



2022-2023 PARENT HANDBOOK

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	Pages
Who are We?	Pages
Our Mission Statement	
Our Goal	
Our Founding	
The Montessori Method	
Our Staff and Program Exemplars	
Accreditations/Certifications	
Parent/Guardian Participation	Pages
Expectations	
Harassment	
General Concerns	
Communication with Parents	
Address and Telephone Changes	
Observations	
Parent Lunches	
Cell Phones	
Privacy of Information	
Enrolling your Child	Pages
Admission	
Special Needs Children	
Admission Consideration	
Financial Obligations	Pages
Tuition – General Information	
Registration Fees	
Early Arrival/ Late Pickup Fees	
Procedure to Follow for Enrollment	
Schedules/Attendance/Activities	Pages
Class Schedules	
Extended Care Hours and Fees	
Drop Off & Pick Up	
School Calendar	
School Closing	
Attendance/Notification to the School for Absences	
Outdoor Time	
Student Interaction and Discipline	Pages
Ground Rules	

Discipline	
Withdrawal or Dismissal	
Bullying Policy and Intervention	Pages
Safety, Health and Security	Pages
Safety of Your Child	
Incident Reports	
Abuse of Children	
Immunizations	
Allergies	
Medication	
Child Leaving School for Illness	
Dress, Meals and Other Notes	Pages
Dress	
Personal Belongings	
Lost and Found	
Lunch and Snacks	
Birthdays	
School Pictures	
Points to Ponder	Pages
Suggested Readings	Pages
Maria Montessori: A Brief Biography	Pages



Where the heart, mind, and spirit grow together

Mission

We are a Christian community of learners working together to provide a Montessori educational experience that engages and inspires students to become life-long learners and responsible participants in our diverse global community.

Vision

At Little Explorers Montessori School, we are dedicated to developing in children their God-given unique and individual potential through an environment rich in exploration and discovery. We believe by allowing children to move at their own pace in relation to their interests and readiness, their natural love of learning, of challenges and of friends will be developed into essential skills for success in both school and life.

Through our framework of Christian values and the Montessori environment and philosophy, we have the unique ability to effectively nurture the whole child...their heart, mind and spirit.

Goal

To be the school of choice in our surrounding community by delivering the finest quality education through the Montessori philosophy and Christian values.

Philosophy

We believe that each child is unique and endowed with great potential. We believe in nurturing the heart of the child and challenging the intellect. We believe in an individualized Montessori curriculum designed to meet the needs of each child and promote self-motivation. We believe that the community of the child, parent, and educator is the foundation of a student's success.

Board of Directors

As a Not for Profit private school, Little Explorers Montessori School is governed by a Board of Directors with the school Head of School as the president of said Board. The BOD meets monthly to discuss school business. All policy and procedures are reviewed and edited by its Board of Directors annually or as needed.

What is Montessori?

The Montessori philosophy of teaching was created by Maria Montessori (1870-1952), an Italian physician whose inquiries extended into philosophy, psychology, and anthropology. However, it was in education that she found a practice that could unite and divine meaning from all of these diverse disciplines. Montessori developed a radical new approach to educating children by challenging the "assembly line" learning approach of the time and inventing teaching materials tuned precisely to the key stages of child development.

Her first "Children's House" was founded in Italy in 1907; her approach quickly spread across Italy and worldwide; Alexander Graham Bell, Thomas Edison and Helen Keller were among her early advocates in the United States. It is based on her observations that in the proper environment children will teach themselves; that children flourish in an environment that is geared entirely to their needs and structured to their physical size; that in a child's development there are optimal moments for acquisition and refinement of various critical skills (such as language); and that children have a deep desire and need to do the work of acquiring those skills. She developed many innovative classroom materials designed to help preschoolers master gross and fine motor skills, mathematics, spatial understanding, and sensory awareness. Montessori's theories and practice extend through adolescence, with a specific curriculum all the way through sixth grade.

In a Montessori school, children learn in multi-age classrooms through a practice wherein a skill or idea is introduced to the child and practiced by self-directed, self-correcting repetition; frequently the child later demonstrates mastery by teaching others. It is a "whole child" approach, recognizing that children have needs that go far beyond the academic. Because it places responsibility for making choices on the child, Montessori-educated children gain impressive skills of self-discipline and independent thinking. As they get older, children in a Montessori program also develop strong organizational skills and excellent study habits.



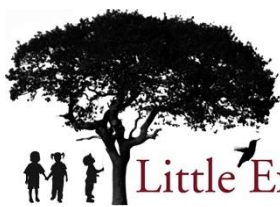
Where the heart, mind, and spirit grow together

Our Staff and Program Exemplars

- Standards that exceed Illinois State Standards
- Certified Montessori-trained teachers
- Well-trained nurturing staff certified in First Aid and CPR, including infant CPR.
- Summer Explorers Program (June to August)
- Extended Care Program geared toward working parent(s)

Accreditations/Certifications/Affiliations

- American Montessori Society (AMS)
- Illinois Montessori Society
- Recognized by the Illinois State Board of Education as a Non-Public School and is a member of the Illinois Non-Public School Association
- License-Exempt by DCFS as Child Care Center



Little Explorers Montessori School

Where the heart, mind, and spirit grow together

PARENT/GUARDIAN PARTICIPATION

We encourage you – the parent/guardian of a Montessori student to take the opportunity to be involved in the Montessori program. You have the chance to learn more about the program by attending Open Houses, Parent/Teacher Conferences and Parent Education Nights. We also recommend reading books about the Montessori Method and doing research online.

Each Parent is a vital part of our school.

If you have a talent, career or hobby that you think might be interesting to the children, please talk to your child's teacher to see how you might become involved in our educational process.

The success of the child in the classroom depends heavily on the interaction between the parent and the school.

Little Explorers Montessori School's Pledge

- A safe, loving and secure environment to help children develop into self-confident, happy adults at peace with themselves and others.
- Faculty and staff who live by the stated philosophies of the school and Dr. Maria Montessori the founder of the Montessori Method of schooling.
- Care and respect for your child as an individual who progresses at his/her own pace.
- Realistic goals for your child
- Information about your child's progress and advice when needed.
- Appreciation of your point of view.
- Positive thinking and professionalism.
- A prepared environment that gives your child the opportunity to cultivate curiosity and interest in an orderly and neat fashion that is easily accessible for the child.
- Acceptance of the Montessori philosophy and adherence to the guidelines of the Parent Handbook.
- Communication concerning situations that may affect your child's school performance.
- Staff communication to the teacher or Head of the School about problems or concerns.
- Staff involvement in parent volunteer activities and other fundraising projects to support the school.
- A positive attitude towards the school and philosophy you have chosen for your child.

Harassment

We expect that all Little Explorers School employees will treat each other with dignity and respect and in turn will be treated with respect and dignity by all parents. We will not tolerate harassment of our employees by anyone, including parents. We define harassment as unwelcome conduct, whether verbal, physical or visual, that is based on a person's race, color, national origin religion, age, gender or disability. Specifically included is sexual harassment. If an allegation of harassment arises, the Head of School will promptly conduct a discreet investigation. If an investigation reveals that harassment has occurred, Little Explorers will take corrective action, including asking the parent to remove their child from the school. At all times, Little Explorers reserves the right to refuse to serve parents whose behavior constitutes a hostile environment for Little Explorers employees.

At the same time, Little Explorers will not tolerate its employees treating parents with less than complete respect and dignity. If you believe you are being harassed, contact the Head of School immediately. The Head of School will conduct a discreet investigation and take remedial action, if warranted.

General Concerns

If there is a problem, question or concern related to an incident or situation with your child at school, we encourage you to do the following:

- ✓ Talk with the Lead Teacher first about the situation.
- ✓ If there is no resolution, talk with the Head of the School.
- ✓ A meeting may be set up with the Head of School/Teacher/Parent(Guardian)

Who to Talk To:

If you have a concern about:

Your child's progress at school
Your child's problems at home or school
Curriculum/academic program
Billing/Payments
After Care hours

Talk to:

Lead Teacher
Lead Teacher or Head of School
Lead Teacher or Head of School
Head of School
Lead Teacher or Head of School

Communication with Parent(s) By Administration/Teaching Staff

Every family at Little Explorers is assigned a folder for parent/teacher correspondence. Your folder is located in the hanging file by the Montessori door. All correspondence to the parent will be placed in your folder. It is our most effective way of communicating with you. It is crucial that you check your folder every day.

