

## **PARENT HANDBOOK**

*Please be advised we have opted-out from Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care agreement (CWELCC).*

### **Program Statement**

Our mission is to create an environment for children in which, they are encouraged to explore, create, learn, socialize and celebrate their unique talents. We hold the view that all children are competent, capable, curious and rich in potential.

#### **The Montessori Philosophy**

Underlying Maria Montessori's method was a philosophy based on the dignity and spiritual worth of the child. In order to develop children's unique potential, they must have freedom: freedom to explore, freedom to be creative, freedom to choose. This freedom is achieved through order and self-discipline.

#### **The Montessori Method**

The Montessori approach is a system of education, which encompasses both a philosophy of the child's growth and a rationale for guiding such growth.

The carefully prepared environment guarantees exposure to material and experiences to develop intelligence, as well as physical and psychological abilities. It is designed to take full advantage of the self-motivation process, the unique abilities of children, and to allow them to develop their own capabilities and inner gifts.

#### **Program**

**“ Help me to do it myself!”**

*“An adult admires their environment; they can remember it and think about it; but a child absorbs it. The things he sees are not just remembered; they form part of his soul. He incarnates in himself all in the world about him that his eyes see and his ears hear. In us the same things produce no change, but child is transformed by them.” - “Maria Montessori”*

Our program and learning activities are set up to enhance four developmental areas: physical, social-emotional, cognitive, and creative. The values we respect are freedom, dignity and independence. Children are doing activities for themselves carefully and competently.

Our key concepts are:

- Children of different ages working alongside each other
- The child works at his/her own pace, according to his needs, interests and abilities.
- Non-competitive environment
- Children demonstrating a high level of confidence and independence
- Children socializing easily and spontaneously with each other and the adults in the environment
- Children see teachers as a friends
- A general atmosphere of fun and happiness
- Children build self discipline and good work habits for further school years

Multi-Age Grouping

This grouping adapts the child's biological clock rather than relying on age as the primary indicator for readiness with instruction. Peer cooperation and tutoring increases achievement and self-esteem in both the older and younger child.

Diversity

We wish to expose and educate our children about the exciting diversity that makes up our society. The children will learn to embrace and respect the differences within our population today.

Community

It is the expressed desire of the school to create a sense of community within the children through our works in the classroom, education and field trips.

Non-Competitive Atmosphere

Our goal is to create a stimulating and cooperative environment rather than a competitive environment. It is important for the children to develop a joy and enthusiasm for learning.

Our programs cultivate authentic, caring relationships and connections to create a sense of belonging among and between children, adults, and the world around them.

We empower the child to fully explore **the path of self-discovery and development** in the Montessori environment. The child's **environment is carefully planned and organized** to enhance learning in a focused, uninterrupted manner following Montessori principles.

We **support positive and responsive interactions** among the children, parents, and staff by communicating, promoting and adhering to our values. We **foster children's exploration, encourage interaction and communication** by

designing environments and experiences that spark curiosity, invite investigation, promote cooperative play and provide challenges.

**Field trips to farms, fire stations, local libraries** are part of our program and we also invite **police force** for introduction to our children as well as **soldiers** to provide information on the meaning and history behind Remembrance Day. *(please see Field Trips and Special Events)*

We are aware that there are still children living in an environment that does not provide them health, equality, education and protection. Therefore, **we proudly support Unicef's Global Parent** to help children all over the world and provide them with ongoing medicine, food and shelter, where needed.

With **program to recycle and reduce waste** we strive to make a difference in our community as well as to create an **eco-friendly environment** for our children. Together with simple ecology lessons, we recycle throughout the day and the children both observe and participate in these daily routines. *(please see Community)*

**The engagement and ongoing communication with parents** about the program and their children is fostered by having regular **Parents' Nights** to explain parents the principles of Montessori education and discuss what is happening in the classrooms. We have **Parents-Teacher Meetings** where the parents can meet and discuss their child's experience with the teachers. Parents can also access their child's teacher by chatting briefly at the door during arrival and dismissal.

We frequently send Parents **articles about children** related topics and our Parents have access to our **Library** on our web page in **Parents' Corner** where we post announcements, school policies, articles and other information. *(please see Parents Corner)*

To understand Montessori class better, our parents are welcome to visit class and observe quietly, the caring and loving interaction between child and the teacher.

Our programs nurture children's healthy development and support their growing sense of self. We promote **the health, safety, nutrition** and well-being of the children by providing **healthy meals and snacks** in positive eating environments; provide opportunities for children to practice self-help and self-care skills based on each child's capabilities.

Our teachers recognize and support children's developing self-regulation abilities and design environments that are attuned to children's varied sensitivities.

