

CHILD



Montessori
School

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**Parent
Handbook
of
Policies and
Procedures**

Admission

▲ Admission is open to any child regardless of race, gender, religion, or national origin. These are the factors we consider when accepting a student into CHILD Montessori School:

1. The child must be sufficiently mature as to not be disruptive in the class.
2. The child must be able to adjust to separation from home.
3. For placement in a Primary Class (3-6 years), the child must be toilet trained (although occasional accidents are to be expected).
4. The child must be able to attend to his/her own work, show respect for peers, teachers, and the environment, and behave in a manner that does not distract others from learning.
5. The child must benefit from the unique Montessori environment; therefore, all children are accepted on a trial basis (6 weeks initially, with an annual review).
6. Placement preference is given to current CHILD Montessori students and their siblings, as well as other students with Montessori experience.
7. Our program primarily serves children with normal physical and emotional health. Acceptance of a student with special needs is based on our staff's training and ability to work effectively with the child and the degree to which that child can function in the classroom. It is the parents' responsibility to inform CHILD Montessori School of any special needs so that appropriate physical or educational adaptations may be considered.

Enrollment

▲ Students are not enrolled over the phone or by mail. Here are the new student enrollment steps: **(a)** At least one parent or guardian visits the school to observe the program. This initial visit must be WITHOUT THE CHILD PRESENT. After this observation, the Director (or staff representative) meets with the parent to discuss our Montessori programs, parent expectations, and the needs of the child. **(b)** The parent fills out and returns a Student Application. **(c)** An interview with the child and the teacher is arranged. The teacher may suggest that the child visit the class for a day. **(d)** If the parents and school staff agree that CHILD Montessori is a positive setting for the child—and there is an available space—the new student will be accepted. If there is no class opening at the time, the child will be placed on the waiting list. **(e)** Upon acceptance, the parents will receive an Enrollment Packet (a Parent Handbook and Admission Forms). After reviewing the material, the parents will pay a non-refundable registration fee to hold the child's place. When the required forms are returned to the school, the enrollment process is complete. Please note that the State of Texas prohibits admission of children to school without certain specific forms of documentation. A child will not be able to attend class until:

1. The registration fee is paid;
2. The Tuition Contract is completed, signed, and returned to the school;
3. The Admission Information Sheet is filled out and returned, so that
 - (a) all inoculations and boosters required by the Health Department have been given and evidence to that effect is on file;
 - (b) a current health appraisal, signed by a licensed physician, is on file;
4. The Emergency Card is filled out, returned, and on file.
5. The supply fee is paid **with** or prior to the first tuition payment.

Waiting Lists

▲ CHILD Montessori School maintains waiting lists for all of its classes. After visiting the school, the parent may request placement of their child's name on the waiting list by filling out and returning the student application. When a space is available, the family will be contacted. No registration fee is required to be on a waiting list. New children are enrolled as openings occur.

Educational Philosophy and Objectives

▲ Early childhood education at CHILD Montessori School takes place within the framework of Montessori philosophy and practice. We recognize small children as feeling and thinking persons in the most dramatic stages of emotional and cognitive development. It is during the period from eighteen months to about eight years that the adult-to-come is shaped within the child.

▲ We also acknowledge that there have been positive developments in the educational field in the past several decades; therefore, we consider it sensible to pay close attention to any and all sound pedagogical theories and practices.

▲ The objectives of CHILD Montessori School are:

1. To foster a love of learning and discovery in each child;
2. To provide an individualized education by matching the student's activity with the student's particular stage of development;
3. To respect the unique pace and learning style of each child while also encouraging that child to reach his or her maximum learning potential;
4. To help children gain the positive attributes of independence, self-confidence, and responsible freedom;
5. To stimulate the child's curiosity, imagination, and creativity;
6. To develop the child's persistence, concentration, and problem solving skills;
7. To guide the child toward positive social development and the ability to work cooperatively with others.

School Hours

▲ The school is open from 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Half-Day Pre-Primary and Primary classes 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

Full-Day Pre-Primary and Primary classes 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Elementary Class 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

▲ It is important that children arrive on time and come consistently on the days they are enrolled.

Fees and Tuition Payments

▲ CHILD Montessori operates on a tuition-based budget; therefore, it is important that parents be conscientious and prompt about payment of fees and tuition. There is a Registration Fee (non-refundable) collected at the time of new student enrollment and current student re-enrollment to maintain the child's place in CHILD Montessori School.

There is also an annual Supply Fee (also non-refundable) due with the first tuition payment, which is used to purchase all classroom and music supplies for the year.

