# Parent Handbook

*(Revised October, 2019)*

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336.766. 5550

wsMontessori.org
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ABOUT US

Our Mission
Our mission is to provide a nurturing and secure environment which promotes the development of each child physically, emotionally, socially, as well as academically. We strive for a well-rounded education grounded in Montessori philosophy and teaching methods, which will develop and foster the natural curiosity of each child into a lifelong love of learning and a passion for excellence. We promote the development of a global perspective and a commitment to giving back to the community through service to others.

Our History
The first Montessori school in Winston-Salem was founded in 1968 with 24 students. Affiliated with Our Lady of Mercy Catholic Church, Southside Montessori was located on the corner of Banner and Sunnyside Avenues. Montessori materials were difficult to find, and training for the teachers consisted of workshops and a correspondence course via the St. Nicholas Preparatory School in London.

During the 1970s, two more Montessori schools were opened: Forsyth Montessori and Reynolda Montessori. In 1984, these schools merged and relocated to Wesley Memorial United Methodist Church on Bolton Street, with the new name of Montessori Children’s Center, Inc. In 1986, Southside Montessori closed, leaving Montessori Children’s Center the only Montessori school in Winston-Salem.

Montessori Children’s Center moved to Old Vineyard Road in 1992, eventually housing two Toddler classrooms, five Children’s House classrooms, and a combined Lower and Upper Elementary program.

By the summer of 2006, a new building designed by Montessori architect, Jim Dyck was finished, and The Montessori School moved to its new campus on Holder Road in Clemmons, North Carolina. The school currently houses three Toddler classrooms, five Children’s House classrooms, two Lower Elementary classrooms, and one Upper Elementary.

During the 2006-2007 School Year, our community engaged in a process to complete a core values document to guide our community. During the summer of 2007 the document was submitted to and approved by the Board of Trustees. This document is an important part of our community and is referred to regularly as the school continually strives to align itself more closely with these core values. We encourage you to visit www.wsmontessori.org and read and reference the Blueprint at any time.

In 2008, the school engaged in a contract with the Natural Learning Initiative (NLI) to design our outdoor environment master plan for our eight-acre campus. Each year we continue to realize this plan through the investment of school resources and support from parents, faculty and staff, and leadership from our Outdoor Play & Learning Environments (OPLE) Committee.

Stemming from the 2013-19 Strategic Plan, in August of 2015, TMS began preparations to expand its program offerings to include a 7th - 9th grade Adolescent Program. In February of 2016, the TMS Adolescent Program Steering Committee, comprised of parents, faculty, school leadership and Board representation, was formed.
and began its work of developing this new program. Along with visiting multiple well-established Adolescent programs both in North Carolina and beyond, the committee retained the consulting services of internationally renowned Montessori Adolescent expert, Pat Ludick, to support our efforts.

In January of 2017, the school purchased 6.7 acres at 6163 Holder Road to be the new home for our Adolescent program. Over the course of 18 months construction and renovations for new facilities on the new North Campus were completed and the first charter group of 7th grade students began in August, 2018.

Organization
The Montessori Children’s Center, Inc. d/b/a The Montessori School of Winston-Salem is a non-profit, tax-exempt organization. It receives revenues from tuitions, fees, and donations. Fund-raising events provide significant assistance towards financing the School’s programs and growth. As required by law, the school has all of the annual financial reports available for public inspection. The reports may be viewed during regular business hours by contacting the Business Manager.

Board of Trustees
The ultimate responsibility for policy-making at The Montessori School of Winston-Salem is vested in the Board of Trustees. The ultimate responsibility for the daily operations of the school is vested in the Head of School. The Board is composed of five to 10 persons who represent a diversity of talent and knowledge and who have sufficient time to support the goals of the school. The Head of School is a non-voting ex-officio trustee of the Board. Please see the calendar for meeting dates and times for community meetings.

Affiliations:
The Montessori School of Winston-Salem is a member of The American Montessori Society (AMS) and is currently seeking dual accreditation with The American Montessori Society and The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools/AdvancED.

Characteristics of Professional Excellence:
The TMS Characteristics of Professional Excellence were developed by the entire faculty and staff over the course of the 2012-13 School Year and reflect our Mission expressed through the lives and work of our Faculty. These characteristics guide our noble work with children and our ceaseless journey of professional growth and renewal.

1. **The Excellent Professional** exhibits an intrinsic knowledge of the difference between right and wrong, shows the courage to act upon that knowledge, and embodies the following ethical characteristics:
   - Respect for self, others, and the environment
   - Empathy
   - Integrity
   - Confidentiality
   - Commitment

2. **The Excellent Professional** strengthens our Montessori program and practice by:
❖ Revisiting Montessori pedagogy and literature.
❖ Seeking out, and taking advantage of, continuing education opportunities, e.g. conferences, workshops, etc.
❖ Engaging in regular reflections and self-assessment of one’s own evolving practice.
❖ Observing colleagues and other schools.
❖ Staying current on non-Montessori educational trends as applicable to our Mission.

3. **The Excellent Professional** prepares a nurturing and secure environment that meets the physical, intellectual, moral and social needs of children through purposeful work that supports self-construction and independence.

4. **The Excellent Professional** regularly observes the children in their environment, and utilizes these observations to guide decisions in meeting the individual needs of each child and the needs of their community.

5. **The Excellent Professional** maintains an ongoing detailed evaluation of each student, making use of formal and informal observations and lesson and work records to help each student reach her/his full potential.

6. **The Excellent Professional** guides each child toward realizing his/her full social, emotional, and academic potential.

7. **The Excellent Professional** helps to create and maintain a constructive, supportive and peaceful community of colleagues by:
   ❖ Sharing ideas and giving active support.
   ❖ Communicating with grace, courtesy and compassionate directness.
   ❖ Collaborating to solve challenges with openness, compromise, forgiveness and gratitude.

8. **The Excellent Professional** establishes and maintains a positive and responsive partnership with parents, characterized by mutual respect, investment, and effective timely communication and collaboration.

9. **The Excellent Professional** effectively manages her/his time to maintain a healthy balance between her/his professional and personal lives.

**MONTESSORI EDUCATION**

At The Montessori School of Winston-Salem, we call our teachers guides. They are trained in the Montessori pedagogy and practice and prepare dynamic learning environments that encourage each child to reason, to cooperate, to collaborate, to negotiate, and to understand. Each guide’s goal is to guide the development and competency of the individual child by serving as the facilitator for learning. The guide is the child’s link to the environment, someone who gives a lesson and steps back to allow the child to work, while observing and
directing each child forward to the next appropriate material and key educational experience. Each classroom offers a wide variety of Montessori materials, current educational supplies, and handmade materials.

Children operate within a balanced structure of freedoms and responsibilities, free to follow their inspirations with work that stimulates and satisfies their inner motivations, while remaining responsible for tackling challenging and difficult work head-on. This balanced structure of freedoms and responsibilities is created and maintained through the ongoing observations, inspiration and redirection of the classroom guides. The Montessori curriculum is organized as a continuum with one step building precisely on the previous one. The concept of mixed ages promotes an atmosphere of cooperation, teamwork, and peer teaching. The design of the materials and the structure of the tasks lead children to the development of self-discipline.

Outcomes of a Montessori Education

a. Independence

The social and physical organization of the Montessori prepared environment as well as the guiding actions of the teacher promote individual independence. Each child develops independence through a balance of freedoms and responsibilities. These include self-selection of opportunities for constructive work, care of environment, and care of self and others in the community. With the support of a meticulously prepared environment and the consistent nurturing guidance of the teachers, this balanced structure of freedoms and responsibilities leads to the development of concentration, inner discipline, internalization of the learning and learning strategies, and metacognition (thinking about thinking).

b. Confidence and Competence

Confidence is built upon success. A Montessori environment creates many occasions for success. In the spiraling framework of the Montessori curriculum each educational experience builds towards another. Each lesson and activity prepare the child for more complex learning to come, providing greater chances of success for the child throughout his experience.