Children's day includes **indoor and outdoor play time, active play, rest time, quiet time and group discussion time**. We have a large, and well equipped **outdoor playground** providing regular daily opportunities for children to be physically active and explore the world around them in safe and stimulating manner. *(please see School Photogallery)*

Our programs provide environments and experiences to engage children in active, creative, and meaningful exploration, play/work, and inquiry.

We plan for and create **positive learning environments and experiences** in which each child's learning and development is supported by using the international Montessori curriculum and materials that have been proven through research to be effective with children from all socio-economic and cultural groups.

We foster **the children's exploration, play and inquiry** by having fully equipped Montessori play/learn environments. There are activities that assist children to become independent or able to assist others in care of the self, care of the environment and care of others (**grace and courtesy**); activities to explore and refine all the senses as well as discover sequencing and order; activities to increase **vocabulary**, encourage **discussion**, explore sounds, and begin to develop the process of **writing and reading**, and activities to develop number sense, numeracy, understanding of large quantities, **the mathematical operations, geometry** and even rudimentary **algebra concepts** and then lots of activities to introduce all the wonderful things in our world. In addition there are activities for **cutting, colouring, painting, exploring colour, shape and texture, pasting, etc.**

Children understand where everything is kept and they are able to choose and return things independently and with their friends.

We provide child-initiated and adult-supported experiences. All Montessori materials are introduced to a child by a teacher or by another child, and while the Montessori **teachers are always observing children** to see what support each child might need, they are very sensitive to allowing **children their own initiative** as this most often results in children being deeply engaged and peaceful in what they are doing.

Our **program has been enriched with French language, Young Kids Explorer Club, Child yoga, Creative drama and Chicken hatching.** *(please see Curriculum Enrichment)*

As we believe **each child is extraordinary and talented individual**, we completed the program offer with **extra curriculum program as Music lessons, Art/Drawing and Pottery/Clay classes art**). Each child can find his area where his natural gifts and talents can be nurtured and explored. We also strongly encourage **physical fitness and recreation activities**. Therefore, besides the

regular daily playground time and yoga exercise, we offer **Dancing and Swimming courses**. *(please see Extra Curriculum Program)*

Our programs foster **communication and expression** in all forms.

We encourage the **children to interact and communicate** in a positive way and we support their ability to self-regulate by having mixed-age Montessori classroom. This provides many opportunities for interactions with children older and younger than themselves, and with adults.

Teachers continuously seek new ideas to facilitate student's exploration and understanding of the world around them. They provide children the time and materials to **encourage expression** through activities such as **visual and creative arts**. Teachers foster communication by being attuned and responding to child's cues as well as engaging in authentic reciprocal communication with children.

Teachers facilitate communication between students by helping them listen to and express themselves to one another in a variety of situations and activities.

### **Children with special needs**

We are working together in partnership with **The Macaulay Child Development Centre** in order to intensify and **support the successful inclusion of children with special needs**. This can include development delay, social, emotional, behavioral and physical challenges.

In order to provide better support for children with special needs, our **Principal** successfully completed course of **Autism Interventionist**.

In case we have enrolled a child who has any difficulties and special needs, parents may apply for support from the professionals from Community Living Toronto as **child psychologist, speech therapist, behavior specialist** and others. **An individualized support plan** is developed in consultation with a parent of the child and any regulated health professional.

### **Our teachers**

We are proud that our **teachers are enthusiastic and devoted professionals** with outstanding experience in child education. They embrace the Montessori philosophy with a depth of knowledge and a genuine desire **to encourage all children** to develop a positive attitude towards learning and education. All head teachers completed Montessori courses and possess recognized certificates/diplomas. They are **knowledgeable, caring, reflective and resourceful professionals**, often going beyond the required qualification and

continuously expand their professional knowledge. *Please see more details under “**About teachers**”.*

We constantly reviewing and assessing the impact of all of our strategies through regular discussions with teachers, principal/supervisor and parents.

At the beginning of each year, our staff also set goals for themselves in discussion with the Principal and we plan for how to support them in the achievement of those goals. We have two Professional Development days set aside each year to attend Montessori conferences organized by The Canadian Council of Montessori Administrators and The Canadian Association of Montessori Teachers.

We meet as a whole staff and in smaller groups to review our work and plan for improvements. Our Principal walks around the school regularly, observing in classes and then engaging the staff in conversation about their observations. We frequently discuss ongoing issues or topics of particular interest. Staff member are encouraged to visit other schools at least once a year observing in their classes.

We **document and review the impact** of the above strategies on the children and their families through observation, conversation, meetings, surveys, etc. Children progress and development is observed, monitored and recorded in **child progress book** and **progress report card**.

We are very proud that our students are competent, capable of complex thinking, curious, rich in potential and able to build on their strengths and abilities.

