



*Maria Montessori*  
PRESCHOOL & ELEMENTARY  
FAMILY HANDBOOK

# Maria Montessori School

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# Maria Montessori School

## Section 1: Introduction

### **Welcome**

Welcome to the Maria Montessori School (MMS) community. The MMS staff and Board of Governors look forward to an exciting year working with you and your child to facilitate a quality Montessori educational experience!

We value your input and participation in all the school's events and endeavors. If you have any questions upon reading this Family Handbook, please do not hesitate to contact the school at [mms.admin@montessorisaskatoon.ca](mailto:mms.admin@montessorisaskatoon.ca).

### **The Montessori Philosophy**

Dr. Maria Montessori (1870-1952) became the first woman to be granted a medical degree from the University of Rome. Her interest in education came from working with underprivileged children in Rome. Through experimentation and close observation of the children's responses, she began teaching them through the use of a variety of manipulative equipment. From her experiences and observations, Montessori concluded that given a carefully prepared environment, unique teaching materials and, a director/ess to guide the child, children become self-directed and independent in their lifelong quest for knowledge and learning. The prepared environment is the cornerstone of the Montessori method. It invites exploration and leads the child naturally from the concrete to the abstract. The classroom director/ess is the link between the child and the environment. The Montessori motto is "help me to do it by myself".

### **Montessori in the Home**

It is inherent in the Montessori philosophy of education that there is a continuum between the home and the school. For a child to enjoy the full benefits of a Montessori education, the home environment should incorporate the Montessori philosophy. Maria Montessori School will assist parents in self-education. The director/ess can answer your questions or refer you to resources that are helpful. The school also has parent education evenings during the year. These evenings are designed to give interested parents a chance to learn more about Montessori education and generally focus on one aspect of the philosophy or the materials.

### **History and Mission Statement**

Maria Montessori School was created in 1997 by a group of parents dedicated to the idea of Montessori education into the elementary years. Originally there were two groups of parents: one group started the Elementary Program, and the other group started the Casa program (Early Childhood Education). These two groups worked together to create a school where Montessori Education was available from the youngest pre-school years through the elementary years, including Grade Eight.

Five years later, MMS staff and Board began having some concrete strategic planning discussions for Maria Montessori School. A facilitated retreat was held where staff and board members had an opportunity to think about what the school was all about and what future directions were possible. After many discussions and meetings, the school's mission statement was born.

In June of 2016, the MMS Elementary Program (grades 1 to 8) became part of the Saskatoon Public School Division. The MMS toddler and Casa programs remain private and tuition-based.

# Maria Montessori School

## Section 2: Organizational Structure

Maria Montessori School is registered as a non-profit corporation and as a charitable organization.

### **The Board of Governors**

Maria Montessori School, like all non-profit corporations is required to have a Board of Governors. This Board has the legal and financial responsibility for the operation of the school. The Board is responsible for long range goal setting and planning, financial integrity, communication with stakeholders, policy review and development, Board education and development, evaluation of Board member performance, nominations and fundraising.

### **Fundraising & Donations**

Families may receive information throughout the year about fundraising activities. From time to time families also donate cash to Maria Montessori School, for which a tax receipt may be issued.

### **Volunteer Program**

Volunteer activities enrich and complement the Montessori experience with family and community support.

Each family is required to complete yearly volunteer hours or pay a charitable donation volunteer fee. One post-dated cheque from each family is required at time of enrolment. More information is available on our website [here](#).

Benefits of Volunteer Program include:

- Involvement in MMS Community
- Ability to offer great programs and events
- Get to know other MMS families
- Become familiar with entire school (not just your children's program)
- 'More hands make easy work'

Our school relies on the generous support of our parent volunteers. The extent to which you are involved is up to you, but we do encourage your interest and assistance.

### **Criminal Record Check**

Note that volunteers are required to provide a Criminal Record Check including the vulnerable Sector Search. This can be obtained from the Saskatoon Police Service at no charge. Please visit the MMS office for a volunteer Criminal Record Check request letter.

*In order to carry a positive action, we must develop here a positive vision. - Dalai Lama*

# Maria Montessori School

## Section 3: Application and Registration

### **Application & Registration Process**

A child is fully registered only when the online enrolment is approved and completed and all fees are paid.

