

A
Parent's
Guide



A childcare center exactly like nothing else!

Table of Contents

Welcome to Villa Montessori!	3
Goals and Philosophy.....	3
American Montessori Society (AMS) Accreditation.....	4
General Policies and Procedures	5
Admission Procedures	5
Orientation.....	5
Arrival and Departure	5
Pick Up Authorization.....	6
Hours, Holidays, and Inclement Weather.....	6
Parent Communication	7
Photos.....	7
Toilet-Training	7
Babysitting	8
Breastfeeding	8
Water Activities/Swimming	8
Assessments	8
Napping and Resting.....	8
Infant Policies and Procedures	8
Fee Schedule	10
Tuition Rates.....	10
Annual Re-Enrollment/Materials Fee	10
Discounts.....	10
Late Pick Up Fees	10
Parent Referrals	11
Withdrawal/Dis-Enrollment & Schedule Changes	11
Reporting Absences	11
Extended Absence/Vacation.....	12
Health and Safety	13
Supervision.....	13
License, Staff and Maximum Group Ratios	13
Transitioning.....	13
Immunizations and Physicals.....	13
Allergies	14
Ill Child Policy	14
Authorization to Act in The Case of an Emergency.....	15
Injury and Accident Procedures	15
General Emergency Procedures.....	15
Medication Administration.....	16
Outdoor Time.....	16
Reporting Suspected Child Abuse	16
Meals.....	16
Snacks for Special Occasions	17
Smoking	17

Guidance and Management Policies	18
Discipline Policy	18
Behavior Plan.....	18
Biting Policy	19
Clothing.....	19
Fences.....	19
Educational Programs	20
The Montessori Method	20
Montessori Compass	20
Reggio	20
S.T.E.A.M – Science + Technology + Engineering + Art + Math	21
Enrichment Programs.....	21
Special Events - Birthdays	21
The Birthday Book Club	22
Invitations/Parties/Playdates	22
About Our Staff	23
Roles and Responsibility	23
Background Checks.....	23
Code of Conduct	23
Code of Conduct for Parents	24
Parent Participation	24
Recommended Reading for Parents.....	24
2023 - 2024 Calendar	25
Sample Infant Daily Schedule	26
Sample Toddler Daily Schedule	27
Sample Pre-Primary Daily Schedule	28
Sample Primary Daily Schedule	29
Center Parent Information Required by Ohio Administrative Code	30

Welcome to Villa Montessori!

Our entire staff welcomes you and your child to our program! We appreciate your confidence in our ability to care for your child during these most important years of growth, development, and learning. We are committed to promoting the well-being of your child and your family. This Parent Handbook is designed to provide you with essential information concerning our program. Please check the Montessori Compass Bulletin Board feature (select Updated – All Time) or with the School Director for the most up to date version available to you.

Goals and Philosophy

Connect. At Villa Montessori (VM), we believe that relationships are built from strong connections – between us and the children in our care, between each child, between families, and between children and their environment.

Daily we seek connections between two educational philosophies – that of Maria Montessori, and the early childhood programs developed in Reggio Emilia, Italy. We have discovered that each philosophy is an extension of the other and provides us the opportunity to help our children develop more holistically, which in turn allows them to have a richer and deeper understanding of their environment and how they fit within it.

Given the freedom and support to question, to explore deeply, and to make connections, Montessori/Reggio students become more confident, eager, and self-directed learners. They become critical thinkers who can work collaboratively with teachers, students and their environment – a skill set for the 21st century.

Guide. Maria Montessori founded her method on one basic principle – “follow the child.” A Montessori classroom is carefully prepared to allow the child to work independently and allow the joy of self-discovery. Teachers are merely guides who introduce materials that children are free to choose from again and again, working and discovering, and ultimately mastering ideas. Lessons are given, but the goal is for children to discover the answers by using auto-didactic or self-correcting materials that are found only in Montessori classrooms.

Children grow academically in the Montessori environment. They discover an ability to complete complex math problems, name the continents, identify geometric shapes, write beautifully and talk about scientific concepts.

However, the most important aspect of our educational mission does not concern academics. Rather, our primary goal is to foster and enhance each child’s natural sense of joy and wonder. We feel that children should delight in childhood, that the school day should include laughter and the buzz of creativity. We want students to love school and the process of learning. Maria Montessori’s idea “that education is not a chore, but a joyous exploration of life’s mysteries” is the most important lesson that we hope to teach our children.

Encourage. The *Reggio Emilia* approach is a growing, unique form of Early Childhood Education. This philosophy was developed after World War II by Loris Mallaguzzi, a psychologist, and by parents in the villages around Reggio Emilia, Italy. This approach was founded on the beliefs that children are strong, capable and resilient; rich with wonder and knowledge. Every child brings with them deep curiosity and potential. This innate curiosity drives their interest to understand their world and their place within it.

Mallaguzzi believed that children use many ways to show their understanding and express their thoughts and creativity -- a hundred different ways of thinking, of discovering, of learning. Through drawing and sculpting, through dance and movement, through painting and pretend play, through modeling and music – Mallaguzzi felt that each one of these *Hundred Languages* must be encouraged and nurtured. These *languages*, or ways of learning, are all part of the child. Learning and play are not separated.

Our *Reggio-inspired* approach emphasizes hands-on discovery learning that allows the child to use all their senses and all their *languages* to learn and to construct their understanding of the world.

American Montessori Society (AMS) Accreditation

Villa Montessori strives to achieve principles approved by the American Montessori Society and is working toward meeting and exceeding AMS standards and criteria. AMS specifications define and recognize quality Montessori programs through the accreditation process.

