



Montessori School of Lemont Parent Handbook

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MONTESSORI

School of Lemont



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Dear Parents,

Welcome to the Montessori School of Lemont. For almost 50 years our school has been educating children age 3 through eighth grade following the educational philosophy of Dr. Maria Montessori. The Montessori Method of education began in Italy in 1906 and is a scientifically proven method based on a multi-sensory approach in a activity rich environment that provides concrete representation of concepts. Presentations are open ended and age appropriate materials encourage experimentation and serve as a point of departure for the student under the guidance of our trained and certified Montessori teachers.

MSOL is a not for profit 501(c)3 charitable organization registered with the Illinois State Board of Education; affiliated with the American Montessori Society; member of the North America Montessori Teachers' Association and Association of Illinois Montessori Schools; and member of the Lemont and Homer Township Chambers of Commerce.

This Parent Handbook is revised each year so please take the time to familiarize yourself with our policies and procedures. This will limit misunderstandings and help new families to transition into our school community. As Montessori wrote in *The Secret of Childhood*, "We must be taught and we must be willing to accept guidance if we wish to become effective teachers." She was speaking not only of educators but also of parents who are the primary teachers of their children. Our faculty and staff look forward to working together with you to guide your children.

Best Regards,

Therese Colby
Administrator



Chapter 1: Welcome

History, Mission Statement and Philosophy

History

In 1979, Montessori School of Lemont (MSOL) was established in Hometown, Illinois as Montessori Elementary School of Southwest Cook County by a small group of teachers dedicated to offering Montessori education to students from families committed to this method. The Board of Directors approved the move of the school to Lemont in 1990. In 2001, the school moved to its permanent location in Lemont after the construction of two buildings on 7.5 acres of donated land. In 2010, a third building was added to the campus, and a ‘Natural Playground’ was established.

Mission Statement

It is the mission of MSOL to provide for the physical, intellectual, emotional and spiritual education of children ages 3-14 years following the methods and philosophy of Dr. Maria Montessori.

Philosophy

We accept and encourage the individuality of all members of our community: children, parents, staff and visitors. We welcome people of all cultures, races, religions, nationalities, origin, disabilities, genders, and orientation in the belief that we will be enriched by the differences and aware of the inter-relatedness of all peoples in all societies. It is Maria Montessori’s global approach to education that we believe to be *Education for Life*.

School Environment

The main objective of MSOL is to provide a carefully prepared, stimulating environment that will help children develop fundamental qualities, attitudes, skills and ideas that are essential for a lifetime of creative thinking and learning. The specific goal for each child who attends MSOL is the development of:

- A positive attitude toward learning
- Positive self-esteem and self-confidence
- Habits of concentration for lifelong study skills
- An abiding curiosity

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- Habits of initiative and persistence
- Self discipline and a sense of order
- Sensory motor skills for discrimination and judgment
- Socially acceptable behavior
- The basic skills necessary for a lifetime of learning

Planes of Development

Based on her own observations and the observations of other psychologists, Dr. Montessori believed that ‘growth is a succession of births,’ and that each birth starts a new plane of development. Each plane is built on the formation of the previous plane and if the child fulfills his/her needs at each plane, he /she will be prepared to experience healthy and successful growth and brain development at the next plane.

The first and third planes of development are times of dramatic transformation, and the second and fourth planes are relatively calm and stable. Roughly speaking, the first plane occurs before and during preschool (0-6 years), the second plane occurs during elementary school (6-12 years), the third plane occurs during the teenage years (12-18 years) and the fourth plane occurs during the college years (18-24 years.)

The First Plane of Development: 0-6 years, “The Absorbent Mind”

The discovery that the child has a mind able to absorb on its own account produces a revolution in education...This is the new path on which education has been put; to help the mind in its process of development, and aid its energies and strengthen its many powers.” (The Absorbent Mind, p. 28)

At this stage, children have an in-born tendency to teach themselves, and a mind that spontaneously and effortlessly absorbs information. This is a self centered time of development. Birth through age six is the most active time for brain development. Will (the ability to make choices) and self-discipline are slowly beginning to develop. The school environment enhances these natural abilities by providing a specially prepared environment in which they are free to move and explore under the guidance of a trained teacher. In the first plane of development, children seek to unfold and reveal their personalities through movement and language. Freedom of movement in a structured environment allows



children to organize their bodies and mind by providing opportunities to master tasks. Repetition of movement leads to refinement of the skills necessary for cognitive development. Children learn the rules of speech for their culture through listening and then imitating spoken language. The role of the adult is to maintain an orderly, consistent environment and schedule to allow the child to feel secure so that he/she can classify newly acquired information, necessary for brain development. We must observe, understand and follow the development of the child and to provide a beautiful, secure environment that fosters physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual growth. We must also provide real opportunities for independence, rich language and a variety of sensorial experiences because experiences provided during this period of development are physically integrated into the brain. This first plane includes:

- Construction of self
- Sensorial exploration of fact and reality, NOT fantasy
- Sensitive periods for:
 - Movement
 - Language
 - Spatial order of the environment
 - Temporal order – routines
 - Details – small objects
- Individual work
- Grace and Courtesy
- Rapid Physical Change

The Primary Class: 3 to 6 years

In this period of the first plane of development, the child is process oriented and focused on order and organization. In this period, the child needs a protective environment where he can explore at will without interference and learn at his own pace. In this stage, he seeks to understand his world by assimilating details through exploration. Because he cannot use abstract thought yet, all his learning comes through the manipulation of concrete materials. The prepared environment and materials provide a model for the order he needs. The teacher's presentations provide models for how to use the materials.



