







PARENT/STUDENT HANDBOOK

Revision 1.02i

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PRELUDE:

Welcome!

Villa Montessori School is a community of families, students and staff members all working to help children develop and demonstrate a love of learning through respect for themselves, their environment and the entire world community of which we are all members.

This handbook provides a method to communicate the policies, procedures and basic information to help families effectively become part of the Villa Montessori Community.

The policies contained within this handbook have been reviewed and endorsed by the VMS Board of Trustees.

Villa Montessori School (VMS) Parent/Student Handbooks are made available to all VMS families electronically and by request in printed form. A copy of the Parent/Student Handbook is also available on the premises at VMS at all times in the main office.

Parent/Student Handbooks will be provided to families electronically before the first day of attendance.

The school reserves the right to alter, amend, or modify the policies and procedures contained in this handbook at any time.

Early childhood education is one of the most valuable investments you can make in your child's future....

Welcome to the Villa Montessori Community!

Ref. NAEYC-Code of Ethical Conduct (2005): P-1.2, P-2.2 & P-4.1

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✦ PHILOSOPHY

CURRICULUM

All classes work within an established curriculum, dedicated to achieving the school's mission. The program at VMS is interpretively based upon the philosophy and work of Maria Montessori, an Italian educator and physician. Time, resources and content are balanced on all age levels. The school expects that each child work to the best of his/her ability, with the goal of reaching academic excellence and personal success.

The child is encouraged to develop a sense of order by completing the work cycle of activity. Multi-age groupings encourage each child to choose work at his/her developmental level, without fear of failure and achieve leadership skills. The teacher makes presentations of curriculum materials to their students individually, in small and large groups.

This is a brief outline of curriculum areas. For more complete information, the school reference library has many works by Dr. Montessori and those who have studied her methods. Curriculum maps for each age level are available from the school.

Practical Life for the younger child includes preparatory activities such as dish washing, scrubbing, pouring, and learning to zip/button/snap, etc. This enables the child to develop concentration and independence. The child learns to care for him/herself and the physical environment. Grace, courtesy, and table manners are also emphasized. Consumer education and home economics expand in the elementary years.

Sensorial - These activities heighten sensitivity and provide a base for later experiences in math and language. Through the use of structured activities, the qualities of objects are remembered. Hands-on experiences lead the child's mind to form concepts that lead to reading and math.

Math – Children are encouraged to use math skills throughout their day. Number concepts are presented hands-on through materials as well as using the language of math (more, less, greater than, etc.) Math begins with concrete materials and moves the child sensibly into abstract computations.

Language - The child's real and imaginary experiences are broadened, so the vocabulary expands. The child is prepared for writing, for recognizing sounds and for enjoying literature. Elementary students practice writing and speaking for varied purposes, gaining skills in using language as part of other studies.

Geography - The child is made aware of the world through physical exploration of maps, land forms, and items from other cultures. This is supplemented by pictures and written materials about the world. This teaching assists the child in becoming a part of the global community. Students will participate in charity and community projects to provide practice in social responsibility.

History - The child develops a sense of history through an interdisciplinary approach. Time lines are used to provide a visual overview of change. The focus is on the child's relationship to time and the child works within a cycle of historical study.

Science - Children in infant and toddler classes are introduced to natural items and the words used to describe things. Experimentation begins in the pre-primary class. The child learns to classify items and builds a concrete foundation for later studies in elementary.

Foreign Language – Children are introduced to Spanish as a language. Songs and studies of countries speaking these languages, stories, and conversation combine to interest the child and enhance multicultural understanding. Families with foreign heritage are invited to share their culture.

Art - The child participates in practical art experiences designed to interest him/her and invite discovery. The child is exposed to classic art through works in the school.

Music - The child sings, plays rhythm instruments, and listens to classical music for an introduction to the varieties and joys of music. Even the older infant watches and may try rhythm sticks as older members of the class sing and play. The children experience dance by participating in the performance of "The Nutcracker Suite."

Perceptual Motor Development - Learning to control one's body gives a sense of mastery and builds a foundation for participation in athletic ventures. The child practices hand/eye, hand/foot, and eye/foot coordination, and learns the vocabulary of fitness. The child is encouraged to try things and stretch his capabilities.

Consumer/Career Education - The child carries out real life experiences with the goal of being a competent member of society. These exercises help the child grow in his/her ability to understand his/her working environment, ability to adapt to change, solve problems, and think critically. As the child develops communication skills and ability to work within a team setting, he/she develops a sense of ethics, an understanding of human development, and potential careers he/she may want to later pursue.

Ref. NAEYC-Code of Ethical Conduct (2005): P-1.2, P-2.2 & P-4.1

GENERAL EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

Physical Goals

- 1) The child is provided a healthy and safe environment and follows appropriate ground rules.
- 2) The child masters gross motor coordination necessary to foster grace of movements.
- 3) The child develops fine motor coordination necessary for writing and manipulation of materials.
- 4) The child accepts his physique and masculinity or femininity and be accepting of others.