▲ Tuition for the full academic year (August - May) is required in advance for each child enrolled (including holidays, teacher workdays, student absences, and bad weather days). For your convenience, the annual tuition can also be divided into 10 equal installment payments. If you use the installment plan, please submit your payments by the first of each month (starting August 1 and ending May 1).

▲ For students enrolled after the start of the year, tuition payments for the remainder of the school year will be arranged with the office.

▲ You may mail tuition payments or deliver them to the school by placing them in the deposit container on the wall inside the office. If you choose to make a payment during arrival or dismissal, please hand it to a teacher. Do not allow your child to deliver the tuition payment—we cannot be held responsible if the payment is lost for this reason.

▲ There is a \$30 charge for any returned checks. A late charge of \$30 may be assessed if a tuition payment is not remitted by the fifth of the month. Accounts one month and/or \$300 overdue will be referred to the Board of Directors for action. Board policy requires that arrangements be made to bring accounts up to date or the child will be withdrawn from school. The Board will then pursue whatever action is required to collect the debt.

Withdrawal Policy

▲ Continuation at CHILD Montessori School is contingent upon the appropriateness of the program for the student. Students are expected to exhibit behaviors that advance their own learning, as well as that of their classmates. The CHILD Montessori Director may approve or request the withdrawal of a student if it is clear that our school is not the most appropriate setting for the child. The parents may also request such a withdrawal due to special circumstances (e.g. the family must move to new location). In such situations, the school must be given a 30-day notice. In the case of approved withdrawals, tuition is charged only for actual time attended (plus any balance due the school), as well as the Registration and Supply Fees (both non-refundable). CHILD Montessori School also reserves the right to refuse to continue services due to the inappropriate actions of parents.

Arrival and Departure

▲ It is important that the children arrive and depart on time. We have allowed a 10-minute grace period before and after the designated drop-off and pick-up times for your child's class. A teacher will be outside to greet children and help them into the school. A teacher will also be taking children to their cars after class.

▲ Please try to limit your communications with teachers during arrival and dismissal; even short discussions can be distracting and hazardous for staff members trying to conduct small children near the line of traffic. If you are in the drop-off or pick-up line of traffic, do not get out of your car to come into the school building. If you need to come into the school, find an out-of-the-way parking spot before entering.

▲ If you deliver your child more than 10 minutes late to class, please park and escort the child into the building and walk with them to their room (parents should enter and exit the room quietly so the class is not disturbed). If you pick your child up more than 10 minutes after the class ends, please park and enter the building to receive the child.

▲ Please use the marked parking spots in our parking lot and avoid parking in **unmarked** parking spots. When drivers double park outside of the sheltered drive-through, it creates a real problem during dismissal times because drivers parked in the area to the right of the main doors have no way to exit. If you need to enter the building and can't find a place to park, you can go to the parking lot across the street (where **Victory Karate** is located).

▲ Drivers should never park in front of the main entrance—under the sheltered drive-through—and come into the building for extended periods of time. When another car pulls up, the main entrance is blocked.

▲ The Emergency Card lists the persons to whom your child may be released. We cannot send your child home with anyone not listed on the card. If your child is to be picked up by someone not listed on the card, you must send a note naming that person and the date for which the release applies.

▲ Children enrolled in Montessori classes only (and not in Extended Day) should not be delivered more than 10 minutes before the class begins or picked up later than 10 minutes after the class ends.

▲ Children being delivered or picked up outside of this 10-minute allowance will be escorted to the Extended Day program. If the parents have not previously arranged for the Extended Day services, they may be billed double the usual rate (2 X \$6.00 = \$12.00 an hour). We are sorry that this is necessary, but Texas State laws limit our Extended Day enrollment and our teachers have essential duties to perform before and after classes.

The School Phone Numbers

▲ To keep our costs down, we do not have a full-time office staff. Please feel free to call the main school number at 493-6550 at any time for general questions or to leave messages for teachers or the school director. However, since we are often all in class, the office phone may not always be answered. Therefore, to facilitate emergency communications, we have phone lines directly into the classrooms. The Primary Class number is 493-7179. The Elementary Class number is 493-2742. Of course, to avoid disrupting the learning environments, please use discretion when phoning the classrooms.

Clothing

▲ Use tags or permanent marker to put your child's name on all clothing brought to school. Don't forget to put names on mittens and hats.