## **Program**

### **Toddler Program            18 months to 2.5 years**

Each child is embraced in love and warmth of our staff and the children are treated with care and respect. The classroom functions as a family and the children enjoy working, playing, dining and napping together. Our staff nurtures each child's development through organized monthly themes and playful educational activities.

A "toddler" is a child in transition – a child with particular needs and abilities. The age of children is from approximately 18 months to 2.5 years. The child is still very new to the world of sights, sounds and movements. He is in awe from the wonders of the world and exhilarated from the growing independence, sense of self and freedom. As a child in transition, he has conflicting feelings. His immature senses can be overburdened or overlooked. The transition is quite

different from the preschool child, who is inner-directed and interested in refining his senses and controlling his own movements.

It's a difficult task, since the child has no experience in the values and expectations of those around him. He needs the environment, which focuses and responds to the rapid and conflicting changes of this age. Toddler is experiencing unusual and unique motoric attractions, set in the motion by nature to propel his attention and activity. The purpose of the toddler class environment is to assist the child in this process.

Our Toddler classroom provides a colorful, safe and tender atmosphere for the very young child to grow to his full potential. The room contains child sized furniture and activities that match the children's physical proportions and their stage of development.

The curriculum of our Montessori Toddler classroom, focused on independence and self awareness, includes:

- Practical life exercises
- Language enrichment exercises
- Movement - refinement of gross motor coordination.
- Exercises to refine eye-hand co-ordination and visual discrimination
- Art & Music activities

Toddlers absorb the ideas from the world around them through their sense of sight, sound and touch. They have opportunities to explore and learn about themselves and their environment.

Children choose activities of interest from the prepared indoor and outdoor environments. They go through their work period (e.g. learning to name colors, count objects etc.) and develop fine and gross motor skills. Children can use the materials with the minimum of adult assistance and they are allowed to complete the tasks without interruption or interference. In this way children build up their attention span.

They enjoy circle time where they learn how to listen, follow directions, sing songs, and enjoy story time. Ultimately, the child will find his own voice; define his own world, needs and personal space in harmony with the environment.

Transition from Toddler to Casa classroom is subject of availability of spot/space in Casa classroom.

## **Casa Program                      2.5 to 6 years**

All children will be respected and their individuality recognized, valued and nurtured. They will be given appropriate opportunities to explore, acknowledge and value similarities and differences between themselves and others.

The child will begin with the simplest exercises based on activities, which he or she is drawn to. The materials and equipment used will help to develop concentration, coordination, independence and sense of order.

Classroom is designed to take advantage of a child's sensitive years between the ages of 2.5 to 6, when the child best absorbs information from an enriched environment. Careful preparation of the environment is an essential for the successful development of children.

### Practical life (life skills activities):

Children choose activities from every day living: polishing shoes, using tools (hammer, screw driver etc.) wet/dry pouring, flower arranging, tying laces etc.

These activities help children to be more independent and develop small muscle coordination, excellent preparation for writing skills and improve fine motor skills.

### Sensorial materials:

Children choose from activities that use their five senses, such as color sorting, matching sounds/smells/textures/weight, grading objects by size etc. Materials give the children the ability to increasingly refine each of their senses.

These sensorial exercises are preparation for intellectual and logical mind and also provide a foundation for later math and language work.

### Language:

Some of the activities included in this area are metal insets, object/picture matching, classification of objects (i.e. put all the flying things in one pile), rhyming words, opposites, letter recognition, and letter sound recognition.

One child has mastered alphabet, he begins to compose/build words in steps that enhance oral language and set the foundation for reading and writing.

### Math:

We introduce, through child's senses, quantity and number symbols. We then put quantity and symbol together in a variety of exercises. Using beads and symbols cards, concrete experiences with the mathematic operation (additions etc.).

These operations provide deep understanding of how numbers function.

### Cultural studies:



Children gain an appreciation of biology, geography, science and history. They learn easily not only the simple, but also the technical names of the new things they were introduced to.

#### Art and creativity:

Children are allowed to be individuals, free to express feelings and emotions and free to enjoy worlds of movement, sounds, colors and sensation. They have an opportunity to work creatively using a variety of materials to create an expressive piece of art, including gluing, painting, scissors, tape, stamps, stencils etc.

#### Playground Time

This is when children work on the development of their large muscles, building coordination and strength. This is also a time when they can practice social skills.

#### Music and movements

Children are involved in dancing, singing and playing instruments. Music is a wonderful way for children to be exposed to and practice using language.

### **Outdoor activities**

Children are going outside in the morning and the afternoon every day. Except for following reasons:

- heavy rain
- temperatures drop below minus 15 degrees Celsius in the winter
- smog alarm and/or extremely hot and humid temperatures in summer

We ask you to dress your child appropriately for the weather.

While we have generous playground so that all children can go out, from time to time we have a walk in the neighborhood either holding ropes for our older children or, in the strollers for the younger.