Social Goals

- 1) The child develops the ability to cooperate with adults and peers.
- 2) The child develops a mature sense of justice and fairness.
- 3) The younger child in a multi-age group learns from the examples and demonstrations of the older child.
- 4) The older child in a multi-age group is allowed to clarify and confirm his knowledge and develop the willingness to accept leadership.
- 5) The child demonstrates an awareness of and caring attitude toward the interdependence of man and nations with a desire for cooperation and peace.
- 6) The child demonstrates an awareness of and caring attitude toward the interdependence of people and nature.
- 7) The child accepts of the differences between himself and others.
- 8) The child develops socially acceptable manners and courtesies.

Emotional Goals

- 1) The child develops a sense of order and an inner security.
- 2) The child develops self-discipline and self-control, as well as develops maturity and a healthy self-esteem.
- 3) The child develops a strong sense of initiative and perseverance and the willingness to try new things.
- 4) The child develops a good self-image and self-confidence as an independent learner.
- 5) The child is able to identify and communicate his feelings effectively, appropriately, and respectfully.
- 6) The child learns to effectively avoid conflict through peer mediation.

Intellectual or Cognitive Goals

- 1) The child develops good concentration skills.
- 2) The child develops and expands his imagination and a positive, creative attitude toward learning.
- 3) The child develops a sense of aesthetics.
- 4) The child progresses at his own pace in the learning style most successful for him in a noncompetitive atmosphere.
- 5) The child becomes a learner independent of the adult.
- 6) The child acquires a sense of responsibility through completion of the work cycle.
- 7) The child masters the tools or skills needed to pursue knowledge.
- 8) The child demonstrates an understanding of how to locate information and use various media for research.
- 9) The child strives for his own personal excellence, while accepting his level of ability.

GOVERNANCE OF THE SCHOOL

Villa Montessori School (VMS) is led by a Board of Trustees which provides a collective wisdom that renders guidance and continuity of policy and program. QC community-based trustees bring a variety of technical expertise to the school. They work within a framework of by-laws, experience with the school, and information provided through an orientation with the Head of School and/or members of the nominating committee.

VMS is a not-for-profit organization, and the primary function of the financial management of the school is to maintain sufficient funds available for necessary operating expenses. The school is audited annually. Fiscal responsibility shall be maintained to provide for the future of the school, including costs of facilities and retaining highly skilled staff. Tuition and fees paid by current families fund the school's operations. At the direction of the Board, the school does hold an annual fund drive to help the school improve its programs and facilities. VMS can also receive monetary contributions designated by families through the Quad Cities United Way Campaign and similar employer-sponsored giving programs.

VMS established an endowment in 2000; the endowment is held at the Community Foundation of the Great River Bend.

In addition to the overview of the Board, the school is accredited and subject to review by the Independent Schools Association of the Central States (ISACS) and the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). The school's 0-3 program must also meet the standards of the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). In addition, VMS is a member of the American Montessori Society (AMS). Elementary education provided by our school is fully transferable to other school systems.

VMS follows the NAEYC Code of Ethics (available in the VMS office) and has adopted the regulations and requirements of DCFS for the infant and toddler program.

VMS staff is actively involved in the community through participation in various early childhood organizations.

VMS families are included on the VMS Board of Directors (see VMS By Laws) as trustees, on Board committees and other volunteer participation as needed. VMS staff match the expressed volunteer interest of families to activities needed by VMS.

Ref. NAEYC-Code of Ethical Conduct (2005): P-4.1

HOW CHILDREN BUILD A FOUNDATION BASED ON SKILLS

Teachers use multiple sources (including results of informal and formal assessments as well as children's initiations, questions, and interests) to:

- Identify what children have learned
- Adapt curriculum and teaching to meet children's needs and interests
- Foster children's curiosity
- Extend children's engagement
- Support self-initiated learning

As children learn and acquire new skills, teachers use their knowledge of children's abilities to fine-tune their teaching support. Teachers adjust challenges as children gain competence and understanding and help children enter into and sustain play.

Teachers support and challenge children's learning during interactions or activities that are both teacher and child initiated.

Ref. NAEYC-Code of Ethical Conduct (2005): P-1.1, P-1.2 & P-2.2

LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

Students are provided with opportunities for language acquisition that align with the program philosophy, consider family perspectives, and consider community perspectives. Students are provided opportunities to experience oral and written communications in a language that their family uses or understands. Children have varied opportunities to develop competence in verbal and nonverbal communication by responding to questions, communicating needs, thoughts, and experiences; and describing things and events.

VMS is pleased to serve families from a wide variety of cultural backgrounds. The Orientation Conference held with the family, prior to the child starting, encourages families that have English as a second language to share key phrases/ words in their native language that the child responds to or may use in their daily activities. The school is happy to work with families who do not utilize English as their primary language. VMS staff will work with the child in learning the English language, but it is helpful when the parents also work with the child toward this goal. This can be done in various ways, such as speaking the native language at home, but speaking English outside of the home; designating a specific room inside the home for speaking English, etc. Please don't hesitate to talk to your child's teacher or Renee Detloff, Head of School, for additional guidance on this topic.

Parents/guardians who need interpreter services during the application process, orientation, parent-teacher conferences and/or written information translated should contact the VMS office, so community resources can be accessed.

Ref. NAEYC-Code of Ethical Conduct (2005): P-1.2 & P-2.5

PROGRAMS OFFERED

All Villa Montessori programs are based on a year-round schedule.

