

Flagler Beach Montessori School



"A Peaceful World Begins with Treating a Child with Kindness & Respect"

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Policy Book 2011-2012

2011-2012 Policy Manual and Parent Handbook

Introduction

This policy manual and handbook has been developed as a resource for families, staff, and community members.

Please read and familiarize yourselves with the policies and procedures enclosed. Further questions should be directed to Flagler Beach Montessori School Staff Members.

“Let us give the child a vision of the whole universe...for all things are part of the universe, and are connected to each other to form one whole unit”

-Maria Montessori

FLAGLER BEACH MONTESSORI SCHOOL

...nurturing the mind, body and spirit of each child

Our Mission

To guide each student on their path of development by providing a carefully prepared environment which nurtures the mind, body, and spirit of each individual.

Goals

To awaken a love of learning, passion for knowledge, and joy of creativity in each student

To support the development of independent, self confident learners

To foster a strong sense of self, respect for others and an ability to work as part of a group

To develop a repertoire of life skills and a strong academic foundation

To provide developmentally appropriate physical activity and healthy nutritional options

To encourage regular practice of self-reflection and nurturing the peace within

To provide a reliable source of care and information for families

Core Values

Respect Responsibility Compassion Honesty Kindness Awareness

The Flagler Beach Montessori Experience (FBMS)

Our Goal at FBMS is to offer the enriching educational curriculum of the Montessori Method and to serve the children of our world with love, respect, kindness and knowledge.

The staff of FBMS consists of:

Kerri Huckabee

Kerri is the Director and the Primary Lead Montessori Teacher. She is Florida State Certified K-12 in Special Education and Pre-K/Primary PK-3. Kerri served in the Florida Public School System as a teacher for many years and has over 24 years experience working with children and adults with various challenges/"disabilities" in school and home environments. She has her BS in Psychology and is certified by the Department of Children and Families. She is also CPR/First Aid Certified and has completed studies in Holistic Health and Nutrition. Kerri is also completing her Elementary Montessori Training.

Carol Sussman

Carol was Owner/Director/Teacher for Flowers Montessori School in Gainesville for over 28 years. She is a Lead Primary Montessori Teacher with an Advanced Director Credential. She also serves as a Montessori teacher for the Center For Guided Montessori Studies/International Montessori Council. Carol is CPR/First Aid Certified and Certified by the Department of Children and Families. She also serves as a Montessori Consultant for Flagler Beach Montessori School and other Montessori schools in Florida.

Lisa Malphurs

Lisa is one of our trained Montessori teachers. She has over 20 years experience working with children in preschools and summer camps. She is certified by the Department of Children and Families. Lisa also has years of experience as an office manager in preschool and medical offices. She also organizes and oversees Summer Youth Group programs in Georgia, North Carolina and Florida. Lisa is certified in CPR/First Aid.

Amy Sammelman

Amy is also one of our trained Montessori teacher. She has the VPK Endorsed Director Credential for the state of Florida; she is Florida State Certified in the areas of Elementary Education Grades K-6 and Preschool Education (Birth-Age 4). She also has over 12 years experience in both Private and Public Education teaching Language Arts and Reading. Amy is also certified by the Department of Children and Families and is CPR/First Aid certified.

Sue Sisk

Sue serves as Montessori Teaching Assistant as well as our before and after care teacher. She is certified through the Department of Children and Families and certified through the Department of Education and the Early Learning Coalition to teach VPK. She is also CPR/First Aid certified. Sue is the mother of four Montessori children!

Lyn Upson

Lyn is our Yoga instructor. She is certified from the Southern Institute of Yoga Teachers. She began a yoga program in Flagler County teaching second and third grade students at Wadsworth Elementary School. She developed and currently teaches a Yoga Program for the Daytona Beach Regional Detention Center. She also teaches yoga to the IB students at Flagler Palm Coast High School. Lyn teaches many other classes in Flagler Beach and the surrounding community. She loves to incorporate “mindfulness, confidence and self discipline” into her practice. Our children love how calm and loving Lyn is. And they love how she incorporates touch and massage with oils into their yoga practice!

Miss Shannon

Shannon is a wonderful yoga teacher, theater practitioner, real estate guru, and most importantly mom to an amazing 4.5 year old. She has devoted most of her theater life to creating new thought provoking work often taking modern approaches to classical texts. She has performed in hundreds of plays on stages in London, Bali, and NYC having played Medea, Hermia in A Midsummer Nights Dream, and she originated the role of Tracy in the off-Broadway rock opera "Automatic Superstar." Shannon has studied under Anne Bogart and Richard Schechner, and as a children's theater teacher she often uses Bogart's Viewpoints and Schechner's Rasa Boxes to introduce young students to an imaginative world filled with improvisational possibilities! She is an RYT 200 yoga teacher who received her children's yoga training through Rainbow Kids Yoga and vinyasa flow yoga training through Shiva Rea. She is currently pursuing her MA in teaching at the University of Southern California. In Miss Shannon's classes you can always expect to laugh and fly!

Elements of the Montessori Approach to Teaching

Montessori is both a philosophy of child development and a method of applying the philosophy in an educational setting to guide a child's growth. The Montessori classroom is a dynamic community of learners and guides. Some basic premises of Montessori include:

A Responsive, Prepared, Child-Centered Environment

Children are to be respected as unique individuals, different from adults, but not less important or valued as members of the community. The child possesses an unusual sensitivity and intellectual ability to learn from her environment. The focus of activity in our Montessori classroom setting is on the child's experience within the environment, and not on the teacher's teaching. Our environment is designed to meet the needs, interests, and abilities of the children within the class. Teachers adapt the environment through modifying the selection of educational materials available, the physical layout and equipment in the classroom, and shifting the tone of the class to fit the ever-changing needs of the children. Generally students work individually or in small self-selected groups. Community meetings or “line times” are scheduled so as not to interrupt the child's work and are usually held at transitional points during the day. There is a conscious effort to design our classroom as a “children's house”, making it as comfortable and inviting as a home.

