



Highlands Campus Parent Handbook 2012-2013

Our Purpose

As a Montessori school, respect for each child is our guiding principle. We believe in the potential of every child to develop as an individual, as part of a family, and as part of a community. It is our goal to provide your child with a rich environment for social and academic growth. We stress basic human values of honesty, respect for others, and love of life and learning. We have no religious affiliation and we welcome diversity in all its forms as something that strengthens the school experience.

Sign on as a current parent on our website at lakesidemontessori.net to:

- Register on line
- Print car nametags
- Access web cams
- Read monthly newsletters
- Review snack calendar
- Parent Resource Page
- Review school calendar

MISSION STATEMENT

We practice the Montessori method because it offers not only a cognitive, developmental foundation, but also a set of values to guide a child now and throughout his or her lifetime. We are committed to each child as a whole and unique individual, and to each child's place within a peaceful, purposeful educational atmosphere. The principle that guides our Montessori community is the triangle of respect.

- Respect for self, which leads to independence and a sense of unshakeable competence
- Respect for each other, which forms a sense of belonging, purpose, and social responsibility
- Respect for the world which sustains a child's sense of awe, wonder and curiosity throughout life

It is a privilege to participate in the lives of children, and it is to them that we dedicate our work each day.

SCHOOL POLICY ON LEARNING

It is Lakeside Montessori School policy that children in our care will receive an enriched learning experience in accordance with Montessori philosophy. This includes developmentally appropriate instruction, both individually and in a group based on the child's readiness, willingness and by the determination of the head teacher in each classroom. Our school is accredited and our teachers are trained and experienced in identifying the best course of action for each individual child. They will not pressure a student to perform beyond their capacity regardless of age or parental perception of the child's ability. We foster the best interest of our students for life long success, as they incrementally build foundational skills to prepare for advanced concepts in the future. We appreciate your support in this mission.

DIVERSITY STATEMENT

Respect for diversity in all its forms is a basic premise of Montessori philosophy, which places human dignity and freedom among the highest goals of education. All people have an innate right to be given respect.

We understand this to mean that individual differences and commonalities are accepted and welcome under the larger philosophical umbrella of respect for each person. In a Montessori environment children learn what "respect" means in an immediate, daily experience. This includes recognition of the developmental needs of the children in our community.

The Montessori approach to diversity education is based on the "needs of people." This developmentally appropriate practice relates discussion of diversity to the basic fundamental needs all people have in common, such as the need for shelter, community, food, work, and self-expression. The Montessori teacher will use tools such as globes, maps, books and activities to demonstrate to the child that we live in a world rich with diversity, deserving of respect. We teach peace based on the common good manners of our culture. Through the "needs of people" approach we include puzzles, pictures, books and stories, and other curriculum showing the wonderful ways we all differ.

Due to the age group we serve, we do not instruct the child directly on differences between religions, or issues relating to race or ethnicity, disabilities or family structure, and we recognize the complexity of diversity within the community we serve. We feel we can best respect this diversity by allowing families to address these topics in detail with the pre-elementary school child. But we also respect the child's right to express him or herself. If a child were to bring up a religious celebration in a sharing circle, our goal would be to listen and acknowledge the child's statement without comparison or editorializing in any way.

Holidays will be discussed or celebrated in the classrooms in a seasonal way. Holidays that have religious significance, such as Christmas or Hanukkah, will not be celebrated or discussed in an instructional way by school personnel or by family members at school, since the instruction and values-related questions are better addressed by the child's own family and traditions.

Violence, bigotry and hate have no place in our peaceful community. For the young child this is presented largely as a matter of proper behavior. We immediately address discrimination or harassment within the context of respect. For instance, if a child is made fun of because of a cultural issue, the teacher may say, "We always treat one another with respect. It is the right thing to do to show good manners and respect for one another."

Repeating the premise of the Montessori program can best summarize our diversity statement: It places human dignity and freedom among the highest goals of education. It is demonstrated in our classrooms through respect for oneself and one another.

MEDICAL POLICY

All private schools are required by state law to maintain current immunization records on each student. It is required that medical records be updated each year. With your cooperation, every effort will be made by the school staff to maintain this record.

No medications are given to children except with a written request by the parent. Please fill out and sign a medicine permission form, which can be obtained from the office. All medicines should be in their original containers labeled with the child's name and with clear instructions for use. Doctor's permission is not required for some non-prescription drugs, i.e. antihistamines, non-aspirin pain relievers, decongestants, non-narcotic cough suppressants, anti-itching cream and sunscreen. Other non-prescription medications do require a doctor's permission. We cannot administer medications that have not met these requirements. Sunscreen, cough drops, lip balm and similar items must be treated as medications.