▲ We have an active, hands-on program where messes sometimes happen; therefore, dress your child in comfortable clothing that can be soiled. Boots should not be worn, as they are distracting. Flip-flops (and other footwear with no heel strap) are not appropriate because they cause slips indoors and do not provide adequate foot protection on the playground. Coats and other winter clothes should be easy to fasten.

▲ For Pre-Primary and Primary students, send a complete change of clothes to school in a sealed plastic bag. Label the bag and the clothes with the child's name. When accidents happen, your child will be changed into their "spare set" of clothes and the soiled clothes will be sent home in the bag. In such a case, send in another change of clothes promptly. If we discover the child has no extra clothes, or that the "spare set" no longer fits, we may need to call you to bring in a change. If we are able to find something from the school clothes box to loan, please launder and return the "loaners" as soon as you can.

Things from Home

▲ All toys should remain at home. Assure your child there will be plenty of things to do at school. Any educational items brought to school by the child in conjunction with a class presentation should be labeled with the child's name and are the child's responsibility.

Emergencies

▲ In case of illness or an accident, we will make every effort to contact you using the information you provided on the Emergency Card. If you cannot be reached, we will contact the alternate individuals listed on the card. Be thoughtful about whom you list and keep the information up to date.

▲ In the case of a minor accident at school, the staff will send a copy of the accident report to the parent.

▲ In the case of a serious accident at school, the staff will take whatever steps may be necessary to obtain emergency medical care if warranted. These steps may include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Attempt to contact a parent or guardian,
2. Attempt to contact you through any of the persons listed on the Emergency Card you completed for us,
3. If we cannot contact you, we will do any or all of the following:
 - (a) contact your child's physician,
 - (b) call an ambulance,
 - (c) have the child taken to a hospital emergency room in the company of a CHILD Montessori School staff member.
4. Any expenses incurred under above item 3 will be borne by the child's family.

Illness

▲ Parents must keep sick children at home so that the school can provide a healthy environment for all students. The Department of Health and/or CHILD dictates that children with the following conditions are not allowed at school:

Common Cold	Scabies	Pneumonia	Head Lice
Chicken Pox	Sore Throat	Tuberculosis	German Measles
Measles	Ring Worm	Whooping Cough	Impetigo
Pink Eye	Scarlet Fever	Mumps	Influenza

▲ If you think your child has one of the listed diseases, check with your physician at once. Your physician will tell you when your child can return to school. Please notify the school if your child has a communicable disease so we can advise other parents that their children have been exposed. In some cases, the school might request a note from the doctor before the child returns to the school. Please check with the school office.

▲ Use the following criteria to assist you when making decisions about an "under-the-weather" child:

1. Children with a cold must stay home. Generally, the cold will run its course in three days.

2. Children with a temperature of 100 degrees F or higher must stay home. They can return to school when the temperature has been normal for 24 hours (without the use of fever-reducing medications).
3. Children with vomiting or diarrhea must stay home until their symptoms have been absent for 24 hours.
4. Children with chickenpox must stay home when the first rash occurs. They may return when all vesicles have formed scabs.
5. Children with a rash or bacterial conjunctivitis must stay home until the rash or eye redness has cleared up or a re-admission note from a physician is acquired.
6. Children with head lice must stay home until the condition has been successfully treated. A re-admission note from a physician is required.
7. Children with ringworm must stay home until control measures are in place (affected area is covered). A re-admission note from a physician is required.
8. Children with strep throat must stay home until prescription antibiotics have been administered for at least 24 hours.
9. Children who come to school will be expected to participate in all activities. A child too sick to go outside is too sick to come to school.

Medications

- ▲ If your child must receive medications while at school, observe the following procedures:
1. CHILD Montessori School must have written instructions or a signed permission slip from the parent/guardian to administer such medications.
 2. Prescription medication must be in the original container with the pharmacy label on it indicating the physician's name, child's name, instructions, and the required dosage and frequency of the medication.
 3. Children may not carry medication to school. Please hand all medications to the child's teacher. Do not place medications in lunch bags or other items carried by your child.

Allergies

▲ It is the parents' responsibility to inform CHILD Montessori School of any and all allergies their child suffers from—especially food allergies. Be sure to list these on the Admission Information Sheet that is required for enrollment.

Emergency Closing

▲ In case of bad weather, CHILD Montessori School will follow NEISD decisions for school closing.

Celebrations and Holidays

▲ At CHILD Montessori School, we observe many special days as we study different cultures and human history. The religious and/or political dimensions of the holiday are left to the family to teach according to their beliefs. Birthdays are acknowledged but kept simple. Please speak to your child's teacher about birthday celebrations because these vary from one class level to the next. Please do not distribute private birthday party invitations at the school. Parents who do not wish their child to take part in a particular celebration are responsible for picking up their child early on that day.