Confidence and perceived competence are also built upon mistakes made. The teacher’s respect for each child’s efforts and the realization that each child constructs his or her own intelligence create a supportive learning culture where it is also safe to fail. Mistakes and difficulties are seen as valuable stepping stones to the development of perseverance, self-perceived competence, (I can do that.), and, ultimately, individual confidence. A child growing in success is growing in confidence.

c. Autonomy & Collaboration

Grace and courtesy in the classroom contribute to the students’ understanding of each individual’s desire to work alone or with others. In a Montessori setting children are able to hone their collaboration, cooperation, and negotiation skills in working through choices of work partners. Children develop from the earliest ages the vocabulary and skills needed to accept or decline inclusion in others’ work with equanimity, ask for and accept help graciously, and resolve conflicts peacefully and respectfully.

d. Intrinsic Motivation

The Montessori guide knows that each child possesses the natural desire to know and the “work” is “its own reward” in a Montessori environment. External rewards such as gold stars, stickers, or “smile” stamps and
other forms of praise undermine the child’s development of intrinsic motivation and are not present in a Montessori environment. Instead, the Montessori curriculum and materials stimulate each child’s natural curiosity and promote engaged exploration and discovery. The child’s freedom to choose his or her work (within limits) nurtures individual initiative and personal responsibility. And, the guide’s focus on acknowledging the elements of the child’s work, e.g. their effort, their approach, etc., encourages the child’s concentration and effort on the process of learning not just the end products.

e. Social Responsibility
Independent and autonomous persons are always a part of a group and must attain independence and autonomy through participation in group activity. Children in Montessori classes are “free” within the carefully crafted, mutually agreed upon limits of the group. These limits are articulated in the course of the school experience through clearly defined class agreements which are modeled by the guide and the children. The physical organization of the classroom contributes to the successful conformance to the class agreements by all members of the classroom community. Social responsibility develops from the child’s willful adherence to and enforcement of these agreements. Children in a Montessori environment attain independence and autonomy and, at the same time, develop social responsibility?

f. Academic Preparation
In Montessori education, children learn to learn by doing. Academic preparation is achieved by nurturing each child’s natural curiosity into a life-long love of learning. The spiraling nature of the Montessori curriculum, one experience building toward successively complex experiences, scaffolds learning for the child. Through the use of the Montessori didactic materials the child achieves first perceptual and then cognitive understanding of concepts. The interdisciplinary nature of the curriculum allows the child make connections between disciplines, leading to deeper understanding and application of skills and knowledge. As an active participant in his or her education, each becomes the builder of meaningful knowledge helping her or him learn how to learn.

g. Spiritual Awareness/Cosmic Education
Dr. Montessori’s distinctive notion of the child as a “spiritual embryo” emphasized her key principle that the growing human being is not simply a biological or psychological entity, but a spiritual energy seeking expression within the physical and cultural world. The Montessori curriculum develops in children, the awareness of ecology of existence that gives every living thing a meaningful function in the larger system and encourages each child to make his or her own unique contribution to the world.

h. Global Citizenship
From the earliest experiences of negotiating and adjusting one's behavior with other students through the study of people of various cultures, Montessori education guides children to move far beyond the family and school, towards global citizenship. Personal responsibility is configured for the child in successively broader terms to include an awareness of the importance of stewardship of the planet. Children acquire civic virtue and an understanding of the natural world and of the necessity to cherish it, respect it, sustain it, and to live harmoniously within it?
Assessments and Standardized Testing

Assessment is an integral part of a Montessori setting and is viewed as a means to support continued learning and development. At TMS we believe that all assessments serve to help us fulfill our Mission and that the skill sets achieved and knowledge gained in each discipline are all essential milestones along a child’s educational journey. They are not the ends in and of themselves but means for our greater goal of guiding our children in their development toward a meaningful adulthood. In a Montessori school, assessment occurs in many ways; to name a few:

❖ The Montessori Three Period Lesson;
  o 1st: A gift from the guide, “These shapes are congruent.”
  o 2nd: Show me, “Show me the congruent shapes.”
  o 3rd: Recall, “What are these shapes called?”
❖ The control of error built into the materials;
❖ Isolation of difficulty in lesson sequence that allows the adult and child to assess understanding of complex processes from the ground up;
❖ Observation of the child at work and review of the child’s work;
  o Questioning & answering
  o Verbalizing processes in one’s work
  o Involving children in the assessment of their own work, “What seems to be missing here?”
❖ Recalling and applying acquired knowledge to new concepts (consistently done due to the interrelated approach of Montessori);
❖ Peer and self-checking/editing of work;
❖ Students applying gained knowledge/skills to teach other students;
❖ Regular teacher/student conferences for Elementary students, helping them make and own the choices in their educational process;
❖ Use of work portfolios;
❖ Quizzes and test-like experiences (often referred to as challenges) both teacher and student produced;
❖ Project work culminating in presentations, dioramas, class materials, etc.;
❖ Standardized testing

A Note on Standardized Testing
At TMS the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS), a nationally-normed standardized assessment, is given in the spring of the Elementary 3rd, 6th and 9th grade years. These assessments provide a snapshot overview of a child’s performance in language, reading and math at the time of testing. Test data is combined with the more comprehensive records and knowledge of the students to inform parents and teachers about a child’s academic strengths, areas of challenge and areas for continued learning and development. Additionally, by analyzing accumulated data, looking for trends, these tests assist TMS with identifying areas of strength and relative weakness of our program, affirming what we do well and highlighting areas of potential programmatic growth.
ADMISSIONS & ENROLLMENT

Admissions Policy
The Montessori School is committed to bringing young people together from a broad spectrum of ethnic, national, socio-economic and religious backgrounds. We welcome diversity and encourage our students to broaden their perspective of the world through friendships, mutual respect, and understanding.

Applications are considered on an individual basis. Our goal is to ensure that our school will be able to offer the applicant the best possible learning environment to meet his/her specific needs. We are committed to helping families make the best match between family, student and school by striving to ensure that the goals and values of each student and family are in alignment with our school.

Each family is asked to carefully read our school literature, especially our Blueprint, a document outlining the school’s core values. You can find our Blueprint on our website, www.wsmontessori.org.

Non-Discrimination Policy
The Montessori School of Winston-Salem (Montessori Children’s Center, Inc.) admits students of any race, color, nationality, and ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. The school does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, nationality or ethnic origin in administration of the school’s educational policies, admission policies, and other school-administered programs.

Enrollment Contract
At the time of enrollment, parents sign a legally binding contract agreeing to pay tuition for the full school year. The enrollment fee and tuition deposit are non-refundable. Several payment plans are available. Refer to your contract for details.

Placement of Students
When current students are rising to a new level or new students are enrolled, the Admissions Committee undertakes a thoughtful and detailed process for determining classroom placements. Our aim is to create classrooms that are optimally balanced in various aspects: age, gender, learning style, etc. For rising students, we do this by gathering input from the child’s current teacher, then combining it with all the knowledge we have about each of the classrooms. For new students, we factor in the information gleaned during the school tour and subsequent communication, information on the child’s application, as well as input from the child’s visit.

Withdrawal Policy
The Montessori school reserves the right to require a parent to withdraw a child from the school if it is the opinion of the School that either the child or the parents are not adhering to the policies of
the school or if the School determines that withdrawal is in the best interest of the child or the school. In addition to the provisions set forth in the initial enrollment contract, a written notice of termination must be submitted to the Head of School on or before March 1 of the then-current school year for the subsequent school year. Any failure to timely provide such notice shall result in being obligated to pay the student’s entire school tuition for the following school year, subject to any reduction in accordance with the “Termination by Parent/s for Other Reasons” section in the enrollment contract. If there is a need to delay the student enrollment decision for a specified length of time, a request for an extension of time must be submitted in writing to the Director of Admissions by March 1 of the then-current school year. In addition, if the School determines that an enrollment decision regarding a student should not be made until after such March 1 date, the School shall so notify the parent/guardians(s) in writing prior to that date occurring. The School makes no guarantee for any continued enrollment of Student, and any such determination, or the granting and length of any such extension of time for making an enrollment decision, shall be in the sole discretion of the School.

PROGRAMS

Toddler

The TODDLER program is for children who are 18 months to approximately three years old. Each class consists of up to 12 children with a Lead Guide and an Assistant. Children are introduced to Montessori concepts of respect, order, concentration, coordination and independence through their work and social interactions. This program is either Half Day 8:30-12:00 or Full Day 8:30-3:00.

Children’s House

The HALF DAY CHILDREN’S HOUSE program is for children three to four years old. Children work at their own pace in a multi-age setting, learning independently or from each other through exploration of Montessori-based learning materials. The curriculum includes practical life, sensorial activities, language arts, math, science, geography, art, and music. The school day is from 8:30-12:00.

(NOTE: We only offer a full day program for children in their 3rd Children’s House/Kindergarten year, typically ages 5-6.)

The FULL-DAY CHILDREN’S HOUSE program is for children ages three to six years who remain in the Montessori class until the end of the school day, 3:00. The curriculum in the morning is the same as the half-day program, with an additional Montessori work cycle in the afternoon. After lunch, children needing rest will move to the napping room and will return to the classroom when awake. After napping, children are welcomed back into their environment and free to choose work if there is still time left in the session. Third year children, and children not needing a rest, will remain in their classroom for the full afternoon work cycle.
Lower Elementary

The LOWER ELEMENTARY program is for children ages six to nine years old and marks the beginning of what Dr. Montessori referred to as the Second Plane of development. Just as the Toddler and Children’s House environments are designed to meet the sensorial needs of children in the First Plane of development, so too is the Elementary program designed to meet the needs of the Second Plane child. The Elementary environment offers a fully integrated curriculum that includes language arts, math, geometry, botany, zoology, cultural studies, art, PE, and music through concrete, hand-on learning experiences, storytelling, and individual and group exploration and research. The school day is from 8:30am-3:00pm.

Upper Elementary

The UPPER ELEMENTARY program is a continuation of the Lower Elementary experience and is for children ages nine to twelve. As the Second Plane child’s abstract reasoning, academic and social skills grow, so does the Upper Elementary curriculum and experience. The integrated curriculum of the Lower Elementary continues into the Upper Elementary in an ever more complex manner and focuses on higher level critical thinking, responsible independence, and personal contribution and service to others. The school day is from 8:30am-3:00pm.