The Primary Environment and Curriculum

The primary environment is prepared with a selection of activities in five major areas. The practical life area provides activities for daily living which aid the development of coordination, concentration, order and independence. Sensory education is aided with a variety of sensorial materials that help children refine their senses using graded materials which encourage progressively finer discrimination of qualities such as shape, size, length, volume, width, dimension, diameter, sound and smell. The manipulative materials in the math area engage children in counting quantities, recognizing and using numerals, and the mathematical operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. The materials in the language area introduce children to phonics, spelling, penmanship, creative writing, pre-reading and reading skills. In the area of cultural subjects, children are introduced to the sciences. The geography materials include puzzle maps, artifacts and pictures from each country. Special visitors representing the culture and cuisine of different countries augment the geography curriculum. Concrete materials for botany, zoology and geology introduce the children to the natural sciences. Music, art and movement experiences are integrated into the academic areas. Exposure to German and Spanish at this level is presented by native speakers. For more on the primary curriculum go to www.lemontmontessori.com/primary_curriculum.pdf

The Second Plane of Development: 6-12 years, “The Reasoning Mind”

During the second plane, the child is no longer self-absorbed. Dr. Montessori called this ‘the birth of the social being.’ The child wants to understand the society in which he/she lives and wants to participate in it. The elementary classroom is a mini-society where children are less dependent on adults and actively seek to find and create their place in the group. The child is no longer dependent on external order because he/she has internalized it. This is also a plane of responsibility and the power to reason develops. The second plane includes:

- Social development
- Exploration with imagination and by conceptualizing
- Exploration of the universe across time and space, ‘Cosmic order’



- Beginning of development of morality
- Interest in justice, ‘What is fair?’
- Working collaboratively and in groups of peers
- Strength, resilience
- Gradual physical growth

The Third Plane of Development: 12-18 years, “The Humanistic Mind”

The third plane is similar to the first plane. Montessori refers to this child as ‘neonate,’ or new born. This child has a lot of intellectual information about the world and now knows himself/herself but is going through great physical and hormonal changes. The child is consumed with contemplating and trying to merge knowledge gained through the first two planes by trying to find his/her place in the world. During this time, the adult must step back and allow for the child to take care of his/her own needs and take part in community service activities. The child must see that he/she will be able to impact the world. The third plane includes:

- Creative and spiritual exploration through manual and intellectual work
- Exploration of the social/economic world and his/her place in it. The search for identity
- Sensitive period for authenticity, personal integrity and social consciousness
- Work in collaboration as well as independently
- Intense emotions
- Doubts, discouragement
- Rapid physical change

The Elementary Environment and Curriculum

This plane begins with concrete materials and ends with the understanding of the academic work in the abstract. The Core Curriculum is an extension of the Primary curriculum and includes music, language, math, geometry, science and the cultural subjects. As in the Primary level, many art and music activities are integrated into other areas, specifically cultural subjects. Daily outdoor activity time emphasizes team building and sportsmanship.



While the Elementary student no longer requires the Practical Life Curriculum to develop his/her concentration, coordination, independence and responsibility that they gained during the Primary years, Practical Life remains one of the most important areas of the Elementary curriculum, applying these skills and qualities in day to day activities.

In the Second and Third Planes these patterns of learning, behavior, attitudes and social interaction blossom under the guidance of the Elementary staff. The 6-9, 9-12 and 12-14 year old student is involved in the Creation of Self through developing use of reason, intelligence and imagination to understand “why”, “how” and “when.”

The students at this level have a physical relationship to the classroom for which they share responsibility to maintain an aesthetically pleasing work environment. The collaboration of the students on this practical challenge involve the use of intelligence and imagination in socially acceptable ways. As the students gain expertise in relationship to their peer group, they are gradually developing a sense of diplomacy, social integration and the ability to assume leadership roles.

By the time Montessori students have successfully met the challenges of the Second Plane of Development and embarks on those of the Third Plane, our staff delights in knowing that they have become self-confident in the knowledge that they are capable of succeeding by their own efforts and abilities: Practical Life in action.

For more information on the elementary curriculum go to www.lemontmontessori.com/elementary_curriculum.pdf

The Fourth Plane of Development: 18-24 years, “The Integration of Personality”

The Fourth Plane is the culmination of all prior experiences. If the child’s needs have been met in the other planes, we will have an adult who can express him or herself as a self directed member of society. The three year age cycle allows each individual the time to achieve success at their own pace. Montessori believed that the more fully the needs of each stage are met, the more successful the child will be in the next stage.



Chapter 2: Admissions and Programs

Admissions

Admission to a specific program is based on availability, a child's developmental readiness, and age. Class placement is made with a goal of attaining a balance of age and gender within each program.

MSOL does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions, scholarship, and other school administered programs. Siblings of students already enrolled in MSOL and transfer students from other Montessori schools will be given preference in enrollment.