A Focus On The Human Tendencies

Maria Montessori based her philosophy of education on the human tendency within the child to explore,

to move, to share with a group, to be independent and make decisions, to create order, to develop self control, to abstract ideas from experience, to use creative imagination, to work hard, to repeat, concentrate, and perfect one's efforts and creations. Each of these tendencies is considered carefully when designing our environments, preparing materials, and planning activities for the students.

A Multiage Community of Learners

Our Montessori classroom is a community of children and adults. The classroom consists of children from a multiage span of three to six years. This creates a "family" like group where older children model and help care for younger children, and younger children look up to and learn from the older children. Varying levels of ability blend easily in a multiage setting, no child feels left behind and everyone learns at their own pace.

Cooperation and Collaboration

Montessori children learn "at their own pace". When the child demonstrates readiness, he/she is guided gently by the teachers in the classroom to explore increasingly challenging activities. In a Montessori setting, teacher's refrain from comparing students to one another and base evaluations on the progress of the individual. Children are encouraged to work together as well as independently. Often a more experienced child will be asked to assist a less experienced child with an activity or lesson. Group discussion and problem solving are strongly encouraged. Teachers work to create a sense of community within the classroom. Children feel a sense of belonging and responsibility toward their classroom and toward each other.

The Process of Learning

Montessori materials teach through hands on learning, spontaneous engagement, active involvement, and self- directed activity. Montessori materials have a control of error inherent in their design. This allows children to work independently, unafraid to make mistakes and to become comfortable with the fact errors are essential to the process of learning. While making independent choices and exploring concepts largely on their own, Montessori students construct their own sense of individual identity. They become independent and confident individuals.

The child is intrinsically motivated to learn. In a Montessori classroom children don't work for grades or external rewards, nor do they complete assignments given to them by their teachers. Children learn because they are interested in things and in gaining an understanding of the world around them.

In the classroom there are three stages of learning a new concept or lesson:

1. Introduction to a concept. This usually occurs by means of exploration within the classroom, observing another child at work, a conversation, reading something in a book, etc.

2. Processing the concept. The child develops an understanding of the concept through working with materials that illustrate the ideas, provide opportunity for exploration and experimentation, and provide opportunity for repetition of an activity.

3. Mastering the concept. The child is confidently able to explain the concept and teach the concept to another person.

Evaluation of Student Progress

The Montessori curriculum is carefully structured and sequenced based on the developmental needs of each individual child. Teachers maintain careful records of each student's individual progress. Portfolios of work are kept for older children. Children are not compared against arbitrary standards or the performance of their classmates. Parent- teacher conferences are held twice a year to discuss student progress. Additional conferences can be held at a parent or teacher's request. If requested, written summaries of conferences can be provided.

Overview of Curriculum

The child has a deep love and need for purposeful work. He works, however, not as an adult, for completion of a job, but for the sake of an activity itself. It is this activity, which enables him to accomplish his most important goal: the development of himself—mental, physical, and psychological powers.

In addition to the goals of our program listed at the beginning of this handbook our curriculum includes the following areas:

Practical Life: Young children have a natural urge to partake in the activities of daily living and be a participating member of family life. Simple chores adults may take for granted fascinate the child, engaging them in the meaningful learning of life skills. Practical life activities help children develop and coordinate movement, awareness of the environment, orderly thought patterns, independent work habits, and responsibility. The lessons in Practical Life include:

Preliminary Exercises- preparing the fine motor skills for more challenging activities (spooning, pouring, stringing, etc.)

Care of the Environment- learning to respect and care for the tools in the space where the child lives and learns (food preparation, sweeping, dusting, washing, polishing, etc)

Care of the Person- learning the basics of self care skills (hand washing, nose blowing, dressing, nutrition, etc.)

Grace and Courtesy- learning social skills (walking carefully, communication, manners, table setting, hosting a guest, life-interaction...)

Sensorial: The materials and activities in this area allow children to pursue their natural tendency to classify sensorial impressions and sort by size, shape, color, touch, sound, and weight. The sensorial materials isolate specific qualities, have a built in control of error, allow for repetition, and make abstract qualities concrete. Sensorial activities lay a foundation for math, geometry, geography, botany, art, and music.

Math: These activities make the abstract concepts of mathematics concrete for hands on learning. Each activity isolates a particular concept and integrates with other activities to form a strong foundation for further exploration. Beginning preschool math activities include 1 to 10 (sequences, quantity, numeral names, combinations often, basic arithmetic), teens, tens, introduction to the decimal system, and the operations of addition, multiplication, subtraction, and division.

Language: Children are immersed in language the moment they enter the classroom. Spoken language is encouraged as children communicate with each other individually, in small groups, and in large groups. A library of books is available for enjoyment and information. Stories are read and told individually, in small and large groups. Phonemic awareness is taught through hands on activities and games, the alphabet is learned with fun and interesting sorting and matching works, handwriting is practiced through tracing shapes, sandpaper letters, and using chalkboards, moveable alphabet letters are used for writing words, and labels are used all over for word recognition.

Science: Sensorial exploration and experimentation is key as children learn about the natural world. For example, sand and water tables allow for open-ended work while other activities isolate individual concepts such as sink and float, magnets, botany, etc. Care for plants and animals overlap with practical life activities and teach science as well as responsibility.

Geography: These materials help the child learn about the facts of the material world. Hands on activities introduce children to the names and types of landmasses, bodies of water, continents, countries, etc.

Cultural Studies: The diversity of our world is celebrated through language, music, art, traditions, food, stories, and history. A variety of cultural themes are integrated into all curriculum areas. Peace education is an integral part of the Montessori classroom and begins with respect for, understanding, and acceptance of differences as well as the celebration of the unifying aspects that connect us all.