The Infant Class is for children 6 weeks of age to approximately 15 months of age. They are in a nurturing learning environment all day. Infants are allowed to eat and nap on their own schedule.

The Toddler Class is offered for children approximately 15 months through approximately 2 years of age. Class begins at 8:45 a.m. and ends at 11:45 a.m. but children may also attend before or after class time.

The Pre-Primary Class is for children 2 and 3 years of age. Class begins at 8:30 a.m. and ends at 11:45 a.m. Child care is offered before or after class time. Students eat lunch from approximately 12:00 to 12:30. Children who stay for the extended afternoon usually nap some or all of the time between 12:30 and 2:30.

Staff will work with parents when the child shows readiness for toilet learning.

The Primary Class is offered for 3- to 6-year old's (traditionally referred to as pre-school or pre-K classes). Class begins promptly at 8:30 and ends at 12:00 or 3:30. Child care is available before and after the scheduled class time.

Parents of children entering primary classes need to participate in the child's toilet learning, if child is not already trained.

Elementary Class is offered for children ages 5 to 12 years old. The elementary class meets Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Families may use child care at any time before class (7:00 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.) and after class (3:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.)

VMS will have each grouping of children assigned to a teaching staff that has primary responsibility for working with that group of children. The teaching staff will provide ongoing personal contact, meaningful learning activities, supervision*, and immediate care as needed to protect children's well-being.

*Children under the age of three (North Wing) are not left unattended at any time. The Elementary children may be out of sight and sound of a teacher for no longer than 10 minutes. Examples: to go to the front office or empty garbage into larger trash bins in the Community Room area.

Ref. IL-DCFS Licensing Standards 407.190 (f) and 407.200 (p)

Ref. NAEYC-Code of Ethical Conduct (2005): P-1.1, P-1.2, P-2.2 & P-4.1

PROGRAM PLANNING AND SCHEDULING POLICY

Villa Montessori School (VMS) has a written program of activities which are suitable for the developmental level of each child and each group of children. Infants are kept together with the same teaching staff for nine to fifteen months. Toddlers and Twos are kept together with same teaching staff for nine months or longer. The program provides each child with experiences which will promote all of the following:

- Self-esteem and positive self-image.
- Social interaction.
- Self-expression and communication skills.
- Creative expression.
- Large and small muscle development.
- Intellectual growth.
- Literacy.

The program schedule is planned to provide a flexible balance each day of:

- Active and quiet activities.
- Individual and group activities.
- Indoor and outdoor activities.

VMS will provide all of the following:

- Reasonable regularity in eating, napping and other routines.
- Daily periods when a variety of experiences are concurrently available for the children to select their own activities.
- Protection from excess fatigue and over stimulation.
- Daily outdoor activities except during inclement weather or when not advisable for health reasons.

VMS staff will give children individual attention. The program as implemented will reflect VMS's written policies.

In order to expand the cultural knowledge and create a sense of community, VMS has "Spirit Day" on a monthly basis. Individuals or organizations present to all of the children and staff their particular talent, interest or cultural traditions and language. We highly encourage any family member, who is willing to share, to let VMS know. If you do not want to be the person who presents, but have ideas for Spirit Day celebrations, please leave a note in the message box by the Parent Board.

Ref. NAEYC-Code of Ethical Conduct (2005): P-1.1, P-1.2, P-2.2 & P-4.1

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STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

Villa Montessori School (VMS) is dedicated to helping children develop and demonstrate a love of learning through respect for themselves, their environment and the entire world community of which they are members.

“Kindness towards all”

is the all-encompassing goal of Villa Montessori School

VMS will challenge the child in an environment of freedom within reasonable limits. Each class with its multi-age group is its own community, within the whole, in which children live and work cooperatively to develop responsible citizenship. Our curriculum equips the children to become responsible citizens with multi-cultural awareness and community involvement.

Our prepared environment with new and challenging activities is designed to move the child from concrete to the abstract and create a positive attitude toward learning. The child will develop a questioning and analytical mind. Creative thinking, problem solving, creative expression, and social skills will develop in the child. The child will gain a love for learning that will last a lifetime.

Ref. NAEYC-Code of Ethical Conduct (2005): P-1.1, P-1.2, P-2.2 & P-4.1

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BASIC INFO

ATTENDANCE

Children are expected to regularly attend the program in which they are enrolled. This is for the child's own welfare; in addition, Illinois law states that children seven years of age and older who do not attend school regularly must be reported as truant to the Regional Office of Education. The state definition of truancy is unexcused absence of more than 10% of school days. An unexcused absence is any time the child is not in class and the parents have not given the teacher prior notice or there is not a note from the child's physician.

Excessive absences or tardiness may result in the child not being properly prepared to move to the next age or grade level. Villa Montessori may dismiss a child from school for lack of attendance.

Each child is expected to attend and maintain the schedule for which they have been enrolled for the current year. Please set an example for your child by getting him/her to class on time. Good attendance can help to establish life-long habits.

If a child needs to be brought in much earlier or stay much later (e.g., in excess of 30 minutes) than his/her normal schedule, please notify the school ahead of time so we can be prepared to adjust staffing as needed. Families wishing to bring their child on a non-scheduled day must make a request to VMS office staff no later than **noon** of the prior day.