### **Assessment Period**

During the first few weeks of school, an ongoing assessment of the students takes place. During this time, the classroom director/ess and the parents have an opportunity to assess the child and his/her readiness for the program. If at any time during this period the director/ess feels that your child is not yet ready for the program in which he or she is registered, the director/ess will discuss alternatives with you. The child may return at a later date during the school year as determined by the director/ess and the family, and his or her name will be kept at the top of the wait list for placement in the program.

### **Re-enrollment**

Re-enrollment for current students begins in January of each year. Enrolment for new students begins in February of each year.

*\*In March of each year, the school's budget and classrooms are set based on these enrolment numbers.*

# Maria Montessori School

## Section 4: The Learning Environment

### The Montessori Classroom

Since Montessori is a word in the public domain, it is possible for any individual or institution to claim to be Montessori. An authentic Montessori classroom must have the following basic characteristics at all levels:

Add the Montessori vocabulary here to teach families

1. A classroom atmosphere which encourages social interaction for cooperative learning, peer teaching, and emotional development.
2. **Work-cycle:** A schedule which allows large blocks of time to problem-solve, to see connections in knowledge and to create new ideas.
3. **Prepared Environment:** A diverse set of Montessori materials, activities, and experiences which are designed to foster physical, intellectual, creative, social, and personal independence.
4. **Community:** A partnership established with the family. The family is considered an integral part of the individual's total development.
5. Teachers educated in the Montessori philosophy and the methodology for the age level they are teaching, who have the ability and dedication to put the key concepts into practice.
6. **Mentor/Mentorship:** A multi-aged, multi-graded heterogeneous grouping of students.

### Stepping Stones - Our Toddler Program

The Maria Montessori School Stepping Stones program has been carefully designed in response to a need that has been identified in our school community. The program is available to children beginning at age 2 who are not yet registered in the Casa program. It also serves as an extended day program for children registered in our ½ day Casa program and are not yet ready to attend the full day.

Transitions to childcare facilities during the day can be very difficult for young children who require consistency and order in their day. The MMS Stepping Stones Program is designed to eliminate unnecessary transitions, allowing the children to remain in the familiar and nurturing setting for the full day. The Montessori environment offers an ideal childcare venue, providing a range of activities that address the children's developmental, physical and emotional needs without placing the demands of a full day Casa program on the younger child.

The program aims to provide a safe and nurturing environment where children can learn through a combination of open-ended and structured learning activities. With the guidance of our program director/ess, children are encouraged to discover their interests, actively explore and develop emotionally, intellectually, and socially. Our structured and relaxed environment contains developmentally appropriate activities that encourage language development, social awareness, problem-solving and self-help skills.

# Maria Montessori School

The program is based on the Montessori philosophy and principals which encourages the children to work towards independence and self-motivation. It also teaches appreciation and responsibility for the environment and a sense of cooperation and respect.

## **Casa – Our Early Childhood Program (Preschool/Pre-Kindergarten/Kindergarten)**

The Casa program is for children 2 years 8 months to 5 years old. The multi-age grouping allows students to move from being assisted and mentored by older children in their first years, to being the leaders in their third and full day year. The classroom is divided into four main areas: practical life, sensorial, language and mathematics, grace and courtesy, the cultural subjects of art, science, geography and biology are offered. Physical education and movement are important to increasing the child's strength, flexibility and coordination. Dr. Montessori observed that the child is highly motivated to learn certain things at specific times; these periods of great receptivity are identified as sensitive periods. These are periods of special sensitivity to order, the acquisition of language, mathematical concepts, and many others.

The Montessori prepared environment is stimulating and carefully planned to meet the individual needs of the child. The child will develop natural tendencies toward self-motivation, control, building relationships with others, mastery of their environment, and independence. This approach fosters feelings of curiosity, self-esteem, competence, joy, and accomplishment.

## **The Classroom Director\ess**

In the prepared Montessori environment, a child is permitted to choose and work freely with self-correcting materials. The adult in the classroom is a specially trained Montessori director/ess. The director/ess's role in the classroom is foremost to prepare and maintain the environment for the children, adapting it to their ever-changing needs as required. The classroom director/ess continually observes the children in their environment so that she/he can best accommodate their needs. The role of the director/ess is not that of a traditional teacher. They are not there to merely teach. Instead, the director/ess is the link between the environment and the child. Once a child is introduced to the materials through a **one-to-one presentation** for each exercise, the child is then free to use their own innate potential to educate themselves using the senses they were born with. This frees the child to learn in a non-graded, non-competitive environment at their own pace without negative or judgmental pressure. The child learns for the sheer joy of it and not just to please a teacher or for external rewards.