Prospective Parents are required to meet with Administration and attend an Informational Session or Coffee prior to application. Parents of transfer students at the Elementary level then may make an appointment with the Main Office to have their child visit for the day. Recommendation by the classroom teacher is required for enrollment or re-enrollment at all levels. Completion of the Kindergarten Program does not guarantee admission into the Elementary program.

The parent and the student agree to follow and adhere to the policies, rules, and regulations of MSOL as set forth in this Parent-Student Handbook and such other rules and regulations as may be promulgated hereafter by MSOL.

Tuition Agreement

Upon signing the Tuition Agreement, the parent agrees to pay MSOL a non-refundable application fee and a non-refundable 10% tuition deposit. MSOL agrees that the tuition balance (after deposit) may be paid in one payment on or before September 1, or nine monthly installments on or before the first of each month, with a 4 day grace period, September through May. Other tuition arrangements are available upon request. A late fee of \$15 will be charged if payment is not received by the 5th of each month.



Length of School Day

Before School Care*

(3 – 14 years old**)

7:30-8:45 a.m.

Preschool

(3 and 4 years old)

8:30-11:30 a.m.

12:15-3:00 p.m.

Extended Day

(3 and 4 years old)

8:45-3:15 p.m.

Kindergarten

(5 years old)

8:30-3:00 p.m.

8:45-3:15 p.m.

Elementary

(6-11 years old)

8:30-3:15 p.m.

Adolescent

(12-14 years old)

8:30-3:15 p.m.

After School Care*

(3-14 years old)

3:00-6:00 p.m.

*Additional fees apply

**Ages indicated are as of September 1st of each school year

Trial Period

There is a six (6) week trial period in the classroom following admission into the program. MSOL or the parent(s) may decide during this time that the situation may not be beneficial for the student, whether new or currently enrolled. The student may be withdrawn or dismissed from MSOL without penalty to the parent or MSOL. During this trial period, every effort is made to keep the parents informed of the student's adjustment into the classroom environment and his/her overall progress.

Observations

Many classrooms have an Observation Room where you can observe class unbeknownst to students and staff without appointment. All visitors are required to sign in and out at the front desk of the Main Office. During the Trial Period, the observation rooms are closed in order to allow students to acclimate to the new school year and their environment. An appointment may be made with the Main Office to observe classrooms without observation windows after the first six weeks of the school year. Parents are encouraged to observe their child's classroom prior to each Parent Teacher Conference (see page 15).



Withdrawal

In the event of withdrawal from MSOL more than thirty (30) days following registration, the 10% tuition deposit is non-refundable unless MSOL can fill the vacated position. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to pay the tuition fee for the entire academic school year if the withdrawal of the child is requested by the parent/guardian during the school year. The Head of School and/or Administrator has the authority to adjudicate payment for that year. In the event of withdrawal during the six (6) week trial period, parents will be released from the tuition obligation as set forth in the tuition agreement. MSOL will not refund deposits, fees or tuition payments covering the period of attendance.

Tardiness

Tardiness and irregular attendance disrupt the class and limits a student's opportunities to develop social and academic skills. Students who have missed excessive amounts of school may not be eligible to move up to the next level. A tardy student misses the all-important beginning of the day, which not only makes it difficult for the student to begin his or her day but also disrupts other children already engaged in an activity. Group lessons missed due to tardiness cannot be made up. A student who is late more than four times in one month is considered to be chronically tardy. The parents of chronically late students will be asked to come in to discuss with the teacher how to resolve this problem. Setting clear limits and establishing a regular routine helps students get to school on time.

Late Pick up Fees

After School Care Fees of \$6/hour, or the equivalent, will be charged for students picked up after published dismissal times. Students will be taken to After School Care and parents will be invoiced monthly.

Before and After School Care

Before School Care is offered from 7:30 - 8:45 a.m. After School Care is offered from 3:00-6:00 p.m. Both programs are available to parents on an as needed basis at a rate of \$6 per hour. Each minute after 6:00pm will be considered late and families will be charged an additional \$1.00 per minute. After 6:15PM families will be charged at an additional \$5.00 per minute. Parents will be invoiced at the end of each month. Availability in the After School Care program is limited and that readiness for extended hours is at MSOL's discretion.

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Summer School

We offer summer school every year for Primary and Elementary students in June and July. Registration takes place in Spring and is offered to former and currently enrolled students. Courses are subject to change annually.

Student Records and Confidentiality

Student files are secured as they contain personal information of parents and students. The following individuals have access to student files: President, Administrator, Teachers and Administrative Staff as designated by the Administrator. Information from the student files is released only upon written authorization of the parent or legal guardian.

Re-enrollment Criteria

Since we are aware that family situations may change during the school year, we do not require a three-year commitment for our three-year programs. Consequently, we cannot guarantee your child's position without your participating in the re-application process.

Each year in February (see www.lemontmontessori.com/school_calendar) we begin the process to re-enroll all students. At that time, the following is due to secure your child's continuation in the program, along with his/her teacher's recommendation for continuation:

- Application Form
- Application Fee
- 10% Tuition Deposit
- Tuition Agreement
- Updated Permission Slip
- Transportation Form

In the event that it is unclear at conferences if continuation is mutually beneficial, a conditional acceptance may be necessary. In the event of a conditional acceptance, parents are encouraged to survey their options and consider registration in an alternative program.