Snacks and Lunches

▲ Most classes work with the parents to offer a snack to the students during the day. Please speak to your child's teacher about snack provision arrangements.

▲ Lunches are to be brought by children attending a full-day class. Please only include food and drink that your child can handle (for example, pizza "lunchables" and drinks in pouches or boxes are difficult for little hands). Please label lunch containers. We will not refrigerate lunches unless requested. Children are not allowed to trade lunch items. Large amounts of uneaten food will be returned home to keep you informed of your child's diet.

Extended Day

▲ Extended Day—available for CHILD Montessori School students only—is open in the morning from 7:30 to 8:30, and in the afternoon from 2:30 to 6:00. If you have not enrolled in Special Extended Day option on the Tuition Contract, you may arrange in advance to purchase, if available, extended day hours with the school office.

▲ The price for Extended Day is \$6.00 per hour. You will be billed at the end of each month for the hours your child attends (payment is due upon receipt of the bill).

▲ If your child is signed up for the Extended Day program, the parent is expected to escort the student in and out of the school building. Always let the Extended Day supervisor know when you are dropping off or picking up your child from the Extended Day program.

Extended Day closes at 6:00 p.m. After closing time, one dollar per minute is to be paid directly to the caregiver upon arrival. After 15 minutes, the caregiver may choose to take the child to the Director's house. Please remember that it is traumatic for the child—who expects to be picked up—if the parent is frequently late.

▲ As a general rule, arrangements for Extended Day must be made in advance. However, if an emergency situation arises to prevent parents from getting to school for regular dismissal after one of the class sessions, please call the school as soon as possible so that we can alert your child and the Extended Day supervisor. In such a case, you will be billed the regular Extended Day rate. If the school receives no call, or if this service is abused, you may be billed double the usual rate (2 X \$6.00 = \$12.00 an hour).

Discipline

▲ In order to provide an excellent learning climate, we set clear expectations and expect good behavior. The establishment of an orderly environment is based upon providing interesting work and a set of reasonable "ground rules." We expect the children to gain self-control and self-direction instead of always requiring control or direction from the teacher. Children are given opportunities to make choices about where they will work, with whom, and what materials they will use; the teachers gently guide the children while they are learning to make these decisions and carry them out. A carefully prepared environment is vital to child management. Positive reinforcement is also important. Inappropriate behavior is handled in several ways depending on the circumstances. For example, negative behavior might be ignored while attention is paid to positive behavior. If the child's behavior is disruptive to the group, or is dangerous to the child or to others, the child will be required to sit apart from the group until expressing a readiness to rejoin the group and to participate

constructively. The teacher may have a private talk with the child about acceptable behavior or even suggest a work activity that might redirect the child. We try to eliminate behavioral difficulties by providing interesting activities and pacing the daily schedule according to the needs of the children. We also give regular “grace and courtesy” lessons as a part of our Montessori curriculum. These positive approaches take care of many behavioral issues. Children will not be spanked or yelled at.

▲ If we are having difficulty coming to a peaceful solution in the classroom, we will arrange for a parent-teacher-child meeting.

Problem Behavior

▲ At CHILD Montessori School there are two basic rules of behavior:

1. No child may hurt another in any way.
2. No child may disturb the work of another.

The purpose of these rules is to aid in the development of self-respect and respect for others. These rules of behavior are applied to all children, regardless of gender, size or culture. Children who harm or disturb others will be directed to sit apart from the group until they can behave in a cooperative manner. Parents will receive an incident report when a child is involved in disruptive behavior.

▲ If problems concerning behavior persist, this procedure will be followed:

- (a) The teacher will discuss the problem with the school Director.
- (b) The teacher and Director will conference to make the decision as to what further action should be taken to best meet the needs of the child. The parents will be called for a conference with the teacher and/or the Director. This is sometimes done by phone to accommodate schedules. The conference will serve the purpose of exchanging ideas to help the child. If there is a question of whether the child can function happily in the school, the Director may use her discretion to set a limited “probationary” period of one to four weeks to work out the problem or dismiss the child immediately based on the severity of previous incidents.
- (c) At the end of the “probationary” period, the teacher and/or the Director will hold a personal or phone conference to make the decision as to what further action should be taken to best meet the needs of the child and the class.
- (d) Continued disruptive and/or aggressive behavior is not permitted at CHILD Montessori School. The school, being the final judge in this matter, can rightfully request that parents withdraw a disruptive student. The school will use Incident Reports for documentation.

