

Weinacker's Montessori School



Parent Handbook Policies and Procedures

2009 - 2010

Revised: June 2009

Weinacker's Montessori School's Parent Handbook Policies and Procedures
and Health Polices are available online at WeinackersMontessori.com.

Weinacker's Montessori School Sites

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Parent Information

Director's Name:

Teacher(s) Name(s):

Program Hours:

Tuition:

Received: Pre-admission Form
 Policies and Procedures

Other notes:

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PARENT INFORMATION HANDBOOK

MISSION/VISION

Our vision is to create thinkers and dreamers, who work together, and are never content with the norm but are inspired to learn beyond the confines of our four walls. Our students will become the innovators in the laboratory of life, always questioning facts and dreaming beyond them.

TEACHERS AND STAFF

Our teachers are experienced professionals and are strongly committed to your child's development and education. Lead teachers hold or are working toward NAMC Montessori Diplomas, having completed a rigorous training program of study and internship. All of our teachers are high school graduates and many hold bachelors' degrees. We are committed to on-going training for all our staff and have a training facility at the Daphne location.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

THE MONTESSORI CLASSROOM

The Montessori approach to learning encourages each child to reach his full potential in all areas of life. The classroom environment contains many multi-sensory, sequential and self-correcting materials. The materials facilitate the learning of skills and concepts. The children are free to work at their own pace with materials they have selected from the environment. All classrooms have multi-age groupings that encourage a family-like atmosphere where learning takes place naturally and spontaneously.

Overview

The fundamental goal of the Montessori Program is to prepare children for life. The Montessori philosophy, methodology, and clearly prescribed curriculum are based on the premise that children have "absorbent minds" and an innate desire to learn. Given the proper environment and freedom, children will direct their own learning activities. Children learn more when they are stimulated by their surroundings and will benefit most when both teachers and parents are consistent and supportive of the Montessori philosophy.

Learning occurs through self-discovery. Students learn from the environment that our school offers. The teacher is a dynamic link between the classroom environment and the student, and it is through this link that learning takes place. Recent research emphasizes developmentally appropriate learning and using the teacher as a facilitator of learning. Also the teacher is responsible for keeping records of each child's progress.

The use of special Montessori equipment is a key feature of the program. Through manipulation and use of materials such as the geometric cabinet, the moveable alphabet, and a variety of other hands-on materials, students learn the fundamental concepts of math, language arts, social studies, and science; and, in the process, they learn how to combine concepts and arrange their thoughts in new and exciting ways. Through a carefully sequenced presentation of progressively complex material, the child will master increasingly abstract concepts. Mastery is noted by visual, oral, and written evaluation that in turn, depends on the exercise being observed.

The Montessori curriculum has been effective in implementing a child-centered, "hands-on", multi-sensory approach to learning reading and math. It fosters student independence and personal responsibility for learning, a willingness to take risks, a sense of social responsibility, and a love of learning. Going beyond mono-sensory approaches, by means such as using phonetics initially to teach reading, Montessori introduces highly structured hands-on materials for training the senses of young children with the ultimate goal of education being self-actualization. Weinacker's Montessori Schools (WMS) places great emphasis on the concepts of natural development, spontaneity, and the natural goodness of the child.

Parent Information Handbook, Continued

Infant/Toddler Program

The Infant/Toddler Program is designed for children six weeks to 24 months of age. Infants and toddlers are combined in the same classroom. The infant program at WMS provides opportunities to help infants gain independence skills as opportunities naturally arise. To provide a supportive environment that meets each child's needs, we first establish a good working relationship with the parents of the infants in our care. With this in mind, we have put together a brief overview of key concepts in the Infant Program.

When a child enters our program, we require that a parent spend the first day with the child so that the child, parent and staff can become comfortable with one another. This helps the child establish a basic trust in the environment. We suggest a shorter first day(s) alone at the school for the child to ensure a positive experience. The staff learns much about the child's daily care from observing the child's interaction with the parent.

A daily report is kept for each child, so that the parent can have basic information regarding food intake, sleep patterns, diaper changes and the health of their child.