Music and Art: Informal and formal music education occurs through singing, listening to music, introduction of instruments, introduction of musical notation, and exploration of sound.

Physical Development: Care of the body is equally as important as challenging the mind. Movement is built into all Montessori activities allowing the child to develop gross motor as well as fine motor skills. Yoga and other types of more formal exercise are built into daily group times. There are at least two periods of gross motor activity time each day with activities that include running, skipping, swinging, navigating an obstacle course, ball play, group games, and activities using other props such as scarves and ribbons.

Universal Values and Global Perspective: Montessori deliberately teaches children not only appropriate patterns of polite behavior, but seeks to instill basic universal values within the core of the child's personality. These values include self respect, acceptance of the uniqueness and dignity of each person we meet, kindness, peacefulness, compassion, empathy, honor, individual responsibility, and the courage to speak from our hearts. The Montessori philosophy is international in its heritage and consciously seeks to promote a global perspective.

Daily Routine

This routine is a general guideline followed by our school. The daily routine is always based on the needs of the children and is adjusted accordingly.

- 8:00-8:50 Early Morning Care, stories/activities
- 8:50 Arrival (Parents bring children to Yoga room/classroom)
- 9:00 Bell rings to gather for Line/Circle Time
- 9:00-9:20 Line/Circle Time
- 9:20-11:50 Work Cycle (Independent Work, Small Group Work)/Snack during cycle
- 11:50 Clean up/Reorganize/Line Time if time allows
- 12:00 VPK dismissal/Lunch
- 12:00-1:00 Lunch/Outdoor-Gross Motor Play
- 1:00-2:30 Work Cycle (Independent Work/Small Group Work)
- 2:30 Dismissal
- 2:30-4:00 (or later) After School Activities (Inside/Outside)

Yoga with Lynn or Shannon will be on Wednesday at 11:25

Visits to the Senior Center will be on Thursdays at 11:45

Library visits are scheduled for Friday afternoons

Discipline Policy

“Freedom within limits” is the core of the philosophy regarding discipline in a Montessori environment. Montessori children enjoy considerable freedom of movement and choice; however, their freedom always exists within carefully defined limits on the range of their behavior. They are free to do anything appropriate within the ground rules of the school community, but they are redirected promptly if they cross over the line. Preparation of the environment and carefully defined ground rules are key to successful discipline.

At Flagler Beach Montessori School, we believe in *guidance* and *positive discipline* to help children learn acceptable behavior and self-control. Every effort will be made to be proactive, endeavoring to foresee and take action before problems arise. Therefore, ample *praise* and *encouragement* are used when acceptable behavior is observed. When behavior is observed that may need adjustment, the teacher will speak with the child *respectfully* and enlist the child’s participation in finding more acceptable behaviors. *A range of direct guidance actions* that appropriately address the problem will be attempted by the teacher to help the child address the problem, including *redirection and setting clearly defined limits*. In all cases the child will be treated with *respect and dignity*. If the problem persists, you as the parent(s) will be asked to work with us in shaping the child’s behavior to be more acceptable so we are working as a team to solve the problem.

In extreme cases or outbursts, the child may be asked to spend time at our *(peace table)* to reflect or regain composure. When the child feels ready to discuss the incident, s/he will do so. Incidents will be reported to the families involved.

Our Peace Table is a positive area for exploring symbols of peace; for discussing our feelings and for working out any daily “struggles” that may arise.

Punishment is inconsistent with Flagler Montessori philosophy for child growth and development and will not be tolerated.

Please print, sign and date

General School and Classroom Guidelines

Flagler Beach Montessori School supports a philosophy based on mutual respect for all members of our community and our world. It is our intention to create a safe, supportive, nurturing environment for students, parents, and staff.

There are some basic expectations we have for all members of our community. Please review, discuss, and model these guidelines with your child:

- Walk safely and calmly in the classrooms and hallways. – - “walking feet”
- Use quiet, calm, and gentle voices, we try to avoid calling or yelling across the classroom. — “indoor voices”
- Be kind and gentle to others; aggressive behaviors will not be tolerated.
- Respect privacy and concentration; we let everyone work without unnecessary interruption; just observe when children are fully engaged.
- Respect other’s personal belongings; only touch when invited to do so (model asking permission).
- Take responsibility for care of our classroom; return work in good order to shelves.

Be kind to wildlife....please do not cage wild insects/animals for use in our classroom. Also, try to respect all living creatures in front of your children (killing all the little bugs that are in your space sends a very deep message to our children). Remember, that we are trying to create compassionate and empathetic spirits!

Adult Guidelines and Rules

The entire school community, including administrators, teachers, students, parents, and friends are responsible for modeling appropriate behavior, helping to maintain the order and neatness of the school environment, and reporting any violations of guidelines or safety concerns to the Staff.

Flagler Beach Montessori School is a smoke free environment. Flagler Beach Montessori School cannot and will not tolerate any irresponsible and dangerous behavior, acts of violence, threats of violence, emotional or sexual harassment or verbal abuse directed toward anyone. It is illegal and forbidden to bring or carry a weapon to the school or on the school grounds.

PLEASE DO NOT TALK ABOUT YOUR CHILD OR ANY CHILD NEGATIVELY ON SCHOOL PROPERTY.....AND PLEASE DO NOT TALK NEGATIVELY ABOUT OTHER CHILDREN ESPECIALLY YOUR CHILD'S CLASSMATES.

THANK YOU!!

