



Program Guide for Parents

The Montessori Method of education was developed by Dr. Maria Montessori, Italy's first female physician. She opened her first "school" (Casa dei Bambini) in 1907. Today, Montessori schools flourish all over the world. Fundamental to all of Dr. Montessori's ideas is a deep respect for a child's ability to learn. She recognized that children go through certain phases during which they learn more easily than at any other time in their lives. This innate potential to learn is dependent upon a loving environment that encourages the active pursuit of knowledge.

Dr. Montessori's developmentally-appropriate approach to learning is designed to fit each child instead of making each child fit into a preset program. She believed that learning should take place in multi-aged classrooms where children who are at various stages of development can learn from and with each other. This learning should take place in a noncompetitive atmosphere in order for each child to develop at his/her own speed.

Dr. Montessori observed that the best way for young children to learn is by active, hands-on experiences. She developed the idea of the prepared environment, where the classroom contains a wide variety of cognitive materials that foster learning in numerous areas. The purpose of the materials is not just to impart knowledge to children, but rather to provide them with stimuli that capture their attention and initiate a process of concentration.

Purpose and Objectives

The school's mission statement is as follows:

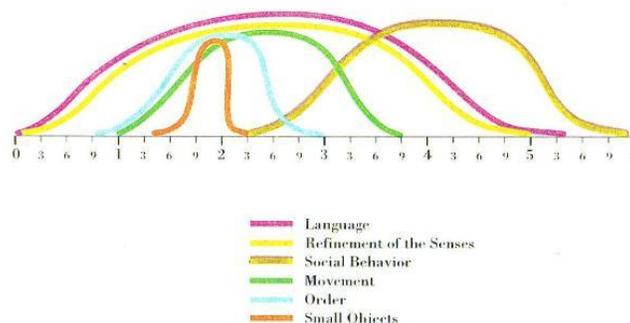
The Garden follows the Montessori educational principles of providing child-directed, individualized, hands-on learning within a prepared environment. The school seeks to educate the social, physical, intellectual, and emotional needs of each child; and to generate a sense of community among children, teachers, and families.

The objectives of the school are:

- To provide a prepared environment in which the stated purpose can be achieved, in keeping with Montessori principles.
- To provide an instructional program that follows the curriculum based on the use of Montessori concepts and materials.
- To provide early childhood development for children ages 15 months through 6 years.
- To follow the child's interest in learning and to use a completely child-led approach to education as a whole, both academic and life skills.
- To provide support and education for the whole family.
- To enrich children's and families lives through the arts and nature-based experiences.

An Introduction to the Classrooms

The Montessori classroom is a beautifully prepared, enriched environment, with child-sized furnishings and materials within reach of even the smallest student. The diversity of ages among the students necessitates a broad range of activities, and allows each child, regardless of age, the opportunity to find work suitable for his or her stage of development. All children are allowed to develop at their own pace, and to find work suitable for his or her stage of development according to their own capacities in a non-competitive and supportive atmosphere. Montessori classrooms and curriculum are prepared based on identified Sensitive Periods (see chart below).



The work in the classrooms falls into four main categories:

1. **Practical Life:** Of prime importance, this area includes activities such as sweeping, scrubbing, polishing, and other everyday tasks the child has observed in his or her own home environment. These activities allow the child to order his or her physical environment to perfection, and in turn, to order his or her own mind. They are also familiar, and serve as a link between home and school. Most children in the first two planes of development (0-18 months and 18 months-3 years) will concentrate almost entirely on these activities as well as exploring the senses as they gain the confidence and comfort in the most basic and necessary life skills before approaching academic challenges. It is important that parents understand that we do not push academic challenges on any child who does not show an obvious interest or desire to learn. Academic challenges include learning letters, numbers, shapes, colors, etc. We believe that it is most important to focus on Practical Life skills such as self-care, care of the environment, food preparation, grace and courtesy, etc. and let the children gently and naturally find their way to learning more complex concepts.
2. **Sensorial:** Special materials in this area are designed to help the child isolate and classify the perceptions of sound, texture, color, shape and size. Children in the Toddler Community will begin with more familiar materials such as puzzles and interesting objects that engage the senses and will be introduced to these more specific materials as they reach their sensitive periods, which is usually closer to age 3.
3. **Language:** Montessori observed that young children have a sensitive period during which learning names are of interest and relatively easy. Thus, basic nomenclature from geography, history, botany, ecology, astronomy, history, zoology and cultural studies is presented, and grammatical concepts gradually introduced. Once a child enters the Children's House (or once they begin to show readiness), s/he builds from learning sounds to writing words then from writing words to reading words then from reading words to reading sentences. Again, all learning is child-led and we strongly believe in following the child's cues and using our observations and general knowledge to present certain materials and encourage academic challenges. We believe that children learn these skills in their own time when they are not pressured into doing so, but when they begin to show a genuine interest and when that genuine interest is supported and encouraged through the prepared environment along with plenty of guided but subtle instruction.
4. **Mathematics:** The young child, in his or her need for order, seeks out mathematical concepts as a means of development. Montessori math materials present abstract math operations in a concrete manner, a