Field trips are organized 2-3 times during the school year. Parents will be notified of any planned field trips and are welcome to join the fun. Child will be able to attend the field trip only if a permission slip from a parent is filled out. We may require parent volunteers to help us supervise.

### **Enrolment Policy**

#### Requirements for admission:

Toddler – the child should be at least 16 months old.

Casa – the child should be at least 2-1/2 (3) years old and preferably toilet trained. The child must be able to communicate the need to go to the toilet.

There is non-refundable enrollment/registration fees. We will advise you, if we are unable to accommodate your request for enrollment. Priority with enrollment will go to siblings.

The Principal reserves the right to adjust enrollment placement at any time.

## **Behaviour Management**

We believe that children and adults flourish best in an ordered environment in which everyone knows what is expected of them and children are free to develop their play and learning. We aim to work towards a situation in which children can develop self-discipline and self-esteem in an atmosphere of mutual respect and encouragement.

### Permitted Practices

Our permitted practices consist from following steps:

1. If child misbehaves (spitting, biting, kicking etc.), the teacher will explain the child that this type of behaviour is inappropriate.
2. If child continues to show inappropriate behaviour then he/she will lose a privilege for a short time and will be re-directed to a different area in the room to calm down.
3. After a short period of time, the teacher will discuss with the child his/her inappropriate activity, in seeing what was wrong and will work towards a better pattern.
4. The child will return to group, play or session.

Staff use always positive approach to eliminate inappropriate behaviour and is expected to use the following practices:

1. Make simple, consistent and reasonable rules, once stated to be followed through. Do not make too many rules.
2. Be patient .
3. Give the child time to comply.
4. Offer the child choices, when child needs to make a decision.
5. Behavior management strategies should respect individual children's level of understanding and maturity.

6. The unacceptability of the behavior will be made clear immediately, but by means of explanations rather than personal blame.
7. It will always be made clear to the child in question that it is the behaviour and not the child that is unwelcome.
8. Staff may implement the various strategies, depending on situations and individual children:
  - to mediate the dispute to help children solve their problem
  - to encourage children to settle their own disputes.
  - to explain why a particular behaviour is inappropriate
  - to offer child the choices of alternative solutions
  - selective ignoring of low level misbehaviour
  - distractions (preventing potential disruptions from escalating)
  - to redirect the child to another activity
  - to remove a child from a critical situation
  - to give a hug / to hold child's hand
  - encourage children to talk about their feelings

Staff will discuss and explain the problem to the child and instruct the child to think about the reason for the discipline method. Used discipline methods should be friendly, fair and flexible. Staff will be aware that some kind of behaviour may arise from a child's special needs.

Teachers, students and volunteers will make themselves aware of, and respect a range of cultural expectations/differences that may lead to different behaviour.

### Prohibited Practices

Teacher, student or volunteer will be immediately suspended if:

1. Deliberately expose the child to a serious danger.
2. Applies corporal punishment of a child.
3. Physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a high chair, car seat, stroller or other device for the purposes of discipline or in lieu of supervision, unless the physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing a child from hurting himself, herself or someone else, and is used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent.
4. Locking the exits of the child care centre premises for the purpose of confining the child, or confining the child in an area or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is

required as part of the licensee's emergency management policies and procedures.

5. Use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or use of derogatory language directed at or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame or frighten the child or undermine his or her self-respect, dignity or self-worth.
6. Depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding; or
7. inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

Staff will not:

- shout at children
- make statements or threats not willing to follow through
- allow child to lash out either physically or emotionally against another child

Exits are not locked nor permitted to be locked for the purpose of confining a child.

### **Supervision of volunteers and students**

Every volunteer or student is supervised by an employee of our centre at all times and is not permitted to be alone with any child who receives child care at the child care centre.

We have developed the written policy and procedures regarding volunteers and students that describes the roles and responsibilities of the supervising employees and the roles and responsibilities of volunteers and students.

### **Serious Occurrence**

A high-level Serious Occurrence Notification Form will be posted at the centre when a serious occurrence has happened. The form will be posted on the parents' information board near the Licensing Summary Chart in the main hallway and will be posted for a minimum of 10 business days.

The Serious Occurrence Notification Form will be retained for at least two years from the date of the occurrence and it will be made available for parents.

## **Emergency Management Policy**

We have developed emergency management policies and procedures based on requirements as set up in Child care and Early Act. If an emergency occurs we will notify the parents by e-mail blast or by phone.

## **Lunch and refreshments**

Please note our centre offers catered food by the operator contracted by the centre.

Catering Service provide nutrition and healthy a.m. and p.m. snacks and lunches for children, which are approved by nutritionist. You have option for vegetarian meal and the catering service does not serve pork. Food is fresh every day with daily norm for fruit, vegetable and milk. All children enjoy homemade muffins and spreads. Catering service made food, which is low in sugar and salt.