Tuition is divided into ten (10) payments. The 10% deposit reflects one of 10 payments. Payments 2 through 10 are due by the 1st of each month, September through May.



Development and Other Annual Fees

- **\$400 Development Fee** is due per family, not per student, by August 1st of each year and benefits the Building Fund for future construction and building maintenance.
- **\$15 School Supply Fee** is due per Primary student to cover Montessori supplies not included on the Primary School Supply List.
- **\$75 Book Fee** is due per Elementary student.
- **\$100 Local Field Trip Fee** is due per Elementary student and covers bus and ticket expenses for local field trips. It does not include expenses for overnight field trips taken by the Upper Elementary and Adolescent students. Forms and fees for these trips will be distributed separately.

Specials

Specialists in cooking, art, soccer, chess, yoga and other areas offer extracurricular activities independent of the MSOL curriculum and class schedules at an additional charge. These classes, called "Specials", are offered each semester outside of class times. The offerings are subject to change annually and rates are determined by the Specialist. Registration Forms for these classes are available online or a paper copy can be obtained from the Main Office. Payments are to be made directly to the Specialist and all questions, cancellations and scheduling arrangements need to be made with them directly. Parents may not enroll their children in Specials unless all MSOL tuition and fees are current.

Chapter 3: Communication

There are many opportunities for formal and informal communication between parents, faculty, and staff at MSOL. Formal opportunities include weekly news emails, the monthly newsletter; Parent-Teacher Conferences, Emergency Closing Announcement, Parent Meetings and Parent-Student Evenings.

Phone calls, email, and written notes are the most frequent and timely ways to contact staff directly. Each classroom has voicemail, and staff makes every effort to respond to messages in a timely fashion. Absences may be left on voicemail or e-mailed to your child's teacher or the Main Office. Parents should let teachers know about changes in routine, e.g., parent trips, new child care providers, special visitors, etc. These events, so important to a child, may affect his/her behavior or focus at school.



Since arrival and dismissal are busy times for everyone, this is not the time to verbally communicate critical information to staff. Critical information effecting a student's transportation, health or safety must be put in writing, signed and dated by the parent or legal guardian. MSOL may not release children to a non-custodial parent without legal documentation.

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities will be provided an opportunity to participate in all school services, programs and activities. Parents of students with disabilities should notify MSOL if their child has a disability that will require special assistance or accommodations and the nature of those accommodations.

Pupil Progress

Based on a student's individual needs, information gained from parents and their own experience and training, staff determine lessons for which each student indicates readiness. Staff keep anecdotal and online records for student progress in each area of the curriculum. Records are updated on a regular basis and an overview is provided to the parents at formal conferences in November and May.

For each lesson, three levels of progress are indicated:

1. Introduced
2. Practicing
3. Mastered

Conferences and Reports

Formal parent conferences are scheduled with the parents of all children in November and May. Conferences are scheduled in 30 minute intervals over two days each semester (See www.lemontmontessori.com/school_calendar). New parents will have an Informal Conference after the first six weeks of school to be scheduled at a mutually agreeable time. Conferences may not be scheduled for any family that is not current with their tuition or before and after school care invoices. Following Montessori's belief that the child constantly "absorbs" information from the environment, it is important that your 3-6 year old child is not present while being discussed. After School Care is provided, at no charge, to parents attending conferences.



Testing

Primary students are not formally tested. Every year in the spring, Elementary students will take the Iowa Test of Basic Skills that is appropriate for their age and grade level. These standardized tests help students gain familiarity with test-taking, which will prepare them for their future educational experiences.

Parent-Student Evenings

These evenings are held in October and February. They are an opportunity for the student to show his/her parents the school from their perspective. The student is the focus of this evening, as he/she is during the school day, therefore no formal meeting is structured and parents will be guided by their child.

Parent Meetings

MSOL relies on the involvement of all parents for the continued success of our programs. Parent Meetings are held throughout the school year to keep parents informed about the curriculum, school management and policies. Speakers on Montessori and related topics will be provided. Attendance by at least one parent is mandatory at Parent Meetings. Due to the size of our enrollment, childcare cannot be provided for everyone but will be offered on a reservation basis. Parents are asked to make other arrangements for children not accommodated and may not bring them to meetings. Attendance at Parent Meetings and general participation will be taken into account at the time of re-enrollment.

Cell Phones

Cell phone use is prohibited during carpool, classroom observations, conferences and school meetings. We hope while you are at school, you are truly available to give your child and staff your undivided attention and appreciate the classroom activities and school environment.

Use of Cell Phones by Students:

In order to ensure that no distractions from classroom activities occur, students bringing cell phones to school must keep their phone in their backpack at all times.

Questions/Concerns

Policy questions should be addressed to Administration. Questions and concerns about your child should be addressed to his/her teacher. Assistants are not trained to interpret a student's performance and will

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refer parent concerns to the teachers who will be happy to schedule time outside of class to meet or speak with parents on the phone. Parents are strongly encouraged to report to MSOL any situations which you believe to be dangerous or make you uncomfortable. Every effort will be made to address your concerns since we strongly value the reputation of our school for being a safe, secure and welcoming environment.