Children will not be permitted at school with any of the following:

- Fevers of 101 degrees F (axillary) or higher must subside for a 24 hour period without the use of fever reducing medications before child can attend.
- Vomiting on two or more occasions within the past 24 hours
- Diarrhea- three or more watery stools in a 24 hour period
- Draining rash
- Eye discharge or pink eye
- Fatigue that prevents participation in regular activities
- Lice or nits
- Excessive nasal congestion or discharge

If a child is well enough to be in school, he should be able to go outdoors for recess. Please send a request from the physician if this is not advised.

If at any time the school suspects a child is too ill to be at school, the school may require that the child be taken home. A parent/guardian or another person authorized by the parent must be available to pick up an ill child within 30 minutes of the school's report of illness, or other needs your child may have.

EMERGENCIES

While emergencies at school are rare, in the event something of concern comes up while your child is at school, we need to be able to reach you **promptly**. It is the school's expectation that parents be available immediately at any time in case of illness or emergencies involving their child while at school.

Please check your emergency numbers that we keep on file for accuracy. We want to be able to talk to **a parent within five minutes**. Numbers connected to voice mail are not an acceptable form of contact for emergencies. If you use a pager or cell phone number, please be diligent about keeping it turned on. If you have questions about this, please speak to us. **If a parent will be unreachable immediately, parents must arrange for someone else to be on call.** A note with parent's signature is required **if** someone other than an authorized person will be picking up your child. It must include the authorized person's name, address, and telephone number.

In the event of a medical emergency, or if we are unable to reach a parent, local 911 personnel will be called, and will make decisions regarding appropriate intervention and care. Every effort is made to keep your child comfortable and calm.

ATTENDANCE

It is expected that children will arrive to class **regularly and on time**. Please notify us if you or your child will be away for any extended period. Also, we appreciate knowing of any changes in your child's life, such as a parent traveling. Tuition refunds will not be made in the case of absences due to illness or vacations.

DAILY SCHEDULE

8:00-8:30 AM	Individual and group games
8:30-9:00 AM	Classroom preparation and activities
9:00-11:15 AM	Class (work time, circle and recess)
11:15-12:30 M	Lunch and recess
12:30-3:00 PM	Class (work time, circle and recess)
3:00-3:30 PM	After school recess
3:30-4:00 PM	Snack (school provided)
4:00-6:00 PM	Full care program, free play, perceptual motor activities, dismissal

ARRIVALS AND DISMISSALS

Arrival time for Montessori class is 8:45-9:00 AM and 12:15-12:30 PM. Teachers will assist children from the car during these times, or parents may choose to park and escort their children into the building. Please be aware of traffic behind you.

If you experience a delay in your drop-off or pick-up procedures due to a long goodbye or an item left behind, please pull forward into a designated parking space. (Handicapped spot may be used for quick drop off and pick up.) Arrivals and dismissals are busy times and for this reason we ask you to arrive promptly and refrain from lengthy conversations with the staff.

If you arrive late for class, please park your car and escort your child through the office entrance. If you are prevented from picking up your child at your usual pick up time, please call the school so that your child may be reassured. Dismissal time is from 11:15-11:30 AM and from 2:45-3:00 PM. Lakeside School staff will walk the children to waiting cars or parents may park and come into the building to retrieve their own children.

Full care children arriving before 8:45 AM and dismissing after 3:00 PM must be walked through the office entrance where sign-in computer will be found. Vouchers can be used for any unscheduled time before or after Montessori classes. State law requires a parent or caretaker's signature and time of day at each arrival and dismissal. Transportation is not provided. We encourage you to form carpools when convenient. A note with parent's signature is required if someone other than an authorized person will be picking up your child. It must include the authorized person's name, address, and telephone number.

SAFETY ISSUES

Our first priority is the safety and well being of children in our care. We are a fully licensed facility, and we put a great deal of effort into seeing that we keep to the highest standards. If at any time a parent has concerns, please contact an administrator immediately.

All entrances to the school are locked. To pick up a child please use the main entrance. No unauthorized person may pick up a child from school. Unfamiliar persons will be asked for picture I.D.

If at any time an authorized person picking up a child from school appears intoxicated, unstable or otherwise unsafe to care for a child, staff are required to call 911 to allow law enforcement to make decisions about safe transport.

During arrival and dismissal times, for the safety of our students and staff, please keep cell phones off while in our driveway.