However, if you prefer supply your own lunches and snacks, they should include healthy foods that are low in sugar. Please read our Nutrition guidelines carefully. Please label all non-disposable food containers with a name.

Please advise the centre of any food allergies, sensitivities, restrictions or special diet. This must be noted in Emergency Information and Contact Form and in case of life threatening allergies in Extreme Allergy Management Plan.

**We do our best to establish a peanut free zone.** We share space of Toddler classroom with the children during the Sunday mass. However, the classroom is cleaned on Sunday evening and every effort is made to ensure that peanut products do not enter the centre as we may have children in attendance who are severely allergic to peanuts. Please take extra caution when making your child's lunch; be sure to read ingredient lists. Any nut products or nut traces will be removed and sent home with a notice.

In the interest of establishing good eating habits we ask that you do not send food items such as candy, soda pop, bubblegum or chocolate bars

## **Daily Schedule**

7:00 a.m.	-	Early care open
8:00 a.m.	-	Morning program open
9:00 a.m.	-	Morning circle, Montessori morning, snack
11:00 a.m.	-	Outside free play
12:00 a.m.	-	Lunch
12:30 p.m.	-	Sleeping time/Montessori afternoon
2:00 p.m.	-	Montessori afternoon

3:00 p.m.	-	Room clean up
3:30 p.m.	-	Extended care, snack
4:00 p.m.	-	Outside free play
5:30 p.m.	-	Closing activities/stories...../
6:00 p.m.	-	School closing

### **Duration/Statutory Holidays:**

School year begins September, the day after Labour Day and ends in the second half of June. The school is closed during the Winter Break, March break and 1-2 days - professional days. Please note the fees are the same in each month.

Summer Camp is available, based on the parents' interest.

Our school is licensed by Ministry of Education and we provide a licensed 12 months program, including our Summer Camp.

The centre is closed for the following statutory holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Family Day
- Good Friday
- Easter Monday
- Victoria Day
- Canada Day
- Civic Holiday
- Labour Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Eve
- Christmas Day
- Boxing Day
- New Year's Eve
- any other day proclaimed as a National or Provincial Holiday

## **Safe arrival and dismissal policy**

### **Purpose**

This policy and the procedures within help support the safe arrival and dismissal of children receiving care.

This policy will provide staff, students and volunteers with a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities for ensuring the safe arrival and dismissal of children receiving care, including what steps are to be taken when a child does

not arrive at the childcare centre as expected, as well as steps to follow to ensure the safe dismissal of children.

### General

- We will ensure that any child receiving childcare at our centre is **only released** to the child's **parent/guardian** or **an individual** that **the parent/guardian** has provided **written authorization** the childcare centre may release the child to.
- We will **only** dismiss children into the care of their **parent/guardian** or another **authorized individual**.
- We will **not release** any children from care **without supervision**.
- Where a child **does not arrive** in care as expected or is **not picked up** as expected, staff must follow the safe arrival and dismissal procedures set out below.

### Arrival

Children should arrive at the centre no later than 9:00 a.m. in order to participate in all aspects of the program. Please ensure that your child has been acknowledged by a staff member upon arrival.

If your child will be absent from the centre, you must notify the staff as soon as possible. On a daily basis, you are required to sign your child in and out of the Attendance Book.

Parents must accept all responsibility regarding walking and/or transporting their children to and from the centre.

### Accepting a child into care

1. When accepting a child into care at **the time of drop-off**, program staff in the room must:
  - **greet** the parent/guardian and child.
  - **ask** the parent/guardian **how the child's** evening/morning has been and if there are **any changes** to the child's **pick-up procedure** (i.e., someone other than the parent/guardian picking up). Where the parent/guardian has indicated that **someone other** than the child's parent/guardians will be picking up, the staff **ask** the parent/guardian **to provide** authorization for pick-up **in writing** (e.g., note or email).
  - **document** the change in pick-up procedure in **the daily written record**.

- **sign** the child in on the classroom **attendance record**.

### Where a child has not arrived in care as expected

1. Where a child **does not** arrive at the childcare centre and the parent/guardian **has not communicated** a change in drop-off (e.g., sent an e-mail, left a voice message or advised the closing staff at pick-up), the staff in the classroom **must**:
  - inform **the Principal** and **the Principal** or **designated** staff member **must commence** contacting the child's **parent/guardian** no later than **30 minutes** after expected arrival
  - staff **must** try to contact parent/guardian by **phone** and **must leave** a message, if parents is still not reachable.
  - and if **no** response is received within **next 30 minutes**, staff will call **another family member** from **Emergency Contact Form**. If staff is still not successful **to confirm** the absence, staff will call **the police**.
2. Once the **child's absence** has been **confirmed**, program staff **shall document** the child's absence on **the attendance record** and **any additional** information about the child's absence in **the daily written record**.