Privacy of Information

In an effort to respect and protect the privacy of every Little Explorers Montessori School student and parents, Little Explorers will not release students' educational records or information contained in educational records without parents' prior written consent. If you wish to have information released to a third party, you must complete a *Consent to Release of Records Form*. In certain circumstances, however, consent may not be required prior to the release of information. These circumstances are:

- School officials with legitimate educational interest
- Other schools to which a student is transferring
- Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes
- Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school
- Accrediting organizations
- To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena
- Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies
- State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law

Parents (legal guardians) have the right to inspect their child's student educational records on the school premises. Little Explorers will make educational records available for your inspection within a reasonable time frame after receiving your written request.

Each school year, with your consent, we may publish a school directory which will include parents' names, student's name and family telephone number. If you do not want to be included in their school directory, please notify us. This directory is created to provide a way for families and students to set up play dates and circulate information regarding birthday parties or special events.

Address and Telephone Changes

It is critical that you notify the school immediately if any cell phone, home phone or work phone numbers change. Also, if you have a change in emergency contacts, please let us know as soon as possible. We cannot be responsible for out of date information in your child's folder if you do not provide updates.



Where the heart, mind, and spirit grow together

ENROLLING YOUR CHILD

Admission

Little Explorers welcomes any child at least age 3-9 years old, regardless of gender, race, color, natural origin, citizenship or belief, who exhibits readiness for the Montessori program and whose parents are willing and able to follow school policies and provide continuity of experience for the child at home. Little Explorers and its employees comply with applicable federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination.

Special Needs Children

Special Needs: Children with mild physical, mental or educational difficulties are considered for admission if their needs may be met within the context of the Montessori program.

Initial and/or periodic assessment by qualified professionals may be required. Prior to registering any child with special needs, a conference between the parents, Head of School and Lead Teacher will be held and a plan of education with specific emphasis on the needs of the child will be drawn up. The plan will be re-visited after 4 weeks and then on an as-needed basis.

Little Explorers reserves the right to ultimately determine whether continuation in Little Explorers or transition to another program is in the best interest of the child and/or school environment. While the school works to respond to each child's specific needs, it may lack the expertise to develop appropriate learning strategies for children with special needs.

Please be aware that a child may be able to function in one environment during a particular phase of development and not another. This does not presume that Little Explorers will be able to offer the structure, assistance and supervision necessary for the optimal growth of the child in the next class. If a facilitator is required for the special needs child, the facilitator must meet all the requirements and will be under the supervision of the Lead Teacher and the Head of School, in conjunction with you-the parent or guardian.

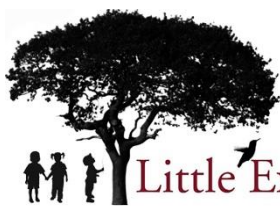
Admission Consideration

When space is not available at the time of application, children may have to be put on a waiting list. Education for all children, including special needs children, will be provided within the parameters of the Montessori philosophy and its implementations. In keeping with the goal of serving the best interests of all children, all admissions are on a 30-day trial basis.

Little Explorers has the right to deny temporary and/or permanent admission if the school feels it is not in the best interest of the child or the school.

Enrollment Procedures

1. Schedule an appointment to meet with the school administrator and tour the school.
2. Complete the registration packet in full. Return the registration forms to the school along with the non-refundable enrollment fee.
3. Provide the school with a CURRENT and UP-TO-DATE immunization record. This must be submitted before any child can start school. This is a requirement for each year a child is enrolled in school through 1st grade.
4. Provide the school with proof of your **kindergartener** having been examined by a qualified physician or licensed optometrist. This requirement also applies to children enrolling for the first time in a public or non-public school.
5. Provide the school with proof of **kindergartener, 2nd, and 6th grader** having been examined by a dentist.



Little Explorers Montessori School

Where the heart, mind, and spirit grow together

FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

Tuition

Little Explorers Montessori School is an academic school. We are not a day care facility. Therefore, when your child enters the school, you sign a Tuition Contract for the Academic School Year or Summer Explorer Program (SEP)

Our aim is to keep the tuition as low as possible. That goal requires that everyone pays their tuition by their contracted due date. If school is not in session for any reason (i.e. holidays, weekends, etc.) on the due date, it is the parent's responsibility to deliver payment on time electronically using Chase Bank's QuickPay method, postdated check, USPS mail or hand delivery.

A **late fee of \$50** will be assessed on the day after your tuition was due.

There is a **Returned Check** Fee of \$50 and any additional fees – No exception. If repayment is not made within 7 days of notification, there will be an additional Late Payment Fee of \$50. Then if repayment is not made by the 1st of the next month, there will be another Late Payment Fee of \$50 added to the outstanding balance on the 1st of every month until payment is made. If a returned check creates an overdraft, the family will be responsible for any additional bank fees that are incurred by the school.

Absences for illness, vacation, school holidays, snow days, etc. do not exempt you from paying the required tuition on time. If tuition and fee payments are over 15 days past due, Little Explorers will regretfully ask you to keep your child home until full payment is received.

Your tuition is for the full academic year. For your convenience, however, it is payable in monthly installments. Financial questions should be directed to the Head of school, as other staff does not have access to financial records.

Registration Fees

Little Explorers charges a registration fee of \$175 annually. This fee is non-refundable and is in addition to your tuition and extended care costs. If the registration fee is paid by April 15th, a discount of \$75.00 is applied.

Late Pick-Up / Early Drop-Off Fee Policy

There will be additional fees incurred for any arrival 10 minutes earlier than contracted time. There will be additional fees incurred for any pick-up 10 minutes after contracted time.

FEES: \$10 per incident and/or per hour.

If a child is picked up after 6pm (closing time), the parent will be charged **\$25 for every 15 minutes the parent is late after 6pm per child**. Payment for these fees will be due within 7 days of receipt of invoice or a late fee will be assessed.



Where the heart, mind, and spirit grow together

SCHOOL HOURS AND SCHEDULES

Full day hours 8:30am-3pm Primary Students (Preschool-Kindergarten)

8:30am- 3:30pm Elementary Students

Half day hours 8:30am-11:30am (only Primary Preschool)

Full day and half day arrival time is 8:30am-8:45am at the Montessori doors. Any time after this, is considered late. In order to protect the classroom from too many disruptions due to late arrivals, we will have **another arrival time at 9:15am** at the upstairs door. Please do not ring the doorbell while you wait for 9:15am as this disrupts the other students that are working toward normalization.

Half day student dismissals are at 11:30am at the Montessori door by the park.

Full day student dismissals are 3-3:15pm Primary at the Montessori door by the park or 3:30-3:45pm Elementary at the Montessori door in the front.

Dismissal for **half day students with lunch** are at 1pm at the Montessori door by the park.

Before School 6:30am-8:30am

After School 3pm-6pm

Primary Program 3-5 year olds (full day):

Academic Instruction from 8:30am to 3pm

Recess 10:15am-10:45am

Lunch 11:45am – 12:15pm

Naptime 12:30pm-6pm

Elementary Program 6-12 year olds (required full day):

Academic Instruction from 8:30am to 3:30pm

Lunch 11:45am – 12:15pm

Recess 12:30pm-1pm

Full Day Daily Schedule* (Kindergarten thru 6th grade)

6:30 am – 8:30 am – Before school care and activities

8:30 am – 8:45 am – Student arrival

8:30 am – 11:45am – Independent/Small Group Work Time

11:45 am – 12:15 pm –Lunch

12:15 pm – 12:30 pm – Clean up

12:30 pm – 1:00 pm – Recess

1:00 pm – 2:55 pm - Independent/Small Group Work Time

3:00 pm – Dismissal Full day kindergarten students

3:30 pm – Dismissal Full day elementary students

3:00 pm – 6:00 pm – After school care and activities

*THESE ARE PROJECTED DAILY ROUTINES; CHANGES ARE CONTINGENT UPON THE NATURE OF EACH DAY.