These standards include criteria requiring a developmentally appropriate program, having a well-qualified and trained faculty, appropriate staff-child ratios and group sizes. A consistent curriculum must be followed, stringent health and safety standards must be in place, and the program must provide meaningful opportunities for family involvement.

General Policies and Procedures

Admission Procedures

On or before your child's first day, we ask that you complete and return the enrollment forms. These forms assist in providing the highest quality care for your family, and they must be received before your child may be enrolled in our program. The information you provide is strictly confidential and will not be released without your consent. You may have access to the information in your child's file at any time. Please notify us in writing when any information changes: address, phone numbers, allergies, health records, etc.

It is unlawful to discriminate in the enrollment of children upon basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin or disability in violation of ADA act of 1990 104 Stat.32, 42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.

Prior to enrollment, parents are invited to visit our school to meet our staff and to observe our teachers and students in the classroom during our schedule viewing hours. In order to minimize the number of interruptions to the classroom, tours and observations are scheduled in advance. Observations are limited to 15 minutes.

Orientation

The adjustment to any program is different for every child. We encourage you and your child to prepare for the transition to our school. We believe the transition period allows for the opportunity to gain trust in our staff and become familiar with the surroundings. Tears are normal the first few days. A quick goodbye generally works best and helps to quickly relieve insecure feelings. We encourage our parents to call the school with any concerns, and we are open to suggestions in making this a positive experience.

Arrival and Departure

The protection and welfare of your child is our primary concern. When a drop-off from another program is coordinated with VM management, and the child does not arrive, VM will contact the parent.

Being on time for school every day is an integral part of a child's success in the Montessori environment. It also is important to know who is going to be in attendance for the day to accomplish various school and building tasks. For example, classroom numbers help to determine how much snack gets prepared, when teachers take their lunch breaks, and where we need additional floating teachers for support.

If you know that your child will be arriving later than 10am for the day due to an appointment or another extenuating circumstance, you must notify the school no later than 9:00 that day so we can notify the classrooms and prepare accordingly. If the school is not notified of this tardiness and a child is not in attendance by 10am your child may not attend school for the day.

Please observe the following procedures to help us maintain a safe environment:

Arrival

1. Make staff aware of your child's arrival so they can be noted as such in Montessori Compass.
2. All children should arrive prior to the beginning of work cycle which starts at 9:00AM.

Departure

1. Pick up younger children first.
2. Notify your child's teacher you are picking them up so they can be noted as such in Montessori Compass.
3. Gather all belongings to go home i.e. lunch bag, bottles, bedlinens (Fridays).

Reminder: Walk your child to and from the classroom. Please do not allow children to be in hallways, empty classrooms, kitchen, offices, sidewalks, or the parking lot unattended. Safety is always our main concern.

Pick Up Authorization

Send a written statement if you wish the school to release your child to someone other than the persons designated on the application form (this person needs identification). We cannot accept consent over the phone. You may email a signed notice of a new authorized person for pick up to our office. Please note we cannot release a child to anyone less than 16 years of age. Note: Our policies do not deny a parent access to his/her child unless there is a copy of a court order, which restrains a parent from the child.

Hours, Holidays, and Inclement Weather

Please refer to the school's calendar for specifics.

School hours are Monday through Friday from 7:00 am to 6:00 pm unless otherwise noted. Please refer to the annual school calendar for specific dates/times.

Villa Montessori makes every attempt to open for the convenience of our families. For the safety of our staff and children, there are rare occasions we must close due to inclement weather. We strive to give as much notice as possible; however, to make it easier for our families to plan ahead, the following guidelines are used to determine our operating procedures during inclement weather:

- Delaware County OH DOT Level 1: VMP will open with a 2-hour delay
- Delaware County OH DOT Levels 2 & 3: VMP will be closed

As confirmation of any delays or closures, we will send out messages via our Facebook page, Montessori Compass, and NBC4 TV at least **one hour** prior to opening in order to give us adequate time to review any changing conditions. If you do not receive any messages through these established modalities, we will be open for our regularly scheduled operating hours.

The following are the roadway levels as set by the Ohio Department of Transportation:

- Level 1 - Roadways are hazardous with blowing and drifting snow. Roads may also be icy. Motorists are urged to drive very cautiously.
- Level 2 - Roadways are hazardous with blowing and drifting snow. Roads may also be very icy. Only those who feel it is necessary to drive should be out on the roads. Contact your employer to see if you should report to work. Motorists should use extreme caution.
- Level 3 - All roadways are closed to non-emergency personnel. No one should be driving during these conditions unless it is absolutely necessary to travel, or a personal emergency exists. All employees should contact their employer to see if they should report to work. Those traveling on the roads may subject themselves to arrest.

For any further questions regarding hours, holidays and inclement weather please call the school directly at 614-721-4410.

Parent Communication

At Villa Montessori, we are cognizant of the fact that communication between parents and staff is of the utmost importance for the health and well-being of your child. Our goal is to communicate with you on an ongoing basis, primarily through Montessori Compass, and satisfactorily resolve any concerns you may have. We ask that Parents or Employees needing assistance in resolving problems related to the program follow a Chain of Command. You can find the Administrative Chain of Command located in our lobby.

Photos

Children will be routinely photographed as they participate in VM activities. These photographs will primarily be used to document a child's progress and will be displayed throughout the center. On occasion children will be photographed for marketing materials. Parents are asked to sign our Photo Release Form and indicate if they do or do not consent to the use of the photos.