### Pick-up

Always have contact with a staff member in the classroom or on the playground when picking up your child. After a parent has signed his/her child out and is present in the child environment, it is the responsibility of the parent to take any necessary disciplinary action for his/her own child.

Late Pick-up: The school closes promptly at 6:00 p.m. Parents/guardians who are unable to pick up their child at agreed time **MUST** call the school as soon as possible and inform staff accordingly.

There is a charge for any child picked up **after the scheduled pick-up time** of \$15.00 for the first 15 minutes. It increases \$1.00 per minute afterwards. It is to be paid promptly to the teacher on duty. If this is not paid in cash at the time of pick up, the fee will be doubled when billed, and is due upon receipt. Late pick-up fees apply even if parent calls the school but is late to pick the child.

### Releasing a child from care

1. The staff who is **supervising** the child at the time of **pick-up** shall **only** release the child to the child's **parent/guardian** or **individual** that the



parent/guardian has provided **written authorization** that the childcare may release the child to.

Where the staff **does not** know **the individual** picking up the child (i.e., parent/guardian or authorized individual), staff will

- **confirm** with **another staff member** that **the individual** picking up is the child's **parent/guardian/authorized individual**.
- where the above is **not possible**, staff **will ask** the parent/guardian/authorized individual for **photo identification** and **confirm** the individual's **information** against the parent/guardian/authorized individual's name on **written authorization**.

#### Where a child has not been picked up as expected (before centre closes)

1. Where a parent/guardian has previously **communicated** with the staff a **specific time** or **timeframe** that their child is to be **picked up** from care and the child has **not been** picked up **within 10 minutes** after the timeframe, **the supervising staff** shall contact the parent/guardian by **phone** and **advise** that the child is **still in care** and **has not** been picked up.
  - where the staff is **unable** to reach **the parent/guardian**, staff **must** call **again** and leave a **voice message** for the parent/guardian to contact the centre.
  - where **the individual** picking up the child is **an authorized individual** and their contact information is **available**, the staff shall **proceed** with contacting **the individual** to **confirm** pick-up as per the parent/guardian's **instructions** or leave a **voice message** to contact the centre.
  - where the staff has **not heard** back from **the parent/guardian** or **authorized individual** who was to pick up the child the staff shall **wait** until centre is **closed** and then refer to **procedures** under "Where a child has not been picked up and program is closed"

#### Where a child has not been picked up and the centre is closed

1. Where a **parent/guardian** or **authorized individual** who was supposed to pick up a child from care **has not arrived** staff shall **ensure** that the child is given a **snack** and **activity**, while they await their pick-up.
2. Staff proceed **with calling** the parent/guardian **to advise** that the child is still in care and **inquire** their pick-up time. In the case where the person picking up the child is **an authorized individual** the staff shall contact **the parent/guardian first** and then **proceed** to contact **the authorized individual** responsible for pick-up if unable to reach the parent/guardian.

3. If the staff is unable to reach **the parent/guardian** or **authorized individual** who was responsible for picking up the child, the staff shall contact **another** authorized individual from **Emergency Contact Form**.
4. Where the staff is **unable** to reach **the parent/guardian/authorized individual** or any other authorized individuals from **Emergency Contact Form** by **6:30 p.m.** the staff shall **proceed** with contacting the local **Children's Aid Society (CAS)** at **416 924 4646**. Staff shall **follow** the **CAS's direction** with respect to next steps.

### **Parent Involvement**

We highly encourage parent involvement and support for the children. We will ensure that all parents have opportunities to contribute from their own skills, knowledge and interests to the activities of the centre.

Workshops will be scheduled throughout the year to share information about our centre, the Montessori methods and materials as well as child development and family life. Your attendance is highly encouraged. These workshops are available to our parents free of charge and are usually one and a half hours long.

### **Payment Policies, Terms & Conditions and Prices**

Tuition payments are due in full on the first day of every month for the current month. We will ask you to issue 10 postdated checks, if you do not decide for any of alternative payment options.

A \$20.00 non-sufficient fund fee per cheque will be assessed to any returned cheques. Two or more returned cheques will result in acceptance of cash only payments.

There will be a \$20.00 late fee assessed to payments made after the fifth day of the month. If you are having difficulty meeting the scheduled payments, please contact the Principal so that an alternate payment plan can be approved.

If tuition payment is not received before the tenth day of the current month, and no prior alternative arrangements have been made with the Principal, the child will not be entitled to attend school until outstanding balances are paid in full.

Please find enclosed our present pricelists.

Fees and/or fee policies are subject to revision and changes without notice.