The staff encourages independence throughout the day with one exception – during separation. Children can only separate successfully in an environment where they feel secure and comfortable. We therefore feel that a caregiver must be available to assist a child who is having a hard time, acknowledging the child's feelings and offering comfort and support. We encourage parents to stay as long as they want any morning. However, when they are ready to leave, they should say good-bye and go.

Children will be fed when they are hungry, and allowed to sleep whenever they are tired. We do not force children to eat at a certain time nor do we awaken them in order to feed them. Young infants are held when they receive a bottle; they are not expected to hold their own. This allows one-on-one time with the caregiver, and makes basic care more personal. We work closely with the parents when it is time to introduce solid foods. We do not put cereal in bottles; we feel that it is important that the child gets practice with a spoon. Children are fed in a bouncy seat before they are able to sit up, and when they are able to sit unsupported for short periods of time, they sit at a weaning table during meals. Utensils are always available for them to experiment with, should they show an interest in them. An adult is always sitting near the infant at the table. As the child progresses, pureed fruits and vegetables are added, followed by bite-size pieces of food they can feed themselves.

The child is weaned from a bottle to a cup gradually, to make the transition as easy as possible for the child. When the child is able to sit at the weaning table for meals, fluids are offered from a cup. After much practice, the child learns this new way of taking in fluids, and eventually tries to hold the cup. The child's parents are an important part of this transition process, and included in all decisions made regarding their child.

Our goal in the infant program is to help the child to become independent, and an important part of this process is to allow the child to learn self-calming skills. Infants cry for any number of reasons including hunger, fatigue, frustration and anger. Crying is communication. It is important to understand why the child is crying. Does the child need something? Is the child angry or frustrated? An infant may need adults to give verbal reassurance, to be moved to a different position, or simply to be left alone. When the infant is small and unable to control his own body, he may need adult help. As he gains more control, however, we need to allow him more freedom to do more for himself. There are times when a child just needs someone nearby as he works through his struggle. When the child is allowed to work it out for himself, he begins to become more independent and learns important self-calming skills. These are all steps to independence.

We provide many opportunities for children to develop their motor skills. Mobiles are provided for infants to look at and reach for, and initial batting movements soon become purposeful grasps. Crawling is encouraged as infants are placed on their stomachs and provided many objects to reach for. As they gain the ability to move forward, they are provided with objects that entice them to crawl, such as rolling toys that move just out of reach. Sitting up is also encouraged at this time, as back muscles strengthen. At first, children are supported by the teacher, then by cushions, and finally sit alone. As the children become proficient crawlers, more challenging skills are introduced through movement such as in and out, up and down. Appropriate and safe materials are provided so that the children may practice their newfound skills without the assistance of an adult.

As crawling is mastered, children begin to pull up to a standing position, and soon start to cruise around the furniture. They also begin to push objects such as chairs or even tables (anything that will move when pushed!) as an alternative to crawling. Our environment is designed to provide many such opportunities.

Parent Information Handbook, Continued

After practicing their upright skills, children soon begin to stand alone, and finally begin to take their first steps on their own. We do not use walkers in our program, both for safety reasons and developmental ones. Although a walker may help the not quite mobile infant move around, it does not encourage the infant to learn the balance necessary for walking, and can also be harmful to the development of leg muscles.

Another extremely important part of the infant's development is communication. Early infant communication and appropriate adult responses become the basis for healthy psychological development. Children become self-confident when they can communicate effectively. The infant's very first experiences of having a need and communicating that need in the infant's own language – crying and body movement – should not be minimized. Respectful communication between the adult and child is crucial. Teachers speak softly and positively, giving the infant time to respond, so that a communication rhythm develops. We read books, sing songs, and name familiar objects.

Transition Program

The Transition Program is designed for children 2 to 3 years of age. Two year-olds are introduced to age appropriate Montessori materials and are invited to make choices from a variety of activities designed to support their needs. The focus of the transition program is to foster the development of basic trust and to assist the emerging personality by supporting the developing sense of self as an individual. The two year-old child's senses of independence and order are encouraged and self-confidence enhanced through social and learning experiences. Music, movement, food preparation, snack, and outdoor play are all part of the daily routine.