Chapter 4: Getting Involved & Giving Back

Volunteer Service

As part of our goal to work with parents for the education of their children, parents are a vital part of MSOL. In keeping with the purpose and spirit of the Montessori approach to education, we encourage parents to become actively involved in the activities of MSOL and read school newsletters, attend conferences, meetings and school functions. Parents are reminded that through their volunteer participation, the child sees and understands that their parent sincerely and deeply cares about MSOL and a sense of value and pride is fostered.

Parents' Association

All parents are automatically members of the MSOL Parents' Association (PA) and are encouraged to attend monthly meetings. Belonging to the PA gives parents the opportunity to meet other parents and to model volunteerism to their children. Parent participation at our school creates a family-based community working for the common good of MSOL. The PA meets the first Thursday of each month at 8:45 am and select evenings to be announced.

The goals of the PA are to:

- Support MSOL's educational, social and fundraising efforts
- Enhance communication between Administration and parents
- Serve as a vehicle of parent involvement at MSOL

In addition to these goals, the MSOL PA hosts many events throughout the year for our school community including the Labor Day Parade, Back to School Picnic, Pajama Day, Grandparents Day and Harvest Day. Being involved in the planning of events for the students is a great way to meet other parents and help create an exciting day at school for your child. More information on these events can be found in Chapter 6.



Fundraising

MSOL is a charitable, not-for-profit 501(c)3 organization that only receives revenues from tuition, fees and donations. Fundraising is critical to supplement programs, materials and other expenses not covered by tuition in order to aid the teachers and staff in meeting their goals and objectives for MSOL and the students. Donations may be used to meet the expenses of the operating budget as well as special projects. MSOL also solicits charitable, tax deductible gifts from parents, alumni and friends of the school for the Building Fund that was established to continue the development of the MSOL campus.

Fundraising Opportunities:

Manna - September through May

Manna is a no-cost fundraising program. Through the school, supporters purchase gift cards from local and national retail stores who donate a percentage to MSOL with no reduction in the value of the gift card.

Walk Jog Run - Fall

Is an annual 5K event held at a local park to encourage fitness, fun and fundraising for MSOL. Refreshments and entertainment are provided.

For Small Hands - October

“For Small Hands,” the sister company of Montessori Services, offers parents the opportunity to purchase a variety of Montessori materials, books and games for children. Teachers receive a percentage credit of all sales towards purchase of materials for their classrooms.

Book Fair - October and February

Twice a year, the Scholastic Book Fair transforms the Lower El building into a fabulous book store. This event takes place on the same days as Parent-Student evenings. When parents purchase books at the fair, MSOL receives credit towards purchase of books and materials.

Silent Auction—Spring

An auction is held annually to raise funds for the development of MSOL grounds and to purchase additional classroom materials. Parents are the sole resource for soliciting, organizing and hosting the auction. All parents are strongly encouraged to participate by committing their time, talents and attendance to the auction for the continued growth of our campus.

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Chapter 5: Carpool, Health and Safety

Car Seats and Carpool Safety

Illinois State Law requires all children up to 8 years or 80 lbs to be in car seats in the back seat to prevent injuries from deployment of passenger air bags. Parents are responsible for consulting the Illinois Department of Transportation for Car Seat Guidelines.

Arrivals/Dismissals

A.M. ARRIVAL

Elementary, Adolescent,
8:15 ^{a.m.}

Blue & Yellow Room

8:20 ^{a.m.}

Green Room

8:45 ^{a.m.}

P.M. ARRIVAL

Blue & Yellow Room

12:10 ^{p.m.}

A.M. DISMISSAL

Blue & Yellow Room

11:20 ^{a.m.}

P.M. DISMISSAL

K Blue & Yellow Room

3:00 ^{p.m.}

Green Room

3:15 ^{p.m.}

P.M. DISMISSAL

K Blue & Yellow Room

3:00 ^{p.m.}

Green Room

3:15 ^{p.m.}

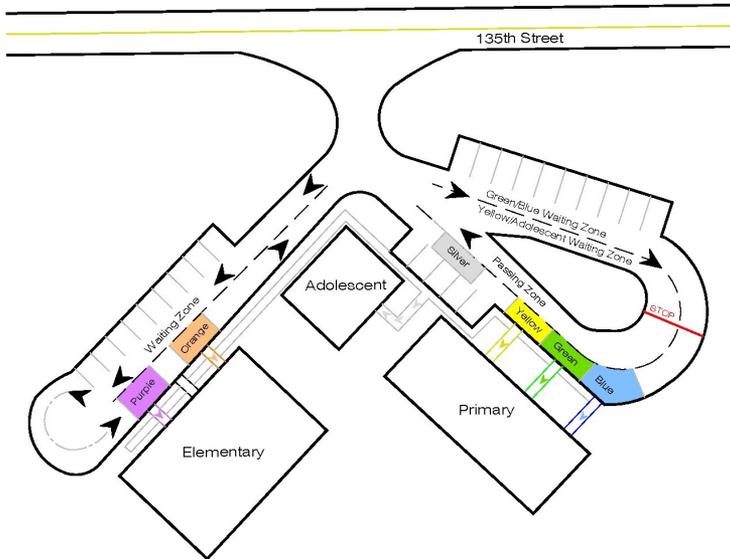
Elementary & Adolescent

3:15 ^{p.m.}

Arrival and dismissal is handled in a drive through fashion. Parents form a line of cars parallel to the entrance door of their classrooms and wait for a teacher to escort their child in and out of the building. For safety purposes, drivers are responsible for securing children in car seats. This also allows staff to continue dismissal and expediting traffic flow.