In the elementary program, a record of the child's absences and tardiness will be transferred with the child's records.

Enrollment for the infant, toddler, pre-primary, and primary program is for a 12-month period.

Elementary children are enrolled for 10 months and must attend a minimum of 186 days.

Ref. NAEYC-Code of Ethical Conduct (2005): P-1.2, P-2.1, P-2.2 & P-4.1

BABYSITTING/NANNY SERVICES

It is against school policy for staff members to provide babysitting or nanny services after hours to VMS families; therefore, families should refrain from asking staff members to babysit or serve as a nanny. Staff members may be subject to dismissal if found to be in violation.

Ref. NAEYC-Code of Ethical Conduct (2005): P-2.11, P-3B.1 & P-3C.3

BIRTHDAY PARTIES & INVITATIONS

We enjoy celebrating each child's birthday with a simple observance and candle lighting ceremony. Due to the number of food-related allergies, treats, muffins, etc. will not be allowed for birthdays. In lieu of providing birthday treats, we ask that parents donate a book or music CD to the child's classroom. (Parents may wish to check with the child's teacher for preferred authors/music styles). Parents who bring a book may wish to make the presentation by reading the book to the entire class.

In deference to the feelings of all children, party invitations may not be handed out at school. The feelings of young children are very tender, and hurts occur easily.

For the above items: Ref. NAEYC-Code of Ethical Conduct (2005): P-2.2 & P-4.1

CHILD ABUSE & NEGLECT:

All employees of VMS are required by law to be MANDATED REPORTERS of child abuse and take training in how to identify and report it. This means at any time a VMS employee suspects a child may be or has been neglected or abused by a parent/guardian, family member, other adult or child, that person is obligated to report it to the proper authorities including: the Head of School, IL-Department of Children & Family Services (DCFS) and local law enforcement. VMS is NOT obligated to inform a parent or guardian of this report, especially if that person is the one named by the child as the possible perpetrator. The proper authorities will be contacting the family about the investigation which must be conducted within 24 hours of a call. The Mandated Reporter must follow-up with a written report to DCFS within 48 hours of the call. Villa Montessori School has a well-defined set of policies and procedures for the reporting of an allegation of alleged abuse reported by staff or about a staff person.

If your family is investigated by the authorities and the case is considered "unfounded," please understand that although it may be an unpleasant experience to endure, the ultimate aim is the protection of your child.

Although parents, guardians and other adults close to a child are not mandated to make a report of abuse, if you suspect your child or any other child might possibly be or has been abused in the past by ANY ONE, including VMS staff, you can make a report to the DCFS Child Abuse Hotline at: 1-800-252-2873 (1-800-ABUSE). If you suspect someone employed by VMS, please also inform the Head of School, in order for our safety and employment procedures to be fully implemented. A parallel in-house investigation will be conducted by the Head of School and a crisis response team. No matter the outcome, a final de-briefing meeting will occur to analyze all aspects of that particular report and outcomes. Your family, if affected, may be asked to participate in this de-briefing meeting.

Ref. NAEYC –Code of Ethical Conduct: P-1.1, P-1.8 through P-1.11

DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP OF A CHILD

The school is open 7:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. Drop off times are established based on the specific program to minimize interruption to the classroom learning environment. Families will be charged on a per-child basis for time spent at VMS outside of their normal schedule. Children may not remain in our care past 5:30 p.m. and if a parent/guardian has not contacted the school and school personnel cannot reach the child's emergency contacts in the event a child is still in our care, the Department of Children and Families and Moline Police Department may be contacted. Fees will be assessed based on ProCare check-in / checkout times. All families should collect their children and have exited the building by 5:30pm.

It is the adult's responsibility to assure that the child arrives to school on time and is picked up promptly. Parents are required to use the automated check-in service upon arrival and sign out when the child leaves. All children should be brought to the classroom with the adult. All children should wash hands, upon arrival, before joining their classmates.

All visitors must wash hands upon entering also. Adults dropping off children in the classroom are asked to use quiet voices and not interrupt the work cycle of children already in the room. Family members are asked to refrain from cell phone use when dropping off/ picking up in order to more fully focus on the child.

This will help in easing the child's transition between you and the classroom. Families with multiple children at VMS are required to drop off the oldest child first & pick up their oldest child last in order to minimize disruptions while maintaining safety in our younger classrooms.

Children will not be released to any authorized pick-up person that appears impaired by drugs and/or alcohol.

No child will be released to an unauthorized person or person without valid identification. If a person requesting to pick up a child is unfamiliar to staff members, identification must be provided to confirm they are authorized to do so. A court order is required to be submitted to the office if a parent is to be prohibited from picking up their child.

Ref. NAEYC-Code of Ethical Conduct (2005): P-1.1, P-2.2, P-2.6, P-1.8 & P-1.11

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

The school has an "Emergency Procedures Plan" which covers a wide variety of emergency situations, including those that are weather-related. This plan was created with guidance from federal, state, and law enforcement personnel. The school practices emergency drills, e.g., fire drill, tornado drill, etc. Please see a staff member if you have questions.

Periodic fire and tornado drills allow the children to practice safety procedures in the event of an emergency. If a family member arrives to pick up a child in mid-drill, please allow the child to complete it. From time to time, the school also hosts local experts who talk to the children about safety issues.