Adolescent

The ADOLESCENT program is a 7th through 9th grade program and is built upon the solid foundation of Dr. Montessori’s pedagogy of place and our understanding of the needs and characteristics of the third plane of development. Located on our 6-acre North Camps, students work and study in a prepared environment that is adolescent-centered and designed to meet and respond to their intellectual, social, physical and emotional needs. Students participate in purposeful work that gives them the opportunity to make meaningful contributions to their own community, to their adult community and to society. Students engage in experiential classroom and land-based learning (hands on, project-based application of skills), and connect and work alongside Specialists in the community to further their understanding of issues and tasks. Students engage in activities that allow them to express themselves in mature ways through adult-like roles such as drama, debate, Model UN, intramural and/or interscholastic sports, and create and manage businesses (micro-economies). Upon graduation students are ready to start answering the question: What is my purpose in life and how do I help the world be a better place? The school day is from 8:15-3:30.

Sunrise and Sunset

The SUNRISE AND SUNSET PROGRAMS are optional programs for parents looking for additional care and enrichment opportunities for their children. These programs are an extension of the children’s Montessori experience with a focus on meeting the needs of specific age groups through meaningful activity, grace and courtesy and positive social interactions. Enrollment is subject to availability and should be requested at the time of registration. At the time of enrollment, parents sign a legally binding contract agreeing to pay for their Sunrise and Sunset program commitment on a semester or full-year basis.
Sunrise Hours: 7:30am-8:15am & Sunset Hours: 3:00pm-6:00pm.
The SUNRISE AND SUNSET DROP-IN program is designed to support families in need of before or after school childcare on an occasional basis. Drop-in for Sunrise and Sunset is available at all levels between 7:30 and 8:15 a.m. and between 3:00 and 6:00 p.m. Due to the popularity of these programs and NC Department of Child Development ratio guidelines, we cannot guarantee spaces will always be available. If you believe you will need regular care please sign up for our program on a semester or full-year basis to ensure availability. To inquire about availability and to sign up for Sunrise or Sunset Drop-in, please call or stop by the front desk. Drop-in requests are considered on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Please note: For Sunrise and Sunset Programs that are fully enrolled, we are unable to confirm drop-in availability until 10:00 am the day of. In programs not fully enrolled, parents may inquire about drop-in availability up to 1 week in advance.

Sunset Studios
Sunset Studios are optional afterschool programs that provide a rich variety of co-curricular activities that go hand-in-hand with our other Montessori programs. A variety of studios are offered throughout the school year, from sports/physical expression to cooking, sciences and the arts, each aimed at engaging the mind, body and soul of our children. Studios typically run approximately 1 hour/week for 8 weeks but may vary depending on the age range and focus of the studio. Sunset Studios are available only for our current students and exact times and costs are shared at the time of registration.

Summer Ventures
Summer Ventures is TMS’s co-curricular summer camp program. For our Toddler students, we offer our Toddler Summer Encore that extends our Montessori toddler program throughout the summer to provide consistency for our youngest students. For our Children’s House and Elementary students, we offer themed weeks that fit the developmental needs and interests of these preschoolers through sixth graders, incorporating Montessori principles that foster independence and freedom with responsibility, and a whole lot of fun.

SCHEDULE & OPERATIONS

Administrative Office Hours
The administrative offices are open from 8:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. during the school year. The office is open Mon.-Thurs. 9 p.m. until 4:00 p.m. during the summer.

Arrival & Dismissal

AS YOU ENTER THE DRIVEWAY, PLEASE SLOW DOWN TO 5 MPH & DISCONTINUE USE OF CELL PHONES.
PLEASE REFRAIN FROM USING YOUR CELL PHONE IN THE SCHOOL BUILDING.

6050 Holder Road, Clemmons, NC 27012 | 336.766.5550 | wsMontessori.org
The School uses a keypad entry system to access our front entrance. You will be able to enter the building using the keypad located to the left of the main entry doors from 7:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. using the parent code.

A new code and specifics about using the keypad entry system will be sent to each family via email in August prior to the first day of school.

In an effort to make the most of this security measure, we ask that you not share this code with your children and only with those that will be picking up your children. We will change the parent code from time to time and keep you informed of those changes well in advance.

Sunrise Program:

Toddler – Upper Elementary arrive between 7:30am and 8:15am.

*Access Controlled by Keypad*

Please park in the parking area and accompany your child inside the building. Allow your child to put belongings and lunch box in the appropriate places. Walk your child to the designated classroom and be sure staff is aware of your child’s arrival.

General Procedures for School Day Arrival (Toddler – Upper Elementary 8:15-8:30)

Our regular school day arrival begins at 8:15 and ends at 8:30 for Toddler – Upper Elementary and 8:00 – 8:15 for the Adolescent program. Because we are doing the important work of preparing for the day, our teachers will not begin greeting children until 8:15. If you arrive before 8:15 and are not participating in our Sunrise program, please wait with your child until 8:15. Please do not leave your child unattended.

At 8:30 the school day begins for all. At this time, we ask that you move to the lobby area if you would like to linger for a short observation or for a conversation with fellow parents. To give ample space and time for the arrival transition to be completed, we will begin classroom observations at 8:45.

Toddler Arrival: 8:15am-8:30am arrival if not enrolled in the Sunrise Program.

Please park and walk into the building with your child for drop off. You may use either the toddler or main entrance. Walk your child to the designated classroom and be sure staff is aware of your child’s arrival.

Toddler Dismissal: 11:50am-12:00pm (half day) or 2:50pm-3:00pm (full day)

Please park and walk into the building to pick up your child. You may use either entrance.

Children’s House & Elementary Arrival: 8:15am-8:30am arrival if not enrolled in the Sunrise Program. You may park in the lot and walk your child in or drop off your child in the carpool circle. Please note: While there will be staff present to assist in the carpool circle and to usher children to
their classrooms, children must be able to exit the car independently and walk with their belongings into the school. If your child needs your assistance to get out of the car or with carrying his/her belongings, please park and walk your child in. If you park, you must walk your child into the building.

1. If you walk your child into the building please say good-bye in the hallway and allow your child to enter the classroom independently. Saying good-bye can be hard for some children, but entering the classroom with your child can make the morning transition even more difficult.
2. When using the carline circle, please form one continuous lane of cars and please proceed out of the drop-off circle as soon as your child is safely on the sidewalk. **For everyone’s safety, please do not pull around to the left of cars in the carline circle of you unless directed to by a staff member.**
3. A staff member or volunteer will assist children being drop-off in the carline circle into school beginning at 8:15 a.m. Drop-off ends promptly at 8:30 a.m. **If you arrive after 8:30 a.m. you must park, walk your child into the building and sign him or her in at the front desk.**

**Children’s House Dismissal: 11:50am-12:00pm (half-day) or 2:50pm-3:00pm (full-day)**

1. If you are walking into the building to get your child during regular pick-up times, please wait in the lobby area until classes are dismissed. Your child will be escorted to you by a staff member.
2. If you are picking up your child via the carline circle, please form (one lane of cars for half-day pickup) and (two lanes of cars for full-day pickup) and place your child’s name label in your front windshield or front passenger window.
   **For your safety, please remain in your car during pick up. Your child will be escorted to you by a staff member.**

Due to Elementary dismissal, if you arrive at or after 3:00pm, please park in the parking lot and walk into the building to get your child.

**Elementary Dismissal: 3:00 - 3:10 p.m. If you arrive early, please park in the lot until 3:00 p.m. so that the Children’s House students may finish their dismissal.**

1. Park and enter the building or proceed through the carline circle by car. Elementary students will dismiss from the front lawn area to the left of the main entrance. If you are walking into the building to get your child during regular pick up times, please wait outside the classroom or in the lobby until classes are dismissed.
2. If you are picking up your child via the carline circle, please form two continuous lanes of cars and place your child’s name label in your front windshield or front passenger window. **Please pull all the way forward to the end of the sidewalk to allow the maximum number of students to load at one time. Please pay close attention to staff members directing traffic in the carline circle.**

**Sunset Program Dismissal: 3:00-6:00p.m. Please park in the parking area and come inside.**
Unloading Zone:
When dropping off requires a little more time than simply having your child get out of the car, you may use our unloading zone, designated in the last section of our drop-off circle (past our little green plastic person, Gilbert)

Please use the unloading zone if:
❖ You need to exit the car to help your child or children, e.g. carpool families unloading items from the truck/rear of the car, etc.
❖ Your child has additional items to unload that require extra time, e.g. laundry, project materials, etc.
❖ Your child needs extra time at drop-off, e.g. your child is new to drop-off, having a difficult time separating, or, moving a little extra slowly, etc.

To use the unloading zone please:
❖ Wait in the drop-off lane until you can pull past Gilbert and up to the sidewalk.
❖ Pull next to the sidewalk and as far forward as possible so that a second car can pull in for unloading if needed. Cars using the regular drop off will then be able to pull around you.
❖ Be mindful of cars pulling around you as you exit the car to unload.
❖ Remember, this is only for unloading; cars may not be left unattended. If you need to walk inside, please park in the parking area and walk in.

Authorized Drivers:
Unless we are notified in writing, your child may be picked up only by you or an individual on your “authorized pick-up list.” Please list all routine authorized drivers on your child (ren)’s emergency form(s) and please contact the front desk to make updates to your “authorized pick-up lists.” Authorized drivers will be asked to show proof of identification if they are not familiar to our staff members. It is assumed by the school that either parent may pick up their child at any time. If parents are separated or divorced, the school will still assume that either parent may pick up the child unless the school is 1) furnished a copy of a current court order which either limits the rights of one of the parents to pick up the child or establishes other custodial arrangements for the child, and 2) teachers and staff are advised about the custody arrangement. If the court order is only a temporary order, it will be assumed that when it expires, either parent will again be able to pick up the child.