Toilet-Training

When your child is ready to toilet-train, we will be happy to assist. Your child may be ready if he/she is:

- Walking well
- Staying dry for several hours
- Able to communicate the need to use the toilet
- Appears to be aware of wet or soiled diapers
- Is in a cooperative mood

There is no definite age when a child is ready – toilet-training may begin in either the toddler class or the two-year pre-school program. Both the parents and staff should use the same procedures for training so it does not confuse the child. If there is too much anxiety or stress, it may be better for the child to wait and try again at a later time.



Babysitting

A finder's fee of \$2,500 will be paid to Villa Montessori by BrightPath Early Learning LLC in the event you hire or employ a Villa Montessori by BrightPath Early Learning LLC employee while they are employed at Villa Montessori by BrightPath Early Learning LLC, or within 60 days of their last day of employment at Villa Montessori by BrightPath Early Learning LLC. *

Breastfeeding

Villa Montessori supports onsite breastfeeding or pumping for mothers who wish to do so. Please see the School Director to make arrangements.

Water Activities/Swimming

Villa Montessori may have outdoor activities that include water. Such activities may include, but not be limited to, a water hose, sprinkler, and/or bucket for activities such as watering the plants/gardens. VM does not offer or participate in any swimming activities.

Assessments

Villa Montessori does not conduct formal assessments nor do we report child level data to ODJFS for purposes of Step Up To Quality (SUTQ).

Napping and Resting

Villa Montessori provides each student a cot and space to nap. Nap time is not to exceed 2 hours. Our non-nappers are given a 45-minute rest period and then are transitioned into an additional work cycle.

Infant Policies and Procedures

At Villa Montessori, we allow infants to safely and comfortably sit, crawl, toddle, walk and play according to the infant's stage of development. As in all of our Montessori practices we provide individual attention to each of our infants to include tummy time each day. We use Montessori Compass to maintain daily written records for each infant that includes food intake, sleeping patterns, times and results of diaper changes and information about daily activities.

Villa Montessori adheres to the following requirements for infant bottle and food preparation:

- We will prepare and serve infant food in a manner appropriate to the developmental needs of each child.
- We will comply with written feeding instructions from the infant's parent, physician, physician's assistant, or certified nurse practitioner (CNP) which shall include the type of food and/or formula/breast milk, the amount of food and/or formula/breast milk, and the feeding times or frequency of feedings.

- We will not feed any foods, other than formula or breast milk, to infants under four months of age, unless there is written documentation on file from a physician, physician's assistant or CNP.
- If formula or breast milk is to be warmed, bottles shall be placed in a container of water not hotter than one hundred twenty degrees or be placed in a commercial bottle warmer. The bottle shall be shaken well, and the formula or breast milk temperature tested before feeding.
- Frozen breast milk shall be thawed under cold running water or in the refrigerator.
- We will ensure that the unused portion of formula, breast milk or food remaining in a container from which the infant has been directly fed shall not be reheated or served again.
- We store, prepare and serve food, formula and breast milk in a safe and clean manner.
- The parents will ensure that all breast milk and formula shall be labeled with the infant's name, the date pumped, and the date the bottle was prepared.

Fee Schedule

Tuition Rates

The tuition fees are based on the operational costs of the center. Classroom tuition rates are based on class size and teacher-to-child ratios. Tuition rates are reviewed annually and will be adjusted to meet operational costs as needed. Parents will be given a 30-day notice should there be a tuition increase.

Tuition Payments

Tuition is collected monthly in advance, tuition billed will be the rate in effect on the child's first day. Tuition is due on the 1st day of each month. Payments are made through use of our automated system, Tuition Express, which allows parents to have their electronic account debited monthly for tuition payments. Tuition Express accepts check, debit cards and most major credit cards, (NOTE: credit card companies charge a non-refundable 2.5% fee per transaction.) A \$25.00 late charge will be applied for any accounts with outstanding balances on the 2nd of each month. All payments that are returned by the bank will have an additional charge of \$40.00. After 3 occurrences of bank returns it will be required that your autopay method be moved to a credit card option. Unpaid tuition will lead to suspension of childcare services beginning the 2nd of each month. If repetitive incidents occur Villa Montessori by BrightPath holds the right to terminate childcare services.

Annual Re-Enrollment/Materials Fee

A re-enrollment and materials fee of \$150.00 per child will be charged to your account upon enrollment and the first of each following September.

Discounts

A sibling discount of 10% will be applied to the eldest siblings' tuition while more than one child is enrolled in the center.

With the exception of the Referral Program, promotions, discounts, and specials cannot be combined. Each family can take advantage of the promotion that is most financially advantageous to them.

Late Pick Up Fees

Our center closes promptly at 6:00 p.m. Children need to be picked up and off the premises at 6:00 p.m. A late charge of \$40.00 (per child) for the first fifteen minutes or fraction thereof that a child remains in the building after 6:00, and a \$20.00 charge per 5 minutes thereafter, will be charged. Late fees apply also for those with set schedules prior to close.

If your child is not picked up at his/her dismissal time, we will contact the person on your emergency contact list. Repeated tardiness may require a child's space to be forfeited.

Parent Referrals

VM welcomes new families to our schools each week. If you know of a family that would benefit from an outstanding Montessori program, please be sure to tell them about us!

When a new family enrolls as the result of a parent referral, the referring parent will receive a \$350.00 credit to their existing tuition when the new family begins care. There is no limit to the number of referral credits a family can earn!

Withdrawal/Dis-Enrollment & Schedule Changes

One full calendar month's advance written notice is required to withdraw your child from the school. Tuition payments are required during this period. Notice of withdrawals should be submitted in writing to the School Director for withdrawal the following month. If notification of withdrawal is received anytime during the month, the following month's tuition will be due.

The tuition deposit and other fees (if applicable) are non-refundable.