The school urges safe use of all playground equipment. It helps the children to have consistent rules enforced by their families when playing on the equipment outside of school hours. If a family is uncertain of the safety rules of the school, they are encouraged to ask any teacher.

Ref. NAEYC-Code of Ethical Conduct (2005): P-1.1, P-2.2 & P-4.6 & P-4.7

ENROLLMENT/ADMISSIONS

Students are selected for admission to the school on the basis of academic potential, developmental maturity, school achievement, diversity and gender balance, readiness for the school's program, and appropriateness of the match between the family and the school. Where appropriate, testing is used as a tool to provide information to assist in the assessment of each candidate. In all cases, the school retains the right to determine, in its sole discretion, whether or not to select a student for admission or to re-enroll a student.

It is the policy of the school not to discriminate on the basis of race, sex, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, or physical or mental disability which is unrelated to the ability to work or enjoy the benefits of the school's programs, facilities, or services. All persons are encouraged to apply. Villa Montessori complies with title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act and will work with families to determine if our school is a good fit for their child.

VMS makes efforts to hire and maintain staff with the cultural and racial characteristics of the families we serve. Staff and volunteers who speak the language of the children being served will regularly interact with the children and families as needed.

Families are asked to read information provided by the school (brochures available or on our web site) about enrollment, philosophy, etc. prior to scheduling a tour of the school. This information will answer some basic questions a parent might have and may help the parent think of additional questions that may be asked when you come for the tour.

Once a parent has read the information, please call the school to schedule a tour.

To register, a registration fee is due with submission of the Registration Application. Submission of a completed Registration Application and fee will secure a position on our waitlist. As placement becomes available in a classroom, families registered for that classroom will be contacted based on the following criteria; current age of child, date in which they are looking for placement, and order in which we received a completed Registration Application.

Once placement is confirmed, the school will schedule an enrollment conference and send an email to the family with the additional paperwork which needs to be filled out and returned at the enrollment conference. All required paperwork must be received prior to the child's start date.

Ref. NAEYC-Code of Ethical Conduct (2005): P-1.3, P-2.2, P-2.4, P-4.3

ENVIROMENTAL AWARENESS

A major tenet of Villa Montessori School philosophy is "...to respect your environment..." These values are demonstrated throughout the school facility. Furniture is selected based on sustainability, lack of unnecessary chemicals and natural construction methods. Finishes for all materials are chosen on the basis of EPA, CDC, and all other applicable state and federal standard acceptability. VMS is a fragrance-free building and all family and staff members are informed of this during their introduction to the school. Recycled materials are used in any areas that they are available. All cleaning materials are provided and monitored by Eco Lab, a world recognized leader in building operations.

FIREARMS / WEAPONS

All faculty, staff, students and visitors to VMS are strictly prohibited from possessing firearms, ammunition for any caliber of firearm, explosives or weapons on the premises of Villa Montessori School unless specifically authorized by the Head of School. This does not apply to authorized members of the Law Enforcement community.

A weapon is defined as but not limited to any device that is designed to or traditionally used to inflict harm. This includes, but is not limited to: 1) firearms, slingshots, switchblades, daggers, blackjacks, brass knuckles, bows and arrows, hand grenades, hunting knives, nun-chucks, throwing stars, etc.; 2) any object that could be reasonably construed as a weapon; or 3) any object legally controlled as a weapon or treated as a weapon under the local authority having jurisdiction.

Anyone violating this policy will be subject to immediate disciplinary actions up to and including dismissal from the program.

Ref. NAEYC-Code of Ethical Conduct (2005): P-1.1, P-1.11, P-2.2, P-3C.2, P-4.6 through P-4.8

INDIVIDUALS PROHIBITED FROM SCHOOL PROPERTY

As a private school, Villa Montessori School has the right to determine who may or may not be allowed on school property, including the building, parking lot, or grounds.

The following are *examples (but not limited to)* of individuals who are not allowed on school property:

- Individuals and family members of individuals who have been dismissed from employment at VMS or who otherwise left employment in any way other than an amicable manner.
- Students and family members of students who have been dismissed from VMS or who otherwise left the school in any way other than an amicable manner.
- Individuals who have restraining orders against them issued on behalf of a staff member, parent, or student.
- Individuals who wish to solicit school employees or the school business office for the purpose of financial gain.

Ref. NAEYC-Code of Ethical Conduct (2005): P-1.1, P-1.11, P-2.2, P-3C.2, P-4.6 through P-4.8

PARKING

Families are asked to park in the marked parking spaces in front of the school and enter through the front doors. Families with handicapped hang tags or plates may park in any designated parking space. The two spaces on either side of the Front Entrance (South Door) are specifically reserved for families and those authorized by the families, who are entering the building for drop-off, pick-up of children; parent-teacher conferences or any other school-related business.

VMS discourages having vehicle idling (busses, automobiles) in VMS parking areas, except if vehicles need to maintain interior or engine temperatures in extreme heat or cold conditions. This is for health and safety reasons to limit children and other's exposure to exhaust fumes.