*We cannot always build the future for our youth, but we can build our youth for the future.*

~Franklin Delano Roosevelt

# Maria Montessori School

## Section 5: Programs

### **Stepping Stones - Toddler**

Maria Montessori School offers morning, afternoon and full day programs for children aged 2 to 3 years old. Children practice and acquire skills which ready them for the Casa program.

Children in this program are not required to toilet independently but should be in the process of potty-training. The staff will work with families to achieve independence in this self-care skill.

This program also allows for naps should they be required.

### **Casa – Preschool, Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten**

Maria Montessori School offers morning, afternoon and full day programs. Children 2 years 8 months to 4 years old may attend both the AM and PM session when they are ready. Readiness for a full day of attendance is a joint decision made by the director/ess and the parents. Children should be beyond needing a naptime in order to participate fully.

Children who are 5 years old (Kindergarten age) attend the Casa program for the full day. This is consistent with Montessori philosophy that allows for these children to have a leadership year in the classroom.

Full day children participate in an enriched cultural and academic period during the afternoon. They take on greater responsibility for their classroom and their classmates.

### **Before and After School Care**

Before and After School Care programs are available on a drop-in or prepaid monthly basis. A Registration Form must be completed and submitted to the MMS office prior to accessing these programs.

Before school care is available from 7:30 to 8:45 am and after school care runs from 3:30 to 5:30 pm (3:00 to 5:30 pm on Thursdays).

If you would like to use the after school care program on a drop-in basis, we ask that you let your child's director/ess know in the morning on the days that you will require after care so that we can arrange for extra staff if numbers warrant. A registration form must be one file to use the drop-in option.

### **\*Important note about the after school extended care program**

The after school extended care program **ends at 5:30 pm**, at which time Maria Montessori School closes for the day. It is essential that all children be picked up by this time.

**A substantial late fee will be charged should any child not be picked up by 5:30 pm.**

# Maria Montessori School

## Section 6: School Routines

### School Hours

Casa & Stepping Stones AM	9:00 am to 11:30 am
Casa & Stepping Stones PM	1:00 pm to 3:30 pm <i>(3:00 pm on Thursdays)</i>
Casa and Stepping Stones full day	9:00 am to 3:30 pm
Kindergarten	9:00 am to 3:30 pm
Recess and Lunch	11:30 am to 12:45 pm
Before school care	7:30 am to 8:45 am
After school care	3:30 pm to 5:30 pm <i>(3:00 pm to 5:30 pm on Thursdays)</i>

### Early Dismissal

Students are dismissed at 3:00 pm each Thursday that school is in session. All students who remain at school after 3:00 pm will go to the after school care program and regular charges will apply. After care will be available until 5:30 pm as usual on all early dismissal days.

### Office Hours

The office is open from 8:30 to 12:00 am and from 1:00 to 4:00 pm daily.

### Safe Arrival & Pickup, Late Arrivals and Absences

It is important that you escort your child to the classroom door or to before care upon arrival. Children shall not be dropped off at the outer doors or in the hallway. Similarly, please meet your child at the classroom door or at after care at departure.

Being on time needs to be a priority for all families at MMS. A student entering the classroom once class is in session is disruptive to the students who have arrived on time.

If your child does arrive late to class, please have your child enter the classroom quietly and the director/ess and assistant will greet your child at the next available moment.

To encourage student independence, we ask that parents say goodbye at the classroom door and allow the students to get ready for their school day on their own. Similarly, please come to the classroom door when you arrive and the director/ess will then dismiss your child. Because other students are distracted from finishing their work by parents coming into the room, please wait in the hallway for your child to be dismissed.

If someone other than a family member or a regular caregiver is picking up your child, please let the director/ess know.

**It is important that students be picked up on time.** Children can become anxious waiting to be picked up, and the classroom director/ess needs after school time for cleanup and preparations for the next day.

# Maria Montessori School

## **Parking**

Street parking is available during drop off and pick up times. Please note the parking restrictions as the area surrounding the school is a residential permitted parking area. DO NOT park in the north or south parking lots as these are paid reserved parking spaces for employees. DO NOT park in front of walk ways or fire hydrants or in areas designated as bus parking. City of Saskatoon Parking Enforcement is in the area often and will not hesitate to ticket vehicles if parked inappropriately.

