’s special needs. We are committed to serving all children.

**Anti-Bias Environment**

Montessori Academy is dedicated to providing an anti-bias environment for children and adults. An anti-bias environment is one that encourages an active approach to challenging prejudice, stereotyping, and bias. An anti-bias attitude values and celebrates diversity among different genders, races, lifestyles, physical abilities, religions, and cultures.

**Non-Religious Policy**

Montessori Academy is a non-denominational organization and does not instruct religious activities. From time to time, however, we will expose children to diverse cultural experiences that may have religious overtones. Children will not be required to participate in any of these activities and alternate activities will be provided upon request.

**Child Abuse & Neglect Policy**

 If an Montessori Academy staff member suspects a child in his/her care has been the victim of child abuse or neglect we are required by law to report our suspicions. All child development teachers in the state of Idaho are mandated reporters.

1. **WITHDRAWL, SUSPENSION AND DISMISSAL**

**Withdrawl**

Parents wishing to withdraw their Preschool/K child must give a written thirty day notice prior to leaving. Failure to provide adequate notice will result in liability for all fees, tuition, or other that were billed at the time notice is given.

Parents wishing to withdraw their Elementary (1st-6th) child prior to the end of the school year will be responsible for the full remaining tuition as specified in the enrollment contract.

**Suspension and Dismissal**

Montessori Academy reserves the right to suspend or dismiss a child (in our sole discretion) for unsatisfactory or inappropriate behavior, if we do not have adequate expertise or resources for the child’s educational, medical, or other needs, for violations of our policies, for any Toddler/Preschool/Kindergarten family for failure to abide by tuition agreement (responsibility for fees may be upheld) or if for any reason we determine it to be in the best interest of the school.

1. **PARENT/STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

For your students success parents are encouraged to: (not in order of priority):

* + Have children at school on time.
	+ Encourage your student’s daily attendance at school; report and explain absences and tardies to the school.
	+ Keep informed of school policies and academic requirements of school.
	+ Be sure your student is appropriately dressed at school and school related activities.
	+ Discuss progress reports and school assignments with student.
	+ Bring attention to the school administration/teachers any learning problems or conditions that may relate to your students education.
	+ Bring attention to the school administration/teachers any conflicts or concerns you or your student may have.
	+ Refrain from discussing other student’s behavior, academic progress, or other. Defamation of character of parents or children is grounds for dismissal.
	+ Maintain up-to-date home, work, and emergency telephone numbers and other pertinent information at the school.
	+ Assist your student in understanding their responsibilities as outlined in this handbook and submit a signed statement (see last page of handbook).
	+ Promote high expectations for your student’s behavior, school achievement, and homework.
	+ Support academics at home by assisting student with management of schoolwork
	+ Establish and maintain open lines of communication between home, school and teachers.
	+ Participate in school activities including parent-teacher conferences.

**STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT:**

The student code of conduct outlines how each student will be helping our school be a safe, respectful, and productive place for learning.

* + Be on time.
	+ Being prepared for each class with appropriate materials and assignments.
	+ Being properly attired.
	+ Exhibiting respect toward others, self, and environment.
	+ Conducting themselves in a responsible manner.
	+ Following school/classroom rules in class, hallways, bathrooms, and on the playground. I have read and understand the code parent and student code of conduct.

Parent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_