During dismissal times, we ask that the adult picking up the child buckle the child in his/her car seat. If this involves the driver, **please turn off the car and set the parking brake.** This will provide a safer and more efficient dismissal process. Because our driveway can get very busy, anyone needing a little extra time securing your child in the car seat is asked to pull forward into one of the parking spots. We will be happy to walk your child to your car. Many thanks for your cooperation in this important safety issue.

WEATHER POLICY

Our school follows the Issaquah Public Schools with regards to school closures due to snow or other weather related closures. While your child is at school, please be aware of the weather. **If conditions cause Issaquah Public Schools to close early, our schools will also close. When Issaquah Public Schools are 1 or 2 hours late in starting, our school will open on time.** When we experience a power outage, we will contact parents by phone or email that the school is closing. Please be sure that we have your updated phone numbers and email addresses so that we can reach you within 5 minutes, and that your child can be picked up in 30 minutes. School closure days due to weather or power outages will not be made up and tuition refunds will not be made.

FOOD ALLERGIES

Parents must notify us of any food allergies. If your child has food allergies, you are required to provide appropriate snacks for your child only. Please notify the office so that your name can be removed from the snack calendar.

LUNCH

Lunch is not provided. Please send your child's lunch in a labeled bag or lunch box. If you send a thermos, the pop-up top is the easiest for children to use. Per Health Department nutritional requirements, lunches must include one dairy product, one meat or meat alternative, a grain product and two servings of fruit or vegetables. In addition, lunches and snacks must be a source of Vitamin C daily and Vitamin A three times per week. When including food items that need to be kept cold, please include re-useable ice packs. Soda pop and candy of any kind are not acceptable. Please include two plain paper napkins in the lunch box, one to be used as a place mat, one for their lap. Food should be "child ready". We cannot peel, cut or heat individual lunches. Every effort is made to assist your child with opening packages and containers.

SNACK

During Montessori class, our families provide snack through voluntary participation. Please check the annual snack list to see when it is your family's turn to bring snacks. Please notify the office if you do not wish to participate. Health Department regulations require that foods be in their original unopened packages.

CLOTHING

It is imperative that all removable clothing and sharing items be **labeled**. Coats, hats, and sweaters, etc. not marked and ultimately not claimed will benefit a charitable organization. We make every effort to get clothing home with your child, but if something does become missing, please ask to check the lost and found.

Children participate in a variety of activities, including art and outside play. While an effort will be made to keep children tidy, please choose comfortable clothing that allows your child to play and work freely.

Please do not send backpacks.

TOILETING AND EXTRA CLOTHES

Independence with toileting is a primary indicator of readiness for this kind of school setting. Children must be toilet trained before attending school. Children who are toilet trained:

- Know when they need to go with little or no prompting.
- Handle most aspects of toileting with minimal assistance, including wiping.

We can assist verbally with changing clothes. We are not equipped with diapering facilities. Please choose attire that can be removed and put on independently when going in or out of doors and to the bathroom. **We ask that you send an extra set of labeled clothes and shoes in a Ziploc bag with your child's name on it that can be kept at school.** If this clothing is used, please send a new set. We can usually assist children in case of a minor toileting accident. For licensing and sanitation reasons, parents are called for major toileting accidents.

If your child is not toilet trained or otherwise ready to attend at your scheduled start date, financial matters are as follows: Registration and last month deposit is always non-refundable. If you choose to completely withdraw your child from school, those fees are forfeited. Alternatively, you can pay tuition fees to hold your place until your child is ready, or you can withdraw temporarily, return to the in-house waiting list, and return when your child is ready to accept the next available opening. If you choose this option we will hold your fees and transfer them to your next start date within the current school year. Paid fees do not carry over to the next school year.

SHOES

For your child's safety, the school requires that children come to school in rubber-soled shoes that enclose the entire foot, and are closed with ties, Velcro or buckles. Slip-ons, sandals, leather-soled dress shoes, and cowboy boots are all dangerous on the playground. (We realize parents can occasionally face "battles" with children over these boundaries. Our staff is happy to help you set the boundaries with your child!) Watches, jewelry and other items that are toy-like in nature should be reserved for wearing when not attending school.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS

Your child's birthday is his/her own special day to share with friends. For celebrations to go smoothly there are a few simple rules to observe:

- Please email the office in advance to alert the teacher so that she can plan the necessary time and not have a conflicting lesson.
- Parents are invited to send **small cookies** or **fruit snack** as a birthday snack to share. Please do not bring cakes, ice cream/frozen treats, donuts or cupcakes. **We ask that you not bring any item that contain nuts, chocolate, peanut butter or peanut oil, or with a disclaimer that states product produced in a plant that makes other nut products,** as some children have allergies. The Health Department requires only store-bought foods in the original unopened container. Please send paper napkins for all.
- Please **do not** send in birthday party bags.
- On occasion your address and phone number may be shared with a classmate for the purpose of scheduling play dates and parties. If you do **not** wish to allow us to share your contact information with a classmate, please specify in **writing** not to include your child and your child's name will be omitted from our contact list.