## **Attendance**

For safety reasons, please advise your child's director/ess by email if your child will be late or absent. Your child's director/ess will provide you with the classroom email address.

## **Clothing**

All students need indoor running shoes that do not mark the floors. Casa students need to have a change of clothes at the school in case of accidents. Please be sure that your child's name is clearly marked on the inside of all items.

Please send your child with weather appropriate clothing, as all students go outside on a daily basis unless the weather is very wet or cold. This includes hats and sunscreen for hot weather; boots, snow pants, mitts, hats, and jackets for cold weather; and raincoats and boots for wet weather. Inadequate outdoor clothing creates discomfort for both the child and the supervisor. Students are expected to be outdoors at recess.

## **Lunch, Snacks & Recess**

All students may take a break to have a snack, which students bring from home daily. **Please note that foods containing peanuts or nut products are not allowed due to severe allergies.**

We encourage parents to send raw fruits and vegetables as snacks. It is also a good idea to send some nutritious extras for those students who stay for after school care.

Students are dismissed for lunch at 11:30 am and eat lunch in their own classrooms with a designated supervisor. Each student is responsible for collecting his/her own garbage and recyclables and washing his/her area of the table at which he/she ate.

A supervised recess period from 12:15 to 12:45 pm allows the children to have free playtime outside of the school in the designated play area, or in a designated inside area during inclement weather. Unless it is very cold (-25 Celsius with the wind chill) or rainy, the children will go outside. Please ensure your child wears weather appropriate clothing each day.

Students are expected to use grace, courtesy and respect throughout the day, including the lunch hour.

Involve your child in the snack and lunch preparation process as they eat better when they have been included in its preparation! Please help your child pack a well-balanced nutritional snack and meal, excluding candy or other highly processed or sugared foods, making sure to utilize reusable and recyclable containers. Your child's name should be clearly marked on lunch boxes and containers.

*In order to carry a positive action we must develop here a positive vision. - Dalai Lama*

# Maria Montessori School

## **Field Trips**

During the course of the year, the students take field trips to enrich their learning experiences. All field trips will be announced in advance and a permission form will be posted outside your child's classroom one week prior to the event. This form must be signed in order for your child to participate. The classroom director/ess may ask for parental assistance with driving and supervision of field trips.

## **Birthday Celebrations**

Birthdays may be celebrated in the classrooms in a birthday ellipse with the family of the birthday child present. Please see your child's director/ess for specific procedures in his/her classroom.

## **Scholastic Books**

Each month, Scholastic flyers will be available from which families may purchase books. With every book purchased, we earn valuable coupons, which we can use to purchase other books or school materials for our classrooms. Orders should be returned to your child's director/ess by the due date indicated on the flyers.

# Maria Montessori School

## Section 7: Communication

### Messages and Phone Calls

General Inquiries	Phone	If office personnel are unavailable, please leave a message and your call will be returned.
	306-955-3852	
Attendance	Email	Please email your child's director/ess if your child will be late or absent.

### Parent/School Communication

To have effective communication between the parent and the school, it is necessary to have both informal daily communication and regular conferences and reports. The MMS administrative staff invites your questions or comments. If you have a quick question, the administrative staff is available to speak with you on short notice. If you need more time, please make an appointment in person or via email.

### Parent/Teacher Communication

Communication between director/ess and parents is essential. Because we are working as a community to create a secure, nurturing environment for the child's development, we have much to offer one another through frequent and honest communication. Methods of communication include written notes via the classroom communication book, email and phone calls.

Your job as a parent is to be an advocate for your child. Therefore, it is important to address any concerns you may have to the teacher. Be assured that your concerns will be honored. It is inevitable that misunderstandings, mistakes, and conflicts will occur from time to time. When this happens, let us know as soon as possible. Your suggestions and input are of great value to us.

### Dealing with Change

If your child has characteristics that you feel may affect their school experience, please let your child's director/ess know. The director/ess will keep you informed of any changes in the school environment that may affect your child. If a significant change occurs in your home, please inform the school. All information will remain confidential.

### Emergency and Other Contact Information

Families are required to provide an alternate/emergency contact. This is a policy essential to maintaining a safe school for your child.

Please keep all contact information up to date. This includes home numbers, work numbers and cell numbers for you and your secondary contacts, the number for your child's physician, and the names of those persons to whom your child may be released are critical. This information must be kept up to date as your child will not be released to anyone other than those persons as stated by you in writing.