From birth through three years of age, young children are characterized by the ability to learn 'unconsciously'. The teacher must be aware of the sensitive periods of development for the toddler. These include movement, order, and language. In our Montessori transition classroom, we provide appropriate activities for these sensitivities or needs. We have an area devoted to the perfection of gross motor skills. Movement is extremely important to the transition child and should be restricted as little as possible as it helps to organize the central nervous system, allows the child to define himself in space and become aware of his personal boundaries.

Activities are designed to foster a sense of sequence and order. For example, the stacking cups are an activity involving size comparison and arrangement by size. The consumption of snack is also presented in such a way as to incorporate order and sequence. The child is encouraged first to place a mat and a napkin on the 'eating' table. The child then selects a snack from the snack table, places it into a bowl, and carries the bowl over to the table that was previously prepared for eating. Only then may the child sit down and consume the snack. A child who wants juice must go back to the snack table, take a cup, pour some juice from the small pitcher, return to the 'eating table', sit down, and drink the juice.

When snack eating is finished, the child stands up and pushes in his chair. The child cleans up by carrying the bowl and cup to the sink, placing the mat into its holder, and putting the napkin and any leftovers into the garbage. Some of the older twos even wash their dishes. Consider how many steps are involved in this process! Two year-olds are very capable and are able to grasp these ideas fairly quickly. The new transition child begins a few steps at a time, with the teacher offering only as much help as is necessary. Sequence and order are important in establishing a sense of routine, developing later organizational skills, and even in developing reading skills (size sequences are presented from left to right).

Language is extremely important to the two year-old. Language is the child's link to the environment. Transition children want to know the names of everything. For this reason, the transition classroom environment includes many concrete and abstract language activities. Language cards are a very popular activity and the school has many sets from which to choose. When introducing language to the two year-old, teachers use the 'three period lesson'. At first, teachers simply name objects for the child. Later (secondly), teachers ask the child to show us the previously named object (teachers name the object). And finally (thirdly), teachers ask the child "What is this?" – at this point, the child gives the teacher the name, and has fully internalized the language given. Conversation, songs and books are all very important to the transition child. Much frustration is eased when the child learns to communicate his wants, needs, and emotions. We do a lot of talking!

Fine motor development is also an important aspect of the child's growth. Puzzles are very important in this regard, and a large selection is available in the classroom. Many practical life activities are important in this area as well, as the toddler perfects the 'pincer grasp' that becomes so important as he begins to learn to write.

The school offers the young child a safe, nurturing environment with trusting caregivers who respect each individual. Our goal is to form a partnership with parents to assist the children as they embark on their first school experience, enabling the children to find joy in their growing independence and new discoveries, and to instill in them a love of learning.

Parent Information Handbook, Continued

Early Childhood (3-6 Year Old) Curriculum

The Montessori classroom contains a variety of materials that facilitate the learning of developmentally appropriate skills and concepts. These materials are designed to engage the child on many levels, to encourage the use of the child's senses, to teach the concept of sequence and order, and to be self-correcting. The child is part of a multi-age grouping that encourages a family-like atmosphere so that learning takes place naturally and spontaneously as the child works at his own pace with the materials selected from the environment. The learning environment is divided into four primary areas as listed below.

The **Practical Life** area allows the child to participate in "real life" activities, which aid the child in the development of coordination, organizational skills, concentration, and independence. Activities include pouring, spooning, sweeping, mopping, polishing, a variety of cleaning activities, dressing frames, folding, sorting and many fine motor activities with a variety of everyday objects.

The **Sensorial** area provides activities with an array of materials designed to refine the child's senses, and that help in the understanding of more complex concepts. Activities found in this area include color tablets, sound cylinders, and smelling bottles for matching; cylinders, prisms, and cubes for arranging according to size and shape; and a variety of material to demonstrate texture, weight, temperature, and their similarities and differences.

The **Language Arts** area provides materials that aid in language development. The child learns to spell, read, and write initially by using a phonetic approach based on sensorial materials. Activities involve the use of sandpaper letters to teach sounds and letters, the moveable alphabet to create words, the use of small phonetic objects or pictures to compare words, and learning to read by pronouncing the sounds of words.