The following conditions may cause services to be terminated:

- Continual late drop-off or pick-up (more than three within a one-month period).
- Inability of a child to adjust to the classroom environment.
- Child behavioral problems deterring successful school experiences.
- Disrespect towards the school, administration, other children, policies and/or staff.
- Unresolved issues or conflict relating to core mission or philosophy of school.
- A child that continually bites another child (3 times).

VM retains the right to dis-enroll any student or family at any time without refund of any fees.

Reporting Absences

We look forward to seeing your child every day and plan for their participation in our program. Should he/she be absent or tardy, please notify your child's teacher in advance whenever possible. Should an unexpected absence or tardiness occur, please notify the school via telephone or email, prior to the morning work cycle of 8:45am.

Health and Safety

Supervision

It is the policy of VM to maintain supervision of the children at all times. Teachers will position themselves in the classroom & on the playground in a manner that will allow for them to have direct line of sight to the children they are responsible to supervise. They will keep attendance records according to the state guidelines.

License, Staff and Maximum Group Ratios

VM is licensed legally by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS). The license is posted in the lobby. The most recent licensing inspection report and any complaint investigation reports can be found in the School Directors office posted on the parent information bulletin board. Inspection reports by the Health Department and State Fire Marshall are available on request. Additionally, Ohio laws and rules are available for review in the School Directors office. The ODJFS toll free number is 1-877-302-2347 for any person to report a suspected violation by the center. No child or parent will be discriminated against because of race, color, religion, gender, or national origin.

<u>Staff/Child Ratio</u>	<u>Maximum Group Size</u>
Infants	1:5 up to 12 months
Young Toddlers	1:6 12mos – 18mos
Toddlers 1 per 7	2:14 18mos - 30mos
Pre-Primary 1 per 8	2:16 30mos - 35mos
Primary 1 per 12	2:24 3-6 years of age

Licensing record-compliance report forms, complaint investigation reports and evaluations from building and fire departments are available for review from ODJFS. The Bureau of Child Care and Developments website is: <http://jfs.ohio.gov/cdc/childcare.stm>.

Transitioning

You will be notified when your child is ready to move up to the next classroom. As part of the transition process, the teachers will develop a transition plan. This plan will include a time frame for the transitioning period and a description of how it will occur. The plan will be presented to you, and your signature will be requested before the transition begins. If you feel that your child is ready to move to a new classroom, please discuss it with your child's teacher and the School Director.

Immunizations and Physicals

Your child's medical exam records must be submitted to VM along with his/her immunization record prior to your child's first day of enrollment signed by your child's

physician. As your child receives additional vaccinations, please provide documentation so we may update records.

A child is not required to be immunized against a disease specified above if any of the following is the case:

- Immunization against the disease is medically contraindicated for the child
- The child's parent or guardian has declined to have the child immunized against the disease for reasons of conscience, including religious convictions
- Immunization against the disease is not medically appropriate for the child's age

Allergies

Information regarding children's allergies will be posted in each classroom to ensure that all staff are made aware of the allergies. The name of the child and the allergy will be included. In the event a doctor diagnoses your child with an allergy, please inform staff. It may also be required that you provide center management with an allergy care plan signed off by your child's physician.

Illness Policy

Villa Montessori is a place for healthy children. We ask that you **do not** bring your child if he/she is exhibiting any of the following symptoms:

- Fever of 100 degrees or higher
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Nausea
- Earache
- Red/Pink eye(s) with white or yellow discharge
- Scabies or lice - must be nit free to return to the school.
- Inability to participate in daily classroom or outdoor activities (usually due to fatigue)
- Persistent cough
- Sore throat
- Runny nose (with yellowish or green mucus)
- Skin sores, rash, or ringworm that cannot be covered
- Signs/symptoms of a contagious illness

If any of these symptoms are identified while your child is at school, you will be contacted and required to pick up your child within 30 minutes. If we are unable to contact you within 30 minutes of our initial call, we will begin calling your emergency contacts.

To help prevent the spread of illness, and in accordance with federal, state, or local regulations, your child will be kept comfortable outside of the classroom (in the front office or other appropriate area) until he or she is picked up.

After displaying any of the symptoms above **and before returning to school**, your child must be **free of fever, vomiting, or diarrhea (without the aid of medication) for at least 1 full day.**

Authorization to Act in The Case of an Emergency

At the time of admission, parents shall be requested to give VM written authorization to act according to the best judgment of staff if immediate action is necessary -- in case of illness or accident -- when parents cannot be reached immediately. This emergency authorization also gives permission to transport your child by an Emergency Medical Squad/Ambulance or car to an emergency center for treatment. This also gives consent to any medical, surgical, and hospital care treatment and procedures performed by a licensed physician or hospital when deemed immediately necessary.

Injury and Accident Procedures

In the case of an emergency, first aid will be administered. Parents and emergency personnel will be contacted.

Children will be transported to the hospital by the Emergency Medical Squad for emergencies, if permitted by parent's signature on the "Emergency Transportation Authorization" form. Parents' refusal to grant permission may result in a child not be admitted to the center due to liability issues but shall not preclude VM from offering childcare services.

All parents' instructions as to emergency procedures are kept in the children's file as well as in the Emergency Evacuation packet located in the classrooms. They are available to all staff members at all times.

Emergency telephone numbers are kept by the telephone for immediate access to staff. Parents' telephone numbers are kept in the children's file as well as in the Emergency Evacuation packet located in the classrooms. They are available to all staff members at all times.