***Please ensure that you have an alternate child care plan in place in the event of illness or an emergency school closure.***

# Maria Montessori School

## **School Monitor, Notice Boards & Parent Portal**

MMS Staff make every effort to keep parents informed of activities and events taking place at the school.

The Parent Portal located on our website is an important source of information and will list community events, school closure dates, etc. We will make every effort to keep this page updated. Families will also receive informational emails and monthly newsletters.

The TV monitor in the lower level hallway and the notice boards outside the each of the classrooms are also important sources of information for things that are happening in the school each day.

Please remember to check these methods of communication daily and ensure the school has a current email address for your family.

# Maria Montessori School

## Section 8: General Policies and Procedures

### **Discipline and Behaviour Expectations**

The Maria Montessori School's discipline policy is based upon respect and responsibility for actions. It is in place to assist in making the school a safe and productive environment. The policy is based upon communication, issue management, and problem solving.

If a problem arises among more than one student, all those involved will have an opportunity to relate what happened and discuss the situation.

When a child engages in individual behaviour that is inappropriate, natural and logical consequences are used to assist the child in his/her learning regarding what is acceptable behaviour in the school community and in the larger community. Positive alternatives may be suggested to learn strategies for peaceful conflict resolution.

To further promote a peaceful school environment, we focus on the three R's: Relationships, Respect and Responsibility. We have made a school noon hour plan that reflects the three R's and if a child receives three warnings in one week regarding disrespect, parents will be contacted and for one lunch period, other lunch arrangements must be made.

There is zero tolerance for physical aggression (fighting). If and when a child chooses to hit and/or fight, the child will have an immediate in-school suspension and parents will be contacted either at the end of the day or first thing in the morning before the child can go back into the classroom the following day. If the physical aggression continues, parents will be contacted and further planning will follow. Each will be reviewed and evaluated on an individual basis

### **Student Behaviour Policy and Procedures**

#### **Policy**

1. Students are expected to treat themselves, others, and their environment with respect. In turn, students should themselves expect to be treated with respect by others at all times.
2. Behavioural issues, whether dealing with disrespectful behaviour or other, shall be dealt with in a timely, confidential, and professional manner.
3. If students demonstrate unacceptable behaviour in the classroom, they shall be disciplined in a positive manner that is appropriate to their ages and actions. This is done in order to promote self-discipline, ensure their safety, respect the rights of others, and to allow the student to maintain their dignity and self-respect.
4. The school principal must be advised in a timely manner as dictated by the circumstance, of any student whose behaviour (i) endangers the safety of the other students, (ii) displays persistent resistance to authority, or (iii) does not respond to efforts to modify his or her behaviour.

# Maria Montessori School

## Procedures

1. When a student exhibits undesirable classroom behaviour, the Director/ess should first attempt to correct the behaviour with positive discipline. If the behaviour persists, the Director/ess must notify the student's parents of significant or persistent behavioural issues at school in a timely manner. The period of time before contacting the parents should be dictated by the severity of the behaviour and its effect on the other students and the classroom environment. Ideally, this contact should take place between a few days and a week of when the behaviour was first exhibited. A meeting should be arranged between the Director/ess and the parents to develop a plan for resolving the problem at school, with the aim of helping the student. Through these parent-teacher conferences, goals will be mutually agreed upon. The Director/ess will keep the parents informed frequently on a regular basis of the student's progress in achieving the goals.
2. If the Director/ess and the parents experience difficulties in mutually agreeing upon goals for the student, they may then call upon the Head of School I at any time to act as a facilitator. The Head of School shall meet with the parents and the Director/ess to assist them in developing a plan for the student with regard to his/her behaviour.
3. If the meetings are still unproductive at this level, the Chairperson of the Maria Montessori School Board of Governors shall be informed. At the discretion of the Chairperson, different options may be suggested, such as meeting with the parents, the Director/ess and the Head of School.
4. If the parents wish to write a letter regarding their concerns and possibly to provide some relevant historical information, they should address this letter only to the Director/ess and Head of School. A copy will be provided to the Board of Governors for their information. The minimal distribution of the letter helps to protect the integrity and reputation of all individuals concerned.
5. If the goals are not able to be met within an allotted time, it may be necessary for the parents to consider further professional help or another school placement for the student. If it is apparent that the parents are unwilling to accept the mission and goals of the school, it may be necessary for the Head of School to consider whether it is in the best interest of the school to keep the child enrolled at Maria Montessori School.
6. A student may be suspended or expelled in the event of serious or persistent behaviour problems, in order to provide an environment that is physically and emotionally safe for all students at Maria Montessori School. Such behaviour includes, but is not limited to: damaging property (school or other), profanity (verbal or written), triggering a fire alarm, violence, threats of violence, blatant disrespect, disorderly conduct, and endangering the safety of oneself or others.