The **Mathematics** program begins with sensorial activities that enable the child to distinguish shapes and sizes. Once this base is in place, the child moves ahead to the concepts of units, measurement, and written number recognition by working with the number rods, spindle boxes, sandpaper numerals, and cards and counters. After mastery of these concepts has been demonstrated, the child will work with golden beads and other materials to learn the concepts of addition, multiplication, subtraction, and division.

Geography, Spanish, Art, and Music materials are also sequenced into each area of the classroom environment. Botany and Zoology are also considered vital parts of the curriculum. Also integrated throughout are the concepts of grace and courtesy, care for one another, and care for the environment. As in all areas of the classroom, the child begins with the simplest and progresses through increasingly more complex activities.

Early Elementary (6-9 Year Old) Curriculum

The six to nine year old curriculum, in Montessori terminology, is called "cosmic education". This means that the curriculum does much to expand the child's awareness of the world. Academically, much work is done in the elementary class to support the discoveries that children make regarding their vision of the whole and the connections between the individual and the larger human family.

Montessori pointed out that the elementary child is sensitive to and curious about other cultures. It is important to help children develop an understanding of the differences and similarities in other countries and cultures. In a mixed-age group, differences in ability, maturity, size, and background are routine. Accommodation is made for differences in learning styles and temperaments by allowing a multitude of choices in work and projects.

In order to encourage independence, organization, self-discipline, and responsibility for their own learning, the children in the six to nine classroom keep a log of their daily work and grow into formulating weekly, monthly, and yearly goals that are organized into work plans. These are written in consultation with each child and are reviewed weekly. It serves as a wonderful record-keeping device and supports evidence of real growth. When children are supported and encouraged individually, they gain the self-respect and self-confidence to hear and accept the contributions of others.

The six to nine curriculum offers a wide array of subject matter:

The **math curriculum** consists of operations, facts, fractions, geometry, measurement, and abstract work.

The **geography curriculum** is divided into Political and Functional (Physical) geography.

The **science curriculum** consists of Physical Science and Life Science (Botany and Zoology).

The **language curriculum** encompasses reading, grammar, spelling, and handwriting.

The **history curriculum** covers the Fundamental Needs of Man, time lines (personal and cultural), the Year and its Parts: Months, Days of the Week, Time (hour, half-hour, quarter-hour, five minutes).

Parent Information Handbook, Continued

The six to nine curriculum introduces the children to “**The Great Lessons**”. The first of these lessons is the **Creation Story** (The Earth and Its Beginnings) covered in September. The remaining Great Lessons are covered throughout the year. They include **The History of Language, The History of Math, The Timeline of Life and Early Humans**.

The Montessori six to nine class encompasses a method of learning and discovery of the child as a unique individual. It gives the child a learning phenomenon that will produce an explosion of awareness, culminating in the realization that the universe in which we live is wondrous and unique.

CLASSROOM AND BEHAVIOR POLICIES

DISCIPLINE POLICY

The ultimate goal of discipline is to place less emphasis on adult control and greater emphasis on the child's development of inner-discipline. Each class has basic ground rules regarding personal safety, dignity, and use of materials. All the children will be advised of the rules in an appropriate way and will be expected to comply.

Some actions are school problems and are best dealt with at school only. Some actions need parental involvement and will be communicated as such. We will talk with parents about their child's behavior before inappropriate behavior becomes a pattern. All significant incidents will be documented and reported to the parents of all children involved.

Behavior that becomes a continuous or significant disruption to the classroom environment or indicates a lack of parental cooperation will constitute grounds for suspension or dismissal from school.

There will be no corporal punishment used at Weinacker's Montessori School.

GROUND RULES

The following are the Ground Rules for our schools. We suggest that parents discuss these rules with your child and reinforce them at home.

1. Treat everyone with respect.
2. Handle materials with care.
3. Use grace and courtesy.
4. Keep all materials on a mat or table.
5. Carry one item at a time.
6. Use one activity at a time.
7. Return material carefully and promptly to its proper place, when finished using it.
8. Use inside voices (talk softly) in the classroom.
9. Walk slowly and carefully inside.
10. Walk around others' work or work mats.
11. Wait until others are available before addressing them.