## **Discounts**

There is a 10% sibling discount policy. The 10% discount will be taken off the tuition of the second child.

Parents electing to pay for the full 5 or 10 months in advance will receive a respective discount as indicated at enclosed Tuition Fees Form.

If you refer a new child, who stays with the centre for at least 2 months, we will be happy to give you one time discount of 100 CAD from your next month tuition.

## **Withdrawal/Refund Policy**

Children are admitted for the duration of the academic school year. Any withdrawals from the school must be requested in writing 30 days in advance of the final date the child/children will attend. If withdrawal is approved, school fees are to be paid for 30 days after the initial request. **Deposit**, is applied to June payment and **is not returned**, if **child does not start** or **does not finish** the school year. **Deposit is not refundable**.

A refund for the pro-rated unused portion of the prepaid tuition will be refunded providing the required request process has been followed and with the Principal's approval of withdrawal. The discounted rate will be cancelled and the rate will be recalculated for any refund as regular rate. **The deposit** will be applied and **not be returned**, if **child does not start** or **does not finish** the school year.

The Principal must evaluate any exceptions on an individual basis. These same policies apply for summer/winter camp enrollments.

## **Discharge Policy**

We reserve the right to cancel the enrollment of a child for the following reasons:

- Non-payment or excessive late payments and/or fees
- Not observing the policies and rules of the school
- Physical and/or verbal abuse of staff or children by parent or child
- If child is consistently disruptive and interfering with the learning process of peers in his/her class
- The school is unable to meet the special needs of the child
- If our school program cannot meet the needs of the parent/guardian

In case of consistently disruptive child, the school will intensify the approach in order to analyze the possible reasons and background for such behavior.

If there are further concerns regarding the child's continued participation in the classroom, the Principal will contact parents for a conference, where the revised approach as well as the possible involvement of related specialist will be discussed.

If there is no improvement of situation, the Principal will send written notice to parents/guardians, stating the last day of enrolment, which will be 2 weeks from the date of written notice.

It is left to the sole discretion of the Principal to continue the enrollment of the child under challenging circumstances.

### **Wait List Policy**

We do not have/ keep a waitlist.

### **General permission**

From time to time the children may be photographed or videotaped for some use related to centre, for example publicity or to be shown at parents' meetings. In this case, a consent/permission form will be sent to parents. Parents should feel free to refuse permission if they, or their child, feel uncomfortable about the activity involved.

### **Special needs**

Some special health care needs children require additional support. Therefore, if we have concerns that a child's developmental needs are not being appropriately met in our school, we will ask you to consult the special needs of your child with appropriate health care professional.

The purpose of this consultation is to review the child's needs and ensure that child can be provided with the required support and assistance. The final decision to accept or withdraw child will be made by the Principal.

Please feel free to ask the Principal for any of below policies:

- Behaviour Management Policy
- Child Abuse Reporting Policy
- Sanitary Policies and Procedures
- Serious Occurrence Policy
- Playground Safety Policy

## **Parents Issues and Concerns Policy**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to provide a transparent process for parents/guardians and staff to use when parents/guardians bring forward issues/concerns.

### **General**

Parents/guardians are encouraged to take an active role in our child care centre and regularly discuss what their child is experiencing with our program. As supported by our program statement, we support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents/guardians and staff, and foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents/guardians about the program and their children. Our staff are available to engage parents/guardians in conversations and support a positive experience during every interaction.

All issues and concerns raised by parents/guardians are taken seriously by the Principal and will be addressed. Every effort will be made to address and resolve issues and concerns to the satisfaction of all parties and as quickly as possible.

Issues/concerns may be brought forward verbally or in writing. Responses and outcomes will be provided verbally, or in writing upon request. The level of detail provided to the parent/guardian will respect and maintain the confidentiality of all parties involved.

An initial response to an issue or concern will be provided to parents/guardians within 2 business day(s). The person who raised the issue/concern will be kept informed throughout the resolution process.

Investigations of issues and concerns will be fair, impartial and respectful to parties involved.

### **Confidentiality**

Every issue and concern will be treated confidentially and every effort will be made to protect the privacy of parents/guardians, children, staff, students and volunteers, except when information must be disclosed for legal reasons (e.g. to the Ministry of Education, College of Early Childhood Educators, law enforcement authorities or a Children's Aid Society).

### **Conduct**

Our centre maintains high standards for positive interaction, communication and role-modeling for children. Harassment and discrimination will therefore not be tolerated from any party.

If at any point a parent/guardian, provider or staff feels uncomfortable, threatened, abused or belittled, they may immediately end the conversation and report the situation to the Principal and/or Board of Directors at [mail@casaverams.com](mailto:mail@casaverams.com).

### **Concerns about the Suspected Abuse or Neglect of a child**

Everyone, including members of the public and professionals who work closely with children, is required by law to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect.