## **Emergencies and Building Evacuation Procedure**

Please make sure that all of your contact numbers are available on the registration form and if there are any changes, let the Administrative Coordinator know as soon as possible. In the event of an emergency, the school will try to contact the parents. If the parents are unavailable, the emergency contact listed on the registration form will be contacted. If these people cannot be reached and the student needs medical attention, the school will contact the child's doctor or secure emergency services as necessary.

In the event of an emergency evacuation of the school, the students will move to a designated location.

*Education is a natural process carried out by the child and is not acquired by listening to words but by experiences in the environment. —Maria Montessori*

# Maria Montessori School

## Fire Drills

- Several times throughout the school year, we practice fire safety by conducting random fire drills.
- The alarm is a special bell which will ring continuously in the event of a fire or drill.
- When the bell rings continuously, all classes will dismiss into designated areas and remain in their groups.
- The director/ess will ensure the classroom is empty and close the doors.
- The director/ess and students will proceed outside to a designated area where they will take attendance, and notify the administrator.
- Students and teachers will remain in the designated area until informed that they may return to class.

## Inclement Weather

During recess the students go outside to play along with staff supervisors, unless it is very cold (-25°C) or very wet, at which time an indoor space will be used.

## Allergy Alert

Please be aware that we have students in our school that have severe peanut/nut allergies. These students have emergency care plans at the school in case they are in contact with the aforementioned products. However, these products must be eliminated from your child's lunch and snack to help ensure the safety of these students.

We have posted alert signs on the doors of the school and classrooms to bring awareness of potential life-threatening situations. We cannot ensure the total elimination of these products, but we can minimize the risk.

## Student Health

Children should remain at home if they are lethargic, in the early stages of a cold, have a cough, a temperature above normal, a rash or an upset stomach. If these symptoms develop while a student is in class, the director/ess will phone to arrange to have the student picked up. (Please refer to page 19 in this handbook)

Please email the school if your child will be absent due to illness, especially in the case of a contagious disease. If your child is exposed to, or contracts a contagious disease, even during school holidays, please report this to the school immediately.

## Medication

If your child requires medication, please confer with your doctor and, if possible, obtain medication that can be administered at home.

If it is absolutely necessary that your child have medication administered during school hours, a **Permission to Administer Medication Form** must be completed. (available from your child's director/ess). A **Permission to Administer Medication Form** must be completed for each medication to be administered and is only valid for said medication.

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Maria Montessori School staff does not keep any medication on hand for the purpose of distribution to students. This includes pain relievers, lotions, sun screen, bug spray, etc. School staff will not administer medication, including the above, without written authorization of a parent/guardian. Do not send medication to school in your child's lunch box.

Medications must be delivered to your child's director/ess in the original container, labeled with the child's name, a date, dosage directions for administration, the physician's name, and pharmacy name. The school will administer the medication only as stated on the label instructions, or as amended in writing by the child's physician.

Follow these guidelines to allow school staff to dispense over-the-counter medications:

- The child must fall within the correct age range written on the label instructions of over-the-counter medication, or else we must receive a doctor's written instructions stating the amount and dosage schedule.
- We cannot give medication "as needed" without prior detailed written instructions from a parent at the time of administration.
- Parents must give written notification when a child is to stop taking a medication.

Parents must provide dispensers for medication.

## **Life Threatening Allergic Reaction**

Please complete a *Student Allergy Information form* (available from your child's director/ess) and provide emergency medications.

**To ensure the child's safety should we have to await emergency medical services, we require your child to have 2 current epi-pens at school. Parents are responsible for ensuring the pack is labelled, complete and pens have not expired.**

*To assist a child we must provide him with an environment which will enable him to develop freely.*

- Maria Montessori

# Maria Montessori School

## When to Keep Your Child at Home - How Sick is Too Sick?

Children should stay home if they do not feel well enough to participate in school activities or require more care than the teachers and staff can give and still care for the other children.