Release Policy

MSOL must have written permission to release a child to anyone other than their parents. Completing a Transportation Form for your child's file or a handwritten note for staff at arrival will minimize confusion at dismissal. In the event of last minute arrangements, parents may leave a message on the teacher's voicemail. Please advise drivers who are



unknown to our staff that they will be required to produce their driver's license before the student is released into their care.

Carpool Procedures, Primary

- Yellow Room and Adolescent vehicles wait in the interior lane of the east parking lot. Green and Blue Room vehicles wait in the exterior lane.
- Stay in your lane until reaching the stop line indicated on map and remain there until space opens in front of your child's classroom.
- Yellow room families should pull up to the end of the sidewalk.
- Elementary vehicles form a line in the waiting zone of the west parking lot and remain there until space opens in front of your child's classroom
- Please stay in your car at all times. Staff will escort your child to and from your vehicle.
- Exiting cars may merge into the passing zone.

Absences and Illnesses

Parents should report all absences to the classroom teacher either by

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phone or in writing 24 hours before the day of absence. In an emergency situation the parent/guardian may call the teacher on the day of the student's absence. In case of extended absenteeism, a physician's release is required from the parent to MSOL upon the student's return.

- Conjunctivitis (Pink eye) - no drainage, completely healed
- Fever - Fever free for 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication
- Head lice - all lice and nits are removed
- Vomiting - no vomiting within the last 24 hours, no symptoms
- Communicable diseases such as scabies, impetigo, pink eye, ring worm, strep throat, the child may return to school 24 hours after treatment has been started.

Note: A parent or guardian must be accessible by phone or cell phone at all times.

Parent/Guardian Consent

All parents/guardians of students admitted to MSOL are to complete, sign and date a new Permission Slip each academic school year. They must give consent for their children to participate in:

- Field trips
- School publicity photos
- Educational research

Additional consent must be given by the parent/guardian for:

- The child to receive emergency first-aid treatment
- The child to be taken to the hospital in case of an emergency

Allergies: Please inform your child's teacher of prohibited foods and allergies, including symptoms of allergic reactions your child may experience. Parents of children with allergies are also required to complete a Food Allergy Action Plan.

Birth Certificate

Parents of all children who are enrolling in a new school for the first time are required to submit a copy of their child's birth certificate. This is an amendment to the "Missing Children Records Act" (325 ILCS 50/5). Other reliable proof of a child's identity also is passport, visa or other governmental documentation.



Dental, Vision and Medical Forms

Dental Forms: All students in kindergarten, second and sixth grades of any public, private or parochial school that is registered by the Illinois State Board of Education must have a dental examination, and present proof of having been examined by a dentist.

Medical Forms: Before entering school, a completed Illinois Department of Public Health Form is required to all new students; students who are in Preschool, entering kindergarten and sixth grade. The State of Illinois requires a TB test unless waived in writing by a physician or for religious reasons. Parents of asthmatic children are required to complete a self-administration waiver, if applicable. According to Illinois State Law 105 ILCS 5/27-8.1 (8) states: Parents or legal guardians who object to health examinations or any part thereof, or to immunizations, on religious grounds shall not be required to submit their children or wards to the examinations or immunizations to which they object if such parents or legal guardians present to the appropriate local school authority a signed statement of objection, detailing the grounds of the objection. If the physical condition of the child is such that any one or more of the immunizing agents should not be administered, the examination shall endorse the fact upon the health examination form. Exempting a child from the health examination does not exempt him from participation in the program of physical education training provided in sections 27-5 through 27-7 of this code [105 ILCS 5/27-5 through 5/27-7].

Questions regarding religious objection should be directed to the school health service consultant, State Board of Education Division of Intervention and Assessment at 217.782.5589.

Vision Form

According to the Illinois State Public Act 95-671, all children enrolling in Kindergarten in a public, private or parochial school, and any student enrolling for the first time in any of the above mentioned schools, shall have an eye examination and must present proof of having been examined by a optometrist or physician licensed in the that field of practice.

Potty Training

An extra change of clothes (labeled) needs to be kept at school at all times. Many potty trained students have accidents when they become

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absorbed in their work: shame and guilt are inappropriate responses and an approach employing this method will not be used at school and is strongly discouraged at home.

Self-Administration

"Self-administration" refers to a pupil's discretionary use of his/her prescribed medication while at school. A student may self-administer medication as long as a signed and dated Self-Administration form is on file.

Lunch/Snack Policies

Lunch and snack for all students are provided by parents. Each family will be notified of their assigned date to bring snack for the class. If vacation plans or other conflicts arise, please reschedule with the teacher.

Lunch and snacks should be nutritious and free from nut and nut products, added sugars and dyes. Due to life threatening allergies, nuts and nut products are not allowed anywhere on campus because nut traces become airborne and circulate.