Health and Safety

Drop off and Pick up

When arriving at school please drive around the library and park just west of the North entrance of the building. Enter through the North door entrance. You must push the buzzer and a staff member will arrive to let you in. When in the building proceed to your child's special bench/cubby and situate any belongings (including lunch) there. Please sign in and check for any messages in the communication areas/folders and then bring your child to the designated area according to your drop off time (Yoga Room, Park, or Classroom). **Please make sure that your child goes to the bathroom and washes their hands before you leave. Gently say your special goodbyes when you are ready and we will tune in to what your child's needs are when you depart. Staying for long periods tends to make your child's transition not as smooth.**

Communication between the parents and teacher is essential to the safety and the best care of the child. Often the morning arrival time and afternoon dismissal time are quite busy for the teachers. Her/His primary focus is on the safety of the children so she may not be able to hold a lengthy conversation at these times. A folder for each child will be kept on the cubbies. Parents are asked to check this folder on arrival and pick up for any important notes and information from the teachers. Parents can leave notes for the teachers and forms in these folders. Tuition payments can be placed in the box on the wall as you enter north entrance of the classroom. A bulletin board of general information will be posted nearby. Phone conversations or teacher conferences are encouraged and best arranged outside of regular school hours. Emergency phone calls should be made at any time and emergency calls will always be returned as soon as they are received.

Phone numbers to call during school hours are: 386-793-9567 or 386-574-2498. Please leave messages. We check them throughout the entire day.

Parents are asked to fill out a form authorizing who is able to pick up their child from school and/or act on their behalf in case of an emergency. Children will only be released to people on this list. Parents should check and update this form regularly.

The parent or person dropping off must sign in on arrival, indicating date and time of arrival and noting any significant information the caregiver may need to know for the day. On departure the parent or person picking the child up must sign out and record the time of departure.

Children are expected to arrive at school on time. Late arrivals are disruptive to the classroom and make it difficult for the child arriving late to transition into the school day. Our special classroom community "Line Time" starts exactly at 9:00. It is a very important part of our day and our children look forward to what information we sharing during this special time together. Please make every effort to be on time. If you arrive after 9:00, please do not ring the bell until 9:25 so our children can maintain their focus without interruption. Thank you!!

Parents should call in the morning whenever their child will be out for the day, coming in late, and/or leaving school early. Let the classroom teacher know as soon as possible for longer-term absences.

Visitation Policy

All visitors are required to sign in, recording the date and time of arrival, purpose for visit, and sign out with a time of departure.

The Montessori classroom is a very special place. The environment has been carefully designed to meet the developmental needs of children. A very delicate balance occurs between the child, teacher, and the environment as they work together to support growth and learning. (Especially at the beginning of the year). The presence of visitors moving freely through the room can be distracting and at times confusing for the children. It can interfere with the atmosphere of independence and concentration in the classroom.

We ask that all visitors respect the children and the classroom. The teacher will guide visitors into appropriate areas to sit and observe. Visitors should remain seated and restrain from engaging in conversation or activity with the children.

In the case of parents, student teachers, and volunteers, the teachers will direct visitors to appropriate activities within the classroom where they can become involved such as sharing a special skill or cultural information during circle time, listening to children read, or directing a special project.

Volunteering at Flagler Beach Montessori School

We certainly embrace your presence as a volunteer in OUR school, whether it is an occasional offer to join us or you want to sign up for the same time each week. All volunteers must complete a Florida Department of Children and Families volunteer form as part of their family file. We know that volunteering can also be a last minute decision. Let us know that you would like to volunteer, sign in/out on our volunteer sign in sheet, and please follow the Flagler Beach Montessori School procedures for visiting/volunteering.

When volunteering

- Make yourself aware of all evacuation routes posted near the north/south exits
- Confidentiality must be honored at all times (regarding children, parents, staff)
- Please follow requests from the staff about how to be the most effective adult in the Montessori environment.
- Volunteers are not permitted to toilet the children and may not be alone with children.
- Please dress neatly and comfortably (keeping in mind that our children are looking to the “big” ones in the world to learn about life). Please no clothing that advertises/supports ideas that do not parallel our school philosophy (No violent images please on children or adults).

We may have volunteers that are committed to a weekly function for a set day(s)/time as discussed and approved by the director/staff. We will let you know who is volunteering and what they will be sharing with our children.

Volunteers that are on-site 40 hours or more per month will be required to obtain fingerprint and background screenings.

Thank you for choosing to assist us. Our appreciation is unending!

Family Volunteer Hours and Logbook

Flagler Beach Montessori School distinguishes itself for the outstanding support that our parents provide to our school. Any form of creative family participation certainly enriches the education that each child receives and provides you the opportunity to share and model for the children how to be a part of and serve the communities in which they belong. We expect parental involvement as a form of commitment and dedication to all of the children of Flagler Beach Montessori School.

The Volunteer Log Book will be in the back of the Sign In Book. Please log your hours. We require a minimum of 15 hours per year. Hours that are considered volunteer hours are Garden Care, Care of the School House, Baking for the Seniors with your children, Event and Fund Raising Planning and Participation, assistance with any planned school event, sharing a skill/philosophy/religion/cultural topic, etc. with our children, helping the teachers cut and make materials. The ideas are endless. Be creative!

Supervision of Children/Child-Staff Ratio Guidelines

Flagler Beach Montessori School follows the required Department of Children and Families student-teacher ratio guidelines and recommended guidelines of the National Association of Young Children (NAEYC) student-teacher ratios.

The Florida Department of Children and Families Ratio Guidelines

For children 2 years of age or older, but under 3 years of age, there must be one staff member for every 11 children

For children 3 years of age or older, but under 4 years of age, there must be one staff member for every 15 children

For children 4 years of age or older, but under 5 years of age, there must be one staff member for every 20 children

For children 5 years of age or older, there must be one staff member for every 25 children.

In groups of mixed age ranges when the children are 2 years and older, the staff-children ratio shall be based on the age group with the largest number of children within the group.

A child will never be left unsupervised.