▲ In the case of seriously harmful behavior, more severe steps will be taken. If a child bites, hits, or kicks, the parents will be called to pick up the child immediately. In the Pre-Primary Class, a child may be asked to leave CHILD Montessori School after the third incident of biting, hitting, or kicking. Any older child (Primary to Elementary) may be asked to leave after one serious incident of biting, hitting, or kicking, without taking the steps used for less serious incidents as outlined above. This is done at the discretion of the Director. In this case, there will be no refunds.

School Materials

▲ Most of the teaching in our classrooms is done through the use of the Montessori materials. If a child breaks a piece of equipment through misuse, parents are expected to pay for the replacements. If you find your child has returned home with an unfamiliar object, please check with the teacher to see if it belongs with the school material. If you ever find an item belonging to a classroom has accidentally found its way into a pocket, we would appreciate getting it back.

Vision and Hearing Screening

▲ The Texas Department of Health requires vision and hearing screening for all enrolled children over the age of 4 years. CHILD Montessori School will have a testing day each year for the entire school.

Donations and Fund-Raisers

▲ As a non-profit organization, donations of either money or needed items are gladly accepted by CHILD Montessori School. We will provide you with a letter to be used for your taxes for any donation. Every year, we need a person to head up fund-raising events. If you can do this or can help with the committee, alert the office. As a non-profit organization, we also rely on fundraisers to keep costs down and to purchase needed equipment.

Communications, Conferences, and Reports

▲ A good educational environment requires regular communications between the parents and the educators; therefore, we would like to create an on-going dialogue that is part of the working bond of mutual respect and cooperation between school and home. We genuinely need and appreciate your input. Your child may indicate an interest or need at home which would be good for the teacher to know about. Likewise, we are happy to share with you our observations of your child in the school setting. You can always arrange an appointment to discuss your child, whether it is a “sit down” session or a phone conference. These would usually take place before or after school.

▲ If difficulties or misunderstandings are discussed at an early stage, there will be a greater possibility of resolution. Please address your concerns directly with the person involved in order to work toward a prompt solution with mutual confidentiality. If you do not feel you can speak with a teacher, please come to the Director. We cannot fix what we are not aware of.

▲ Pre-Primary and Primary teachers prepare written progress reports to be sent home at the end of the year. Elementary Level teachers prepare written reports at the end of each semester. At all levels, the teacher or parent can request a conference whenever needed.

▲ In May and December, we have scheduled conference days on the school calendar. Please make your appointment when your child’s teacher requests sign-up.

▲ Parents are also welcome to meet with the Director to discuss questions or concerns (and don’t forget positive feedback).

▲ Finally, please notify us immediately of any changes in the information you listed on the Admissions Information Sheet or the Emergency Card.

Parent Involvement

▲ CHILD Montessori School encourages parents to help out with school projects: field trips, special events, fund-raising, carpooling, making snacks and sharing of any other talents you feel would benefit the children or school. Speak with your child's teacher or call the office if you are interested in volunteering.

Classroom Visits and Observations

▲ There are often opportunities for parents to come and visit the classrooms during informal activities (celebrations, presentations, etc.). Your child's teacher will let you know when these events will take place. It is also permissible for parents to come and have lunch with the children.

▲ We highly recommend and strongly encourage class observations. However, when the school year begins, the children need at least a month or so to adjust to the new environment. Please ask your child's teacher when observations can be scheduled. During your observation, please sit quietly and allow the children to work unless you are invited to move about the room by the classroom teacher. We ask that you not initiate conversations with the children as they go about their learning activities; however, if a child approaches you, you may naturally respond to their inquiry. You are welcome to stay as long as you like. Please do not use this time to have a conference with the teacher. Of course, we do encourage you to make an appointment later to discuss your observations with the teacher.

Important Miscellany

▲ To accommodate parent privacy needs, we have 2 places designated for breastfeeding. Staff will be happy to direct you to the appropriate place.

▲ Please apply sunscreen to your child before school. If you provide us with sunscreen, we will re-apply it in the afternoon.

▲ The staff of CHILD undergoes TB tests. The staff is also offered flu shots yearly.

Policy Changes

▲ Any changes to the policies in this handbook will be given to the parents by newsletter or as a special handout.

Affiliations

▲ CHILD Montessori School, Inc. (a Texas non-profit corporation) is affiliated with the following organizations:

Association Montessori Internationale Teachers of Texas
American Montessori Society
International Montessori Institute
North American Montessori Teachers Association