Below are some guidelines that may help you determine whether your child should stay home from school:

Symptoms	Should your child stay home?
Diarrhea – frequent, loose or watery stools compared to child’s normal ones that are not caused by food or medicine	Yes – if child looks or acts sick, has a fever, is vomiting or the diarrhea overflows the diaper or toilet
Fever – above 38°C (100° f)	Yes – when a child also has a rash, sore throat, vomiting, diarrhea, behavioural changes, stiff neck, difficulty breathing, etc.
“Flu-like” symptoms - fever with cough or sore throat, tiredness, body aches, vomiting, diarrhea	Yes – 24 hours after fever is gone without medication that reduces fever
Coughing – children with asthma may go to school with a written health care plan	Yes – if severe, uncontrolled coughing or sneezing, rapid or difficulty breathing
Mild Respiratory or Cold Symptoms – stuffy nose with clear drainage, mild sneezing, mild coughing	
Vomiting – more than once in 24 hours	Yes – until vomiting stops for a 24 hour period (watch for dehydration)

Common Childhood Illnesses: When is it safe to attend school?	
Illness	Should your child stay home?
Chicken Pox	Yes - until blisters have dried and crusted
Cold Sores	Not required
Conjunctivitis (pink eye)	Yes – until seen by a physician and on antibiotics for 24 hours
Fifty Disease	Not required
Hand Foot and Mouth Disease (Coxsackie Virus)	Not required – unless child has mouth sores, is drooling and is not able to take part in regular activities
Head Lice or Scabies	Yes – until treated
Hepatitis A	Yes – for 7 days after onset of illness and until able to participate in regular activities
Impetigo	Yes – until scabs are completely scabbed over and for 24 hours after starting antibiotics
Measles, Mumps, Rubella (German Measles), Pertussis (Whooping Cough)	Until physician indicates child is no longer infectious (requires doctor’s note)
Ring Worm	Yes – until treatment has been initiated
Roseola	Yes – until physician indicates child is no longer infectious
RSV (Respiratory Syncytial Virus)	Should be discussed with physician. Staying home is recommended when a child is not well enough to take part in usual activities and/or is experiencing acute respiratory symptoms (note *RSV spreads quickly through classrooms)
Strep Throat	Yes – for 24 hours after starting antibiotics and child is able to participate in usual activities
Yeast Infections	Not required – follow good handwashing and hygiene practices

**Remember, the best way to prevent the spread of infections is through good hand washing.**

# Maria Montessori School

## Section 9: Academic Policies

### **Attendance Policy**

At MMS, attendance is important to every child's academic and social success. MMS is a school of choice. By enrolling at MMS, families have chosen an educational program which is based on the Montessori philosophies of an extended work cycle, Montessori manipulative materials, individualized programming, and experiential learning. This educational experience cannot be duplicated outside the classroom environment, which makes daily attendance crucial to success.

Absence from school not only has an effect on the individual but it also has an effect on the other students in the classroom. The Montessori philosophy extends to the entire learning community. When a student is not in class he or she is missing educational experiences and the other students miss their contributions to the classroom activities.

When a student is absent from school, the parents are expected to communicate with the classroom teacher by phone, email, or communication book. If no message is received by the end of the second day of absence, the teacher will attempt to phone or email the parents.

All hours of the school day are equally important to the student's growth and learning. When students are late, they also experience a loss of learning and interrupt the learning of others. Similarly, early departures can adversely affect the learning community.

MMS acknowledges the need for vacations. The administrative team has carefully planned the school calendar and there are various breaks scheduled throughout the year. Please use the school calendar as a planning guide to ensure your child receives the maximum benefits of the Montessori program. If family circumstances require an extended absence from school, the parents should advise the teacher in advance. The teacher may be able to create a support program for the child to take away if enough notice is given. Absences for a vacation will be recorded as full-day absences even if a work program is provided as the full Montessori educational program cannot be delivered off-site.

# Maria Montessori School

## **Classroom Observations**

Parents are welcome, and encouraged, to observe our classrooms. An observation can be arranged in advance with our staff. When you visit the classroom, you will be provided with an observation area where you can sit quietly and observe the classroom at work. In order to view the classroom in its normal routine, we would ask that you not interact with students as this disrupts their concentration and the work cycle.

If, as you observe, you find that you have questions, please feel free to arrange a meeting with the director/ess via the classroom communication book to discuss them.