An incident/injury report will be completed according to the following guidelines:

- Any illness, accident, or injury which requires first aid treatment
- A bump or blow to the head
- Administration of syrup of ipecac (only at the advice of the Poison Control Center)
- Emergency transporting
- Unusual or unexpected event which jeopardizes the safety of the children or staff

General Emergency Procedures

VM will follow these outlined procedures in response to general emergencies:

- In the event of a threat to the safety of children due to environmental situations such as tornados or threats of violence we will observe our In-Shelter drill and move children to their assigned In-Shelter lockdown location.
- In the event of a natural disaster such as fire or flood we will evacuate the building and proceed to a secondary off property location located at:
 - The Cabinet Shop, Antares St, Columbus, OH 43240 (614) 885-9676
- In the event of a loss of power, heat, or water we will wait one hour to give adequate time for the restoration of the lost service. If service cannot be restored

within one hour, parents will be notified they need to pick their children up within a one-hour time window to ensure children are not without the necessary requirements to care for them in a safe environment for longer than two consecutive hours.

Medication Administration

This policy is intended to prevent errors in medication administration. Parents are urged to give doses of medication at home if possible. We will administer topical non-medical ointment, repellent, lotion, cream or powder to any child with written authorization from the child's parent. In addition, we will administer lifesaving medications (i.e. EpiPen) provided a current written authorization by your physician is supplied and on file. Children are not permitted to carry their own medication and ointments.

Outdoor Time

Generally, all children are expected to participate in outdoor activities. Children well enough to return to school following an absence may go outside for short periods. Sunscreen is required for all children during the hot summer months. A parent's note is required for sunscreen and insect repellent applied. All parents must fill out a medication consent form for sunscreen and/ or repellent to be applied.

Outdoor time may be limited during inclement weather (i.e. thunder, lightning, temperatures above 90* or below 25*, wind-chill temperatures below 25*) or safety issues. VM will provide indoor gross motor activities.

Reporting Suspected Child Abuse

2151.421 Requirement that certain injuries to children be reported by physicians, nurses, teachers, etc.; penalty for failure to report.

Any staff member in a childcare facility who has reasonable cause to know or suspect that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect or has observed the child being subjected to circumstances that would reasonably result in neglect or abuse shall report the matter immediately to the local department of the county or city where in the child resides or where in the abuse or neglect is believed to have occurred or to the Department's toll-free child abuse and neglect hotline at 614-229-7000.

Meals

OUR SCHOOL IS NUT FREE. PLEASE DO NOT SEND PEANUT BUTTER OR ANY FOOD ITEM CONTAINING NUTS. (SUNFLOWER SEED BUTTER & SOY NUT BUTTER IS A PEANUT BUTTER SUBSTITUTE)

Children's lunches are provided by parents following the daily allowance guidelines. Daily snacks (2 per day - morning snack & afternoon snack) are provided by VM.

Food must be cooked at home and sent in a thermos. Please do not pack more than your child will eat.

All food items must be labeled with your child's name and date (small sticker work best for this).

A healthy lunch includes the following:

- A protein rich food
- 2 fruits or 2 vegetables or 1 fruit and 1 vegetable
- Milk or milk alternative
- A grain or grain alternative
- A special treat (low or sugar-free)

If your child is allergic to any items, please note the application and medical forms and make the staff aware. VM will make best efforts to help coordinate any food supplements and/or modified diets.

Refer to Allergy Policy for more information.

Snacks for Special Occasions

For your child's birthday, or for other special occasions, you may wish to send a snack for your child's class (as well as any necessary cups, plates, utensils, and napkins). **Please send healthier items such as mini muffins, fresh cut fruit and/or vegetables, yogurt, or cheese and crackers. High sugar treats such as candy, cupcakes, doughnuts, cookies, sheet cakes, soda, and gum are not allowed at school. As a reminder, our school is a nut-free zone.**

Please check with your child's teacher to coordinate a day that will work for the class and to confirm any allergies in your child's classroom.

Smoking

The use of nicotine products such cigarettes, pipes, and vapor devices are not permitted on or within sight of the school property.

Guidance and Management Policies

Discipline Policy

Praise and positive reinforcement are effective methods in the behavior management of children. When children receive positive, non-violent, interactions from adults and others, they develop positive self-concepts, problem solving abilities, and self-discipline. Based on this belief and the philosophies of Dr. Maria Montessori and how children learn values, the use of physical punishment is prohibited. Further, VM does not incorporate "time-out" periods.

In place of this practice, VM institutes the following:

- We will praise, reward, and encourage the children.
- We will re-direct their attention to modify behavior.
- We will reason with and set limits for the children.
- We will model appropriate behavior for the children.

Behavior Plan

The plan for behavior has been developed based on health and safety requirements. Young children need to be reassured that people who love them will guide, protect, and set limits that will keep them safe. The School Director will contact the parent in the event a child's behavior becomes a threat to himself, other classmates, or VM staff. If a child poses a continued threat to themselves, other classmates, or VM staff, documentation will be made for further dialogue and a plan of action made with the parents. It is our goal that a solution can be reached between VM and the parent. If a successful outcome is not possible, the child will be disenrolled from the school for the safety of all. If your child is dismissed from VM, we are required to report this incident in the Ohio child licensing and quality system (OCLQS) in accordance with paragraph (G) of rule 5101:2-12-16 of the Administrative Code.

The first step in guiding young children's behavior is to anticipate and eliminate opportunities for misbehavior. We use creative ways to manage and redirect children who are not following rules.