Half Day and Full Day Napper Daily Schedule* (3-5 year olds)

6:30 am – 8:30 am – Before school care and activities

8:30 am – 8:45 am – Student arrival

8:30 am – 10:15 am – Independent/Small Group Work Time

10:15 am – 10:45 am – Recess for half day students and nappers

10:45 am – 11:45 am – Independent/Small Group Work Time

11:30 am – dismissal for **half day students** (only 3-5 year olds can be half day)

11:45 am – 12:15 pm –Lunch

12:15 pm – 12:30 pm – Clean up

12:45 pm – 2:25 pm – Naptime (only 3-5 year olds can be regular nappers)

12:30 am – 1:00 pm – Recess

1:00 pm – Half day Lunch dismissal (only 3-5 year olds)

3:00 pm - Dismissal Full Day students

3:00 pm – 6:00 pm – After school care and activities

Morning Drop off & Arrival Time

Children are required to be at school by 8:30 am. We understand that a child may be “late” on occasion due to an appointment or unexpected occurrence. In the event that you are running late or know that your child will be late, please text the school (815.886.4898) as soon as possible. If you are running late and cannot arrive before 8:45am, please wait until our late arrival time of 9:15am. The 9:15am late arrivals will be done upstairs. Please do not ring the doorbell or knock on the door before that time. It is too disruptive to the children already in the classroom working.

Extended Care

Little Explorers opens for Extended Care at 6:30 am and closes promptly at 6:00 pm (unless other arrangements have been made). The fees for Extended Care are as follows: Regular before/after care is \$5.00 per hour when paid monthly. Occasional before/after care is \$6.00 per hour. See fees

School Calendar/Attendance/Absences

The school calendar, which includes all school holidays and teacher in-service days, is published and provided to you in advance of the beginning of the school year. The school calendar is also on our website. Little-Explorers.com

DAILY regular attendance for kindergarteners and 1st thru 6th graders is required throughout the entire regular school term. Please read the calendar so you are aware of all required school days, as well as all teacher institutes and school holidays that have no school attendance. You have the responsibility to plan accordingly to have your child in school daily and on time, as well as plan for their care on the days school is not in session.

We ask that you make a commitment to have your child attend daily and be ready to begin class at the scheduled start time. Many educational opportunities are missed due to late arrival and absences.

Please let us know if your child is missing school for any reason such as vacation, a “mommy-“ or “daddy-day”, appointments, etc. There is no reduction in tuition for absences and/or vacations.

Please notify the school when your child is sick. This helps us to track and taper the spread of illness. If a child has a contagious illness, we reserve the right to memo other parents without referencing the child directly. There is no reduction in tuition for absences due to illness.

School Closing

School closings due to inclement weather will be based on the Valley View School District 365U and business closings and/or the judgment of the Head of School. If the school needs to close early, you will be notified. Please use our website (Little-Explorers.com), Facebook page, or Valley View 365U School Closing information for any change in school closings. Also, check WJOL for Valley View School District 365U closings as we will be following their snow day policy.



Where the heart, mind, and spirit grow together

STUDENT INTERACTION AND DISCIPLINE

The school has ground rules that are the basis for positive interaction in the classroom which reinforce the values that we all want our children to have. **These rules are based on respect and explained at eye-level and are always positive.** Children are shown what TO DO rather than WHAT NOT TO DO.

Examples of Ground Rules

1. Walk indoors to keep it quiet and safe.
2. Use your inside voice so that others may concentrate.
3. Put your work away when you are finished so that the next person will have it when they are ready to use it.
4. If you are outside and need to come inside, a teacher must accompany you.
5. It is the teachers' or mom's or dad's job to open the school doors when you leave
6. Wash your hands before eating and after using the bathroom.
7. Teeth are for eating, feet are for walking, etc.
8. Speak kindly to show respect for oneself and others.

Discipline

Discipline procedures at Little Explorers Montessori School are proactive. The emphasis is on preventing behavior problems by structuring an environment that allows all children to succeed, be confident and be in charge of their own behavior. To discipline is to teach. It is not based on punishment, which is based on anger. We discipline with natural consequences rather than punish. Effective discipline is about the future while punishment is about the past. We believe that by disciplining in this way, we can help the students learn true discipline, which comes from within.

Discipline Policy

Our goal is to aid children in developing inner control and self-discipline. When disagreements occur, students are taught to state their feelings and their needs and decide on an action plan for themselves. Teachers help facilitate conflict resolution.

We strive for all children to display a respect for oneself, one another, and one's environment.

When a child uses or engages in disruptive/harmful words, fighting, bullying, inappropriate language/cursing, offensive body gestures, damage to materials or equipment we use the following steps to modify negative behaviors:

Step 1 – Redirect child through discussion

Step 2 – If negative behavior continues, teacher and child will conference

Step 3 – If negative behavior still persists, child will be removed from situation until they regain composure. They can return when they feel and the teacher feels it is appropriate.

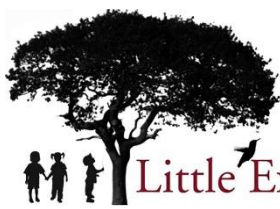
Step 4 – If disruptive behavior still continues, teacher, child and parent will conference.

In addition to these steps, continuous negative behaviors, such as excessive biting or fighting, may result in a child being sent home for the day.

Biting Policy

When a child becomes frustrated and does not have the words to express him or herself, the child may substitute biting for words. An incident report will be filled out for each biting occurrence. The teacher or the school office will notify both children's parents. If the same child bites three times in one day, the parent/guardian will be called to pick up the child immediately and keep him or her home for the remainder of the day.

There is no corporal punishment practiced at Little Explorers Montessori School.



Little Explorers Montessori School

Where the heart, mind, and spirit grow together

BULLYING AND BULLYING INTERVENTION EDUCATION

Little Explorers Montessori School has adopted the below policy regarding bullying prevention and intervention. Our staff discusses this policy at length throughout the school year. It is reviewed, and edited if needed, annually by staff and our Board of Directors in order to remain current and up to date with methods for effective prevention and intervention of bullying.

BULLYING IDENTIFICATION, PREVENTION AND PLANNING BY CHIP DeLORENZO, M.Ed.

Defining Bullying – Classic bullying behavior occurs when one person is exposed, repeatedly, and over time, to the negative actions on the part of one or more other persons, with a noted power differential. The target of the behavior is chosen, specifically due to the real or perceived power imbalance in the relationship rather than due to ordinary social conflict.

Bullying behavior is misbehavior, and can be manifested in many forms, both passively and overtly. Examples of passive bullying behavior are: telling lies, spreading false rumors, covert threatening, etc. Examples of overt bullying behavior are: hitting, saying hurtful things, deliberately excluding, teasing, etc. It is important to note that while these passive and overt behaviors are also very common, and developmentally appropriate, misbehaviors that elementary children exhibit as they learn to navigate social dynamics. The identifying component in the bully/victim relationship is rooted in the power imbalance.

It is important to narrow the definition of bullying because of the power differential component involved in the behavior. Specific steps, requiring direct intervention, are used to effectively address the power differential when true bullying behavior occurs. These steps are different than steps used to address normal misbehavior or social conflicts. If too broad a definition for bullying is used, then there is a danger of over or under reacting to true bullying behavior and over reacting to normal misbehavior. Under reacting can create an environment of permissiveness, and overreacting can create an environment of repression; both of which lead to increased misbehavior and social conflict.

Note: Most bullying literature suggests strongly not labeling a child as a bully or a victim. Instead, refer to the behaviors as bullying or victim behavior.

Roles in Bullying Behavior – There are often more than two students involved where bullying behavior is being exhibited. The roles of other children may be passive, but often enable the cycle of behavior to continue.

1. Bully – The student or students directly involved in the negative, repatative behavior toward the victim.

2. Victim – The student or students who are the target of the repetitive, negative behavior by the bully(ies).
3. Bystanders – Students who witness the behavior. Those students may be followers, supporters (passive or active), onlookers or defenders. In traditional approaches to bullying behavior, the importance of these students in enabling the behavior or in solving the problem has been significantly overlooked. These students play a key role in creating a safe environment.