Adolescent Arrival: 8:00 – 8:15 a.m.
Adolescent students are to be dropped off at the North Campus at 6163 Holder Road. For safety, students may not walk unattended from the Main Campus to the North Campus. Adolescent Program Faculty will be present to greet students each day.

Adolescent Dismissal: 3:00-3:15
Adolescent students not participating in afterschool programs must be picked up from the North Campus.

Late Arrivals and Departures:
Children need consistency and predictability in their lives. Arriving at school on time each day can meet that need. Children who arrive late are at a disadvantage for integrating into the morning’s activities. Children arriving after 8:30 a.m. must be signed in at the front desk and escorted to class by their parents. **Carpool drop-off ends at 8:30 a.m.** and class **begins promptly at 8:30am**. Students arriving late are disruptive to all classrooms. If you arrive late, please ask the front desk for the appropriate place to leave your child’s lunch. **Do not leave lunch in front of the classroom.**

Whether pick-up time is noon, 3:00, or 6:00 p.m. please be on time. If you have an emergency and cannot arrive to school on time, please call the office and notify a staff member immediately. **If you are late, you will be responsible for late pick-up charges ($10 per 15 minutes); charges will be made to your account.**

Early Pickup:
If you plan to pick up your child early for an appointment or other commitment, please sign him/her out at the front desk. If your child returns to school the same day, please sign him/her back in and accompany him/her to class, making sure the teacher is aware of the student’s return to the classroom.

Reporting an absence
If your child is going to be absent unexpectedly from school, please call the school and ask the receptionist to transfer you to your teacher’s voice mail box. Please leave a message directly on the voice mail box. It is always helpful for the teacher to know the status of your child. If your child has a planned absence please notify your teacher via voice mail or other method in advance whenever possible.

Inclement Weather Procedure
Our school **DOES NOT** follow the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County School System closing and delay decisions. If we decide to close school or to delay opening due to hazardous winter weather conditions, information will be emailed to parents preferred email address, posted on our school website (wsMontessori.org); the TMS Facebook page; our voicemail; and on WXII-TV. Opening changes may be posted as late as 6:45 a.m., so please check back often. Our decision to open or close will take into consideration travel conditions and general safety of our staff, students, and parents. **We ask that parents make their own travel and attendance decisions based upon weather and road conditions in their vicinity.**

**School-Home Partnership**

The school and parents must have mutual trust and respect if they are to work together effectively for the education of the child. Maintaining this trust requires clear continuous communication.
between staff and parents. It involves parents understanding and applying the same pedagogical approach that the school uses in interactions with their child. To develop this mutually supportive relationship, TMS provides opportunities for parent participation and partnership in many ways.

**Communications**

When you need to communicate with your child’s teacher during the school day the following methods are available:

1. **Voicemail:** Call the school (336-766-5550) and ask for the teacher’s voicemail to report information, ask a question, or request a meeting.

2. **Notes in writing:** Written messages will be placed in the appropriate mailbox for the teacher to find at the end of the day. Messages may be given to the office staff for delivery, or your teacher may have a box outside the classroom.

3. **E-mail:** Email is a powerful communication tool and is used to enhance our school-home partnerships. We recommend that classroom-related email be used almost exclusively for notices, announcements, changes in schedule, and the like. Email is not the best vehicle to discuss concerns or issues; such discussions are better done in person in a collaborative dialogue.

Please check with your teachers about what time of day they anticipate being able to check email and respond to any questions. As teachers’ attention is focused on the children, please assume that teachers will not receive or respond to emails during the school day.

Our email distribution list is to be used only to disseminate notices, announcements, changes in schedule, etc., related to your child or school activities. It is not to be used to advertise or solicit for personal needs.

Please understand that trying to communicate important information while standing at the classroom door at drop-off or pick-up time is not effective. Teachers need to focus on the children at those transition times and cannot give parents full attention or appropriate response.

A school-wide community newsletter will be sent by email throughout the school year. It will include information about school programs and activities. A classroom newsletter will be sent home regularly via email. Items may be sent home via backpack when necessary. In addition, our school-wide Notes & Reminders will be sent out every Friday with updates and reminders about upcoming school events.

**Observations**

Most classrooms have one-way windows. Observing your child’s activities can be reassuring when your child is new to our program. After the classes have settled in at the start of the school year, parents may schedule classroom observations through the office. Beyond that, the active involvement of parents in our program as volunteers provides them with the best opportunities to view their child with teachers and other children.
Conferences
Formal parent/teacher conferences are held three times during the year for all children, in the fall, winter and spring. A comprehensive written progress report for each child precedes two of these conferences. These are important points of communication about your child(ren)'s progress and vital to successful the school-home partnership. In the weeks preceding the conferences parents will receive via email access to an online conference sign-up. Please refer to your school calendar for exact times for our conferences.

Work-Share
TMS values parent involvement in supporting the life of the school. To help parents get connected we have a work-share program in which each family contributes 20 hours per family (10 hours per family for single parents) of volunteer service. This program is based on the honor system. There are many ways for parents to share their talents and gifts. A volunteer fair is held in the fall highlighting the variety of available opportunities throughout the year. Those who have not completed work-share hours by May 31st will be asked to pay a rate of $10 for each hour not completed. At the end of the school year you will be asked to verify your hours or notify us of the number of hours to bill you. Families who do not respond to the email will be billed.

Volunteers & Chaperones
The Montessori School of Winston-Salem depends on volunteers and chaperones to support the school in numerous ways. If you are interested in volunteering in any capacity at our school, a Volunteer Application including an additional online application must be submitted to the business office in advance. A basic background check will be completed for all volunteers and chaperones that will be interacting with children. Applications are valid for three years. See the website for applicable form.

Room Parents
Room parents assist teachers in organizing classroom functions and recruiting assistance to support classroom endeavors. If you are interested in being a room parent for your classroom, please contact your child’s teacher.

Community Meetings
This effective process was founded during the 2006-07 academic year. Community Meetings offer all community members a meaningful opportunity to participate in the development of school programs and policy. Community meetings are open to anyone interested in attending and are normally attended by parents, members of the faculty, administration, and board.

Community meetings are process oriented. The goal of each community meeting is to provide a forum for the open exchange of ideas, not necessarily to produce answers or proposals. Many school related issues cannot be appropriately addressed and resolved in a large group setting. In the normal course of discussion, the group may identify issues that should be addressed by the faculty, administration, or trustees. At times, attendees may ask the school to make a more formal
presentation on a given topic of interest. To allow time to prepare hand-outs and/or clarify information, topics may be tabled and scheduled for the next meeting. The focus of Community meetings is on topics of common interest, not individual issues concerning one family, which normally cannot be discussed in a public setting.

Because the purpose of these meetings is to facilitate communication, all views will be heard and discussed. It is perfectly normal for values and perspectives to vary within the group. As members of a school community that teaches children kindness and respect, it is very important for us as parents and teachers to model a high level of consideration and respect for each other. No one can be allowed to dominate a meeting; it is neither appropriate nor fair to the larger group. Everyone present will be encouraged to participate in the meeting; however, silence is a legitimate part of any meeting. We all strive to remember that we have common values and interests that brought us together. We need never see ourselves as adversaries, even if we should disagree on a given issue. Concerns and issues that need to be explored and addressed are normal in any institution. There is no such thing as a perfect school, and there will always be a need for new ideas and on-going improvements. Check your School Calendar for meeting dates and time.

**Community Sing**

These sessions are a casual opportunity for all of our students, faculty and staff to get together and sing. Parents, grandparents, friends and relatives are welcome to attend and join in any or all of our Community Sing sessions held throughout the year. These are not performances, but merely group events that allow us all to come together as a community and celebrate in song. Parents are encouraged to volunteer their own musical talents during these sessions. The children always love to hear our many guest artists perform live.

**Parent Education**

As an integral part of a successful school-home partnership, TMS offers many avenues for parent education. In addition to online resources and our parent resource library (see below) we offer a series of events throughout the school year focused on various aspects of our program, curriculum and parenting topics. We encourage all parents to attend these helpful sessions. Childcare is provided free of charge for evening sessions. Reservations are required for childcare. Please check out our website and our parent resource library for resources and see our calendar for offerings and dates of our Parent Education Series.

**Parent Resources**

We provide online resources on our website and hard cover resource in our parent resource library. The parent resource library is located in the conference room off the main lobby. Parents and other family members may borrow resource material (parenting literature, education, Montessori books and magazines, child development information, etc.) for one week at a time.
TMSfund
One of the most important ways to support the school comes from the contributions made to the TMSfund. As a non-profit educational institution, The Montessori School of Winston-Salem receives revenues from tuition and voluntary charitable contributions. The TMSfund is our yearly fundraising campaign that directly translates into the everyday experiences of our students, from providing continuous program and facilities enhancements to ongoing professional support for our teachers.