At Villa Montessori we find that a child is most successful when teachers, administration and parents are all on the same team working toward a common goal. As Early Childhood professionals, if a behavioral plan is needed, we strive to work with you, the family, to implement the best tools and practices to help the child and the classroom succeed. However, in some situations outside interventions are needed. These interventions include, but are not limited to, speech therapy, occupational therapy, and behavioral evaluations. When outside interventions are requested from Villa Montessori, it is because we feel the medical and health professionals will provide us with necessary information and additional supports. If these suggestions are made from the administrative team here at Villa Montessori it is required that you, the family, seek the help we are requesting. Failure to do that alters our ability to work as a team and find success for the children. Villa Montessori reserves the right to suspend or terminate a

child's enrollment with us if the family does not participate in receiving the additional help that we request if our initial behavioral plan needs more support.

Biting Policy

Biting is a natural developmental stage that many children go through. It is usually a temporary condition. The safety of the children at the school is our primary concern. Incidents of biting are stressful for both the students, staff and parents involved. In the event of biting, the parents of the biter will be notified. Chronic biting may require that the child be disenrolled from the school. Each biting situation is carefully evaluated by the School Director while considering all the relating factors. Staff reports all bites to the Director. Incident reports are written for any bite, not just ones that break the skin.

If biting takes place, we will:

Thoroughly clean the area three times with warm, soapy water, apply an ice pack, provide TLC, and notify the parent. If the bite breaks the skin, the parent of the biter will be contacted by phone, an incident report will be required for signature, an in-person meeting with the School Director will be scheduled for further dialogue, and a Behavioral Plan may be initiated.

Biting can be an emotional situation for the parents and children involved. We will keep incidents as confidential as possible and will work with the child and families closely to get through this situation.

These procedures comply with Ohio Administrative Code 5101:2-12-19.

Clothing

- Provide a change of clothing in case of spills, accidents or emergencies.
- Label all items including outer garments.
- Closed toe shoes are required. Please do not send your child in flip flops or open toed shoes. Tennis shoes are best.
- Provide indoor slippers for wear inside the classroom.
- Provide appropriate outdoor attire based on the weather. For temperatures below 32 degrees, please provide a coat, hat, gloves, etc. The School Director reserves the right to close the playground and/or not allow students to play outside if they are not appropriately dressed.

Fences

Children occasionally may be outside of the fenced area to participate in educational related activities as supervised by teachers. Parents will be asked to sign off on a permission form acknowledging that these times can occur throughout the school year.

Educational Programs

The Montessori Method

Montessori is based on years of observation and study of children by Dr. Maria Montessori, a medical doctor and student of psychology. She worked out her methods and developed teaching materials by letting the children show what did and did not work. The Montessori Method develops the whole personality of the child: their powers of deliberation, initiative, and independent choice, with their emotional complements. The child is trained in those fundamental social qualities which forms the basis of good citizenship.

Montessori enables the teacher to guide the child individually in each subject according to their individual requirements. Each child works at their own pace and is allowed a large measure of freedom of choice.

Social Graces and Courtesy is the foundation of the Montessori Philosophy. The children are taught to respect themselves, their classmates, teachers, the classroom materials, and the world they live in.

Montessori Compass

At VM, we use a web-based record keeping system to track and communicate each child's growth and development. With this system, teachers are able to upload photos, observations, and data to each child's individual record. Allowing them to easily share this information with the parents. You will be sent an invitation via email to Montessori Compass and will have access to your child's account.

Reggio

Our Reggio Emilia inspired arts and science programs are designed to enhance the Montessori Experience. The program is based on the principals of respect, responsibility, and community through the exploration and discovery in a supportive and enriching environment. Children are believed to be "knowledge bearers" and are encouraged to share their thoughts and ideas about their experiences through their self-guided curriculum.

The Reggio Emilia philosophy is based upon the following set of principles:

- Children must have some control over the direction of their learning;
- Children must be able to learn through the experiences of touching, moving, listening and observing;
- Children have a relationship with other children and with material items in the world that children must be allowed to explore;
- Children must have endless ways and opportunities to express themselves.

S.T.E.A.M – Science + Technology + Engineering + Art + Math

At VM, we know that parents today are well educated and are looking for advanced programs such as STEAM. By adding a Reggio inspired Art program, we are cutting edge, offering the most diverse, well rounded education to our students.

Science: We explore science through are Reggio Inspired Programs

Technology: The light tables offer an unobtrusive link to technology to help improve our science and art studies.

Engineering: The Sensorial Materials address early engineering through the Stereognostic manipulation of objects.

Art: Our Reggio inspired art programs extends the Montessori method of teaching the works of famous artists into creating our own masterpieces.

Math: Math is the fundamental link to Montessori's methods. The math program is tried and true, and famous throughout the world.

Enrichment Programs

Learning in our Montessori environment extends far beyond language development and building foundational mathematics skills. Extending beyond the traditional elements of the Montessori classroom, we offer students a wide range of enrichment activities. Some of these are incorporated into daily classroom materials, while others are more specialized and introduced to the children outside of the typical classroom experience.

At our school, we offer:

- Gardening
- Music and Movement
- Foreign Language (introduction to Spanish)
- Yoga
- Public Speaking

Special Events - Birthdays

Parents of children in the Toddler and older programs are invited to join a special celebration of their child's birthday at school. Your child's teacher will coordinate with you a mutually convenient time for a special ceremony we call "Celebration of Life"/"Walk Around the Sun". You will be invited to bring in **one** picture of your child for every year starting from birth. These pictures will be shared with the class as your child "walks around the sun" to celebrate each year of his or her life. Please see "Snacks for Special Occasions" above for details regarding birthday snacks.

The Birthday Book Club

The Birthday Book Club is a voluntary program that celebrates children's birthdays, enables their peers to share their special day, and contributes to the classroom's library of story-time books.