If a parent/guardian expresses concerns that a child is being abused or neglected, the parent will be advised to contact the [local Children's Aid Society](#) (CAS) directly.

Persons who become aware of such concerns are also responsible for reporting this information to CAS as per the "Duty to Report" requirement under the *Child and Family Services Act*.

### **Escalation of Issues or Concerns**

Where parents/guardians are not satisfied with the response or outcome of an issue or concern, they may escalate the issue or concern verbally or in writing to the Principal or Board of Directors at [mail@casaverams.com](mailto:mail@casaverams.com).

Issues/concerns related to compliance with requirements set out in the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014* and Ontario Regulation 137/15 should be reported to the Ministry of Education's Child Care Quality Assurance and Licensing Branch.

Issues/concerns may also be reported to other relevant regulatory bodies (e.g. local public health department, police department, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Labour, fire department, College of Early Childhood Educators, Ontario College of Teachers, College of Social Workers etc.) where appropriate.

## Procedures

Nature of Issue or Concern	Steps for Parent and/or Guardian to Report Issue/Concern:	Steps for Staff and/or Principal in responding to issue/concern:
<p><b>Program Room Related</b></p> <p>E.g: schedule, sleep arrangements, toilet training, indoor/outdoor program activities, feeding arrangements, etc.</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to the classroom <b>staff directly</b> or to <b>the Principal</b></p>	<p>Address the issue/concern <b>at the time it is raised</b> or arrange for a meeting with the parent/guardian <b>within 2 business days</b>.</p> <p>If the responses and outcomes <b>are requested</b> to be provided <b>in writing</b> than the documentation should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>the date and time</b> the issue/concern was received;</li> <li>- <b>the name of the person</b> who <b>received</b> the issue/concern;</li> <li>- <b>the name of the person reporting</b> the issue/concern;</li> <li>- <b>the details of the issue/concern</b>; and</li> <li>- <b>any steps taken to resolve</b> the issue/concern and/or information given to the parent/guardian regarding next steps or referral.</li> </ul>
<p><b>General, Centre or Operations Related</b></p> <p>E.g: child care fees, hours of operation, staffing, menus, etc.</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to <b>the Principal</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>the date and time</b> the issue/concern was received;</li> <li>- <b>the name of the person</b> who <b>received</b> the issue/concern;</li> <li>- <b>the name of the person reporting</b> the issue/concern;</li> <li>- <b>the details of the issue/concern</b>; and</li> <li>- <b>any steps taken to resolve</b> the issue/concern and/or information given to the parent/guardian regarding next steps or referral.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Staff, Principal and/or Licensee Related</b></p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to the <b>individual directly</b> or <b>the Principal</b></p> <p>All issues or concerns about the conduct of staff etc. that puts a child's health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the Principal as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>the date and time</b> the issue/concern was received;</li> <li>- <b>the name of the person</b> who <b>received</b> the issue/concern;</li> <li>- <b>the name of the person reporting</b> the issue/concern;</li> <li>- <b>the details of the issue/concern</b>; and</li> <li>- <b>any steps taken to resolve</b> the issue/concern and/or information given to the parent/guardian regarding next steps or referral.</li> </ul> <p>Provide contact information for the appropriate person if</p>

Nature of Issue or Concern	Steps for Parent and/or Guardian to Report Issue/Concern:	Steps for Staff and/or Principal in responding to issue/concern:
<p><b>Student / Volunteer Related</b></p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to the <b>staff</b> responsible for <b>supervising</b> the volunteer or student or <b>the Principal</b>.</p> <p>All issues or concerns about the conduct of students and/or volunteers that puts a child's health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the Principal as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.</p>	<p>the person being notified is unable to address the matter.</p> <p>Ensure the investigation of the issue/concern is initiated by the appropriate party <b>within 2 business days</b> or as soon as reasonably possible thereafter.</p> <p>Provide a <b>resolution or outcome</b> to the parent(s)/guardian(s) who raised the issue/concern.</p>

The school policies are also available on our internet site at [www.casaverams.com](http://www.casaverams.com) .

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.



**RETURN SLIP**

I have received a copy and completely read the entire Parent Handbook. I understand the policies and information presented here and I agree to fully comply with the same.

We, as Parents/Guardians of a child registered at your school, understand and appreciate that when the child is in your care and responsibility (that is, from entering the school till leaving the school), a child may be prone to accidents or altercations and interplay with other children, which may lead to occasional accidents and cause the child harm or injury.

Therefore, we release you from any liability in connection therewith, indemnify and hold harmless Casa Vera Montessori School Inc., its directors, principal and employees from any and all claims, damages and/or liabilities relating to, arising or resulting from injury to our child.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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Parent/Guardian

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Parent/Guardian

Child's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_