Efforts will certainly be made to familiarize children and parents with potential substitute teachers, volunteers, and student teachers. In the event of a planned, short-term, non-recurring absence of the teacher (doctor's appointment, teacher training, personal day) parents will be notified in advance and an approved substitute will be arranged.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

The importance of preparing for emergencies will be gently and carefully explained to our children. Our practice will lead to a sense of confidence and lessen any fears that accompany these situations.

Fire/ Emergency Information

A Fire Alarm System is in place in the Wickline building. Fire extinguishers are located on the wall near the north and south exits of the classroom, as well as the west wall. They are also located throughout the building. These extinguishers are checked regularly and inspected by professionals annually. Fire Drills are held each month.

Procedure for evacuations due to fire/other emergency

When in the event of an emergency the teacher will alert/ring the bell and ask children to stop what they are doing and quietly walk to either the primary or secondary exit. In case of a fire emergency, the fire/smoke detector alarm will go off and the teacher will instruct children to line up at the nearest exit immediately.

- As the children are lining up the teacher/assistant will check all areas of the classroom for children. In the case of a fire emergency, the teacher will guide the children out of the building as quickly as possible, checking that all children are present. Since a quick evacuation is essential in a fire, this may mean exiting through the safest doorways. The emergency bag will be carried by one of the staff members.
- The teachers will walk with the children to the designated meeting place(s). Once assembled in a safe place the teacher will take attendance using the class list located in the emergency bag.
- Authorities can be notified using the cell phone and emergency numbers located in the emergency bag.
- Parents will be notified using the emergency contact list in the emergency bag. This list is checked and updated monthly.

Fire Drills

Monthly (random) fire drills and high wind drills will be conducted on a monthly basis. The emergency procedures described above will be practiced.

Wind Emergencies

For high wind situations we will immediately move the children into the bathrooms. There are no windows in these rooms. They will be guided into the crouched, covered-head position if necessary.

First aid kits are safely located in the classroom and in the emergency bag.

School Closings, Delayed Openings

If severe weather conditions make travel hazardous, school may be postponed, closed early, or canceled. Flagler Beach Montessori School follows the closing policy of the Flagler County School District. Please listen to your local radio and television stations for school closings and delay information.

Local and National Emergencies

In the event that children and staff need to evacuate the building due to a national or local emergency, they will proceed to the closest safest building as directed by emergency personnel. The school will only be evacuated in the event the building is deemed not safe for occupancy by the police/fire department. Please tune into your local TV and Radio stations for more emergency information. Please ensure that all information, telephone numbers and emergency contacts are updated and checked throughout the year.

The school highly recommends that each family have an emergency plan for picking up your child at school.

General Student Health and Safety Policies

All children enrolled in Flagler Beach Montessori School must submit a written statement signed by a health care provider verifying the child is able to participate in child day care/school, currently appears to be free from contagious or communicable disease, and is receiving health care, including appropriate health examinations in accordance with the American Academy of Pediatrics schedule of such care and

examinations. Such documentation must state that the child has received age appropriate immunizations in accordance with Florida Law. Any child who is not immunized because of the parent's genuine and sincere religious beliefs may be admitted if the parent furnishes the provider with appropriate forms from the county Health Department. All children must remain current with their immunizations and update the documentation at the school annually.

In addition to the health care statement, the following documents will be submitted at the time of admission and kept on file while the child is enrolled:

- A written consent signed by the parent authorizing the provider or other caregivers employed by the program to obtain emergency health care for the child
- A written consent signed by the parent allowing for the provider to arrange for transportation of the child in need of emergency care, or in the case of emergency evacuation from the site, permission to transport the child to one of the designated relocation sites.
- A written consent of permission to apply topical sun block, diaper creams, and/or lotions to the child. The parent must provide product for the child in original packaging and clearly label the bottle with the child's name.
- A written consent to allow the child to be photographed at school and permission for the school to use these photographs for school albums, newsletters, on our web site, and for other school related purposes (special craft projects, press releases, etc.).
- A written consent that the parent is familiar with our napping policies and procedures (if a family would like child to nap/rest).

Illness Policy

The Flagler Beach Montessori School adheres to the state of Florida's guidelines for dealing with illness in the school. The standards are designed to protect your healthy child. Please do not send your child to school if they are sick or unable to participate in daily activities. Your child will recover more quickly at home and the other children and adults at the school will be protected from continued exposure to the illness. The school is neither licensed nor equipped to care for ill children.

If a child becomes ill while at school, he or she will be isolated from the other children and parents will be called to arrange for the child to be picked up. If a child is considered to be too ill to attend school at drop off, he or she will not be admitted. Please remember that when illness is accompanied by fever, your child may not return to school until their temperature has been normal for twenty four hours (without medication).

Medication Policy

Flagler Beach Montessori School teachers and staff prefer not to administer any medication, prescription, remedy, or treatment, except as stated earlier in the use of topical ointments such as sun lock and diaper cream and except to the extent that such administration is required under the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Please speak to us if your child does need medication and is healthy enough to attend school. We will work from there.

Illness Exclusion Policy

EXCLUDE IF:	READMIT IF:
1. Temp of 100.4° F oral, 101°F rectal, or 99° F auxiliary	1. Free of fever for 24 hours
2. Temp of 100.4° F oral, 101°F rectal, or 99° F auxiliary plus one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Severe cold with yellow-green nasal discharge • Cough • Sore throat • Sneezing • Swollen glands • Skin rash 	2. Free of fever for 24 hours and note from clinic or physician stating child is not communicable
3. Conjunctivitis (pink eye) bacterial and/or viral	3. All discharge has ceased and note from clinic or physician stating child is not communicable
4. Head and body lice	4. After treatment and free of lice and nits
5. Ringworm of body	5. After treatment and child is free of contagious lesions
6. Ringworm of head	6. After treatment, lesions are covered, and note from clinic or physician stating child is not communicable
7. Skin lesions, impetigo, and scabies	7. Skin sores are healed or note from clinic or physician stating child is not communicable
8. Vomiting	8. Free of upset stomach and vomiting for 24 hours
9. Diarrhea (two or more loose watery stools per day)	9. Diarrhea free for 24 hours
10. Fainting or seizures or general signs of a communicable disease to which the child has been exposed	10. Free of symptoms or note from clinic or physician stating child is not communicable

FOODS THAT ARE A DANGER FOR CHILDREN UNDER FOUR YEARS OF AGE

Foods that are hard, small, thick and sticky, smooth, or slippery should not be offered (unless properly prepared) to children less than four years of age.