presentation that children this age can understand. The materials also provide the children with a sensorial base for future abstractions. Toddlers are introduced to numbers in concrete ways using familiar materials and later introduced to specific Montessori materials as they display readiness while those in the Children's House learn through guide support, self-directed exploration as well as observation of older peers in a mixed-age environment.

Supplemental Categories of Learning Include:

***Music:** Individual, small group and whole class music activities are integrated into the daily schedule, providing the foundation for full creative development.

***Spanish:** Introductory and basic Spanish language skills will be incorporated into daily learning in a natural, playful, child-led way.

***Yoga:** The Garden employs a certified yoga instructor who instructs yoga weekly in the Children's House to promote physical awareness, fitness and peace.

***Art:** Children are free to explore art materials throughout the day. Children are given the materials to create and are encouraged to use their own creativity to produce their desired result.

***Nature:** The Garden is grateful to have access to a beautiful campus with grassy, open areas, several wooded acres including a nature trail, a working garden and a prepared outdoor classroom. Summer camps are offered completely outdoors and children enrolled in the 5 day Children's House program will participate in Forest Fridays, spending entire mornings outdoors enjoying, exploring and learning in nature.

Parent Role

The strongest foundation that can be provided for the education of the children is the support and concern of parents. Parents of toddlers are highly encouraged to provide a gradual transition process as recommended by the transition schedule provided by The Garden. Parents are invited to join the classroom as often as desired by the use of a parent volunteer sign-up sheet. All parents who volunteer in a classroom will be required to complete a background check to ensure the safety of all of our children. Parents are also responsible for purchasing supplies listed on supply list below, providing a healthy snack for the class using our rotating sign-up sheet and submitting the fees listed below according to enrollment terms.

Fees and Payment Policy

Please note that fees and policies listed below are for the 2016-2017 school year. Fees and policies are both subject to change for future years. The Garden will provide sufficient notice of any changes occurring after your official registration has been submitted and allowances will be made for withdrawals based on these changes.

Supply Fees (in lieu of providing school supplies):

Toddler: \$30.00

Children's House: \$50.00

Annual Registration fee (Children's House & Toddler Community): \$200
(\$100 for returning students)

Annual Registration fee (Parent's Morning Out Program): \$150
(\$75 for returning students)

please note that PMO families will be required to submit a new registration fee if and when enrollment changes from PMO to Toddler Community

Summer Camp Registration fee (All Ages): \$40.00
(\$20 for currently enrolled students)

Camp registration fees do not apply to children enrolled in 2015-16 school year, 2016-17 school year and all 3 months of summer camps. Enrollments for all 3 months of summer camps will also receive a discount (\$30.00 off total summer tuition for Toddlers, \$50.00 off total summer tuition for Children's House).