We offer parents the option to donate an age-appropriate book to honor your child's birthday. The school will prepare and include a book plate on the inside cover citing your child's name and birthdate to acknowledge the donation. The book is then placed in the classroom library. Every time the book is read during circle time, the citation is read before beginning the story as recognition of your child's contribution.

It has been our experience that the Birthday Book Club encourages children's interest in books and stories while promoting pride and self-esteem.

In keeping with the Montessori philosophy, the book's illustrations should depict realistic themes. Please avoid cartoon, TV, and super-hero characters.

Invitations/Parties/Playdates

The social aspect of school is very important to children even at this young age. It can be devastating to a child who feels excluded from their peer group. We ask that when you are organizing birthday parties or other out-of-school social events or when you are facilitating friendships, please be sensitive. If many students in a classroom are being invited, we suggest inviting the entire group. For invitations to a few children, please do not hand out in your child's classroom.

About Our Staff

Roles and Responsibility

We understand that our Lead and Assistant Teachers are partners with the parents in the education of our students. Our staff is responsible for the supervision, education, and nurturing of our students through the use of our Montessori and Reggio programs, while adhering to VM and state licensing guidelines.

Background Checks

Each of our staff members receive a background check through the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services (ODJFS). Each member must be free of any charges, pending charges or convictions of a "barrier" crime, drug related crime or other crimes that conflict with the values of VM.

Code of Conduct

At VM, we expect our staff to be positive role models both in and out of the school. We encourage teachers to have an open but professional relationship with parents and families of their students. We expect staff to:

- Initiate individual conversations with families, fellow staff members, or appropriate supervisors or administrators to encourage open dialogue.
- Provide opportunities for parents/guardians to ask questions, address issues, or raise concerns in a way that encourages constructive feedback.
- Provide regular written communication that details individual child information, classroom happenings, and school events through Montessori Compass.
- Discuss all confidential matters in non-public areas of the school and with the appropriate parties.
- Refrain from social media relationships with parents and family members of students.
- Refrain from taking photos of students on personal devices.

Code of Conduct for Parents

All adults, while at the center or attending center-related meetings, should behave in a manner that models appropriate behavior for children.

Parent Participation

VM has a variety of opportunities for parent participation. We host several family events that you can volunteer to assist with. Please see the attached school calendar that lists out our planned events for the school year. VM provides many opportunities for parents to meet with center staff via parent teacher conferences. Parents are always welcome to pre-scheduled time to meet with center staff upon request.

Parents who wish to receive contact information of other parents/families within the school are encouraged to write a note to that family asking for them to contact you, providing your information to them. The note can be either placed in the cubby of the family they wish to connect with or give the note to their teacher. The center will never give out privacy information to other families.

VM has an open door, unlimited access policy, and we encourage you to drop in whenever you wish. If you are visiting outside of normal drop off & pick up times, we request that you let an administrator know you have entered the building if one is not visibly present upon your arrival. This ensures the safety of all children & that the administrator knows who is in the building at all times. Communication is the key for a happy, positive relationship between you, your child, and our school.

Your comments and suggestions are always welcome.

Recommended Reading for Parents

- Maria Montessori: Her Life and Work by E. M. Standing.
- The Absorbent Mind by Dr. Maria Montessori.
- The Secret of Childhood by Dr. Maria Montessori

2023 - 2024 Calendar



2023-2024 School Event Calendar

September 2023							March 2024						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
							31						
October 2023							April 2024						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
29	30	31					28	29	30				
November 2023							May 2024						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30			26	27	28	29	30	31	
December 2023							June 2024						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
24	25	26	27	28	29	30	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
31							30						
January 2024							July 2024						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6		1	2	3	4	5	6	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31				28	29	30	31			
February 2024							August 2024						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29			25	26	27	28	29	30	31

September 2023							March 2024						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
14-15	Community Helper Visits						1	Read Across America					
20	International Day of Peace Celebration						15	St. Patrick's Day Celebration					
21	Fall Picnic						19	Pewee New Year Celebration					
29	Breakfast on the Go!						25	Holi Celebration					
							28	Breakfast on the Go!					
							29	Spring Egg Hunt					
October 2023							April 2024						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
9	Indigenous Peoples' Day - Closed / Prof. Dev.						1-5	Parent Teacher Conferences - Infant/Toddler					
16-20	Virtual Parent/Teacher Conferences - Infant/Toddler						10	Eid Celebration					
18	Parent Education Night						18	Parent Education Night					
27	Trunk or Treat						22	Earth Day					
31	Breakfast on the Go!						22-27	Parent Teacher Conferences - Primary					
							29-30	Teacher Appreciation Week					
							30	Breakfast on the Go					
November 2023							May 2024						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
6-9	Virtual Parent Teacher Conferences - Primary						1-3	Teacher Appreciation Week					
10	Veterans Day - Closed						10	Mother's Day Celebration					
13	Diwali Celebration						24	Spring Picnic					
17	Thanksgiving Feast						27	Memorial Day - Closed					
20-22	Grandparents Visits						30	Breakfast on the Go!					
23-24	Thanksgiving - Closed												
30	Breakfast on the Go!												
December 2023							June 2024						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
6 to 8	Gingerbread Village Making / Display						10	Summer Program Begins					
11	Hanukkah Celebration						14	Father's Day Celebration					
15	Kwanzaa Celebration						17	Juneteenth - Closed					
25-26	Christmas - Closed						21	Kindergarten Graduation					
28	Breakfast on the Go!						28	Breakfast on the Go!					
January 2024							July 2024						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
1	New Year's - Closed						4	Independence Day - Closed					
15	Martin Luther King Jr. Day - Closed						20	International Festival 10am - 12pm					
18	Extended Primary Information Night												
31	Breakfast on the Go!												
February 2024							August 2024						
Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	Su	M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa
8	Art Auction						14	Summer Program Ends					
9	Lunar New Year Celebration						15-16	In Service Days - Closed					
14	Valentine's Day						22	Back to School Night					
19	President's Day - Closed/Prof. Development						30	Breakfast on the Go!					
23	Breakfast on the Go!												
26-29	Montessori Education Week												