1. Hot dogs/Veggie Dogs sliced into rounds
2. Whole Grapes
3. Hard Candy
4. Nuts and Seeds
5. Marshmallows
6. Chunks of peanut butter
7. Popcorn
8. Cherry and Grape tomatoes
9. Raw peas
10. Dried Fruit
11. Chips
12. Chunks of meat

Please keep the list in mind when preparing lunch.

We do have nut allergies this year, so please nothing with nuts in our lunches!!

Nutrition

Food is never forced on a child, rather offered frequently throughout the day. Every effort will be made to accommodate food preferences for personal, religious, or medical reasons. Parents are required to provide a balanced, nutritious lunch for their children. Parents should remember to include a protein, grains, vegetables and fruits for lunch. Candy and other highly sugared foods are not appropriate and prohibited. If parents are having trouble discovering meals their child is willing to eat, they are encouraged to speak with staff members who will be happy to give them ideas.

Green Lunches and Composting

We are teaching our children to be responsible, caring and conscientious human beings that care for their world and all of humanity. A few ways that you can carry this over to home are:

Please bring in all of your composting materials for our compost bin. Our children love composting!

Please pack lunch items in reusable containers and allow your child to pack his or her own lunch (with guidance if needed). **And don't forget to include a note from you that we will read together with your child at lunchtime.**

Please do not pack any candy or cookies for lunch. Also, please do not pack the juice boxes and yogurt squeezes that spill all over when children hold them. Pack juice boxes in sturdy containers or use a thermos for drinks. We really appreciate it! Thank you so much!

Staff and Facility Health and Safety Policies

The necessary health forms for staff will be filed.

This information will be kept on file and updated regularly.

In accordance with the provisions in the social services law, all teachers and staff at the Flagler Beach Montessori School are required to report any suspected incidents of child abuse or maltreatment concerning a child to the statewide center of child abuse and maltreatment.

Caregivers must wash their hands, and ensure children wash their hands with soap and running water at the beginning of each day, when they are dirty, after toileting or assisting children with toileting, after changing a diaper, before and after food handling or eating, after handling of pets and other animals, after contact with bodily secretion or fluid, and after coming in from the outdoors.

Safety precautions relating to blood must be observed as follows:

- Disposable gloves must be worn whenever there is a possibility for contact with blood, including but not limited to touching blood or blood contaminated fluids, treating cuts that bleed, and wiping surfaces with stained blood.
 - In an emergency, a child's well being must take priority. A bleeding child must not be denied care because gloves are unavailable.
 - Disposable gloves must be discarded after each use
 - If blood is touched accidentally, the exposed skin must be thoroughly washed with soap and running water
 - Clothing contaminated with blood must be placed in a securely tied plastic bag and returned to the parent at the end of the day
 - Surfaces that have been contaminated with blood must be cleaned and disinfected with a germicidal solution
- Sufficient and suitable clothing must be available so that children who are dirty or soil their clothing may be changed. Parents will be asked to keep at least one seasonally appropriate change of clothes for their child at school.

Toileting facilities will be kept clean at all times and stocked with toilet paper, soap, and towels accessible to staff and children.

Toileting equipment will be provided appropriate to the toilet training level of the children in the group.

If a child is not able to use the bathroom parents must supply an adequate supply of disposable/cloth diapers and wipes. Diapers will be disposed of in a tightly covered trashcan and kept out of reach of children. Soiled cloth diapers will be placed and sealed in a plastic bag and sent home with the child at the end of the day. The changing pad will be wiped with a disinfecting solution after each use.

All rooms, equipment, supplies, and furnishing accessible to children will be cleaned and disinfected as needed to protect the health of the children and staff, and in a manner consistent with the health care plan guidelines

General School Information

Clothing

All clothing and other belongings, which are brought to school, should be clearly labeled with your child's name. A supply of clothes for changes should be sent at the beginning of the year and checked regularly to insure an adequate supply. The children work with materials in the classroom that may result in their clothing becoming soiled or wet (water, paint, etc), sometimes more than once a day. They appreciate the option of changing into clean dry clothes on their own.

Since self-sufficiency is encouraged, parents are asked to consider the ease with which their child is able to dress him or herself. For example, overalls make look cute but may be challenging for your child to unhook when they need to use the bathroom.

Each child should keep a pair of indoor shoes or slippers to wear while at school. This helps keep our environment clean and healthy. Every child must wear some type of shoe at all times in case there is an emergency or fire drill and we must exit the classroom quickly.

At Flagler Beach Montessori School we are all working together to create a peaceful environment. Please keep this mind when choosing attire for the day. We would like **to avoid clothing with any violent images at all (No Spider Man, Super Man, Transformers, skulls, swords or ANY OTHER commercial images that could frighten other children. Our children are given enough opportunities to view TV characters outside of school so let's avoid advertising them in our school environment (this includes all TV characters such as princesses, Scooby Doo and other fantasy figures). Also, clothing, jewelry and shoes that glow, light up, etc. become quite a distraction in our educational environment please save them for times at home.** Thank you.

Items we keep at home:

Please keep personal toys at home. Our children are distracted by the occasional toy that appears at school. They are also confused because our children that have been here for years understand that they leave "toys" at home. It creates a sense of unbalance because it is not fair to the children and the families that are following this procedure in their child's work environment.