2016-2017 School Year Tuition Rates (see updated hours of operation)

*Children's House 4 Day (Mon-Thurs 8:30-12): \$350.00/mo

*Children's House 5 Day (Mon-Thurs 8:30-12, Fri 8:30-12:30**): \$450.00/mo

*Toddler Community 3 Day (Tues-Thurs 9-12): \$260.00/mo

*Toddler Community 5 Day (Mon-Fri 9-12): \$430.00/mo

*Toddler Parent's Morning Out 2 Day (Mon & Fri 9-12): \$180.00/mo

(toddler siblings may extend their attendance hours to arrive at 8:30 for an additional fee of \$25.00/mo)

**Children's House 5 Day Students will participate in Forest Fridays. Barring dangerously high or low temperatures and/or thunderstorms, all time will be spent outdoors on Fridays, rain or shine. Appropriate clothing for changing weather is required. Children will also pack a lunch and eat during school hours on Fridays only. (5 day program required for children who turn 5 before Jan 1, 2017)

2016 Summer Camp Fees (see updated hours of operation)

*Children's House 4 Day (Mon-Thurs 8:30-12:30): \$365.00

*Children's House 5 Day (Mon-Thurs 8:30-12:30): \$465.00

*Toddler 1 Day (Mon 9-12 JUNE ONLY): \$155.00/mo

*Toddler 2 Day (Mon & Fri 9-12 \$185.00/mo

*Toddler 3 Day (Tues-Thurs 9-12 \$265.00/mo

*Toddler 5 Day (Mon-Fri 9-12 \$435.00/mo

Tuition is due on the first day of each month prior (~30 days in advance)

The salaries, supplies and administrative expenses of The Garden are supported entirely by fees. Tuition payments are due the first day of each month prior, irrespective of the actual number of days and hours the child attends. The child's spot will not be reserved until all enrollment forms, fees and any other requested information is complete and submitted to your child's teacher. Any deadlines set forth regarding submitting these fees and forms are firm and no exceptions will be made. The parent/guardian/custodian will be responsible for payment of monthly fees in order to reserve the enrollment spot. We offer a 5 day grace period in which to submit payment. If a payment is not submitted by the 6th of the month, a 15% fee will be added to that month's invoice. If payment is not received by the 15th of the month, a child may be discharged for non-payment of fees.

Non-discrimination policy

The Garden encourages children of all backgrounds to attend. The school does not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, color, creed, national origin, ethnic background or ability. The Garden hopes to be able to provide sponsorships in the future for children with special needs or children who might otherwise be unable to attend The Garden. Plans are in place to set up these sponsorships, but we are currently not providing sponsorships.

Eligibility

To attend the Garden, a toddler must be 15 months old (18 months for Toddler Community) and confidently walking by the start of the school year s/he will attend. Children's House students must be 3 years old by the start of the school year and fully toilet trained. Children who are not fully toilet trained are welcome to remain in the toddler community through age 3.

Openings

Openings are determined by a student/teacher ratio dependent upon age as well as classroom size. Enrollment is determined by the following priorities:

- Students currently enrolled have first priority for successive enrollment.
- Siblings of students have second priority for enrollment.
- Children with a submitted application (on the waiting list) have third priority and will be admitted on a first-come basis according to the date of completed registration and/or age of the child. When openings

occur during the school year, enrollment for those positions is determined by the following priorities:

- Students currently enrolled in the school who wish to change their attendance hours have first priority.
- Children with submitted applications but were denied admittance and placed on a waiting list have second priority for enrollment.
- Initial placement of all children for preferred attendance hours is dependent on a first-come first-served basis.

Exceptions may be made in order to provide beneficial classroom dynamics in regards to gender and age.

Enrollment Forms

Parents must have all enrollment forms completed before the child's spot is reserved. Enrollment forms **MUST** be submitted by the assigned deadline in order to maintain the child's spot. The Garden has a growing waiting list and it is not possible for the administration to hold spots for those who have not submitted all of their paperwork in time. Enrollment forms include the following:

- Registration Form
- Program Guide Agreement (see last page of program guide)
- Release Form: Picture/Video (optional)
- Record of Immunizations: Immunizations are mandatory and required for admittance to The Garden. We are a private entity that does not allow an exemption form, religious or otherwise, to be submitted in place of immunization records. Feel free to contact us with any questions regarding this matter.
- Additional Medical Forms – A medical report is required for all children. Children with specific illnesses or allergies must submit additional forms provided by The Garden. It is the parent's responsibility to let the director know about a child's allergy prior to the deadline and within enough time to get an allergy form signed by the child's allergist. Missing forms of any kind at the time of the stated deadline, including allergy and additional medical forms, will result in the removal of the child's name from the roster.
- Alternate Pick Up List – This list consists of names and contact information for relatives and friends of the family that can pick up a child in place of his or her parents. A child cannot be released to anyone who is not listed on this form. It is the parents' responsibility to update names, relationships and phone number of persons authorized to pick a child up from the center. Parents should notify the

school if there is a court order which prohibits a person from contact with the child.