Subject to Change

Polaris 2023 - 2024

Sample Infant Daily Schedule

- 7:00 Room Opens
- 9:30 Breakfast
- 10:00 Circle Time
 - Diapering/Handwashing
 - Free Play
- 11:30 Handwashing
 - Lunch
- 12:00 Diapering
- 12:30 Older infant nap time
- 1:30 Sensory Time/Story Time
- 2:00 Diapering
- 3:00 Afternoon Snack
- 4:00 Diapering
 - Group Activities: Art/Music/Language Development
- 5:00 Free Play

6:00 PM School Closes

Sample Toddler Daily Schedule

- 7:00 - 8:30 Arrival and Art & Free Play
8:30 - 9:00 Montessori Work Cycle/ Presentations of work/ Observations
9:00 - 9:15 Snack
9:15 - 10:30 Group Time/ Specials/ Art/ Music/ Language
10:30 -11:15 Outdoor Time
11:15 -11:30 Hand Washing / Clean-up / Diaper Check
11:30 -12:30 Lunch/Diapering
12:30 - 2:30 Nap
2:30 - 2:45 Snack
2:45 - 3:25 Renaissance Studio Enrichment
3:30 - 4:00 Outdoor Play
4:00 - 5:30 Enrichment activities/ Free Choice
5:30 - 6:00 Late PM Snack

6:00 PM School Closes

Sample Pre-Primary Daily Schedule

- 7:00 - 8:30 Arrival and Art & Free Play
- 8:30 - 9:00 Montessori Work Cycle/ Presentations of work/ Observations
- 9:00 - 9:15 Snack
- 9:15 - 10:30 Group Time/ Specials/ Art/ Music/ Language
- 10:30 -11:15 Outdoor Time
- 11:15 -11:30 Hand Washing / Clean-up / Diaper Check
- 11:30 -12:00 Lunch
- 12:15 - 2:30 Nap
- 2:30 - 2:45 Snack
- 2:45 - 3:25 Renaissance Studio Enrichment
- 3:30 - 4:00 Outdoor Play
- 4:00 - 5:30 Enrichment activities/ Free Choice
- 5:30 - 6:00 Late PM Snack

6:00 PM School Closes

Sample Primary Daily Schedule

7:00- 8:30	Arrival, Greeting, Hand Washing, Free Choice
8:30– 11:30	Montessori Work Cycle
9:45-10:00	Morning Snack – self-serve
11:30-12:00	Outdoor Play
12-12:30	Lunch
12:30-12:45	Bathroom Break
12:45- 2:30	Yoga Stretches/ Rest / Nap for younger children
2:30 - 2:50	Afternoon Snack – self-serve
2:30 - 3:30	Renaissance Studio Enrichment Program
3:30 – 4:15	Afternoon Group/Work Cycle
4:15 – 5:00	Outdoor Play
5:00-6:00	Free Choice/ Parent Pick-up

6:00 PM School Closes

Ohio Department of Job and Family Services

Center Parent Information Required by Ohio Administrative Code

The facility is licensed to operate legally by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. This license is posted in a conspicuous place for review.

A toll-free telephone number is listed on the facility's license and may be used to report a suspected violation of the licensing law or administrative rules. The licensing law and rules governing childcare are available for review at the facility upon request.

The administrator and each employee of the facility is required, under Section 2151.421 of the Ohio Revised Code, to report their suspicions of child abuse or child neglect to the local public children's services agency.

Any parent, custodian, or guardian of a child enrolled in the facility shall be permitted unlimited access to the facility during all hours of operation for the purpose of contacting their children, evaluating the care provided by the facility or evaluating the premises.

Upon entering the premises, the parent or guardian shall notify the Administrator of his/her presence. Contact information for parents/guardians of the children attending the facility is available upon request. This information will not include the name, telephone number or email of any parent/guardian who requests that his/her name, telephone number or email not be included.

Recent licensing inspection reports and any substantiated complaint investigation reports for the past two years are posted in a conspicuous place in the facility for review. The licensing record including compliance report forms, complaint investigation reports, and evaluation forms from the building and fire departments are available for review upon written request from the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services. The center's licensing inspection reports for the past two years are also available for review on the Child Care in Ohio website. The website is: <http://jfs.ohio.gov/cdc/childcare.stm>.

It is unlawful for the facility to discriminate in the enrollment of children upon the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, or disability in violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, 104 Stat. 32, 42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.

****This information must be given in writing to all parents, guardians and employees as required in 5101:2-12-30 of the Ohio Administrative Code.***



I have received and accept the school policies listed in Villa Montessori Parent Handbook.

- Admissions
- Safe Arrival and Departure
- Hours, Holidays and Inclement Weather
- Tuition / Due Dates / Annual Registration / No Refund Policy
- Late Pickup
- Vacation Credits
- Withdrawal / Absences / Change of Schedule
- Menus/ Food
- Emergencies
- Emergencies / Immunizations/ Health Records / Medication / Allergies
- Outdoor Activities / Fences
- Behavior Plan & Discipline / Potty Training / Biting
- Photos
- Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect
- Chain of Command

I have received a copy of the Parent Handbook, understand and agree with the policies, including those listed above.

Child's Name _____

Parent
Signature _____

Date _____

Administrator
Signature _____

Date _____