Clothing

A change of clothing should be kept at school at all times. Each item must be labeled with the student's name. For the younger student, please consider whether the clothes your child wears allow for easy access in the bathroom. Please dress them for success and choose pants with elastic waistband, no belts, tights or overalls.

MSOL has an indoor shoe policy to provide for the cleanest environments possible. Please choose shoes that offer adequate support and that can easily be put on and removed by the children. These will be kept at school. Please do not send bedroom slippers; or shoes that have cartoon characters, lights or sounds. Label shoes on the soles or inside.

Separation

The adjustment to a new routine will vary by child. Estimated time frames are outlined below.

- May take two weeks for full-time students
- May take four weeks for half-time students
- May take six-eight weeks for three-day students



Nondiscrimination:

MSOL does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, physical disability, mental disability, national origin or ethnic origin.

Bullying

Bullying, intimidation, and harassment (including sexual harassment) diminish a student’s ability to learn and a school’s ability to educate. Preventing students from engaging in these disruptive behaviors is an important Montessori School of Lemont (herein after The School) goal. The School shall maintain a program that:

1. Fully implements and enforces each of the following policies:

a. Harassment (including sexual harassment) of Students Prohibited. This policy prohibits any person from harassing or intimidating a student based upon a student’s race, color, nationality, sex, sexual orientation, ancestry, age, religion, creed, physical or mental disability, gender identity, order of protection status, status of being homeless, or actual potential marital or parental status, including pregnancy, or other protected group status.

b. Student Discipline. This policy prohibits students from engaging in hazing or any kind of aggressive behavior that does physical or psychological harm to another or any urging of other students to engage in such conduct; prohibited conduct includes any use of violence, force, noise, coercion, threats, intimidation, fear, harassment (including sexual harassment), bullying, hazing, or other comparable conduct.

c. Restrictions on Publication and Written or Electronic Material. This policy prohibits students from: (i) 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 (ii) creating and/or distributing written, printed, or electronic material, including photographs and Internet materials and blogs, that



causes substantial disruption to school operations or interferes with the rights of other students or staff members.

Full implementation of the above policies includes: (a) conducting a prompt and thorough investigation of alleged incidents of bullying, intimidation, harassing behavior, or similar conduct, (b) providing each student who violates one or more of these policies with appropriate consequences and remedial action, and (c) protecting students against retaliation for reporting such conduct.

2. Examines the appropriate steps to understand and rectify conditions that foster bullying, intimidation, and harassment (including sexual harassment); this contemplates taking action to eliminate or prevent these disruptive behaviors beyond traditional punitive disciplinary actions.

3. Includes bullying prevention and activities of grace and courtesy in curriculum for all grades.

4. Fully informs staff members of the school's goal to prevent students from engaging in bullying and the measures being used to accomplish it. This includes: (a) communicating the school's expectation – and the state law requirement – that teachers and other employees maintain discipline, and (b) establishing a process for staff members intimidation, harassment (including sexual harassment), and other acts of actual or threatened violence.

5. Encourages all members of the school community, including students, parents, volunteers, and visitors, to report alleged acts of bullying, intimidation, harassment (including sexual harassment), and other acts of actual or threatened violence.

6. Actively involves students' parents/guardians in the remediation of the behavior(s) of concern. This includes ensuring that all parents/guardians are notified, as required by state law, whenever their child engages in aggressive behavior.

7. Communicates the school's expectation that all students conduct themselves with a proper regard for the rights and welfare of other students. This includes a process for commending or acknowledging



students for demonstrating appropriate behavior

8. Annually communicates this policy to students and their parents/guardians. This includes annually disseminating information to all students and parents/guardians explaining the serious disruption caused by bullying, intimidation, or harassment (including sexual harassment) and that these behaviors will be taken seriously and are not acceptable in any form.

9. Engages in ongoing monitoring that includes collecting and analyzing appropriate data on the nature and extent of bullying in the schools and, after identifying appropriate indicators, assesses the effectiveness of the various strategies, programs, and procedures and reports the results of this assessment to the Board along with recommendations to enhance effectiveness.

10. Complies with state and federal law. This includes prompting the Board to update the policy beginning every 2 years after its initial adoption. Bullying is not an acceptable behavior and will not be tolerated. In keeping with the character standards adopted by The School, staff members will help students foster a bully-free school environment. If bullying does occur within the school setting, staff members will provide support to students and to families to try to eliminate all bullying incidents.

Bullying is any severe or pervasive physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing, electronically or verbally or by gesture, directed to or at or intended to impact or influence one or more students, which: has, or may reasonably be expected to have, an impact on their academic performance; or Places the student(s) in reasonable fear of harm to their person or property; or Causes a substantially detrimental effect on the student's or students' physical or mental health; or Substantially interferes with the student's or students' ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities or privileges provided by The School.

Bullying may occur when one or more students intentionally and repeatedly engage in one or more of these behaviors:

Physical Aggression

- Pushing



- Stealing
- Shoving
- Kicking
- Tripping
- Threats
- Spitting
- Hitting
- Entering personal space,
making others uncomfortable.