Successful Bullying Prevention

“There is a type of fish, known as the Puffer fish that frightens off enemies by puffing itself up to a greater size. A bully is like a threatened puffer fish that is all puffed up and full of air. The best tool at the bully's disposal is the willingness of other people to be victims. When a bully meets weakness he thrives. When a bully encounters dignity and assertiveness he deflates into nothingness.” ~ Jane Nelsen, Ph.D.

Below are three components of developing a school environment that reduces the opportunity and instances of bullying behavior, and helps students develop life-long assertiveness skills:

- Establish a whole school culture of respect for oneself and others.
 - Modeling of respectful, kind and firm behavior by adults
 - Involve students in creation of classroom culture and ground rules so that students have ownership over the social/emotional environment
 - Involve students in resolution of problems
 - Taking time for training – communications skills, resilience/assertiveness skills, expected behavior, problem solving skills, identifying and responding to bullying behavior
- Provide support for adults
 - Training in respectful classroom discipline
 - Outlined plan for bullying behavior
- Specific support for students
 - Bystander training with all students
 - Assertiveness and communication training with all students
 - Individualized support for victim behavior
 - Individualized support for bully behavior

Sample Plan for Bullying Behavior

1. Increased supervision by adults
2. Meeting with parents of both children, outlining classroom plan and support needed from home.
3. Separation of students (direct or indirect)
4. Individualized support plan for child exhibiting victim behavior that includes, but is not limited to:
 - a. accessing immediate adult support

- b. development of communication and assertiveness skills
 - c. establishment of buddy system
 - d. adult support in conflict resolution
 - e. class meetings
5. Individualized support plan for child exhibiting bullying behavior
- a. establishment of clear expectations for behavior and logical consequences
 - b. development of communication skills in resolving conflict and receiving peer messages
 - c. development of needed social skills for making connections
 - d. support and redirection to positive power and social responsibility
 - e. class meetings

Sources:

- 1. <http://www.education.com/reference/article/definitions-characteristics-bullying/>
- 2. http://www.pbis.org/pbis_resource_detail_page.aspx?PBIS_ResourceID=785
- 3. <http://www.stopbullying.gov/respond/support-kids-involved/index.html>
- 4. <http://www.positivediscipline.org/resources/Documents/PDSbrchr-8-06.pdf>

Little Explorers Montessori School
Bullying, Intimidation, and Harassment Policies

Bullying, intimidation, and harassment diminish a student's ability to learn and a school's ability to educate. Preventing students from engaging in these disruptive behaviors and providing all students equal access to a safe, non-hostile learning environment are important goals.

Bullying on the basis of actual or perceived sexual orientation, gender or sex (includes gender identity, gender expression, pregnancy, childbirth, breastfeeding, and pregnancy-related medical conditions), race or ethnicity, ethnic group identification, ancestry, nationality, national origin, religion, color, mental or physical disability, age, immigration status, marital status, genetic information, order of protection status, political belief or affiliation (not union-related), military status, unfavorable discharge from military service, or association with a person or group with one or more of the aforementioned actual or perceived characteristics, or any other distinguishing characteristic is prohibited in each of the following situations:

1. During any school sponsored education program or activity.
2. While in school, on school property, on school buses or other school vehicles, at designated school bus stops waiting for the school bus, or at school sponsored or school sanctioned events or activities.
3. Through the transmission of information from a school computer, a school computer network, or other similar electronic school equipment.
4. Through the transmission of information from an electronic device that is not owned, leased, or used by the District but causes a substantial disruption to the educational process or orderly operation of a school. This paragraph (item #4) applies only when a school administrator or teacher receives a report that bullying through this means has occurred; it does not require District staff to monitor any non-school-related activity, function, or program.

Definitions 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7

Bullying includes *cyber-bullying* and means any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically, directed toward a student or students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

1. Placing the student or students in reasonable fear of harm to the student's or students' person or property.
2. Causing a substantially detrimental effect on the student's or students' physical or mental health.
3. Substantially interfering with the student's or students' academic performance.
4. Substantially interfering with the student's or students' ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities, or privileges provided by a school.

Bullying, may take various forms, including by not limited to one or more of the following: harassment, threats, intimidation, stalking, physical violence, sexual harassment, sexual violence, theft, public humiliation, destruction of property, or retaliation for asserting or alleging an act of bullying. This list is meant to be illustrative and non-exhaustive.

Cyber-bullying means bullying through the use of technology or any electronic communication, including without limitation any transfer of signs, signals, writing, images, sounds, data, or intelligence of any nature transmitted in whole or in part by a

wire, radio, electromagnetic system, photo-electronic system, or photo-optical system, including without limitation electronic mail, Internet communications, instant messages, or facsimile communications.

Cyber-bullying includes the creation of a webpage or weblog in which the creator assumes the identity of another person or the knowing impersonation of another person as the author of posted content or messages if the creation or impersonation creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of *bullying*.

Cyber-bullying also includes the distribution by electronic means of a communication to more than one person or the posting of material on an electronic medium that may be accessed by one or more persons if the distribution or posting creates any of the effects enumerated in the definition of *bullying*.

Restorative measures means a continuum of school-based alternatives to exclusionary discipline, such as suspensions and expulsions, that: (i) are adapted to the particular needs of the school and community,

(ii) contribute to maintaining school safety, (iii) protect the integrity of a positive and productive learning climate, (iv) teach students the personal and interpersonal skills they will need to be successful in school and society, (v) serve to build and restore relationships among students, families, schools, and communities, and (vi) reduce the likelihood of future disruption by balancing accountability with an understanding of students' behavioral health needs in order to keep students in school.

School personnel for purposes of this policy means persons employed by, on contract with, or who volunteer in a school district, including without limitation school and school district administrators, teachers, school guidance counselors, school social workers, school counselors, school psychologists, school nurses, cafeteria workers, custodians, bus drivers, school resource officers, and security guards.

Bullying Prevention and Response Plan.

1. School principal and staff shall work to develop safe, supportive school environments that prevent bullying and harassment through developing supportive school climate strategies, teaching students social emotional skills, and establishing predictable responses and effective disciplinary practices
2. All School employees who witness incidents of bullying or harassment or who possess reliable information that would lead a reasonable person to suspect that a person is a target of bullying, must: (a) intervene immediately in a manner that is appropriate to the context and ensures the safety of all people involved; (b) report the incident of bullying or harassment to the Principal/Head of School as soon as practicable, but within 24 hours; and (c) cooperate fully in any investigation of the incident and in implementing any safety plan established by the Principal/Head of School. Alleged bullying targeted at sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression should be reported immediately to the District's Title IX/Nondiscrimination Coordinator at 801 W. Normantown Road, Romeoville, IL 60446, 815-886-2700 or VVSD_Complaint-Manager@vvsd.org in accordance with Policy 7.20.
3. Students are encouraged to immediately report bullying. A report may be made orally or in writing to the Principal/Head of School, or any staff member with whom the student is

comfortable speaking. Anyone, including parents/guardians, who has information about actual or threatened bullying, is encouraged to report it to the Principal/Head of School, any staff member, or by using the anonymous reporting tool. Alleged bullying targeted at sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression should be reported immediately to the District's Title IX/Nondiscrimination Coordinator at 801 W. Normantown Road, Romeoville, IL 60446, 815- 886-2700 or VVSD_Complaint-Manager@vvsd.org in accordance with Policy 7.20.