The participation and support from families, grandparents, alumni, faculty/staff, our Board of Trustees and friends helps continue the legacy of authentic Montessori experiences for our students. The Montessori School has a long tradition of strong support for the TMSfund. Each year every family, faculty/staff and Board member is asked to participate.

All gifts are welcome and appreciated. It is our hope the TMSfund is a priority for our families and that they give to the maximum extent they are able. Each tax-deductible donation affirms that our school is firmly supported by those who are closest to the mission speaks volumes to our prospective parents and potential donors.

In short, The TMSfund helps us accomplish our mission of fostering intellectual curiosity, a passion for excellence, a commitment to serving others and a life-long love of learning for all our students.

Grievance Procedure
Any member of the school community finding himself or herself in disagreement with another member of the school administration, faculty, or staff over an action or policy is encouraged to bring his or her concerns to the attention of the staff member involved, and to the Head of School.

Every effort will be made to address the issue through conferences involving the Head of School and those concerned. In the event that the initial conferences fail to resolve any or all of the concerns, the following steps can be taken:

1. Grievances must be submitted, in writing, to the Head of School stating the specific nature of the grievance. Upon receipt of the communication, the Head of School will convene a Grievance Committee and schedule a formal meeting within fourteen (14) days at a mutually convenient time for all parties. Any individual named in the formal written grievance may not serve on the committee.

2. The Grievance Committee will be chaired by the Head of School and consist of the following: the school’s legal counsel, one member of the school administration, faculty, or staff selected by the person filing the grievance, and one member of the school administration, faculty, and staff selected by the Head of School. If the Head of School is named in the grievance, the President of the Board of Trustees will serve in his or her stead.

3. The Committee will consider the issue, collecting any necessary information as needed from the parties involved, and form an appropriate decision, solution or action in so far as the decision does not conflict with the policies and/or requirements of the School’s Board of Trustees.
4. Every attempt will be made to reach consensus. If this is not possible, all decisions will be determined by a majority vote of the Grievance Committee; the minority opinion will be formally entered into the record.
5. Written notification of all decisions and recommendations will be made within five (5) days of the meeting.

**STUDENT BEHAVIOR & DISCIPLINE**

Empathy and being considerate of others are adult qualities that take many years to develop. It begins in childhood and in a Montessori environment it is nurtured as children learn to respect the people and the materials in that environment. Our discipline policy emphasizes positive democratic and respectfully approaches to helping children behave constructively.

1. We encourage cooperative behavior.
2. We set clear limits and expectations for behavior to ensure a safe and peaceful environment for all.
3. We model appropriate behavior for the children.
4. We modify the classroom environment to encourage cooperative behavior.
5. We listen to the children.
6. We provide consistent redirection of any inappropriate behavior towards meaningful and purposeful activity.
7. We respect the individual needs, desires, and feelings of each child.
8. We explain things to the children on their levels.
9. We remain consistent in our efforts to maintain a safe and peaceful environment for all our students.

Intentional aggressive behavior toward peers or staff including kicking, fighting, biting, pinching, poking, hitting, beating, bullying, shoving, spitting, tripping, scratching, using profane language, making disruptive noises, or misusing the school’s and other’s property will be addressed in a compassionately direct manner. Repeated behavior that does not improve with conflict resolution techniques may result in the following:
1. The child being removed from the environment. When the child has calmed down, the teacher will have a discussion with the child about behavior and will provide encouragement and redirection.
2. The teacher contacting parents to discuss concerns and partnering with the parents to provide support for the child.
3. Ending the child’s day early. If the child is acting aggressively and has broken the agreements that have been made with him/her to keep everyone emotionally and physically safe at school, the parents may be asked to come and take the child home for the rest of the day. The child will be welcomed back the next day with agreements in place to ensure everyone’s safety and well being.
4. Holding a conference with the parents, teacher, and Head of School.
5. If the behavior continues, the Head of School and/or the Director of Education will use his/her own discretion as to how best to support the individual child and the rest of the TMS community.

**Principles of Child Management**
1. Use quiet voices inside.
2. Walk inside – Run outside.
3. Use furniture for its purpose (i.e., sitting in chairs).
4. Show respect for property.
5. Work with only one set of materials at a time.
6. Replace material on shelf as when taken.

**Development of Social Conscience**
1. Show respect for other people.
2. Listen without interrupting.
3. Use “Please” and “Thank you.”
4. Wait until everyone is served.
5. Use “Excuse me, please.”

**Toddler Discipline**
Our toddler age children are experimenting with and exploring their limits, expectations, and personal boundaries as they relate, in some cases for the first time, with children their own age. It is not uncommon to see behaviors such as biting, hitting, and pushing. These behaviors are not necessarily acts of aggression but can stem from a variety of reasons, including frustration and the inability to communicate verbally, physical motor and sensory needs for biting and chewing, and cause and effect exploration. We approach these issues by encouraging appropriate behaviors (using simple words, i.e. “that hurts” or “please stop”), providing appropriate avenues for biting/chewing and using gentle redirection.

While this type of behavior in toddlers is developmentally common, repeated hitting and biting can jeopardize our ability to maintain learning environments that are safe, both physically and emotionally, for all of our children. As such, we will call on your partnership to support your child and the rest of the class environment during what can be a difficult, albeit temporary, time. This partnership will include open, direct communication about these types of behaviors occurring at home and at school, employing common strategies and vocabulary to support your child, and perhaps even ending the day early for a child who is repeatedly hitting/biting.

In the event that you are called to pick-up your child early, please know that it is only after many strategies have been utilized in the class, and is done so in support of all our students including your child, and without any association of shame or guilt. We understand that even though this behavior is temporary, these can be difficult moments for families and toddlers who are biting, or being bitten, and we appreciate your partnership.
Adolescent Program
Due to the growing maturity and needs for responsible independence of the adolescent, students and families enrolled in the adolescent program will receive at the beginning of the school year a TMS Adolescent Community Handbook, which contains additional information, policies, guidelines and procedures specific to this age group and program.

LUNCH AND SNACK
At TMS lunch and snacks are provided by the families. We believe that lunch and snack times are a fun, social experience and also a time for children to become more conscious of good and healthy eating habits. We use these times to support our emphasis on building a sense of community and respect for others. We also use them as opportunities to model about nutrition, food preparation, composting, recycling, and conservation.

State Requirements
NC law also requires that the lunch box, water-bottle and snack be labeled with child’s NAME and DATED each day for our Toddler and Children’s House programs. One strip of masking tape works well for a week. Elementary Students do not have to adhere to this requirement.

The following snacks and meals are required for Toddler and Children’s House children.
- Half-Day Students must bring 1 snack.
- Full-Day students (8:15AM-3:00PM) and Sunset students (3:00PM-6:00PM) must bring 2 snacks and 1 lunch.

The following snacks and meals are required for Elementary and Adolescent students.
- Regular school-day students must bring 1 snack and 1 lunch.
- Students participating in Sunset (3:00PM-6:00PM) and/or Sunset Studios must bring an additional snack for the afternoon.

For our Toddler and Children’s House programs all snacks and lunches must comply with the USDA Meal Patterns for children in childcare programs unless the parent/guardian opts-out. The USDA Meal Patterns can be found at https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/cacfp/CACFP_MealBP.pdf.

If a child does not have all of the required elements of the USDA Meal Patterns for children in childcare, and if the parent(s) have not signed the nutrition opt-out form, TMS will offer your child a supplement food to meet these requirements. TMS will then notify the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the missing requirement and remind them of their obligation to meet these requirements.
Opting Out
To opt-out of these nutritional requirements and not have your child’s lunch and snacks supplemented by TMS, parents/guardians must sign the Nutrition Requirement Opt-out form. This form can be found in Appendix A of this handbook and on the school’s website, www.wsMontessori.org.

Please note, however, that if a required snacks and/or lunch is not provided, i.e. if a child has no lunch and/or snack(s), TMS will provide supplemental food and drink as if the parent/guardian hasn’t opt-out.

Recommendations for Elementary and Adolescent Families
Because the USDA Meal Patterns are based on the recommended nutrient intake judged by the National Research Council, we encourage our Elementary and Adolescent Program families to use this as a resource to help their children make healthy choices for their snacks and lunches.

Dietary Restrictions and Food Allergies
TMS is committed to working in cooperation with parents, students, TMS faculty/staff and physicians, to provide a safe and nurturing environment for all, including those who have life-threatening allergies. The focus of allergy management at TMS is on inclusion, prevention, education & awareness, communication and emergency response.

In addition to standard practices to help ensure the safety and well-being of students with life-threatening allergies, TMS has detailed procedures that include class-wide communications and food restrictions and related emergency response plans when a life-threatening allergy is identified. Please refer to our full Allergy Management Policy found in our Health and Safety Section.

Water Bottles
Please provide your child with a water bottle every day. Toddler and Children’s House bottles should be labeled with child’s name and DATE and have a re-closable cover so that the part of the bottle that touches the child’s mouth is not continuously exposed. Please only put water in the bottle (no juice, milk, etc.).