Parent Information Handbook, Continued

SCHOOL HOLIDAYS 2009/2010

Labor Day	September 7
Thanksgiving	November 26
Christmas	December 24-25
New Years	January 1
Mardi Gras	February 16
Memorial Day	May 31
Independence Day	July 5

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE

All children must be signed in and out daily inside the building. Please use a full signature, as it is a requirement of the Department of Human Resources. This is for the protection of your child. Neither WMS nor any of its staff will be responsible for children who are not escorted into their respective classrooms by a parent or other responsible adult. Also, neither WMS nor any of its staff will be responsible for children after they are released to a parent or other approved adult.

Please plan to arrive before class begins. Coming in late distracts the attention of the children who have already begun their work. Please have your child in class before 8:30 each morning. If you cannot arrive before 8:30, please plan to bring your child to school after 11:00 when the day's work period is over and your arrival will not interrupt the classroom.

Bring your child to the teacher each morning and leave promptly. This is helpful to the teacher as well as the children. It makes the transition from home much easier and quicker for the child.

You must send written permission for your child to leave school with anyone other than his/her parents. Please ask the person picking up your child to show proper identification. A valid driver's license is preferred.

Please do not block the driveway when dropping off or picking up your child. This will allow the traffic to flow smoothly.

All-day students should be picked up before the close of the school each day. Departure times will be strictly enforced. Early arrivals and late departures will be charged \$1.00 *per minute* per child when the times are not within the posted school operating hours. The time on the school clock will be used.

Please note that extra hours may be arranged for Morning or Extended Day children at a cost of \$5.00 per hour. These hours require advance notice and are subject to staff availability. This "Extra Hour" rate will automatically be assessed when a child comes to or remains at school for more than 15 minutes before and/or after the scheduled time for arrival and departure.

ENROLLMENT FORMS

Prior to the first day of attendance, parents must provide:

- Child's Pre-Admission Record
- Blue Immunization Form
- Food Program Application or Lunch Option Form

Note: The registration form includes a publicity waiver. On occasion, WMS may use pictures of school activities including children and/or parents for communications and marketing.

Parent Information Handbook, Continued

NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION

Children in all classrooms will benefit from a pre-enrollment visit to their classrooms accompanied by their parents. This enables the child to become familiar with the teachers and the environment prior to the first full day of school.

Infant & Toddler Level children are expected to participate in a phasing-in procedure. This process may last for only a few days, or may continue for a week or more depending on the child. Prior to leaving the child for a full day, a parent or trusted caregiver is expected to visit with the child and gradually withdraw as the child becomes secure with the school environment. At the infant level, this process enables the teachers to observe how the child interacts with the parent, and to learn techniques that will help the child during the transition into the classroom. It is very important that both the parent and child feel comfortable with the program. At the Toddler level, the goal is to have the child walk away from the parent rather than vice versa. At the Infant and Toddler levels, the issues of bonding and separation are extremely important, and the way in which these transitions are handled at this time can have profound effects on future separations. It also makes for a happier classroom!

Preschool and Elementary level children are at different cognitive and emotional levels than their younger schoolmates. While a pre-enrollment visit is encouraged, parents are urged to make morning drop-off time as short as possible. Please do not linger in the classroom; this could make the transition more difficult for your child. To prepare for a shortened goodbye it is helpful to tell your child in advance what the procedure will be. This will allow your child to participate in the process with full knowledge and awareness.

All parents are asked to attend school-wide parent-teacher meetings and evaluation conferences that are scheduled in throughout the year. In addition, at the beginning of the school year (in September) a parent orientation meeting is held. These meetings are appropriate times to speak with your teacher about processes and behaviors. To schedule a conference with your teacher between meetings please write a note to your child's teacher.

Newsletters are published monthly. They outline classroom plans and school events. Parents are urged to read these newsletters to be better informed about the school and their child's class.

PROGRESS EVALUATION

Evaluations are provided twice during the year: once in January and again in May. Teacher conference time will be made available so that you may discuss your child's progress when these evaluations are completed.

If you would like to discuss your child's progress with the teacher between evaluations, please schedule an appropriate time with the teacher. The teacher's time in the classroom is best spent with the children. If you have any questions or suggestions and would like to communicate with the teacher, please feel free to send a note.