4. The Principal/Head of School shall promptly investigate and address reports of bullying, by, among other things:
 - a. Consistent with federal and State laws and rules governing student privacy rights, promptly informing the parent(s)/guardian(s) of every student involved in an alleged incident of bullying or harassment and discuss, as appropriate, the availability of social work services, counseling, school psychological services, other interventions, and restorative measures.
 - b. Making all reasonable efforts to complete the investigation within 10 school days after the date the report of a bullying incident was received and taking into consideration additional relevant information received during the course of the investigation about the reported bullying incident. The investigation shall include, but is not limited to, (1) identifying all students engaged in the alleged bullying along with all witnesses; (2) interviewing all involved parties; (3) determining how often the conduct occurred, past conduct, or any continuing pattern of behavior; and (4) assessing individual and school-wide effects of the incident relating to safety.
 - c. Involving appropriate school support personnel and other staff persons with knowledge, experience, and training on bullying prevention, as deemed appropriate, in the investigation process.
 - d. When the investigation is complete, documenting in writing whether the alleged incident meets any of the four elements of bullying listed above in the definition of bullying and determining whether the report of bullying is substantiated or not substantiated. If the investigation determines a student engaged in bullying behaviors and/or other inappropriate behaviors listed in the District's Policy 7.190, the Principal/Head of School shall impose the appropriate disciplinary action in accordance with District policy.
 - e. Consistent with federal and State laws and rules governing student privacy rights, providing parents/guardians of the students who are parties to the investigation a copy of the final written report and offer them an opportunity to meet with the Principal/Head of School to discuss the investigation, the findings of the investigation, and the actions taken to address the reported incident of bullying.
5. The Principal/Head of School shall use interventions to address bullying, that may include, but are not limited to, school social work services, restorative measures, social-emotional skill building, counseling, school psychological services, and community-based services.
6. A reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an act of bullying **is prohibited**. A student's act of reprisal or retaliation will be treated as *bullying* for purposes of determining any consequences or other appropriate remedial actions.
7. A student will not be punished for reporting bullying or supplying information, even if the School's investigation concludes that no bullying occurred. However, knowingly making a false accusation or providing knowingly false information will be treated as *bullying* for purposes of determining any consequences or other appropriate remedial actions.
8. The Principal/Head of School or designee shall post this policy on the School's website and include it in the student handbook, and post it where other policies, rules, and standards of conduct are currently posted. The policy must also be distributed annually to parents/guardians,

students, and school personnel by posting it on the School's website and in any employee, parent or student handbooks.

9. The Principal/Head of School shall assist the Board with its evaluation and assessment of this policy's outcomes and effectiveness. This process shall include, but is not limited to:
 - a. The frequency of victimization;
 - b. Student, staff, and family observations of safety at a school;
 - c. Identification of areas of a school where bullying occurs;
 - d. The types of bullying utilized; and
 - e. Bystander intervention or participation.

The evaluation process may use relevant data and information that the School already collects for other purposes. The Principal/Head of School or designee must post the information developed as a result of the policy evaluation on the School's website.

10. The Principal/Head of School or designee shall fully implement the Board policies, including without limitation, the following:
 - a. 2:260, *Uniform Grievance Procedure*. A student may use this policy to complain about bullying.
 - b. 6:60, *Curriculum Content*. Bullying prevention and character instruction is provided in all grades in accordance with State law.
 - c. 6:65, *Student Social and Emotional Development*. Student social and emotional development is incorporated into the District's educational program as required by State law.
 - d. 6:235, *Access to Electronic Networks*. This policy states that the use of the District's electronic networks is limited to: (1) support of education and/or research, or (2) a legitimate business use.
 - e. 7:20, *Nondiscrimination, Harassment and Retaliation of Students and Title IX Policy*. This policy prohibits any person from harassing, intimidating, or bullying a student based on an identified actual or perceived characteristic.
 - f. 7:185, *Teen Dating Violence Prohibited*. This policy prohibits teen dating violence on school property, at school sponsored activities, and in vehicles used for school-provided transportation.
 - g. 7:190, *Student Behavior*. This policy prohibits, and provides consequences for, hazing, bullying, or other aggressive behaviors, or urging other students to engage in such conduct.
 - h. 7:310, *Restrictions on Publications and Written or Electronic Material*. This policy prohibits students from and provides consequences for: (1) accessing and/or distributing at school any written, printed, or electronic material, including material from the Internet, that will cause substantial disruption of the proper and orderly operation and discipline of the school or school activities, and (2) creating and/or distributing written, printed, or electronic material, including photographic material and blogs, that causes substantial disruption to school operations or interferes with the rights of other students or staff members.

Nothing in Policy is intended to infringe upon any right to exercise free expression or the free exercise of religion or religiously based views protected under the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution or under Section 3 of Article I of the Illinois Constitution.

LEGAL REF: 105 ILCS 5/27-23.7.

Cross Ref: 2.260 (Uniform Grievance Procedure), 6:60 (Curriculum Content), 6:65 (Student Social and Emotional Development), 6:235 (Access to Electronic Networks), 7:20 (Nondiscrimination, Harassment and Retaliation of Students and Title IX Policy.), 7:185 (Teen Dating Violence Prohibited), 7:190 (Student Behavior), 7:310 (Restrictions on Publications and Written or Electronic Material)

ADOPTED: August 2006

AMENDED: January 2009

AMENDED: August 2016

AMENDED: August 2019

AMENDED: March 2023

Withdrawal Or Dismissal

From the first day of school, both you and your children agree to support all the rules of the school as outlined in the Little Explorers Montessori School Parent Handbook and/or in other communication to families while the child is enrolled at Little Explorers. If the school is unable to respond to the child's academic, social or emotional needs, it reserves the right to require that the child be removed from our environment to ensure success of the student and the well-being of the school.

If, in the judgment of the child's Directress and the Head of School, it is not in the best interest of the child or other children in the school for the child to continue attending the school, withdrawal from the school may be the only alternative. If this situation arises with your child, some or all of the following procedures will be used:

- ❖ The classroom Directress will request a conference with you.
- ❖ If the situation continues, the Head of School/Director will observe the child and assist the Directress with the situation
- ❖ The Head of School/Director and Directress will again meet with you and discuss the situation.
- ❖ The Head of School/Director will request a full professional evaluation, at the expense of the parent/guardian, of the child within a specific time period.
- ❖ In case of behavioral or disciplinary problems, you may be asked to keep the child at home for a period of time with the re-admittance date being determined by the Head of School/Director.
- ❖ Until such time as the Head of School/Director and/or Parents withdraw the child, the parent/guardian continues to be financially responsible for tuition and fees.

SAFETY, HEALTH AND SECURITY

Safety

The staff is responsible for the safety of the children while they are on school premises, during school hours. We take special care in maintaining the materials and equipment that the children use. No child is left alone or unsupervised at any time.

Safety of Your Child

To ensure the safety of your child, we ask that you escort your child to the Montessori door each morning. **Be sure to sign in and out your child every day as instructed on the clipboard by the door.**

In addition, if another party is picking up your child, you will need to complete an *Authorized Pick Up Form*, available from the Head of School. **The school will ask your designated driver for picture identification.**

This is for your child's safety – our number one concern!

No student will be dismissed to someone we have not met without their picture identification and being listed on the form.

There will be NO exceptions to this policy.

If someone does not regularly pick up your child but they are on the Authorized Pick Up Form, please have them bring their picture ID each time they come to pick up your child. While we want to remember everyone we meet, that is not always the case and we may need to ask for their ID more than one time.

Incident Reports – Primary Program (Preschool – Kindergarten)

If your child is injured or hurts another child during the day, the witnessing staff members will file an *Incident Report*. The Head of School/Director then signs the incident report. A copy of this report will be given to you at dismissal time. It will be noted that you received the report and a copy will be made for your child's student file at school and for our Incident Report binder.

A staff member may apply simple first aid at the facility for an injury or illness requiring only minor attention such as minor cuts, abrasions, insect bites, etc. All staff members are required to protect themselves against blood borne pathogens. Staff members will wear latex gloves and/or other protective gear while they are dealing with blood or any other bodily fluids. If there is a doubt about the seriousness of the incident, you will be notified immediately. If the incident is serious or with a loss of consciousness, 911 will be called immediately then you will be called.

In the case of accidents or emergencies, Little Explorers will seek immediate care for a child. Each child's emergency information is on file in the school office. If needed, your child may be transported to the hospital/emergency room, accompanied by a Little Explorers' Head of School/Director.

It is very important that you provide us with the most UP-TO-DATE emergency contact information for your child and notify us immediately if there are any changes. We keep this information readily available in case of any emergency.

Please note, if your child regularly hurts other children in ongoing incidents, you may be asked to remove your child, temporarily or permanently from the school.

Evacuation Drills

Little Explorers Montessori School, in accordance with local fire regulations, conducts a minimum of three (3) evacuation drills to prepare students and staff for fire incidents. One (1) of these drills will be with the participation of the local fire department.

Severe Weather Drills

Little Explorers Montessori School conducts a minimum of one (1) severe weather drill and shelter in place drill to prepare students and staff for possible tornado incidents.