- Emergency Medical Authorization – This form gives The Garden permission to act on your behalf in an emergency medical situation and allows us to give EMTs permission to transport your child to a hospital should they need to be transported. EMTs MUST view this form before they will be allowed to transport a child, so it is VERY important that this form is filled out correctly and submitted in time.

Withdrawal from the Program

Parents wishing to withdraw their child must provide a statement in writing at least 30 days prior to the discontinuation of this service.

Hours of Operation 2016-2017 School Year

Parent's Morning Out (15 mo/confident walkers – 2 yrs)

Mondays & Fridays 9am-12pm

Toddler Community (18 mo – 3 yrs)

Tuesdays through Thursdays 9am-12pm

OR

Monday through Friday 9am-12pm

Children's House (3yrs-6yrs)

Monday through Thursday 8:30am-12pm

OR

Monday through Friday 8:30am-12:30pm

CAMP HOURS (age groups are the same as above):

PMO

Mondays 9am-12pm (JUNE ONLY)

PMO 2 Day

Monday & Friday 9am-12pm (JULY & AUG ONLY)

Toddler Community

Tuesday through Thursday 9am-12pm OR

Monday through Friday 9am-12pm

Children's House

Monday through Thursday 8:30am-12:30pm

Monday through Friday 8:30am-12:30pm

Parents' Rights and Responsibilities

Parents have the right:

- To know that their child is cared for in a safe, supportive environment;
- To confer with the Teacher(s), Directors concerns related to the child or the program;

- To be told about serious behavior concerns on the part of their child, and to visit with the teacher (s), directors in order to bring about improvement in the situation;
- To be regularly informed by the teacher or director about school activities.
- To have access to their child at any time

Parents have the responsibility:

- To pay fees on time;
- To provide the school with the supply fee
- To provide a class snack about once per month using the rotating sign up sheet and the provided snack list.
- To keep the child's records up-to-date as explained in Enrollment Forms;
- To drop-off and pick-up their child on time as explained in Hours of Operation *PLEASE NOTE THAT WE ARE NOT LICENSED FOR FULL-TIME CHILD CARE AND IT IS ILLEGAL FOR CHILDREN TO REMAIN IN OUR CARE FOR MORE THAN 4 HOURS PER DAY. PARENTS SHOULD ARRIVE 5-10 MINUTES EARLY IN ORDER TO ENSURE THEIR CHILD IS PICKED UP WITHIN 4 HOURS OF ARRIVING. A VERBAL WARNING WILL BE GIVEN ON THE FIRST TIME A PARENT IS LATE PICKING UP THEIR CHILD. AFTER THAT, PARENTS WILL BE CHARGED A FEE (AS EXPLAINED BELOW) FOR LATE PICKUP.
- To follow health policy as explained in Health and Policy section;
- To let the Directors know if their child will not be attending on a regularly scheduled day;
- To take note of any communications from the Teacher (s), directors regarding their child's behavior, and to cooperate in any efforts to bring about improvement in the situation;
- To attempt to attend parent meetings scheduled by the school
- To attend parent/teacher conferences as listed on the yearly calendar
- To schedule meetings with the director if any concerns arise during the school year & to maintain open communication with the director about any concerns or issues pertaining to the child and their school performance.

Children's Rights and Responsibilities

Children have the right:

- To have a safe, supportive, and consistent environment;

- To use all the program equipment, materials, and facilities on an equal basis;
- To have respectful treatment;
- To have discipline that is fair and non-punitive;
- To receive nurturing care from staff members who are actively involved with them

Children have the responsibility:

- To be accountable for their actions;
- To respect the school rules that guide them while at school;
- To remain with the group and staff at all times;
- To care for materials and equipment properly.

Lunch

We will not break for lunch at any time during the school day, except on Fridays at the end of the school day (Children's House only). Children enrolled in Children's House 5 day program should pack a lunch on Fridays. Snack will be served and available to the children throughout the morning, but parents should not send any food to school with children unless it is their assigned snack day. Parents should plan to have children eat breakfast prior to attending and lunch after attending school each day.