Lunchboxes
Lunchboxes are refrigerated in the morning. Please remember spoons or forks if your child needs them. If you arrive late, please ask at the front desk for the appropriate place to leave your child’s lunch. Please DO NOT leave lunch in front of the classroom. Consistent with our “Media Character & Ad Free Environment policy, all Lunchboxes should be void of media characters and advertisements.
To support our educational aims of helping children develop healthy life habits, we ask that children not bring candy, sugary dessert-like items and sodas to school. Healthier choices such as fruits and vegetables, proteins, healthy grains, 100% juices, and natural vs. overly-processed items support a well-balanced diet, resulting in better concentration, impulse control and engagement with their lessons. We also encourage families to involve children in age appropriate ways in the choices and preparation of their lunches and snacks. If you have specific questions related to food items, please ask your child’s teacher.

**Birthday Celebrations**

Students’ birthdays are acknowledged with a special birthday ceremony that involves parent participation. As your child’s birthday approaches, contact the teacher to coordinate the celebration. Private birthday party invitations may not be distributed at the school. A school directory is available each year and provides contact information and addresses for our Montessori families. You can direct any other specific questions related to birthday celebrations to your child’s teacher.

**CLOTHING AND BELONGINGS**

Please send your child to school in clothing that is age-appropriate, durable, and comfortable. Clothing should be manageable by children using the bathroom independently. It is best to choose fabrics that are easily laundered when stained by art materials or foods. Please label all removable clothing (sweaters, coats, hats, etc.) with your child’s name. Since we go outside every day, dress your child according to weather predictions. All children need warm hats or hoods and mittens on cold winter mornings. Select shoes that give support and traction and allow freedom of movement. **Children are not to wear flip flops, open toe sandals, raised heels or platform shoes, including cowboy boots, as they pose a safety hazard for the children and are not appropriate for playground activity and equipment climbing.** Velcro shoes work well for toddlers to encourage independence.

**Media Character/Ad Free Environment**

In an effort to provide a respite for our children and families from pervasive media marketing and to minimize distractions for the children during the school day, TMS strives to be a “character & ad free environment.” **To those ends, we ask that all clothing and personal items containing pop culture/media characters, i.e. super heroes, cartoon and movie characters, pop culture icons, etc., and advertisements remain at home.** This includes but is not limited to clothing, hats, shoes (including those that light up), water bottles, lunch boxes/bags, backpacks/totes and nap rolls.

For the convenience of our families, we have TMS backpacks and nap rolls available for purchase. Please speak to the Administrative Assistant if you interested.
Toddler and Children’s House students need one or two extra sets of clothes, clearly labeled. Please bring these enclosed in a large, labeled zip-lock plastic bag. If wet/dirty clothes are sent home to be laundered, be sure to send a replacement set the next day.

Lost and Found
Misplaced clothing that is not clearly labeled with a child’s name will be placed in the Lost and Found cabinet located in the front lobby. Twice a year, all Lost and Found items will be removed and donated to charity.

Toileting Independence for Toddlers
One of the important developmental works of the toddler age is that of toileting independence. Like all areas of development, toileting independence progresses at varying rates for children and requires nurturing support both at school and at home. To facilitate effective collaboration between the parents and the teachers, below are indicators for toileting readiness.

Indicators for toileting readiness:
1. Shows interest
2. Dislikes dirty diapers
3. Has dry diapers for at least two hours during the day
4. Can sit still and coordinate movements
5. Can follow three or four steps directions
6. Has begun to dress and undress oneself
7. Can verbalize when she or he needs to go

If your child is showing some of these indicators, maybe he or she is ready. Please discuss with your child’s teacher.

Diaper Policy for Toddlers
Children using diapers need to bring them clearly labeled with the child’s name. Please send 4-6 diapers daily (labeled with your child’s name) in the backpack. Your teacher will notify you if more are needed.

Parents requesting use of skin ointment after diaper changing must provide a Permission to Administer Medication form with the labeled tube of ointment.

Cloth diapers may be used. Parents should supply and label a diaper pail. Used cloth diapers must be picked up with the diaper bag each day. Teachers and parents will discuss independent toileting as soon as the child signals readiness. **We do not consider pull-ups to be a positive transitional step.**
Toys and Possessions
Children may bring books, cd’s, artwork, and other educational items to share with the class. Check with your child’s teacher to learn what is appropriate. Toys and objects highly valued by children should be left at home because they are easily misplaced or damaged in the school setting. Comfort items such as blankets may be brought if needed for nap time. Be sure your child’s name is attached.

Nap Roll
If your child will be resting/napping at school, please purchase a nap roll. They are available for purchase at the front desk and available online and in many stores. These will be sent home weekly for laundering. Consistent with our “Media Character & Ad Free Environment” policy, all nap rolls should be void of media characters and advertisements.

Backpacks
**Montessori Backpacks for Toddler and Children’s House Students**
Parents are encouraged to purchase a Montessori backpack for their Toddler/Children’s House student. A backpack will encourage independence by allowing the students to safely transport their own items with their hands free and available for holding grownups hands and/or carrying special items. TMS backpacks are available for purchase at the front desk. Consistent with our “Media Character & Ad Free Environment” policy, all backpacks should be void of media characters and advertisements.

**Backpacks for Elementary Students**
Elementary students should use a small or medium sized backpack with no wheels. Please do not hang stuffed animals, key chains, etc. from the backpack. Keep in mind that elementary students do not carry large text books regularly so large packs are not necessary and do not fit easily in the cubby area. Consistent with our “Media Character & Ad Free Environment” policy, all backpacks should be void of media characters and advertisements.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Immunizations
TMS follows the North Carolina state mandated immunization guidelines for all enrolled children. An updated copy of immunization records must be on file for every student within 30 days after enrollment and the records may be no more than 12 months old at the time of program entry for Toddler and Children’s House Students.

Illness and Injuries
It is our desire to keep the children and adults at the school as healthy and safe as possible. Notify your teacher when your child contracts a contagious illness so other parents can watch for symptoms. Do not bring your child to school if he/she has been sick during the night. If a child is
well enough to attend school, the child will be expected to go outdoors with classmates for scheduled play time. Separate staff supervision cannot be provided indoors. Children with fading cold symptoms, ear infections, and similar conditions are considered by our staff to be capable of outdoor play when dressed appropriately for weather conditions. When a child becomes ill at the school, he/she will be isolated as much as possible, and the parents will be called. If a parent cannot be reached, emergency contacts will be called. Sick children need to be picked up within an hour.

When minor injuries occur, the school staff will provide first aid and file an incident report form to be signed by a parent at pick-up. When a serious injury or illness occur requiring immediate medical care, emergency services will be called while we attempt to notify parents. The medical permission form will be used in the event parents cannot be reached.

**Sunscreen**

For Children’s House and Toddler students, sunscreen is considered a medication by NC Department of Child Development. Please apply sunscreen to your child BEFORE school arrival. If your child is particularly sensitive to the sun or requires an additional application, please be sure that the school has a permission form on file to administer this. It is not feasible to individually apply sunscreen to each student before outdoor play.

As part of the sunrise/sunset enrollment process, each family has been asked to sign authorization for sunscreen application. Sunscreen is administered around 3:00 p.m. in the sunset program. Provide the teacher with clearly labeled sunscreen for your child if he/she is enrolled in this program. Elementary students may bring and apply their sunscreen individually.

**Absences Due to Illness**

The following guidelines represent common childhood illnesses and the usual recommendations for deciding whether or not to keep your child out of school due to illness. As always, please consult your pediatrician for specifics. Please **REPORT any contagious illness like strep, chicken pox, pink eye or other to your teacher so that we may notify other parents to be alert for symptoms.**

1. **Child should be fever free for 24 hours before returning to school.** A child's temperature is lowest in the morning, so a low temperature on awakening is not a true indicator. If you have given your child pain relievers at night, the medication could still be affecting your child's temperature. A child should be fever free without the assistance of medication for 24 hours before returning to school. Please note that a fever is 100.4 degrees orally or 99.4 under arm.

2. **A child should be free of vomiting and/or diarrhea for 24 hours before returning to school.** A child who has been ill during the night may feel slightly better in the morning. However, the child will likely experience symptoms of illness later, will also be tired from loss of sleep, and may still be
contagious to other children.

3. **A child with thick or constant nasal discharge should remain home.** Very few younger children can effectively blow their noses and wash their hands afterwards. A child with the above symptoms will quickly spread the illness to other children.

4. **A child diagnosed with strep throat/scarlet fever should remain home for the first 24 hours of antibiotic treatment.** A child remains contagious until he/she has been on antibiotics for 24 hours.

5. **A child diagnosed with conjunctivitis may attend school after 24 hours of treatment.** There should be no drainage from the eyes, even if medication is being administered.

**Allergy Management Plan**

TMS is committed to working in cooperation with parents, students, TMS faculty/staff and physicians, to provide a safe and nurturing environment for all, including those who have life-threatening allergies. Though much of this policy focuses on food allergies, sections related to allergy plans, emergency medications and responses to exposure and anaphylaxis apply to other allergens, such as insect bites, latex, etc. The focus of allergy management shall be on inclusion, prevention, education & awareness, communication and emergency response.

The goals for our policies and practices related to allergy management include:

1. To maintain the health and protect the safety of students who have life-threatening allergies in ways that are developmentally appropriate, promote self-advocacy and competence in self-care and provide appropriate educational opportunities.
2. To ensure that interventions and individual allergy plans for students with life-threatening allergies are based on medically accurate information and evidence-based practices.
3. To define a formal process for identifying, managing, and ensuring continuity of care for students with life-threatening allergies.