FIELD TRIPS

A field trip offers an opportunity for children to gain hands-on experience about a subject we may be studying in the classroom. It also presents a new and "inviting" environment in which the children can learn. This is why we go on field trips. It is also why it is necessary that children who attend be able to follow direction and exercise self-control. Consequently, only children who demonstrate appropriate behavior at school will be able to attend field trips. The teachers and administration will determine when a child may or may not participate. **Children not participating in the field trip are required to make alternative arrangements for care on that day.**

Field trips may be taken approximately once a month, beginning in October. These field trips will be to places of specific interest to the child and will complement classroom activities. If you have any ideas or contacts for a field trip, you are invited to share these with your child's teacher or administrator. Parents are needed as volunteers to assist the teachers on field trips. All parents are required to sign a field trip release form for each trip so your child will be able to participate.

Parent Information Handbook, Continued

TOYS AND BOOKS

Children should leave toys at home. They distract the children from their school environment, create conflicts, and may be broken or lost. We encourage the students to bring real items from our natural environment such as: shells, rocks, plants or small animals that can be shared with the class on Show and Tell Day, which is generally on a Friday. The preschool students read and learn about real things. Children are encouraged to bring a book or books about these to share with the class.

CLOTHING

Please send children to school in play clothes and comfortable shoes. These items are less restrictive and more conducive to classroom activities. A child learning to use the rest room needs clothing that can be easily removed by the child. Children are unable to care for themselves when they wear clothes that require adult help.

Children should wear proper shoes to school. Proper shoes include: tennis shoes or athletic shoes and hard sole shoes. Please avoid backless shoes, cowboy boots, or shoes that could cause an accident.

Send a change of clothing to stay at school (two sets for the Toddler Class). This set of clothing must be labeled and should remain at school. Please remember to replace items the following day. Parents will be contacted and expected to bring clothes for children who are inappropriately attired.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

As a Montessori School, we encourage parent participation. **A minimum of three hours of parent involvement is required monthly.** You should sign up at the beginning of each month for volunteer hours with your child's teacher. If you are unable to participate, a close family member may be approved by the director to participate in your place. Otherwise, an alternative payment of \$15.00 is to be made to the school or you can purchase the equivalent in supplies for the classroom.

Areas of participation may include, but are not limited to, the following: art, music, science, photography, woodworking, yard work, physical education, office assistance, library, cooking activities, field trips, and making classroom materials.

TUITION PAYMENTS

Tuition is due on the first day of attendance each week. If payment is delinquent, a late fee of \$5.00 per day will be charged. Please include late fees with the amount of tuition if you are making a late payment.

Tuition Express is the preferred payment method. Tuition will be automatically withdrawn from the account of your choice each week. Please speak to your director about any questions you may have about Tuition Express.

There is a \$35 fee for returned checks. This fee plus tuition must be paid with a cashier's check, money order, or certified check. If a second check is returned, all future tuition payments will be required by one of these methods of payment.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

Occasionally, problems will arise in the child's classroom that a parent will feel a need to address. Should such a problem arise, a meeting should be scheduled with the child's teacher outside of regular classroom hours. If, despite the best efforts of those involved, the problem remains unresolved and no plan has been formulated to address the issue after this meeting, it will be brought to the attention of the administration. A second meeting will be scheduled with the parent, teacher, and administrator to address the issue(s) of concern. Every effort will be made to reach an equitable solution.

WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL

Two weeks written notice is required to withdraw your child from school. Otherwise, you may be charged for full tuition for these weeks.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

NUTRITION

A good, balanced diet can have a marked effect on a child's social and emotional behavior and can affect the child's ability to use the full range of his intellectual capabilities. Together we can work to encourage good eating habits and to educate our children in basic principles of nutrition.

The Tillman's Corner, Daphne and Bay Minette schools provide each child with a nutritious breakfast, lunch, and a morning and afternoon snack. Children at the Hillcrest school are asked to bring lunches from home. The parents provide the morning snack for the class on a rotating basis. Teachers cannot heat lunches from home. This process requires too much time, taking the teacher's time away from the children.