Outdoors Play

Time outdoors is an important part of a child's day. It provides the fresh air needed to insure good health and aids in the development of social and gross motor skills.

Weather permitting the children go outside every day. In the case of a light sprinkle or drizzle the children may still go outside for a shorter period of time.

If your child is recovering from an illness and still is not able to go outside, you are asked to keep him or her home. The school does not have adequate staff to provide for the care of one or two children while the other children are outdoors.

Lost and Found

With so many children, it is sometimes difficult to keep track of clothing and other belongings. Having each article of clothing clearly labeled helps prevent losing items. A "lost and found" box is kept.

Clothing that is not claimed after a reasonable amount of time may be kept as extra items for children who may need it on any given day or donated to a good cause.

Classroom Materials

The materials in the classroom are there to be used by all the children and the staff attempts to make them as inviting as possible. Sometimes they are too successful and pieces of the apparatus get invited home. It is often the most important/favorite pieces that find their way home. Should this occur, we ask that parents not worry about this and return items as soon as possible.

Birthdays

Birthdays are special days and we enjoy celebrating them at school. Please remind your child's teacher a few days before the birthday so the teacher is able to plan for the celebration.

We practice the favorite Montessori tradition of creating a picture timeline of your child's life. Please send in pictures of your child at birth, and each year thereafter, so the entire class can see how he or she has grown or changed. Every birthday child will be honored by participating in the birthday walk where the child carries a model of the earth around the sun (a candle in the center of our circle) for each year of his or her life. We follow up by singing Happy Birthday and the child can blow the candle out.

If you and your child would like, you can bring a **healthy** birthday snack to share with the class. The celebration of your child's birthday can also include donating a book to the classroom library in your child's name or a special object such as a rock, feather, shell to our nature area (be creative!).

Holidays and Celebrations

“All mankind shares a common history, a common world of cultures, and struggles toward a common future. The child should be given a sense of our heritage, our culture, and our potential destiny from the earliest moments of sensitivity. The needs of mankind are universal. Our means of meeting them create the richness and diversity of the planet. The child should come to relish the texture of that diversity.” - Maria Montessori

We acknowledge and celebrate the diversity of our school community and the diversity of the much larger world community. At Flagler Beach Montessori School we are concerned about the tendency in America to see the United States as the center of the world. We feel it is important to broaden our children’s horizons to encompass the entire planet. Our goal is not just to transmit information about other cultures but also to celebrate them. Celebrations help inspire a sense of joy, wonder and enthusiasm. We teach with great respect for the child, his or her family, and his or her background. We encourage each family to share their heritage through stories, food, and celebrations.

Flagler Beach Montessori School does not teach religion, although we do present many universal spiritual themes such as love, kindness, joy, and confidence in the fundamental goodness of life. Many of the holidays we celebrate may be religious in origin. We approach them instead from a cultural perspective, sharing food, music, dance and traditions related to the day. This helps us build a sense of community by celebrating our similarities as well as our differences. If we want to achieve peace, we must begin by teaching children how to accept each person for who they are.

Communication and Events

Mail Folders

Each family has a mail folder on their child’s cubby. Please check your folder daily for notes and information.

Website and Internet Information

www.flaglerbeachmontessori.com (on-going process to update!)

email address: flaglerbeachmontessori@earthlink.net

To view pictures go our website and click on galleries. You can view both pictures and videos. There are also many pictures on Flickr. Search Flagler Beach Montessori School pictures.

Parent -Teacher Conferences

Parent teacher conferences are regularly scheduled twice a year, in the fall and in the spring. A parent can request a conference with a teacher at any time throughout the year and your teacher may schedule additional conferences if necessary.

Evaluation of Student Progress

Flagler Beach Montessori School maintains careful notes and documentation on each child in accordance with the traditional Montessori curriculum. Children are never compared to each other or “graded” in a traditional or arbitrary manner. Written narratives are kept for younger children and portfolio samples are kept for older children. Evaluation of progress is based on the individual growth of each child.

Meetings with the Staff of Flagler Beach Montessori School

Meetings can certainly be arranged by appointment.

Support Services

All Flagler Beach Montessori School families of preschool age children or older are eligible for the screening services available through the public school home districts. Screenings are available for speech, hearing, social/emotional, fine/gross motor, etc. Younger children are eligible for screening through early intervention services. Your teacher can assist you in requesting a screening from your home district if there are concerns about your child development in one of these areas.

Special Family Events

During the year our school we will have special school events like “A dish to share picnics”, nature outings, family days at the beach/parks. All events can be viewed on our website calendar and we will announce these events in our newsletters and post them on School House bulletin boards.

Montessori Education Nights

Four to six times a year we will host Montessori education and planning evenings open to the school and larger community. **THESE MEETINGS ARE MANDATORY.** We want each of you and your child to fully benefit from our Montessori experience together. These meetings are ways for our families to connect and for you to fully understand the Montessori philosophy that you have chosen for your family. We will discuss different areas of the Montessori philosophy and child development. This is a great opportunity to meet and talk with other parents, ask questions, and learn about what your child does each day in the classroom. Meeting dates are located on our website calendar. Please make sure you check our website and our calendar frequently!

Community and Committee Meetings

Through out the year we will hold regular community and committee meeting to discuss the state and future of the school. These are open to all friends and families interested in our school community.

Admission Policy

General Policy

Flagler Montessori School considers itself more than just a preschool or daycare program, we consider ourselves a true community of families that share a vision, values, and goals for our children. Beginning the admissions process and learning about our school is a process of learning about each other, similar to dating. Our primary goal in the admissions process is to help each family find the perfect match. Not all great people would make us happy as our spouse or business partner. We recognize that we may not be the perfect school for every family. The admissions process is a chance for us to get to know each other. Honesty in any relationship is key to its success. We are not here to convince prospective families that our school is right for them. We actively encourage families to observe and explore the many school options available. Our goal is to present our program as truthfully as possible, help families to grasp the nature of our school and what we have to offer, and allow them to weigh all the factors out as they consider whether our school is indeed the right match for them.