Ref. NAEYC-Code of Ethical Conduct (2005): P-1.3, P-2.2, P-4.6 & P-4.8

SCHEDULED SCHOOL CLOSINGS / HOLIDAYS

Days that the VMS may be closed will be posted on the school calendar. Any other closings due to potential weather or unforeseen circumstances will be announced through the public media outlets, as well as a school-wide e-mail announcement.

In order to be as inclusive as possible, and taking into consideration cultural sensitivity, VMS does not celebrate holidays as part of the curriculum, instead, we celebrate the changing of seasons in our world.

Ref. NAEYC-Code of Ethical Conduct (2005): P-1.2 & P-2.2

SECURITY/CHECKING IN AND OUT

The school's electronic check in/out system helps ensure your child's security by tracking who drops off and picks up the child and is also used to calculate the child care billing. It is important that families be diligent in utilizing the system and provide instruction to any others who drop off or pick up your child.

Sharing of access codes is not allowed. If someone else needs to drop off or pick up your child on a one-time basis, arrangements must be made with the office. If the person will be routinely dropping off or picking up, the person must be added to the child's authorized pick up list and be assigned a personal code.

Although courtesy is a priority at VMS, **DO NOT ALLOW OTHERS TO FOLLOW YOU** through the door as you enter (tailgate).

Repeated failure to utilize the school's check in/out system properly will be cause for additional charges or dismissal.

Ref. NAEYC-Code of Ethical Conduct (2005): P-1.1, P-2.1, P-2.2, P-4.6 & P-4.8

SOLICITATION

VMS does not permit soliciting, peddling, or the canvassing of employees or families. No school building, facility, or class list may be used for this purpose.

The only exception is for school-sponsored fundraisers.

Ref. NAEYC-Code of Ethical Conduct (2005): P-2.2 & P-2.11

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POLICIES

ANIMAL POLICY

Any visits by any animals must be arranged in advance with the office and comply with DCFS guidelines.

Visiting animals must appear to be in good health.

Visiting animals must have clearance from a vet or animal shelter showing that the animal is fully immunized.

Visiting animals must be suitable for contact with children.

Parents with children who are allergic to any type of animal/pets should share this info on their health report form and with their child's classroom teacher(s) to ensure that they are not inadvertently exposed.

Ref. IL-DCFS Licensing Standards (2016): 407.300

Ref. NAEYC-Code of Ethical Conduct (2005): P-1.1, P-2.2

ASSESSMENT POLICIES

Purpose: The purpose of assessment is to best enable the child to progress based on his/her own intellect and developmental abilities. VMS is sensitive to the cultural diversity and varying abilities and will only utilize assessment processes that are within the comfort level of the child's family. Teachers refer to curriculum goals and developmental expectations when interpreting assessment information.

Procedures: The family is invited to come in for an orientation conference prior to beginning class. Once in class, children are assessed on a daily basis using observation, sampling, and checklists. During the first three months of a child's attendance, all areas of development are initially assessed. Formal conference forms are introduced to the family at the beginning of the first conference. Each category of assessment is explained, as well as the process for scoring and evaluation. Formal conference forms are updated as the child progresses (annotated no less than three times per school year)
Parents are invited to relay concerns or questions to be addressed prior to meeting with the teacher during the conference time with the teacher.

Conditions: Children are assessed in their own familiar classrooms with familiar staff. Children are assessed using progressively challenging Montessori materials as they show readiness.

Timelines:

Rock Island Department of Public Health routinely conducts on-site vision and hearing screenings for all children. Black Hawk Area Special Education District (BHASED) also is available to do vision and hearing screening, if families live within their service area.

AGES & STAGES (ASQ-3 & ASQ:SE-2) Questionnaires* are to be completed by parents at the time of enrollment and twice more during the year. Input from your child's teachers and administrative staff create a cumulative scoring that can help determine if any additional community resources might be indicated to assure that your child has the optimum learning experiences while attending VMS.

*Utilization of the ASQ-3 & ASQ:SE-2 will be introduced beginning Fall 2018.

The Montessori Assessment Tool is completed by staff within the first 60 days of enrollment and then reviewed during the formal conferences which are done 2-3 times/year. Daily records are kept on a teacher's log. Portfolios are updated weekly by the teacher.

Families are encouraged to communicate any concerns or questions in a written note, personal contact, or a phone call directly to the teacher. The VMS office will be happy to facilitate any preferred means of communication.

Use of results: Parents are given copies of the child's conference form in a person-to-person format. Parents are invited to relay concerns or questions to be addressed prior to meeting with the teacher during the conference time with the teacher. The family is included in the process of determining what future course of learning will be emphasized. Conference forms and individual children's personal and academic records are kept in the VMS Main Office in a locked file drawer. **Assessments will not be used for comparison of children in individual classrooms.**

Referrals: Developmental screening and referral for diagnostic assessment are utilized when a child demonstrates or a parent expresses concern that is out of the realm of age appropriate development.

Families that refuse to follow through within a reasonable amount of time, on recommended referrals for their child may result in the child's dismissal from VMS.

Curriculum and adaptation of teaching practice: This occurs throughout the school year as the children's needs and knowledge base changes. Montessori materials are placed strategically on shelves in the classroom to continuously invite the child to self-challenge. Teaching staff also utilize assessment outcomes to adjust the classroom environment in ways that most effectively meet each child's instructional level and interests.