Social Exclusion

- Telling others they cannot participate
- Intentionally leaving someone out
- Persuading others to exclude another child

Verbal Aggression

- Spreading hurtful statements
- Public challenges or dares
- Name calling
- Taunting
- Teasing
- Mocking of other's race, religion or ethnicity

Discipline

All students are expected to respect the rights of other students as they work and study in a shared environment. It is the responsibility of the classroom teacher to implement a positive sense of self-discipline to control the overall activities and to establish an atmosphere of peace, harmony and concentration. A student may be asked to sit aside and observe others if s/he is experiencing behavioral difficulties. We have three basic ground rules and the refusal or inability to follow them are reasons to reevaluate continuation of the program:

- We respect others' bodies and feelings
- We respect the materials
- We respect nature
-

Emergency School Closing

MSOL will be closed in the event of adverse environmental factors. In the event of fire or other environmental factors necessitating school closure, the students will be escorted to a place of safety and parents will



be notified to pick up their children. MSOL prepares the staff and students for emergency situations by implementing periodic drills. Fire drills are conducted with the local fire department. The lunchroom in the Primary building is a tornado shelter with cinderblock construction and hurricane reinforced ceilings. The basement of the Upper Elementary building serves as the tornado shelter for grades 1st-8th.

For Emergency Closing information:

WMAQ 670; WGN 720; WBBM 78; WLS 890
CBS 2; NBC 5; WGN 9; FOX 32; CLTV
1-900-407-SNOW
www.EmergencyClosings.com

Objects from Home

All objects from home should be left there unless educational. Exceptions can be made in the case of a security blanket or object. Please discuss with your child's teacher. Backpacks are unnecessary for 3-6 year olds and storage space does not allow for us to accommodate them. Unnecessary jewelry, purses and toys may distract your child from his/her work. Reassure your child that the item will be waiting in the car when you return at dismissal.

Chapter 6: Events

School Calendar & Newsletter

A yearly school calendar (www.lemontmontessori.com/school_calendar) is sent via e-mail to families at the beginning of school year. Parents/guardians are responsible for marking their calendars in advance to reserve these important dates.

A monthly newsletter is posted online and is also sent via the Weekly News email to each family. It is the responsibility of parents to be informed of deadlines and any schedule changes announced in school publications and emails. Paper copies of newsletters and calendars are also available at the Main Office. MSOL does not assume responsibility for missed deadlines or opportunities for these posted events.

Birthday Celebrations and Snack

Personal holidays are very important to children and each teacher has a celebrates these momentous occasions in the Montessori tradition. The

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student demonstrates the Earth's journey around the Sun, once for every year of their life while the teacher tells the child's life story using a timeline by the family with photos for each year of life, birth to present. This celebration involves the entire class so all can marvel at the many accomplishments in their life. In the spirit of giving back, the MSOL tradition can include the presentation of a gift from the child to the class in honor of his/her special day. Classroom wish lists are available upon request. Birthday treats and the weekly snack that is provided by parents must be nut and dairy free and should not contain added sugars or dyes.

School Portraits - September

Field Trips - Throughout the year

Family Field Trips

On a monthly basis, families and friends of MSOL are invited to meet at local museums, attractions, theaters, zoos or at school to socialize and get to know each other.

School Field Trips

Kindergarten and Elementary students take field trips together during the school day to museums, symphony and theaters both locally and in Chicago. Parents are notified and must sign a permission slip and remit a fee before a student can participate. Parents can often participate and space will be provided as possible.

Cultural Celebrations –Throughout the year

Maria Montessori's global approach to education encourages children to celebrate to the various traditions and cultures from around the world. During the course of the school year, and with the help of parent volunteers, students engage in presentations, eat different foods, hear stories, music and more about Eid, Hanukkah, Diwali, Weihnachtsfest Day of the Dead, and other traditions parents share from their culture.

Back to School Picnic - August

To celebrate the beginning of the new school year, the entire school population comes together for a community picnic on school grounds on the Friday before Labor Day. Families bring a dish to pass and celebrate the unofficial end of summer.



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Pajama Day - February

Children wear their favorite pair of pajamas to school while at the same time helping a needy child by donating a new pair of pjs to The Pajama Program, an organization in the Chicago area that provides pajamas and books to children who are in need.

Grandparents' Day - April

Grandparents' Day is a favorite annual event in which grandparents are invited to visit MSOL and treated to a classroom tour of and demonstrations of their grandchild's favorite works.

Harvest Day– October

The purpose of this event is to organize the entire school community to plant the Organic Community Garden, beautify the campus and prepare the outdoor learning environment for the children.

Kindergarten and Elementary Performances - May

The kindergarten and elementary students star in their own production that feature music and other talents presented to MSOL families.



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Montessori School of Lemont
Parent Signature Page

Please sign, date and return this form to the main office.

Student Name

Program

My signature below confirms that I have received a copy of the Montessori School of Lemont Parent Handbook. I have read the entire document and understand the guidelines and rules in which I and my child must abide.

I understand that Montessori School of Lemont's Parent Handbook is not all inclusive and may be subject to change at the discretion of Administration.

I understand that the provisions of this handbook are not to be considered to be a contract between student and The School. Rather, the information described in the handbook is meant to guide families on rules and procedures put into place by Montessori School of Lemont to keep all parties safe before, during, and after the school day.

I further understand that any family that is deemed to have broken any of the policies described within the handbook may be asked to withdraw from their program.

Parent Signature

Date



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