Law Enforcement Drill

Little Explorers Montessori School conducts a minimum of one (1) law enforcement drill during the academic year.

Abuse of Children

All employees of Little Explorers Montessori School are Mandated Reporters. By law, the members of Little Explorers Montessori School staff are required to report suspected child abuse and neglect to DCFS' child abuse Hotline (1.800.25A-BUSE)

Missing Children

Little Explorers Montessori School follows the provisions of Section 5(a) of the Missing Children Records Act, 325 ILCS 50/5, which requires each school to have a system in place that flags records requests for any current or former student reported as a missing person by the Illinois State police. The procedure is as follows: Upon notification by the Illinois State Police of a person's disappearance, a school in which the person is currently or was previously enrolled shall flag the record of that person in such a manner that whenever a copy of or information regarding the record is requested, the school shall be alerted to the fact that the record is that of a missing person. The school shall immediately report to the Illinois State Police any request concerning flagged records or knowledge as to the whereabouts of any missing person. Upon notification by the Illinois State Police that the missing person has been recovered, the school shall remove the flag from the person's record.

Reporting Drug Violations to Authorities

Little Explorers Montessori School shall follow the provisions of the School Reporting of Drug Violations Act, 105 ILCS 127 which provides that the head of school or his or her designee shall report all instances of “drug violations” to local law enforcement officials or to the office of the county sheriff of the municipality or county where the school is located. a. A “drug violation” is when any of the following occurs on school property, on a public way within 1,000 feet of a school, or on any property owned, leased, or contracted by a school to transport students to or from school or to or from a school related activity: A person knowingly manufactures, delivers, or possesses with intent to deliver, or manufacture, cannabis in a school, in violation of the Cannabis Control Act, 720 ILCS 550, Section 5.2; or 10 A person delivers a controlled, counterfeit or look-alike substance to a person under 18 years of age, in violation of the Illinois Controlled Substances Act, 720 ILCS 570, Sections 401(b) and or 407; or A person knowingly possesses, procures, transports, stores, or delivers any methamphetamine precursor or substance containing any methamphetamine precursor in standard dosage form with the intent that it be used to manufacture methamphetamine or a substance containing methamphetamine, in violation of the Methamphetamine Control and Community Protection Act, 720 ILCS 646 et seq. b. Reporting.

Upon receiving any report from any school personnel regarding a verified incident involving drugs in a school or on school owned or leased property, the head of school or his or her designee shall report such drug-related incident occurring in a school or school property to the local law enforcement authorities immediately and to the Illinois State Police. Reports to the Illinois State Police can be made through the School Incident Reporting System (“SIRS”), a web-based application used by schools to report incidents electronically. Note that reporting through SIRS does not satisfy the requirement to report the incident to local law enforcement authorities as well.

Reporting Firearms on School Property to Authorities

Upon receiving any report from any school personnel regarding a verified incident involving a firearm in a school or on school owned or leased property, the head of school or his or her designee shall report such firearm-related incident occurring in a school or on school property to the local law enforcement authorities no later than 24 hours after the occurrence of the incident and to the Illinois State Police. Reports to 10 the Illinois State Police can be made through the School Incident Reporting System (“SIRS”), a web-based application used by schools to report incidents electronically. Note that reporting through SIRS does not satisfy the requirement to report the incident to local law enforcement authorities as well.

Reporting Attacks on School Personnel to Authorities

Upon receiving a written complaint from any school personnel, the head of school or his or her designee shall report an incident of battery committed against a teacher, teacher personnel, administrative personnel or educational support personnel to the local law enforcement authorities immediately after the occurrence of the attack and to the Illinois State Police's Illinois Uniform Crime Reporting Program no later than 3 days after the occurrence of the attack. Note

that reporting through the Uniform Crime Reporting Program does not satisfy the requirement to report the incident to local law enforcement authorities as well. 105 ILCS 5/10-21.7



Where the heart, mind, and spirit grow together

HEALTH

Immunizations

Illinois state law requires that every child entering preschool, kindergarten or school for the first time, have a complete immunization record as well as a Certificate of Child Health Examination on file prior to admittance to the school year. The Certificate must be signed by the Health Care Provider and be within one year of the date the child is entering school.

Any time a child receives a booster shot or new immunization, the school must be provided with a copy of his/her new immunization record to keep on file. If a child has not received his/her boosters or immunizations, you have 30 days to comply with this requirement. If we do not receive the proper paperwork within those 30 days, Little Explorers reserves the right to ask you to keep your child home until the proper paperwork is provided.

Allergies

If your child has allergies, notify the staff immediately about any foods, insects, etc, that may trigger an allergic reaction from severe to not-as-severe. Also notify the staff and Head of School of any life-threatening allergies such as bee stings, peanuts etc. If your child has an Epi-Pen, please make sure the school has at least one. It will be kept with the child, while they are in school care, whether in the classroom, outside for recess or anywhere else on the school property. Let the staff know of any precautions that need to be followed.

In the event of an allergic reaction and the use of the EPI pen, 911 will be called and you will be notified immediately after that.

Medication

Non-prescription and prescription medicines are treated in the same way. BOTH should come to school in its original container. An Authorization and Permission for Administration of Prescribed Medication or An Authorization and Permission for Administration of Over-the-Counter Medication form must be completed and signed before we can administer any medication, prescription or over-the-counter. This includes ointments and creams etc.

Be sure to stipulate the dosage that needs to be administered to your child and indicate if there are multiple times in a day for administering the medicine. Please be advised that a new form will be necessary each day your child is to receive medication. IF this medication needs to be given long term or consistently for more than a few days, please see the Head of School for an additional form to complete with a schedule and dosage chart.

We cannot administer any medication to your child without your written permission. We will not administer a fever reducer/pain reliever (Motrin, Tylenol, etc.) without a doctor's note stipulating that your child needs this for a ***non-contagious ailment***.

Child Leaving School for Illness

If your child becomes ill during the day, we will telephone or text you and ask that you come and pick him/her up in order to prevent the spread of the contagion to other children. If your child has a fever, has vomited or had diarrhea, the school will need to isolate your child. Since a staff member must supervise your child, you will need to arrive within 45 minutes from the time that you are notified. If the child is not picked up within 45 minutes, a "late pick-up fee" of \$3.00 per minute will be charged to your account.

In order for your child to return to the school, you will need to confirm that your child has been WITHOUT the use of fever-reducing medication in the last 24 hours AND has currently has no fever. We will call you to come pick up your child if they have not been fever-or vomiting-free for 24 hours. Please do not send your child to school the day after we had to send them home for either of those issues.

If there is an outbreak of illness within a contained classroom, Little Explorers reserves the right to require that a child or children do not return to the school within 48 hours of being sent home or the last known time of fever/vomiting, etc.

PLEASE DO NOT SEND SICK CHILDREN TO SCHOOL. For the welfare of other students and staff, please do not send your child to school with any of the following:

Elevated temperature – 100 degrees or above (99 degrees if taken under the arm): your child should have a normal temperature for 24-48 hours without medication before returning to school.

Upper Respiratory Tract Infection: Your child's time resting at home depends on the severity and/or your physician's instructions. In the case of the common cold, it is advisable to keep your child home until the acute stage subsides – usually one to two days. Good sanitary habits are essential in keeping the spread of the flu under control.

Vomiting: If your child has vomited the previous night or in the morning before school, keep him/her home from school until the vomiting has stopped for at least 24 hours.

Diarrhea: If your child has two or more diarrhea bowel movements in one day, you will be asked to pick him/her up immediately. Keep your child home for at least 24 hours after bowel movements are regular.

Strep Throat: Your child may return after antibiotic treatment has rendered the condition no longer contagious, but no less than 24 hours.

Head Lice: Your child may return to school with a statement from the Health Department or a physician stating that proper treatment has destroyed the lice and eggs.

Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye): Your child may return to school 24 hours after medical treatment has begun.

Bodily Fluids: Discharge of bodily fluids from ears, nose, eyes etc.

Little Explorers Montessori, at its discretion, may request a child be picked up based on individual circumstances.