Planning program improvement: Curriculum areas are in an ongoing cycle of review and improvement as part of the standing Trustee committee (Programs), as well as how the curriculum materials are aligned with the curriculum map, syllabus, and assessment forms. This progress is communicated yearly through the annual publication of the curriculum map. Surveys are distributed requesting family input. The information is input for the ongoing school improvement process that could have impact in the planning process. Parents are also encouraged to share observations, concerns or ideas with the administration at any time.

Training: Teaching staff have been trained to conduct child assessment through the traditional Montessori 3- Period lesson approach. Each teacher is trained per material in each curriculum area to know what steps are required to “teach” the concept/ skill, as well as extensions that expand on the learning involved through the process. Each Montessori curriculum area has direct/ indirect goals of learning for the child. As part of the evaluation of each staff member, the skill base for presentations is assessed for advancing mastery.

Special services: Outside resources are utilized when determining special needs. We facilitate the use of norm-referenced and standardized testing, checklists such as the AGES & STAGES (ASQ-3 & ASQ:SE-2) Questionnaires.

VMS uses a self-developed assessment tool based on a combination of expectations of the Illinois Early Learning standards, NAEYC standards and the time- tested Montessori materials and techniques.

A complete assessment of the child's progress is more accurately attained by the teacher if the child attends VMS 5 days/week.

Villa Montessori contracts with *Caregiver Connections*, a free program sponsored through the IL-Department of Human Services (DHS). This program provides a consultant who will observe and give recommendations to VMS and parents about any additional community support services necessary to be retained in the classroom or if transfer to a different learning environment is warranted.

NOTE: For children from Birth through High School graduation or age 21, Public School Districts are required to identify, evaluate and provide appropriate special education services through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA-2004). These services are at no cost to families.

Ref. NAEYC-Code of Ethical Conduct (2005): P-1.2 through P-1.7, P-2.2 through P-2.13 & P-4.5

BUILDING & GROUNDS CARE POLICY

VMS uses an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) system to eliminate or control the potential for exposure to harmful animals, insects, pests and noxious / poisonous plants. Chemical control agents will be used only when natural control approaches are not deemed effective and will be used in the minimum amount required to achieve the control objective.

The IPM will be managed by a professional licensed Service Company.

A Log Book will be maintained in the Main Office that records all pertinent information (chemical, date of application, area of application) on all IPM activities at this location.

No IPM operations will occur when children are present in the facility.

Any interior IPM operations will occur on the third Saturday of each month when children are not present in the facility.

Any exterior IPM operations will occur only when children will not be present for the next 24 hours.

Ref. NAEYC-Code of Ethical Conduct (2005): P-1.1, P-2.2, P-4.6 & P-4.8

COMMUNICATIONS POLICIES

The school uses a variety of formal and informal methods to communicate with families about the program philosophy and curriculum objectives, including educational goals and effective strategies that can be used by families to promote their children's learning. Specific methods of communications include:

Newsletters/School Updates: The school issues newsletters and/or school updates to keep families informed of happenings at school. It is generally transmitted electronically, unless families request a printed copy. It is the family's responsibility to read the information.

Phone calls: All calls are received in the Office. Messages will be delivered to the appropriate staff member and they will return the call when they are not busy working with the children. All VMS staff members are first responsible for the care and education of the children attending here. If you need to speak with a staff member at length, please call to arrange an appointment.

Parent/Teacher Conferences: An orientation conference is scheduled between the teacher and family when a child is new to the classroom. Regular parent/teacher conferences are scheduled during the school year. Parents and guardians are urged to attend. In addition to these conference times, parents may contact their child's teacher to arrange a conference at any time of the year.

Written communication: It is the parent's responsibility to notify the school of changes in phone numbers, address, etc. All information will be kept confidential. If a change affects who may or may not pick up the child, the family should alert the office staff immediately, so the child's file may be updated. If the family is involved in legal action involving the child, we are required to have a copy of applicable court decisions (i.e. custody decisions, orders of protection, etc.) on file.

Certain questions or comments that need to be communicated to teachers, administrative staff, etc. are best done in written form. Commonly used forms are provided in the Parent Forms Notebook outside the main office (schedule changes, request for extra days, pick-up list changes, etc.). Having information in writing will help us to respond more quickly and concisely to any of your concerns.

Children's mailboxes are located in their assigned classrooms. Parents are responsible for checking their mailbox for messages at the start and end of the day.

Children's mailboxes are reserved for communication from the child's teacher or office staff, unless otherwise authorized. **Mailboxes are not to be used for personal business.**

Informal Communications: In addition to more formal communications, we find informal communication vital to achieving our goals for the children. We need to know enough of what's happening in the child's world to adapt our environment to support the child's needs as much as possible. If a significant change occurs in the home, the family should alert the child's teacher(s) as soon as possible.

School web site: The school web site is utilized as a tool to reach prospective families. The web site also provides information for current families, such as school calendar, etc., which families can access.

Facebook page: The VMS Facebook page is an additional way for VMS to keep parents up-to-date and provide information about happenings at the school. This is not a forum for parents to discuss concerns, complaints, or matters regarding any of the children.

E-mail: Families should provide VMS with an e-mail address in order to assure timely receipt of school information. Please be sure the email address provided is one that is checked regularly. This is particularly useful when the school needs to contact families quickly, e.g., early school closing due to bad weather, etc. Please notify the school immediately if your e-mail address changes.