**Standard Practices**

The following are standard practices at TMS to help ensure the safety and well-being of students with life-threatening allergies.

- All faculty and staff engage in annual review of the school’s policies and practices for allergy management and emergency response.
- All faculty and staff receive ongoing training related to food allergies including:
  - Common food allergies.
  - Signs and symptoms of and responding to anaphylaxis.
• Administering epinephrine.
• CPR and First Aid.
• Social and emotional impact of living with food allergies.

• Students and adults, using appropriate handwashing procedures, regularly wash their hands throughout the day, including:
  • Upon arrival to the classroom.
  • Before eating.
  • After eating.
  • Whenever there is an identified exposure to a known allergen.

• Table surfaces are cleaned using soapy water and paper towel before and after food consumption and/or preparation.

• Food restrictions apply to the use of curriculum materials, e.g. practical life, art, etc. For example, items containing peanuts will not be used in practical life area in a class where there is a known allergy to peanuts.

• Age appropriate opportunities are provided for students to discuss and learn about food allergies.

• Individual medical information about food allergies is confidential and only shared with parent permission or within the professional context to ensure the safety of the student.

When Life-threatening Allergies are Identified

The following are the procedures when a life-threatening allergy is identified.

Note:
When a life-threatening allergy is identified, allergy response plans and emergency medications must be provided to the school in order to fully provide adequate accommodations and emergency response measures.

• Parents, in consultation with their primary care provider and/or a board-certified allergist, must provide a full allergy response and management plan (including a photo of their child) using the FARE Food Allergy & Anaphylaxis Emergency Care Plan. This plan can be picked up at the front desk or found online at https://www.foodallergy.org/life-with-food-allergies/food-allergy-anaphylaxis-emergency-care-plan.

• Allergy response and management plans must be updated at the beginning of each school year and whenever there are modifications to the plan.

• Parents and relevant faculty/staff will meet at least annually to discuss the allergy response and management plan to ensure understanding of the student’s allergy, the school’s policies and practices, and agreed upon accommodations.
• Copies of individual allergy response and management plans will be provided to all programs in which the student is enrolled and originals will be kept in a central, secure but accessible, location along with emergency allergy medicines.

• Allergy management plans and emergency medications for relevant students will be carried by a faculty/staff member during field trips. Exceptions allowed for adolescent students who have permission to self-carry emergency medications.

In order to fully provide adequate accommodations and emergency response measures, including the proper management of classroom food restrictions, allergy response plans and emergency medications must be provided to the school.

• All emergency allergy medications, e.g. epi-pens, etc., must follow the Permission to Administer Medication Policy. (See Permission to Administer Medication Policy.)

• The school will notify classroom guides, and parents of students in classrooms where one or more students have a life-threatening allergy. Notification will include a list of foods and materials to avoid.

• Food Restriction signs will be posted at the entrance of the classroom, e.g., “No peanuts or tree nuts & all products containing these foods are to be served in this room...”

Milk Exception for Lunch

Milk is listed as a required element of the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program meal patterns for lunches. It is mandated by the state of North Carolina that milk not be restricted during lunch meals. As such, for classrooms that have a food restriction for dairy, milk is allowed in classrooms for lunch meals only. Milk for snacks and all other dairy products will be restricted when there is a known dairy allergy.

Soy Milk Exception for Lunch

Per the USDA, soy milk is an acceptable substitute for milk for children with a dairy allergy. As such, for classrooms that have a food restriction for soy, soy milk will be allowed in classrooms for lunch meals only. Soy milk for snacks and all other soy products will be restricted when there is a known soy allergy.

• Teachers monitor snacks and lunches daily to identify foods that may contain known food allergens pertaining to their classroom.

• If a restricted food is found or suspected, the teachers will remove that food item and contact the parents of the child who brought it to remind them of the food allergies for their class and offer support in complying with the required restrictions.
• In addition, the school will strive to provide additional resources to support non-allergen families find non-allergen alternatives for snacks and lunch.

**Emergency Response to Exposure and Anaphylaxis**

The following are emergency response procedures in the event of an exposure to a food allergen and anaphylaxis:

1. If an exposure to a food allergen is suspected, consult the student’s allergy plan.
2. Per the student’s allergy plan, examine the child (and ask questions as possible) to ascertain if any symptoms of an allergic reaction are present.
3. If any signs of allergic reaction are present, or suspected, contact the administration for additional support.
4. If signs of anaphylaxis are not present or suspected, wash affected area and monitor the student. Monitoring includes, talking with student, keeping them calm, observing for increasing or decreasing signs of allergic reaction.
5. Contact parents.

**Responding to Anaphylaxis**

1. Administer emergency medication, i.e. Benadryl, Epinephrine, etc., per the student’s allergy plan.
2. If epinephrine is administered, Call 911. (Request ambulance with epinephrine.)
3. Have student lie down with feet slightly elevated. If breathing is difficult or they are vomiting, have them sit up or lie on their side.
4. Consult with the student’s allergy plan for consideration of other medications.
5. Contact school administration for additional support.
6. Monitor the student and record relevant observations. Observations include:
   a. The known or suspected allergen and time of exposure.
   b. Anaphylaxis symptoms observed.
   c. Time of epinephrine injection.
   d. Any increase, decrease or return of symptoms
7. If symptoms worsen or return, a 2nd dose of epinephrine may be given after 5 minutes of the first.
8. Contact parents.

**Permission to Administer Medications**

With the possible exception of emergency allergy medications for students in our Adolescent program, students are not allowed to carry medicine with them.
This includes vitamins, aspirin, cough drops, candies or other non-prescription drugs.

Medications shall be administered to a child only as follows:

- The parent/guardian must fill out a “Permission to Administer Medication” form located on our website.
- The school will administer the dosage as indicated on the dispensing form and will then log that dosage on the dispensing form. Except for epinephrine injections as part of emergency response to anaphylaxis, parents will be responsible for medication via injection.
- Prescription medication shall be in the original container labeled with the child’s name, date, directions, and physician’s name.
- **Emergency Allergy Medications:**
  - Emergency allergy medications will be kept in a central, secure but accessible location with copy of allergy management plans.
  - Exceptions to this policy may be made for our Adolescent students in order to self-carry these emergency medications. All exceptions will be determined on a case by case basis in coordination with the parents and adolescent, and in accordance with the student’s allergy response and management plan.
- Non-prescription medicine must be in the original container with written instructions from the parents regarding dosage and frequency.
- Medication shall not be administered after any stated expiration date.
- Medication shall be returned to parents when no longer needed.
- Medication shall be kept separate from food.
- We do not apply medication to a wound other than water to wash it and applying a Band-Aid.

**Supervision for Toddler and Children’s House Programs**

Once the formal drop-off period has ended at 8:30 a.m. parents of the arriving students are expected to supervise their child while he/she puts away all belongings. Parents should quietly open the door to the classroom, ensure the student enters, and make eye contact with a teacher to make sure the arrival of the student is noted. (Late drop off is disruptive and strongly discouraged.)

During the school day it is the direct responsibility of the teachers to know where students are at all times while on campus or field trips. Attendance will be taken at regular intervals throughout the day, including each transition (playground, nap room, field trip, etc.). No student should be left without adult supervision. Students working in the hallway will be supervised. An adult must escort students to the appropriate destination.

North Carolina mandated (DCD) student teacher ratios apply at all times during the school day, including the playground.
Teachers are responsible for carrying out their assigned supervisory duties in such a way that students are, as far as can reasonably be expected, protected from harm.

**Supervision for Elementary Programs**

Once the formal drop-off period has ended, parents of the arriving students are expected to ensure the Lower Elementary student enters the classroom safely and makes eye contact with a teacher to signal his or her arrival. Upper Elementary students may walk into the school and the classroom alone, but should make direct eye contact with the teacher to ensure his or her arrival is noted. (Late drop off is disruptive and strongly discouraged.)

All elementary classrooms will maintain a sign-in/sign-out list or a similar procedure (noting clear times in and out) that allows for the identification of the location of a student at any time. This should be used when a student goes to the library, runs an errand, goes to the compost pile, is working in the garden, or completing other tasks that are not under direct supervision.

First year elementary or less experienced students will be partnered with more experienced students during work that requires leaving the classroom. Attendance will be taken at regular intervals throughout the day, including each transition (playground, gardening, field trip, etc.).

Teachers are responsible for carrying out their assigned supervisory duties in such a way that students are, as far as can reasonably be expected, protected from harm.

**Shaken Baby Syndrome/Abusive Head Trauma (SBS/AHT)**

The Montessori School of Winston-Salem believes that recognizing, responding to, and reporting all forms of child abuse and neglect, including shaken baby syndrome/abusive head trauma (SBS/AHT), is an important function of keeping children safe, protecting and nurturing their healthy development, providing quality care, and educating families. It is the duty of all personnel to observe for, respond to, and report suspected child abuse or neglect.

SBS/AHT is the name given to a form of physical child abuse that occurs when an infant or small child is violently shaken and/or there is trauma to the head. Shaking may last only a few seconds but can result in severe injury or even death.