School tours, classroom observations, open houses, Montessori education meetings, and meetings with the staff are important ways to get to know our community. We will have a lending library of videos, DVDs, and books that describe the Montessori philosophy of education and are a great resource for current as well as prospective parents.

When we admit a new student, we are not simply bringing him or her into the school community. We are bringing the child, his parents, siblings, and extended family into the mix. In making admissions decisions we normally give strong preference to families who share common values and goals with the school, and who, after careful consideration and exploration, have concluded that our school is something that they want very much for their children, for the right reasons.

We consider applications for admissions on a case-by-case open admission basis. When no openings are available children will be placed in the applicant group waiting list. In the event of an opening, children in this group will be considered based on the date an application was received and age and needs of the child (in accordance with the Montessori principle of a multi-age classroom). Siblings of currently enrolled students, children of staff members, and transfers from other Montessori schools may be granted priority in the admissions process.

The Flagler Beach Montessori School 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. Flagler Beach Montessori School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national, and ethnic origin in administration of educational and admission policies. Following the traditional multi-age Montessori classroom model, Flagler Beach Montessori School is committed to creating a balanced learning environment for all students. We are committed to integrating and accommodating children with special needs into our program, in accordance with the Montessori philosophy and appropriate early childhood practices. In some circumstances, Flagler Beach Montessori School is not the “right fit” for a child and family. Flagler Beach Montessori School reserves the right not to accept a child into the program or to ask a child to leave the program based on the school’s inability to meet the needs of the child and the family. We will support the family in finding a program better suited to the child’s specific needs.

Admissions Process

Observation and School Tour

Prospective families are required to have a school tour before enrolling their child. Appointments for tours or observations can be made through the “main office” (386-793-9567).

Application

If at all possible, parents are encouraged to speak with the Staff of Flagler Beach Montessori School and tour the classroom before submitting an application. All applications will be processed upon receipt of a completed application form.

The application is valid for three years from the application date or until the child is no longer eligible for enrollment. If an offer for enrollment is declined for any reason, the application will be withdrawn. Please remember to notify the school if you change your address or phone number.

Waiting List

If there are no openings available in the program selected, your application will be placed on a waiting list. You will be contacted as soon as space becomes available and will then have two weeks in which to enroll your child by signing our school contract. Once enrolled you will be responsible for following the 10 month tuition schedule. **Upon enrolling, your family is responsible for paying the first month, as well as the Registration fee. These fees are non-refundable.**

Provisional Acceptance

All children enrolled are accepted into the program with the understanding that if the teacher feels the program cannot meet the child’s needs, the staff and parents will explore alternatives together.

Enrollment Agreement

A child is officially enrolled in the program when the school has received the signed enrollment agreement and tuition deposit (first month and the registration). Enrollment in all programs is binding. Parents are responsible for tuition each month regardless of the amount of time the child attends the school.

Withdrawal

Should a family initiate withdrawal of a child; a minimum of 30 days advance written notice must be given to the school in order to receive a full refund of tuition deposit.

If both the parents and the school administration decide that the Flagler Beach Montessori School program is not appropriate for an enrolled child, the child may be withdrawn and the parents relieved of any further financial responsibility.

If the school decides that the Flagler Beach Montessori School program is not appropriate for an enrolled child, the family is relieved of any further financial obligation.

Enrollment Forms

Flagler Beach Montessori School and The Department of Children and Families require that the following information be kept on file for each child enrolled in the program:

1. Application
2. Enrollment contract
3. Day care registration form
4. Medical report/immunization documentation Emergency/Medical treatment consent form
6. Emergency transportation release form
7. List of authorized people to pick child up from school
8. Sunscreen permission form
9. Photography permission and release form
10. Activity Release form
11. Know Your Child Care Facility form
12. Allergy form
13. Flu Form
14. Policy Book Form

It is your responsibility to **notify the school when there** is any **change in the information provided on** these forms.

Tuition Policy

Tuition may be paid annually or monthly (10 monthly payments) in accordance with the following payment schedule:

Annual Due: This year, by August 17, 2011

Monthly Due: The 15th of each month (August-May). The first payment is due on or before August 17th.

A late fee of 10.00 per day will be charged for late tuition payments.

Collection Policy

Parents are expected to make payment by the due date or make payment arrangements in writing. The school understands that families may experience some financial difficulties and are committed to working with any family to make acceptable arrangements for payment.

Returned Checks

A **\$35.00 fee** will be charged for all **returned checks**.

Tuition Credit

We do understand that unfortunate circumstances surface and we are open to discuss them with you. Please know that to make our school a success, we need to be understood. Giving credits for every child's absence for illness and vacation does work for creating the quality School Environment that will unfold over the years. There will be no credits for absences due to illness, vacations or school closings. Please be honest with us so we can make it work for you and our school. Thank you.

Privacy Policy

Child Privacy

The staff of the Flagler Beach Montessori School values the privacy of each family that is enrolled in our program and will keep personal and private information secure. A form will be sent home asking for permission to add your name to the school directory. Only families that give the school permission will be added to the directory. The school will not give out phone numbers, birthdays, or addresses of families that have elected to remain out of the directory. Class lists will be sent home to each family that has consented.

Staff Privacy

The school also respects the privacy of the entire staff. The office will not give out home phone number or addresses. Teachers may elect to give out e-mail and phone numbers; however they are not required to do so. During the school day the staff will be given messages when you call. If it is an emergency please notify the person answering the phone and the teacher will be notified.