Birthdays: We are happy to help celebrate the children's birthdays. We ask, however, that this be done in a manner that is the least disruptive to the school day. We have a ceremony that has been traditional at the school for the Pre-K-Grade School level children. It involves bringing in photos of their lives which show how much they have grown, and a light ceremony wherein the child circles the globe for each year of age. The toddler age children are also asked to bring in photos, although they forego the light ceremony. We ask that parents bring only healthy treats from home to help celebrate this day. After all, we are actually celebrating the health and growth of the child on this special day, and good nutrition plays a large part in this. Your child's teacher will be happy to offer suggestions or answer any questions you may have.

EMERGENCY POLICY

Fire drills are conducted on a regular basis, during which the school's Escape Plan is followed (this plan and the procedures are clearly posted in each classroom). A log is kept of this activity.

If a medical emergency arises with a child, an attempt will be made to notify the child's parents. If the parents cannot be reached, or if the situation warrants, 911 will be contacted immediately and the child may be transported to the appropriate medical facilities.

To enable the staff to respond quickly and appropriately in the event of an emergency, parents are encouraged to fill out emergency information cards promptly and return them to their child's teacher.

HEALTH *

All children must have an up-to-date immunization record and a pre-admission form on file by the first day of school. Because the health and well being of the children are of great importance to us, please do not bring your child to school when any of the following symptoms have occurred within the previous 12 hours. Any child brought to school with any of these symptoms will be isolated from the other children while parents are being contacted and arrangements made for the child to go home.

- Fever
- Persistent cough
- Active cold
- Red or discharging eyes (conjunctivitis)
- Yellow or green runny nose
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Sore Throat
- Contagious rash

Please be aware that all children will be given a Daily Health Check by teachers. This is a visual check for any strange markings, injuries, or rashes.

**Please refer to the Appendix A for a complete description of WMS' Health Policies.*

Parent Information Handbook, Continued

MEDICATION *

The health and safety of the children are a primary concern of the school. Therefore, only the parent will administer oral medication. No pain relievers or anti-diarrhea medicines, in any form, will be administered at school. If a child needs these medications, it is a sign that the child is not well enough to be at school.

Topical ointments (such as diaper rash creams, sunscreen, insect repellent, etc.) will be accepted and used only when the ointment container has a pharmacy label printed with the child's name, doctor's name, and instructions for the use of the medicine.

EMERGENCY CLOSURE

School closures may be necessary due to hurricanes, tornadoes, snow or sleet, floods and other natural disasters. We will follow public school policy in this regard for the county in which the school is located. Parents may call the school number to hear updated information about school closing and re-opening.

HEALTH POLICIES for Weinacker's Montessori Schools

These updated school health policies are designed to work for the overall health, safety and welfare of the children, staff, and families associated with WMS. In many ways they are more defined but in no way conflict with other guidelines or policies. While helpful, these guidelines cannot replace the teachers' judgment of your child's ability to participate within the routine school environment.

SYMPTOMS OF ILLNESS

Fever*

For purposes of school a fever is:

- ⇒ 100 degrees axillary
- ⇒ 101 degrees orally
- ⇒ 102 degrees rectally

Reasons for taking a temperature – child exhibits outward signs of illness; child is flushed, has chills, or feels warmer than usual; child is irritable or lethargic for a length of time.

A child's temperature must be below 100 degrees rectally without the use of fever-reducing medicine in order to return to the school. Should the child's temperature elevate above 100 degrees rectally on the day of his/her return to the school, he/she will be excluded from school.

**The teacher at the school will determine if a child has a fever and must leave school.*

Vomiting

Child will be sent home if he/she vomits at the school. Child may return to the school the following morning if he has not vomited in the previous eight hours.

If there appears to be blood present in the vomited material, immediate medical attention is necessary.

Cough

Child should be referred for evaluation if he/she has a frequent cough, which prevents eating, sleeping, playing or which is accompanied by other illness symptoms.

Rash

Child with an undiagnosed rash will be sent home for any of the following reasons:

- ✓ Rash is spreading over a period of time.
- ✓ It is widespread.
- ✓ It appears to cause discomfort and/or is accompanied by fever.
- ✓ It persists for more than two days.
- ✓ It contains or consists of blisters.
- ✓ It looks like it is bleeding under the skin.