*SUMMER: Children should pack a small snack each day. Children in the Children's House Open-Air summer camps will need to pack both snack and lunch each day. All children should bring a water bottle to cap each day.

Snacks

Parents will be responsible for providing snack for the class during the school year using the rotating schedule. The children enjoy sharing their favorite foods as well as trying new nutritious foods. Please drop off snacks on the morning of your scheduled day. Snack schedules are listed on the monthly parent calendar which will be distributed at the beginning of each month. Please choose from and provide only snacks assigned to your family. This will help ensure that all children can enjoy the snack without concern for allergy and will also ensure that children will be able to participate in the preparation of snack. Birthday snacks are welcomed, but, again, please refrain from sugary snacks or sweets. If you would like to bring an additional birthday snack, please contact the director to let her know in advance.

We do have children with allergies enrolled in our programs. Please be sure to check all labels for any ingredients containing any type of nuts.

Food brought to the center will be stored in the refrigerator, if necessary, and opened boxes will be placed in a plastic protective container.

School Bags

Every child will be provided with a "school bag." This is a convenient tote bag for notes from home, show and tell items, change of clothes, diapers, sunscreen, etc. We are encouraging independence so we will provide bags that your child can access on his/her own to accommodate this independence. These bags also ensure that there is enough space on our storage hooks for all children's bags. Children will bring their work home in a 8x10 folder in their bag, so we have made sure the bag is large enough to fit this folder without damaging the work inside. Children should bring this bag every day.

Child's Personal Property

Although the school attempts to help children stay organized, the school cannot be responsible for lost personal property. Items lost at school will be collected and stored in a lost and found box located at the sign-in table. Please check the lost & found box regularly for missing items. Children should not bring money, toys, food, or other items unnecessary for school activities to school without checking with the teacher. If a child takes any school equipment home, it should be returned.

School Attire

Children should wear washable, comfortable play clothes. The staff recommends that an extra set of clothing be kept at school in case clothes become wet or muddy. All items should be marked with the child's name.

Outdoor activities are planned daily. Outdoor play will not be allowed in storms or extreme temperatures. Every child should be properly dressed for the weather. In the winter, this includes snow pants, a hat that covers the ears, mittens, boots. Children should also wear "indoor shoes" or slippers, leaving outdoor shoes on the shoe rack upon arriving. This will help us to keep the premises clean and, since children spend a lot of time working on the floor on their mats, this will protect their fingers and help keep floors clean for workspace. It will also especially help us to respect the beautiful church property. Staff/child ratios do not permit the school to keep one or two children inside during outdoor activities, so proper outdoor attire is mandatory as well, including rain boots if needed for wet or rainy days.

Rest Time

All children's need for rest will be respected, however, we will not have a cot or blanket for children to sleep on since we only operate for half of the day. If you think your child may have trouble adjusting to the new schedule, please feel free to pack a blanket or comfort item in his/her bag & we will make your child comfortable in case s/he gets sleepy and needs to rest in the padded quiet area until you arrive.

Celebrations, Birthdays, and Holidays

Planned special occasions can include: Halloween, Thanksgiving, December Holidays, President's Day, May Day, students' birthdays. The school is sensitive to the multicultural nature of our community and therefore includes cultural diversity in celebrations whenever possible. Parents are encouraged to share their family's traditions with the children at school. Please let us know if you would like to volunteer to speak to the children about your family's cultural celebrations or traditions.

Parent Orientation/ Education/Conferences

Before school begins for the fall term, there will be an open house for new families. During the year, one parent/teacher conference will be scheduled per semester. We will also have a lending library with reading materials to help parents familiarize themselves with the Montessori Method and we will attempt to have regular parent education meetings throughout the year.

Visitors and Observations

Parents and community members are welcome to observe at the school. A scheduled visit would be appreciated but parents have unlimited and immediate access to their children. For liability and supervisory reasons, it is not possible for children who visit the program to take part in activities. A liability release is required for all children visiting the program. Observations guidelines are available from the child's teacher. We require non-parent volunteers or observers for our program obtain a background check prior to their visit.