NAPS

If your child naps on a regular basis at school, parents should provide a sleeping bag or a small blanket and a small pillow. Our storage space is limited, so nap items must fit completely inside and be brought to school in a **standard-sized pillowcase**. For health purposes, we request that the bedding be taken home at the end of **each week** for cleaning. Please put your child's name on each bedding item.

SHARING

"Sharing" can be an important aspect of your child's school experience. In an effort to make it a positive experience, and part of the educational process, we have established several ways your child can participate in sharing.

- At any time, your child may bring a book to place in the reading area of his or her classroom, where it will be available to all the children. Please make sure the book is clearly labeled with your child's name to ensure its safe return.
- At any time, a child may bring an object from nature (rocks, shells, leaves, seeds, etc.) to place in the "nature" area of the classroom.
- Once a month, the teachers will devote a circle time to a "sharing circle". This is a verbal exercise, where each child is given the option to share a story, a joke, or something special happening in his or her life. This is a valuable opportunity for children to practice speaking in front of others in a safe, natural atmosphere. While most children choose to share, it is always a choice, never forced. Sharing circle is conducted during the first Monday and Tuesday of each month.

Please limit sharing items to appropriate books and natural objects. **Please no toys**.

THREE-YEAR CURRICULUM PLAN

We have long-term goals in mind when we work with children. We prepare them to become unique individuals with diverse expression, who are confident, competent, and passionate about learning and empathetic toward others. The Montessori learning environment is a highly individualized approach. It provides the child an opportunity to acquire skills and creative expression in practical life, sensory-motor learning, language, math, music and art.

In addition to the basic areas of study, each classroom follows a 3-year plan that integrates science, art and social studies into the curriculum. The classrooms rotate among three broad subject areas: physical science, natural science, and human culture. The yearlong sequence of lessons and materials is presented as an essential component of the basic Montessori process.

The specific nature of the lessons will be outlined in plans by each teacher. These plans will be on file in the school office from October 1-June 1, and are available for review on the Current Parent website. However, as is consistent with the Montessori directive to "follow the child", teachers often adjust their plans to respond to the needs of the group.

VOUCHERS AND "ADD AN AFTERNOON" PROGRAM

In order to provide additional care on an unscheduled basis, we offer a voucher program for prepayment. A sheet of eight one-hour vouchers may be purchased for \$64.00. Any quantity less than 8 will be sold at a rate of \$9.00 each. These may be used during the 8:00-9:00 AM

opening hour, the lunch hour 11:30-12:30, or from 3:00-4:00, 4:00-5:00 and 5:00-6:00. Emergency drop-in care will be billed at \$11.00 per hour. This time must be approved by administration and depends on space available at time of request. Children picked up after 6:00 PM will be charged \$8.00 for every five minutes (or portion thereof.)

Parents can purchase a sheet of “**Add An Afternoon Class**” Vouchers and give one to the staff at drop off time. You can purchase a sheet of 6 for \$210.00 or less at \$35.00 per day. No reservations are required. Drop off time is between 11:15 and 11:30 send your child with a packed lunch. Children arriving after 11:30 should have already eaten lunch.

All vouchers are to be purchased in advance and sent in with the child the day they are to be used. If a child is left for unscheduled time without a prepaid voucher, an IOU voucher will be issued at the rate of \$10.00/hour (or portion thereof) to be paid immediately upon dismissal of the child. Please call the office if you would like more information on our voucher program.

PARENT COMMUNICATION

Essential in the care of your child is good communication. Your child's teacher is available to you for discussion regarding your child's progress and classroom experience. Renee Thornton, our Director and the Administrators are available to answer any questions or concerns. You may request a conference with your child's teacher or review your child's records by calling or emailing the office of your child's school. The Rolodex, student files, curriculum notes, etc. are the private property of the school and may not be used or transferred without the specific written permission of the Director and the parents.