Please understand that the director/ess's responsibility during school is to the students. When you have finished your observation, please slip quietly out of the classroom. If you have questions, you can set up a meeting with the director/ess via the communication book, which you will find outside the classroom.

## **Student Evaluation**

Two official parent/teacher conferences are scheduled during the year to discuss your child's progress. Parents or teachers may request additional conferences to discuss concerns regarding your child's development, behavior or other issues. We are always happy to talk with you about your child.

For Casa students, written assessments are provided once per year in June. For students in our Kindergarten program, written assessments are provided three times per year in November, March and June. Student reporting conferences are held in November and March each year.

## **Privacy of Student Records Kindergarten**

A cumulative folder containing records of progress is kept for Kindergarten students. These records are confidential and are kept secure from unauthorized access.

Parents or guardians may have access to the child's file by written request to the office at least 24 hours in advance. The file must be viewed in the presence of a Maria Montessori School staff member, and if they disagree with any item in the file, a note may be inserted into the permanent file with their comments.

Officials of the Department of Education may have the right to review student files without the parents' or guardians' permission. However, with a written court order, other government officials may inspect the contents of a student's file without the permission of the student or parent/guardian. In such a case, the school will inform the student and their family in writing that such an inspection has been requested or made.

A copy of the student's file may be sent to an outside professional, such as a psychologist or educational diagnostician, if requested in writing by the parent(s), guardian(s), or student if he/she has attained the age of majority, with notation of pertinent papers to be sent.

# Maria Montessori School

## Section 10: Financial Policies

### Tuition Fees

When you commit to Maria Montessori School, you are responsible for the whole year's tuition. Parents should fully understand their financial obligation for tuition. Please see our Withdrawal & Refund Policy for more information.

Tuition is payable one school month in advance beginning on June 1<sup>st</sup> and may be paid in one installment dated June 1<sup>st</sup>, two installments dated June 1<sup>st</sup> and January 1<sup>st</sup> or 10 installments dated June 1<sup>st</sup> and then each month from September 1<sup>st</sup> to May 1<sup>st</sup> inclusive.

Post-dated cheques, a Pre-Authorized Debit or Credit Card Agreement must be submitted upon enrolment.

### Extended Care Fees

Please refer to our current fee schedule by clicking [here](#).

Families using the before and/or after school care program on a per use basis are invoiced at the end of each month and payment is due within 30 days of the invoice date. Payment may be made by cash or cheque at the MMS office or by e-transfer to [mms.admin@montessorisaskatoon.ca](mailto:mms.admin@montessorisaskatoon.ca).

If payment has not been made at the end of the 30 day period, your credit card will be charged for the amount owing.

For families using the before and/or after school care program on a monthly pre-paid basis, payment is required to be made on (or by) the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month. Otherwise billing will be on a fee per use basis as above.

### Late Fees and NSF Cheques

Maria Montessori School charges a late fee of 2% per month (24% per year) assessed on any late fees.

Maria Montessori School charges a fee of \$25.00 for each NSF cheque.

### After Care Late Pick Up Fee:

**A late pick up fee of \$30 per half hour (or any part thereof)  
per child will apply to children picked up after 5:30 pm**

# Maria Montessori School

## Withdrawal and Refunds

If a family wished to withdraw from the program, the decision should be discussed with the classroom director/ess.

The refund policy is as follows:

- The enrolment fee is non-refundable.
- Once fees are paid for the month they are non-refundable.
- Withdrawal prior to December 31: One month's written notice is required in order to receive a refund of tuition fees. Notice must be received by the last day of the month and the notice period will be effective starting the first day of the next month.
- Withdrawal after December 31: two month's written notice is required in order to receive a refund of tuition fees. Notice must be received by the last day of the month and the notice period will be effective starting the first day of the next month.
- When notice is properly given, tuition fees for the months following the notice period will be refunded.
- There are no refunds or reductions in tuition for illness, family holidays or vacations.
- In the case of a child who attends the program and is determined "not ready" by the classroom director/ess, tuition for the months following the month in which the determination is made will be refunded. The child may return at a later date as determined by the director/ess and the family. **Note that the enrolment fee is non-refundable.**
- In the case of a child who is withdrawn and never attends the program, one month's written notice must be given. When notice is properly given, tuition fees for the months following the notice period will be returned. **Note that the enrolment fee is non-refundable.**

\*The terms "refunded" and "non-refundable" apply to both lump sum payments and post-dated cheques.