Channels of Communication

Throughout the year, if a parent has any questions about their child's progress, they can contact the teacher in person, by phone or by email. Written and electronic messages from school will be sent periodically to keep parents informed of school happenings and student progress. A newsletter will list important upcoming events to assist parents in keeping current with activities. Parents can request a parent/teacher conference at anytime

during the school year and we will do our best to accommodate within a reasonable time period.

Health and Safety Policy

If a child has a known medical condition (asthma, diabetes, seizure disorder, etc.), it is the parents' responsibility to inform the Director of the steps to be taken if a problem occurs during school hours using the Allergy Action Plan form. Parents should also make sure that any necessary medication is available and that the "Medical Authorization Form" for its use has been completed, that the parent has demonstrated how to use the medication if needed. If a child has any one of the following conditions, the parent will be notified to pick up the child immediately:

- Contagious disease
- Fever over 100 degrees
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Accident requiring medical attention
- A rash, until diagnosed and determined to be non-contagious
- Draining sores or burns

In case of accident or illness, parents of the child will be called immediately. Teachers will administer minor first aid, i.e., cleansing, bandages. The child will be moved to a quiet spot in the office area until the parent/guardian arrives. **If your child is sent home from school due to an illness, he/she may not return to school the following day.** Incident reports will be sent home in duplicate explaining what happened and what treatment was administered. Parents should sign one copy and return it to the school while keeping the second for their records. In serious cases, the child will be taken to one of the local hospitals by emergency vehicle for treatment and the parents will be called as soon as possible. If the child's parents cannot be reached, the individuals designated by the parents as emergency contacts will be called. When necessary, announcement of an outbreak of a communicable disease or head lice will be posted.

Dental Emergency Procedures

The school will follow the guideline as outlined by the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry.

Distribution of Medications

We request that children be given medicine or have topical creams (including sunscreen) applied prior to attending preschool. Emergency medicines will

be stored according to doctor's instructions and given only in an emergency situation and according to the Medical Authorization Form. If a child has to be given any medication (including over-the-counter medicine), the parents must complete the Medication Authorization Form. This procedure must be followed every day that the child is to receive medication. Teachers are not permitted by law to administer any medication unless this form is completed. Parents should hand the medication directly to a staff person. Parents should ask the teacher for a medication form, fill it out, give the form and the medication to the teacher, and indicate if the medication needs to be refrigerated. Medication should be in its original or duplicate container, or a container accompanied by the doctor's directions. If medication is to be kept at the school for treatment of a chronic condition, no more than a one-month supply should remain at the school at any time. Medicine brought to the school must be kept in a locked container in the main office. Staff members must complete their portion of the form, and initialize it where necessary. One staff person will be authorized to dispense medication. Sunscreens must be stored separately from oral medicine and any food or food service items. Any unused medicine must be disposed of properly or returned directly to the parents. Children may never bring in the medication themselves.

Parent Emergency Medical Consent

The school requires the forms to be kept current. The parent must provide new information to the school regarding changes in information, such as, emergency contacts' names, new employers, new phone numbers, changes in arrival or departure procedures, etc.

Smoke-Free Environment

Smoking and the use of tobacco products shall be prohibited in or around the center.

Hand washing

Hand washing is the most critical element in reducing the spread of germs. Hands should always be washed upon arrival at the school, whenever contact is made with bodily discharges, immediately before and after eating, upon returning inside from outdoor play, after using the restroom, and upon leaving the school.

Universal Precautions/Exposures to blood or other body fluids

Gloves shall be worn by Staff when diapering or when contact with blood or other body fluids is possible and when cleaning contaminated surfaces. Spills of urine, feces, vomit or blood shall be cleaned from the surfaces first with soap and water and then surfaces shall be disinfected with a solution of household bleach and water. Any contaminated material shall be disposed of in a double layer plastic bag with a secure tie.

Tornado Plan

Tornado escape plans will be posted at each exit door. Class attendance record, emergency information book, cell phone and first aid kit will be taken to the interior hallway/bathroom. All children will be accounted for using the class attendance record. Cell phone will be used in the notification of parents and emergency vehicles. Children will get down on the floor and cover their heads. Tornado drills will be practiced to prepare children. One teacher will blow a whistle and record the time. Another teacher will lead the children to the safe place with the class attendance, emergency records, and first aid kit. Another teacher will be responsible to get the cell phone and help any immobile child.