We will conduct various parent meetings and events during the school year. Exact dates are listed on the school calendar or will be announced in the monthly newsletter. Monthly newsletters also include notes from your child's teacher. Formal Progress Reports are sent home in December and May, and give detailed accounts of your child's growth and individual learning goals. Individual parent notes may also be sent during the school year.

You are always welcome in our school and we encourage you to come in and observe your child or participate in volunteer class activities. Please contact the teacher about any formal observations so that she can schedule your visit at a mutually agreeable time. Please plan any formal observation of the classroom after November.

DISCIPLINE

In general our environment and structure eliminate the need for adult-imposed discipline. We teach children to make appropriate choices, and encourage self-discipline. Anything we ask a child to do centers around three basic boundaries: respect yourself, respect others, and respect all the creatures and things around you. We have three ground rules that we enforce. A child may not mistreat another child, mistreat school materials or engage in behavior that could result in injury to himself or another child. If a child breaks one of these rules he is spoken to and reminded of the appropriate actions. This is done quietly to the child in a respectful fashion. If necessary, the teacher will ask the child to either choose self-control or to sit and watch the children until he is ready to rejoin the group.

If at any time a child's behavior threatens or endangers the safety of others, at the school's discretion a child may be sent home for the day. The school and parents will work together on a case-by-case basis to resolve the issue as soon as possible. The school must be able, under

the constraints of normal supervision, to provide a safe, non-threatening environment for all children. At the school's discretion, a child may be asked not to return until we judge we can reasonably provide this safety. Biting is a significant health threat and is usually considered serious aggression, requiring the child to be sent home for the remainder of the day.

PEST CONTROL POLICY

We are required by state law to inform you of our pest control procedure. Although we generally do not use pesticides, when we professionally treat any landscaped areas, it will be on a Friday evening when children are not present.

DISASTER PLAN

In case of fire, all classroom staff will assist children in evacuation of the building via the established route practiced during monthly drills. Administration will search the building including all restrooms. In case of earthquake, children will be instructed to "drop and cover" until shaking stops as practiced during quarterly drills. If there is damage to the building, all will evacuate using the practiced route if accessible or an alternative route if not accessible. Administration will search the building.

As per fire department recommendations, parents are **not** notified prior to disaster drills.

For any disaster requiring evacuation, head teachers and classroom assistants will guide the children to safety where the head teacher will take roll using her daily roll sheet. She will also have a first aid kit that she will take from the classroom prior to evacuation. She will administer first aid as necessary while the assistants care for the other children. Administrators will search the building and once evacuated start phoning parents or emergency contacts, using cell phones if necessary.

Emergency food and water, located throughout the building will be accessed as needed. Emergency services will be contacted if available.

WEAPONS POLICY

Lakeside Montessori School is a weapon free school. Any student who brings a pocketknife, squirt gun, paintball gun, and/or other play gun to school will have the item confiscated and is suspended from attendance at school for up to one week at the school's discretion.

PROTOCOL FOR CHILD OF CONCERN

Montessori is a method of education that can meet the needs of a broad range of children. In the event that a child experiences significant difficulties, or gives the school reason for concern related to developmental or behavioral issues, a protocol process will be followed. This policy takes a team approach, involving parents, teachers and, when appropriate, professional consultation. At all times the safety of the entire group and the integrity of the school program will be given first priority.

CLIENT/EMPLOYEE RELATIONSHIPS

Relationships between the school staff and clients (children and families) are carefully cultivated and professionally oriented. Social relationships with clients are strongly

discouraged. This includes babysitting or other work relationships that may develop as a result of client/staff interaction. We have a policy that hiring and socializing with Lakeside Montessori staff is prohibited. There are many reasons why this discretion is required, including the protection of employment and conflict of interest. Questions about this should be discussed with the director.

Parents are required to sign that they have received the Parent Handbook before child's first day of attendance. Attendance at school implies agreement to comply with and understanding of all school policies in this handbook. It is the responsibility of parents to promptly seek clarification of policy that is not understood. The school reserves the right to make changes in the handbook and/or policy at any time. Notification of changes will be made through the monthly newsletters or other written notice.

We are a fully licensed childcare facility with the State of Washington for children 2.5-6 years old including the kindergarten level. No child will be excluded on the basis of sex, race, color, religion, ability, orientation or national origin. All Lakeside Montessori School staff shares your concern for your child's health and safety. In addition, we are mandated by state law to immediately report any suspicions of child abuse or neglect to Child Protective Services or King County Police. School personnel may not be able to notify parents when the police or Child Protective Services are called about possible child abuse, neglect, or exploitation. This depends on the recommendation of Child Protective Services.