DRESS, MEALS AND OTHER NOTES

Dress

Because Little Explorers is open year-round, it is important to make sure that children are appropriately dressed for the weather. Please remember to bring items such as sunscreen, hats, sweaters, mittens, raingear, etc. each day as children prepare for the outdoors.

School clothing should be completely washable, comfortable and easy for the child to manage by him/herself. The children may get dirty from playing outside or from working on special projects. Please dress them accordingly.

Spills and falls happen so please provide extra clothes. These should be sent in your child's backpack on the **1st day of school in a 1-gallon Ziploc-like bag with each item LABELED WITH YOUR CHILD'S INITIALS OR LAST NAME.** Since this bag will be left in their backpack, please remember to monitor and replace items as needed, especially when the season changes. We will send wet/dirty clothes home in a plastic bag tied to the handle of your child's backpack with a note reminding you to replace the clothes in their backpack.

Children will need:

1 pair of pants	1 shirt
1 pair of underwear	1 pair of socks (PLEASE remember to label socks)

We go outside for recess if the temperature is above 30 degrees and it is not raining. All children need to wear a coat, hat/cap, scarf, mittens/gloves and other appropriate winter attire to school. When the temperature reaches 45 degrees, the children can wear just their coat and gloves if they wish. At 50 degrees, they are allowed to wear just a coat. At 55 degrees, we allow the children the choice to remove their coat at recess.

Children are not allowed to wear flip-flops, clogs or other shoes that are not secured with straps or laces.

Violent pictures, violent characters or offensive writing on clothing is not allowed in school and child may be asked to change at the discretion of the school.

PLEASE LABEL EACH ARTICLE OF CLOTHING WITH THE CHILD'S NAME.

Personal Belongings

Toys, make-up, electronic games and similar play items must be left at home. Toys cause distractions inside and outside of the classroom. They can be stolen, left behind or lost and the school cannot be held responsible for them. Other children may become upset, jealous and distracted when toys are brought from home. If a child brings a toy in from home, it may be held in the school office until the child is picked up. If your child comes home with an unfamiliar object, please bring it back to school the next day.

Lunch

Little Explorers does not provide lunch. Please send a healthy lunch in an insulated lunch box for your child to eat at lunchtime. Please do not send juice, soda, candies, fruit roll up type candy, chocolate, go-gurts or chewing gum. Please do not send anything that will need to be cooked or heated.

We work hard to instill healthy eating habits in children. A teacher eats lunch with the students to model this behavior. All “friends” at lunch eat their protein first, then their fruit or vegetable. After that they can eat whatever they would like. If they do not have a fruit or vegetable, then they can not eat anything else in their as it is usually some kind of chips or dessert-type item.

Milk and water are provided at lunch. Students are allowed to drink milk after eating their protein and fruit or vegetable.

Parent will be charged \$5.00 per lunch for any lunch provided by the school for a child due to forgetting a lunch at home. This should not be used often or other charges will apply.

Snacks

Healthy snacks are provided for the children throughout the morning, and at 3:30pm and 5pm for afterschool children. These snacks include a protein, carb and fruit or vegetable. Children may take out their lunch box in the afternoon if they would like to finish their lunch. If a child is still hungry in the afternoon, after lunch, we will provide them with a additional snack.

Breakfast

Little Explorers does not provide Breakfast nor is there time allotted for this after 8am. Please ensure you child eats a healthy breakfast before arriving at school. If your child arrives before

8am, you may send them with a breakfast to eat at school. Please remember that is cannot be cooked or heated.

The USDA does not recognize sugary cereals, items containing icing (donuts, etc) and maple syrup as healthy breakfast foods. To ensure your child can concentrate and get the most out of learning, please provide them with healthy foods. Some examples are:

- ❖ Oatmeal
- ❖ Bagel or toast
- ❖ Eggs
- ❖ WIC approved cereals
- ❖ Yogurt
- ❖ Granola
- ❖ Chicken or other protein

GENERAL INFORMATION

Laundry Family

Each week a family will get to take home the classroom laundry. This is an opportunity for the children to contribute to the care of their environment. It is mostly sponges, place mats, cloth napkins and towels from lunch. We ask, if at all possible, to allow your child to help with the washing and drying of the laundry. Folding is not necessary because the children in the class like to help with that job. Taking laundry home really does help build the child's feeling of being part of their home and school community, but mostly, if they can help with this responsibility. Children ask regularly if they can be the laundry family.

Show and Share

We will be having Show-and-Share but not until at least mid-September. We would like to have the classroom normalized before starting this activity. Each week, four or five children in each class will be allowed to bring in something important from home to share with their friends. You will receive a note with the details of good Show and Share items the week before your child's Show and Share date. Show and Share is a favorite time of the week for most of the children.

Birthday

We have a Birthday Celebration for each child on or near their birthday. If a child has a summer birthday, we will celebrate their half-birthday during the school year. We want to make sure every child feels extra special on their birthday so **please remember to talk to your child's teacher two weeks before your child's birthday** so we both have enough time to prepare. The celebration involves a ceremony of walking around the "sun" one time for each year of their life. Also, there is the telling of the story "On the Day You Were Born" with a beautiful song and dance. And, of course, we sing Happy Birthday. If you can send in one or two pictures from each year of your child's life for the telling of their story, that would be great.

Please feel free to join us for your child's birthday celebration time. Talk to your child's teacher for the time of the celebration.

You are welcome to send in pre-wrapped to-go-home treat or treat bags for your child's classmates on your child's birthday. These will not be eaten or opened in school but will be passed out by your child to be taken home by their friends.

Explorer

One day a week in each classroom, Miss Michelle will be doing the Explore Program with the children in class. It's a fun, interactive way to learn about God. You will probably hear a lot about the mystery box and the songs. Each week your child will bring home a flyer with what they learned and how you can reinforce that learning at home if you choose. If you have any questions or would like to learn more about the curriculum, please contact Miss Sherry.

Lost and Found

There is a box that contains unclaimed items such as clothing, food containers, etc. If your child's belongings are lost, please check let us know. Because families often donate items to the school, we cannot always tell if an item is a current student's. Please label everything you send in for your child to help facilitate getting your items back to you.

POINTS TO PONDER

Dr. Maria Montessori believed in the following:

- ✚ Each child matures or develops at a rate different from that of others. The rate changes over time; thus comparing children of the same age does not produce useful information and causes unnecessary anxiety.
- ✚ Encourage rather than push children. At the school, we encourage, not push. We strongly suggest the same philosophy in the home.
- ✚ Provide sensible, flexible rules and limits that your child can accept and follow easily. This gives your child a sense of security in his/her environment and relationships.
- ✚ Do not do anything for the child that he/she can do for himself/herself.
- ✚ **Demonstrate** each activity to your child in a slow simple manner with as few words as possible and let him/her try the task. Give time to practice; let your child use real objects.
- ✚ Only touch a child when invited to do so.
- ✚ Never speak ill of the child in the child's presence or absence.
- ✚ Be ever ready to answer the call of a child who needs you.
- ✚ Respect the child who makes a mistake and then can later correct it.
- ✚ Stop immediately and firmly correct a misuse of the environment and any action that endangers the child.
- ✚ Treat the child with the best of good manners and offer the best you have in you and at your disposal.
- ✚ Limit TV time, computer time and video games. These things can quickly compromise the bulk of your time with your child.

Maria Montessori - Biography

Maria Montessori was, in many ways, ahead of her time. Born in the town of Chiaravalle, in the province of Ancona, Italy, on August 31, 1870, she became one of the first female physicians in Italy upon her graduation from medical school in 1896. Shortly afterwards, she was chosen to represent Italy at two different women's conferences, in Berlin in 1896 and in London in 1900.

In her medical practice, her clinical observations led her to analyze how children learn, and she concluded that they build themselves from what they find in their environment. Shifting her focus from the body to the mind, she returned to the university in 1901, this time to study psychology and philosophy. In 1904, she was made a professor of anthropology at the University of Rome.

Her desire to help children was so strong, however, that in 1906 she gave up both her university chair and her medical practice to work with a group of sixty young children of working parents in the San Lorenzo district of Rome. It was there that she founded, on January 6, 1907, the first Casa dei Bambini, or "Children's House." What ultimately became the Montessori method of education developed there, based upon Montessori's scientific observations of these children's almost effortless ability to absorb knowledge from their surroundings, as well as their tireless interest in manipulating materials. Every piece of equipment, every exercise, every method Montessori developed was based on what she observed children to do "naturally," by themselves, unassisted by adults.