Emergency Plan for Intruder

Action should be taken if a person enters the center that is not authorized to pick up a child and/or is intoxicated. Staff should not attempt to physically restrain the individual. Staff cannot refuse access to a legal parent or guardian but every attempt will be made to discourage the person from leaving with the child. Proper authorities will be immediately notified if the child is taken. Description of the vehicle, license number, and description of the state of the individual will be reported to the authorities.

Emergency Plan for Abducted or Lost Child

If a child is abducted or missing, the center will notify the parents and authorities immediately. Description of any suspicious persons or vehicles will be reported to the police.

Power Failure Plan

In the case of a power failure, children will remain at the center until parents are notified.

Bomb Threat Plan

In the case of a bomb threat, children will be escorted to Elliot's on Linden. Parents will be notified as to where to pick up their child. Proper authorities will be notified. Emergency information, child's forms and records, and cell phone will be taken.

First Aid Kits

A first aid kit will be maintained and kept in a location not accessible to the children within the program space and will be carried outdoors whenever children and staff leave the building for any reason and will be taken on any field trips.

Fire Plan

Fire escape plans will be posted at each exit door. Class attendance record, emergency information book, cell phone and first aid kit will be taken outside to the playground. All children will be accounted for using the class attendance record. Cell phone will be used in the notification of parents and emergency vehicles. Children will be taken to the playground until parents can pick them up. Fire drills will be practiced to prepare children. One teacher will activate the fire alarm. Another teacher will lead the children to the playground with the class attendance record, emergency records, first aid kit and cell phone.

Handicap Accessibility

The school is handicap accessible and has a handicapped accessible bathroom. Any further accommodations will be handled on individual basis.

Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse

All employees are required by law to report cases of child abuse. Employees are required to make an oral and a written report. See the Director (s) for more information regarding the procedure and the information required to be included in such a report. According to the Code, any Mandatory Reporter, who makes a report of child abuse or participates in an

investigation of child abuse in good faith, has immunity from any criminal or civil liability.

Staff Development

- All staff will obtain and maintain current First Aid certification, and a CPR certificate (Adult, Child, and Infant).
- All staff will go through initial orientation to the School's policies and staff requirements. Included in this training will be instruction regarding the School's emergency procedures policies and policies on universal precautions and infectious disease control. Beyond the initial orientation, staff will undergo ongoing training on these policies.
- Lead classroom teachers in the Children's House & Toddler Community will be required to have previous child care experience, a minimum of a 4 year degree in a related field and will possess or be working towards the North Carolina Early Childhood Credentials I & II AND an approved Montessori Teacher Credential.
- Assistant/Associate Teachers will be required to have previous child care experience, have or be working towards an associate's degree in a related field (OR NC Early Childhood Credentials I & II) and an approved Montessori Assistant's Training or Fundamentals Training.

*side note: Montessori educators sometimes prefer to be referred to as "guides" or "directresses" rather than "teachers", as we believe that the children are their own teachers and we are simply guiding them and providing an environment and support for their own personal goals.

Arrival and Dismissals

Children should arrive no more than five minutes before start time and parents may not drop-off children early. Children MUST be picked up on time. Because our program is not licensed to operate more than 4 hours per day, it is illegal for us to keep children longer than the allotted time per day. Sign in and sign out sheets are provided to ensure children do not stay longer than 4 hours each day. Late arrivals are disruptive to both class and the child. Please arrange other pickup for your child if you cannot make it on time. A verbal warning will be given if a parent is late, and after that, late pickups will be charged a fee of \$10.00 per 10 minute time period to discourage this practice. Parents who are consistently late (3 or more times) picking up their child from school will forfeit their child's spot.