Child will be excluded from the school until a note is received from his/her health care provider stating the diagnosis or that he/she is not contagious.

A child with any of the following diagnoses may attend school when a note is sent by the health care provider: diaper rash; heat rash; eczema; food allergy; antibiotic rash; contact dermatitis; rash from immunization; viral rash.

Mouth Sores

Mouth sores associated with an inability of the child to control his/her saliva is reason for exclusion from school unless a health care provider states that the child does not have Coxsackie virus. (See Coxsackie's virus under Contagious Illnesses.)

CONTAGIOUS ILLNESSES

Diarrhea*

Child will be sent home for diarrhea that occurs three or more times per day for infants that is not contained by diapers and two or more times per day for toddlers and preschool children that is not contained by diapers or toilet use.

Child may return to the school when diarrhea (as described in #1 above) has not occurred in the previous eight hours. On the day the child returns, if one such stool occurs, he/she will be excluded from the school.

If there appears to be blood present in the stool, immediate medical attention is necessary.

Diarrhea of two weeks duration is an indication of a need for professional medical evaluation.

**All diarrheas are a health concern in the classroom. Rotavirus diarrhea is of special concern – see list of contagious diseases, below.*

Cold

Child may be sent home with any of the following symptoms or complaints:

- ◆ nasal congestion/runny nose
- ◆ chills
- ◆ postnasal drip/sore throat
- ◆ red, watery eyes
- ◆ neck, head, muscle aches
- ◆ sneezing
- ◆ dry cough/hoarseness
- ◆ breathing difficulty
- ◆ listlessness/loss of appetite
- ◆ fever
- ◆ ear drainage
- ◆ nasal discharge that is copious, profuse or yellow/green

Rotavirus

A diagnosis of rotavirus by the child’s health care provider requires exclusion from childcare for five days after the onset of symptoms or a signed release from the child’s physician stating that the child is clear of the virus.

Coxsackie virus

A diagnosis of Coxsackie’s virus by the child’s health care provider requires exclusion from child care for five days after the onset of symptoms or until all lesions are dried or resolved, whichever comes first.

Impetigo

Child may return following twenty-four hours of treatment (may include topical or oral). Draining lesions should be covered with a bandage (i.e., Band-Aid).

Pink Eye (Conjunctivitis)

Child will be sent home if either eye is draining cloudy or colored discharge.

Child may return to the school when:

He/she has been on antibiotics for twenty-four hours, or

He/she is accompanied by a doctor’s note stating that the drainage is caused by a non-contagious condition (such as a blocked tear duct).

If the child returns to the school and symptoms do not improve or should worsen, re-evaluation may be required.

Ringworm/Tinea

Child may return to the school after one treatment. In this event, all affected areas should be covered with a bandage (i.e., Band-Aid) until area is no longer affected.

Roseola

Child may return to the school when fever is gone and child has a doctor’s note stating that he/she has Roseola and is not contagious.

Strep Throat

Child must be on an antibiotic for twenty-four hours before returning to the school.

Thrush

Child may return to the school after one treatment. Children who show no improvement after one week should be referred for re-evaluation.

Chicken Pox

Child may return to the school six days after the onset of the rash or when all lesions are crusted over, whichever comes first.

Lice

Child may return to the school when nits (eggs) can no longer be found on the child by the teachers or staff.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

“Out-of-Sorts” Children

Child will be sent home for a change in behavior that severely limits the attention that other children could and should be receiving, i.e., requires constant holding and attention, inconsolable crying for a long period of time, etc.

Administration of Medicine

- ❖ Fever-reducing and anti-diarrhea medicines will not be administered by parents or teachers while children are in the school.
- ❖ All over-the-counter cold medicines will be administered by parent ONLY.
- ❖ Teachers may administer topical medications with a physician’s order, but may not administer oral prescription drugs.
- ❖ Prescription drugs must remain in their original container and be accompanied by a permission note from the parent.
- ❖ Teachers must administer the medication as stated on the container unless the medication is accompanied by a physician’s note.

Important Note:

As soon as parents are aware of contagious diseases in their children, regardless of the severity or nature of the infection, they are responsible for notifying the school authorities.