Children teach themselves. This simple but profound truth inspired Montessori's lifelong pursuit of educational reform, methodology, psychology, teaching, and teacher training--all based on her dedication to furthering the self-creating process of the child.

Maria Montessori made her first visit to the United States in 1913, the same year that Alexander Graham Bell and his wife Mabel founded the Montessori Educational Association at their Washington, DC, home. Among her other strong American supporters were Thomas Edison and Helen Keller.

In 1915, she attracted world attention with her "glass house" schoolroom exhibit at the Panama-Pacific International Exhibition in San Francisco. On this second U.S. visit, she also conducted a teacher training course and addressed the annual conventions of both the National Education Association and the International Kindergarten Union. The committee that brought her to San Francisco included Margaret Wilson, the daughter of U.S. President Woodrow Wilson.

The Spanish government invited her to open a research institute in 1917. In 1919, she began a series of teacher training courses in London. In 1922, she was appointed a government inspector of schools in her native Italy, but because of her opposition to Mussolini's fascism, she was forced to leave Italy in 1934. She traveled to Barcelona, Spain, and was rescued there by a British cruiser in 1936, during the Spanish Civil War. She opened the Montessori Training Centre in Laren, Netherlands, in 1938, and founded a series of teacher training courses in India in 1939.

In 1940, when India entered World War II, she and her son, Mario Montessori, were interned as enemy aliens, but she was still permitted to conduct training courses. Later, she founded the Montessori Center in London (1947). She was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize three times-- in 1949, 1950, and 1951.

Maria Montessori died in Noordwijk, Holland, on May 6, 1952.

THE HISTORY OF THE MONTESSORI MOVEMENT

Nearly 100 years ago, an Italian physician inspired the birth of a worldwide educational movement. Dr. Maria Montessori, one of Italy's first female physicians, became interested in education while caring for mentally challenged children in a psychiatric clinic in Rome. There she combined sensory-rich environments and hands-on experiential techniques in the hopes of reaching children previously labeled "deficient and insane." The experiment was a resounding success. Within two years, the children were able to pass Italy's standardized public school tests. More importantly, Montessori's innovative practices had elicited positive learning behaviors from children previously left behind by society.

In 1907, Montessori continued shaping her learning model by opening "A Children's House" for pre-school children living in the slums of San Lorenzo. With her scientific background to guide her, she observed how young people learned best when engaged in purposeful activity rather than simply being fed information. She drew upon her clinical understanding of children's cognitive growth and development in constructing an educational framework that would respect individuality and fulfill the needs of the "whole child." Dr. Montessori's pioneering work created a blueprint for nurturing all children—learning disabled to gifted—to become the self-motivated, independent and life-long learners that are the ultimate goal of today's educational reform movement.

Since that time, Montessori's philosophy, materials and practices have spread around the globe and have been implemented in a variety of cultural settings. Following Dr. Montessori's death in 1952, the practice enjoyed a renaissance in America as parents sought new learning options for their children. In 1960, parent and teacher Dr. Nancy McCormick Rambusch founded the **American Montessori Society (AMS)** to meet an overwhelming public demand for more information on Montessori education.

Today, Dr. Montessori's visionary ideas flourish as the cornerstone of a thriving educational practice. There are thousands of Montessori schools in the U.S. including hundreds of programs in public and charter schools, where the interest in enrollment often results in long waiting lists. However, because any school can call itself "Montessori" – there is no trademark on the name – AMS can only vouch for the authenticity of the programs as practiced in schools that are members of the Society.

As more and more schools incorporated core elements of her model—multi-age classrooms, early childhood education—Montessori became widely recognized as being ahead of her time. Remarkably, her visionary ideas remain viable concepts that have profoundly influenced the entire educational landscape.

PARENTS AND THE AMERICAN MONTESSORI SOCIETY

Dr. Maria Montessori viewed the child as a member of a family, not as an isolated individual, whose most formative life experiences take place within the family. She recognized parents as a child's first and most influential teachers.

As a parent you are a role model and teacher

- Know your child well
- Be a patient observer and careful listener
- Place your confidence in your child
- Provide simple, safe and consistent rules encouraging your child to take responsibility and to contribute to his or her home and family.

As a parent you prepare your child's home

- Provide safety (physical & emotional)
- Provide organization, consistency, a reliable routine
- Prepare areas that are child sized — a place of her/his own
- Provide your child age-appropriate *responsibilities* in your home
- Provide "*real life*" experiences
- Provide age-appropriate choices and opportunities to make positive decisions

As a parent you set the limits

- Offer protection from objects and ideas that can hurt
- Always encourage your child to be capable and confident
- Limit toys and games to a workable number (rotate toys)
- Monitor television and other forms of media (inappropriate exposure can negatively affect social, emotional, intellectual, and physical growth)
- Develop consistent routines which encourage your child to develop self-control (self-control, responsible behavior and freedom are outcomes, not starting points)

As a parent you support and encourage your child

- Offer great possibilities for exploration in the home environment
- Encourage children to do for themselves ("Let me do it myself!")
- Encourage your child to be an active agent of his/her own education

THE ROLE OF THE PARENT AND THE SCHOOL

Parent, teacher, child, and school relationships are very important in a student's life. An alliance based on mutual respect and support will enhance all individuals' understanding, knowledge, and insight and offer a cohesive, prepared learning environment.

How to give support to your school

- Be involved, volunteer
- Be informed, attend all conferences & meetings
- Be knowledgeable, attend Parent Education meetings
- Contribute financially

Involved parents support their Montessori school by contributing their time, talents, and money. Each school offers different programs and projects for parents to volunteer their time, energy, and resources.

Informed parents communicate with their school by attending planned conferences and other parent activities, reading newsletters and e-mails, and asking questions. Ask the school's administrator or your child's teacher for the best time and method to communicate informally — to share insights, questions, and observations.

Knowledgeable parents select a school by seeking an optimal match between their child's needs; their expectations; and the school's philosophy, program, and services. Parents support the school's policies and procedures and attend Parent Education Meetings, as well as read articles and books about Montessori education.

Contribute financially to support programs at your child's school. Your contributions are often tax deductible and will help to create a foundation for stability and growth, vital for the school.

THE ROLE OF THE PARENT AND THE AMERICAN MONTESSORI SOCIETY

Since its formation in 1960, the American Montessori Society has been the mainstay of the Montessori movement in the United States. AMS is a non-profit, non-discriminatory service organization dedicated to fostering Montessori teaching methods in independent and public schools, providing teacher education, and services. AMS has become a collective voice of over 9,000 Montessori teachers, school administrators, parents, and interested friends committed to furthering Montessori philosophy and promoting excellence in education.

MEMBERSHIP

AMS warmly welcomes parents and guardians as members. Through our professional development events, publications, and in-house resources, we can help these important constituent groups to enhance their understanding of a Montessori education, learn how to develop collaborative partnerships with their children's teachers, stay abreast of related public

policy initiatives and the latest Montessori research, and more. To become a member:
www.amshq.org/becomeAMember.htm.

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

Parent or general membership benefits include:

- **Montessori Life** magazine four times a year
- Discounts on conference, workshop, and symposia fees
- Discounts on publications and videos
- Discounts off any one purchase from Nienhuis Montessori USA
- A combined voice and community of thousands of Montessori parents supporting Montessori education for children and Montessori teacher education through their AMS membership.

RESOURCES AND PUBLICATIONS

AMS offers books, videos, brochures, and pamphlets for Parent Education and Professional Development. These can also be found on Amazon

- Montessori Questions & Answers
- The Early Childhood Years (3-6)
- A Parent's Guide to the Montessori Classroom
- The elementary School Years (6-12)
- Montessori Adolescent Programs
- The Authentic American Montessori School
- Your Child is in an Accredited School
- The Kindergarten Experience
- *Montessori in Contemporary American culture*
- *The Montessori Controversy*
- *Nurturing the Spirit*
- *Learning How to Learn*
- *Peaceful Children, Peaceful World*