It is the parents' responsibility to escort the child to the building and encourage them to visit the restroom to wash their hands. It is helpful to allow older children (3-5) to wash their hands and put away their belongings independently if possible, so we ask that parents drop-off at the door while signing their child in for the day. The school is not officially responsible until parent/teacher contact is made and sign in sheet is filled out. A child may be checked upon arrival for any communicable diseases, e.g. conjunctivitis or fever. Parents of toddlers are responsible for picking them up from their classroom. Parents of children in the Children's House are responsible for using the carpool line (entering from the first driveway coming from Hwy 5) and lining up with the school to the right beside the 1st sidewalk/entry. Children will be escorted by a teacher to the vehicle and will hold hands with the child until the parent has taken their hand or until they have safely entered the vehicle. Parents must sign the sign-out sheet prior to leaving the campus.

Late Policy

We will follow a three step policy for chronic late pickup.

Step 1. Written note with amount due of \$10 per 10 minutes to be given to the teacher on staff.

Step 2. Verbal warning

Step 3. Withdrawal of child from the program

Absences

If your child will not be attending the school because of a scheduled appointment, vacation, or other planned absence, please notify the Directors in advance. If your child is sent home from school, he/she may not return the following day. One of the following conditions is sufficient cause for the child to be kept at home:

- A contagious disease, not including a cold;
- A fever of 100 degrees or higher within the past 24 hours;
- Diarrhea and/or vomiting within the past 24 hours;
- Rash, until cause is diagnosed and determined non-contagious
- Draining sores or burn
-

Scheduled and Unscheduled School Closings

Scheduled No-School Days:

The Garden will be closed on scheduled no-school days (see calendar). The school generally follows the same schedule as that for the Moore County Public Schools (for holidays only, not teacher workdays or other school-related events). Refer to the school calendar.

There will be no school on days when the Moore County Public Schools are canceled due to bad weather. The school will be **canceled** on days when the Moore County Public Schools are delayed due to bad weather. The Garden will **NOT** be cancelled due to extreme cold or heat. Unfortunately, we are unable to provide refunds or prorated tuition for missed days due to inclement weather or scheduled holidays or cancellations.

Unscheduled Early Dismissal Days

The school will close at the same time as the Moore County Public Schools when there is early dismissal due to bad weather.

School closings and delays will coincide with those of the Moore County Public Schools. If a child has already arrived at school on these days, parents are expected to pick him/her up as soon as possible. To determine if the Moore County Public Schools are closed or delayed, check the news or internet or call them for direct inquiries. There may or may not be a separate announcement for The Garden.

Insurance

Families are encouraged to provide their own insurance coverage.

Discipline and Discharge Policy

The Garden has a positive approach using redirection, direct communication, and conflict resolution. The peace rose ceremony is demonstrated and facilitated for the children in the Children's House at the beginning of the school year to empower them to develop skills to resolve their own differences. Children are entitled to a pleasant and harmonious environment at the Garden. We intend to work with all children regarding behavior concerns and will attempt to work with parents to provide a consistent approach to discipline. If a child exhibits behavior that is continually disruptive and/or harmful to the other children and their progress, and we

feel that we have made every effort to improve the situation and have been unsuccessful, the child will be removed from the program.

A child can also be removed from the program at anytime if we feel that s/he is not abiding by our policies, if parents are uncooperative with any policies or if there is general discord among parents and staff members, if parents are continually unresponsive to staff concerns or if a child is no longer benefitting from the program for any reason.

Field Trips

Field trips may be scheduled occasionally during the school year. Each trip is planned with small children in mind and every precaution is made to ensure each child's safety. Whenever a field trip is planned, parents are notified and all parents are requested to assist in transporting and chaperoning the children. Carpools will be assigned based on parent chaperones and volunteers. Waiver for field trips must be signed.

Non-Center Activity Policy

Parents will be notified if there will be routine non-center activities, for example library or recreation center activities or field trips.

Center Pets

The Garden may obtain pets in each classroom. Parents will be notified and allergies will be taken into consideration prior to obtaining pets.

Please sign the attached form and return it to your child's teacher with your enrollment forms in order to verify that you have read and agree to all terms, policies, practices, etc listed here.



I, _____, parent of my child,

_____, have read this program guide thoroughly and do hereby agree to abide by all policies and procedures, terms and agreements listed here. I understand fully the philosophies, practices, costs, procedures and any other information provided to me here in the program guide as well as on any and all required enrollment forms. By signing below, I agree to the above statement.

X

parent/Guardian signature

Date