**Recognizing:**
- As with all forms of abuse and neglect, children are observed for signs of abusive head trauma. Signs may include irritability and/or high-pitched crying, difficulty staying awake/lethargy or loss of consciousness, difficulty breathing, inability to lift the head, seizures, lack of appetite, vomiting, bruises, poor feeding/sucking, no smiling or vocalization, inability of the eyes to track and/or decreased muscle tone. Bruises may be found on the upper arms, rib cage, or head resulting from gripping or from hitting the head.
Responding:
- If SBS/ABT is suspected:
  - Call 911 immediately upon suspecting SBS/AHT and inform an immediate program director and the Head of School.
  - The Head of School and or his/her designee shall call the parents/guardians.
  - If the child has stopped breathing, trained staff member will begin pediatric CPR.

Reporting:
- Instances of suspected child maltreatment in the home are reported to the Forsyth County Department of Social Services. Phone number: (336) 703-3800
- Instances of suspected child maltreatment while at TMS are reported to Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE) by calling 1-800-859-0829 or by emailing webmasterdcd@dhhs.nc.gov.

Prevention Strategies to Assist Coping with a Crying, Fussing, or Distraught Child
First, determine if the child has any physical needs such as being hungry, tired, sick, or in need of a diaper change. If no physical need is identified, attempt one or more of the following strategies:

- Talk with the child; asking, ‘What do you need right now?”
- Attempt to engage the child with an activity.
- Engage the child by getting them to “help” you, e.g. clean, sweep, etc.
- Read to the child.
- Walk with the child.
- Rock the child, hold the child close
- Stand up, hold the child close, and repeatedly bend knees.
- Sing or talk to the child in a soothing voice.
- Gently rub or stroke the child’s back, chest, or tummy.
- Turn on music or white noise.
- Seek assistance from colleague and/or supervisor.

In addition:
- Faculty who feel overwhelmed at any time may contact administrative staff for support to have a short, but relatively immediate break away from the children.
- TMS provides support when parents/guardians are trying to calm a crying child and encourages parents to take a calming break if needed.

Prohibited Behaviors
Behaviors that are prohibited include (but are not limited to):
- Shaking or jerking a child
• Tossing a child into the air or into a chair, or car seat
• Pushing a child into walls, doors, or furniture

**Strategies to ensure staff members understand the brain development of children up to five years of age**

All staff takes training on SBS/AHT within first two weeks of employment. Training includes recognizing, responding to, and reporting child abuse, neglect, or maltreatment as well as the brain development of children up to five years of age. Staff review and discuss:

- Brain Development from Birth video, the National Center for Infants, Toddlers and Families [https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/156-brain-wonders-nurturing-healthy-brain-development-from-birth](https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/156-brain-wonders-nurturing-healthy-brain-development-from-birth)

**Resources**

**Faculty-Staff Resources**

- Annamarie Edwards, Director of Toddler and Children’s House Programs, Positive Discipline Parent Coach
- Caring for Our Children, Standard 3.4.4.3 Preventing and Identifying Shaken Baby Syndrome/Abusive Head Trauma: [http://nrckids.org/CFOC/Database/3.4.4.3](http://nrckids.org/CFOC/Database/3.4.4.3)
- Preventing Shaken Baby Syndrome, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/preventingsbs.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/preventingsbs.pdf)
- Early Development & Well-Being, Zero to Three: [https://www.zerotothree.org/early-development](https://www.zerotothree.org/early-development)

**Parent Resources**

- Annamarie Edwards, Director of Toddler and Children’s House Programs, Positive Discipline Parent Coach
- The American Academy of Pediatrics: [https://www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/at-home/Pages/Abusive-Head-Trauma-Shaken-Baby-Syndrome.aspx](https://www.healthychildren.org/English/safety-prevention/at-home/Pages/Abusive-Head-Trauma-Shaken-Baby-Syndrome.aspx)
- The National Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome: [https://dontshake.org/family-resources](https://dontshake.org/family-resources)
- The Period of Purple Crying: [http://purplecrying.info/](http://purplecrying.info/)

**References**

- Coalition for Children, [www.safechild.org](http://www.safechild.org)
- The National Center on Shaken Baby Syndrome, [www.dontshake.org](http://www.dontshake.org)
- NC DCDEE, [ncchildcare.dhhs.state.nc.us/general/mb_ccrulespublic.asp](http://ncchildcare.dhhs.state.nc.us/general/mb_ccrulespublic.asp)


- Caring for Our Children, Standard 1.7.0.5: Stress, http://nrckids.org/CFOC/Database/1.7.0.5

AHERA Compliance
As required by the federal Asbestos Hazard Emergency Response Act (AHERA), The Montessori School of Winston-Salem has an approved Asbestos Management Plan in place and a trained Local Education Agency Designee (LEA designee) to oversee this plan. The Montessori School of Winston-Salem contains no identified asbestos containing building materials and is aware of, and in compliance with, all state and federal asbestos regulations. Our Asbestos Management Plan is on file in the Business office and available for review upon request. If you would like to review this plan please contact our LEA designee, Jon Churn, at jonathanchurn@wsmontessori.org.

NC Childcare Laws and Rules
A Summary of the NC Childcare Laws and Rules is available by clicking here.

Image Release for Use
The Montessori School of Winston-Salem is committed to protecting the privacy and safety of all students and endeavors to take every precaution to ensure that privacy is maintained. There are times when we recognize students and their work in a public forum which may include publishing and exhibiting student work, photos, video and audio recordings of classroom events, and/or citing names of students in various forms of school print or digital publications.

With annual parental/guardian consent, The Montessori School of Winston-Salem may use my child’s work and/or image (including audio or video recording), in the school’s print and digital publications, including (but not limited to) school newsletters, the school website, official social media pages, development brochures, press releases to the media, admissions materials, newspapers, magazines and television programming. However, photographs and videos on our website, social media channels or for external marketing use are never accompanied by students’ full names. With the exception of work displayed in the classrooms and hallways of The Montessori School Winston-Salem, last names will not be associated with students’ work, images, audio, or video publications, unless parental permission is received. Parents/guardians acknowledge that no financial remuneration is expected for these uses, any such images may be used at a later date.
Out of respect for privacy and a commitment to safety, it is the school’s preference and recommendation that parents who have taken photos during school-sponsored events, not post photos of students other than their own on social media sites without expressed parental/guardian consent.

Enrollment in The Montessori School of Winston-Salem constitutes permission for reasonable use of the likeness and names of students for internal school publications such as monthly classroom newsletters. However, if a parent prefers that his or her child’s name or photograph not appear in internal school communications, the parent should notify the Director of Admissions in writing no later than the first day of school.

TUITION, FEES, AND FINANCIAL AID

Tuition Payments
Three tuition payment plans are available. Refer to your contract copy if you have questions about the payment plan that you chose or contact the school’s Business Manager. Tuition schedules are posted on the school website.

We do not send monthly invoices, unless your account is past due. All payments are due on the first of the month and are considered late after the 5th of the month. There is a late payment fee of $25. Please do not give payments to teachers. Make checks payable to “The Montessori School” and place them in the wooden box at the front desk. Or, mail them to the school address. There is a $50 fee charged for returned checks. Families who submit two or more insufficient funds checks will be asked to pay with cash or money order for all future payments. Returned check fees may not be waived.

Financial Aid
The Financial Aid program was created to assist families with tuition in the form of need-based grants. Our school is committed to supporting those families who cannot meet the full expense of current tuition rates. The Financial Aid Committee is dedicated to distributing these funds to as many eligible families as possible who desire an authentic Montessori education for their children. The distribution is determined yearly, based on the number of applicants and the amount of money that the school has allocated for aid. The actual amount distributed per family may change year to year based on the need of the applicants and the budgetary restraints of the school.

Applications for scholarship are provided and evaluated by Financial Aid for School Tuition (FAST), a national-level program which looks at a family’s financial information and determines an estimated family contribution to school costs. Families can learn more about this program on our website or by contacting the business office.
Appendix A: Nutrition Requirement Opt-out Form

Nutrition Requirement Opt-out Form

Per the Child Care Rule (10ANCAC 09 .0901) when children bring their own food for meals or snacks to their childcare center, the food must meet the nutritional requirements per the USDA Meal Patterns for children in childcare programs unless the child’s parent/guardian opts out. The USDA Meal Patterns for children in childcare programs can be found at this link: (https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/cacfp/CACFP_MealBP.pdf)

If the food for meals and snacks do not meet the nutritional requirements per the USDA Meal Patterns, the center must provide additional food necessary to meet those requirements unless the child’s parent/guardian opts out.

I understand, per the TMS Parent Handbook, that I am responsible for providing all lunches and snacks for my child(ren) enrolled, and that all lunches and snacks must meet the nutritional requirements per the USDA Meal Patterns for children in childcare programs unless I opt out. As such, I do not want my child’s lunches and snacks supplemented by The Montessori School of Winston-Salem.

I understand, however, that if I do not provide required snacks and lunch for my child, i.e. she/he has no lunch or snack(s), TMS will provide supplemental food and drink, even if I have opted out.

__________________________________________  _______________________________________
Printed Name of Parent/Guardian                        Name of child

________________________________________________________
Parent/Guardian Signature  ___________________________
Date
An education capable of saving humanity is no small undertaking: it involves the spiritual development of ‘the individual’, the enhancement of his value as an individual, and the preparation of young people to times in which they live.

-Dr. Maria Montessori