Because teachers are busy with the children in the classroom and are rarely at their desk, e-mail is not a recommended method of communication with the teachers when you need a prompt reply.

Correspondence Box: A black mailbox can be found on the wall next to the main office door.

Correspondence to any VMS staff member, as well as tuition payments, etc. may be left in this box.

Family Survey: Occasional surveys are administered, allowing families to participate in a comprehensive evaluation to measure progress towards the school's goals and objectives. Participation in the survey is important to assist the school in making decisions to improve its programs.

NOTE: Families are encouraged to let VMS staff know if written communications are difficult to read and understand, due to English being a second language or for those with a disability or impairment.

Translations or clarifications of any written communication can be done, whenever needed, and as quickly as possible.

Ref. NAEYC-Code of Ethical Conduct (2005): P-2.1 through P-2.6

CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS & STUDENT INFORMATION

The School adopts and incorporates the provisions of 105 ILCS 5/2-3.12, the Illinois Statute, as well as United States Code, Chapter 20, Section 1231g, the Federal Statute, as its policy regarding the release and dissemination of a student's educational and school records.

A family's failure to provide legally required information (health records, etc.) to the school in a timely manner may result in dismissal of the child.

VMS staff will respect the confidential nature of all child and personnel records.

Information pertaining to the admission, progress, health, or discharge of an individual child will be confidential and access limited to VMS staff designated by the Head of School or Site Director. Any other dissemination of personal info will require written permission.

Families should respect each other's rights and privacy. Children's school records are kept in confidence and are only available to the child's parents and teachers. We have a growing number of families with unlisted phone numbers, or who otherwise do not want their home phone numbers to be "mass distributed." In respect to those who wish to retain their privacy (or those who simply wish to control the release of their phone numbers) the school will not hand out phone numbers without first obtaining the family's permission.

Ref. NAEYC-Code of Ethical Conduct (2005): P-2.8, P-4.6 & P-4.8

FIELD TRIP POLICIES

Villa Montessori's field trip policies follow the regulations set by NAEYC and DCFS. Children will have the opportunity to take field trips or participate in activities away from school as is age appropriate. Teaching staff: child ratios will be maintained while on field trips.

Experiences in the community are an integral part of the Villa Montessori learning process. Our flexible schedule allows us to take advantage of opportunities as they develop. Families are alerted to field trips by receipt of a field trip permission slip which must be signed in order for their child to participate.

Parents available to chaperone field trips are welcomed. Those who do will be responsible for watching their own child(children) as well as one or two other classmates. Siblings are not permitted to come along on field trips. Siblings enrolled at the school who are left to be cared for at school while the parent attends a field trip will be charged for child care if it is not the child's scheduled day; parents should first receive permission from the child's teacher before leaving the child at school.

Villa Montessori's field trip policies follow the regulations set by NAEYC and DCFS. Children will have the opportunity to take field trips or participate in activities away from school as is age-appropriate. Teaching staff: child ratios will be maintained while on field trips.

Experiences in the community are an integral part of the Villa Montessori learning process. Our flexible schedule allows us to take advantage of opportunities as they develop. Families are alerted to field trips by receipt of a field trip permission slip which must be signed in order for their child to participate.

Ref. NAEYC-Code of Ethical Conduct (2005): P-1.1, P-1.2, P-2.2, P-4.6 & P-4.8

OUTDOOR EDUCATION POLICY

Children are enriched by time spent outdoors. We have a lovely outdoor environment which we like to enjoy. Our students spend time outdoors developing their gross motor skills, socializing in a manner different than that within the classroom, and observing nature. Our outside experiences are an integral part of the education we provide. Children will go outside on a daily basis, except in inclement weather conditions. If a child's parent indicates that they are not to go outside, a doctor's excuse will be needed.

Our outdoor area is carefully designed to include an extensive natural environment, which also provides opportunity for gross motor activities and dramatic play. Staff will protect children and adults from exposure to high levels of air pollution from smog or heavy traffic by limiting outdoor and physical activity as a precaution during smog or other air pollution alerts.

Ref. NAEYC-Code of Ethical Conduct (2005): P-1.1, P-1.2, P-2.2, P-4.6 & P-4.8

VISITORS/OBSERVERS POLICY

Through observations and frequent communication between both staff and parents, this cooperative effort gives your child the feeling that their academic and social/emotional achievements are important!

Studies have shown that parental involvement has the most positive effect on your child's future academic success compared to any other measure!

All visitors are expected to enter the school by using the doorbell/intercom to request access.

All visitors must check in at the main office, be issued a visitor ID badge (this badge must be visibly displayed throughout the visit) and be escorted by a staff member. Visitors are not allowed to walk through the building unless physically escorted by a staff member. Any unidentified (without ID badge) visitor who is not recognized by the staff can expect to be stopped and escorted to the main office. The school reserves the right to stop a visitor at the main entrance and not allow further access to the school.

Families of students wishing to observe the classroom their child attends may visit at any time during the programs' regular hours of operation. Family members must check in at the school office and be escorted at all times.

Parent or guardians visiting the school on a regular or long-term basis (i.e. to perform volunteer work in the classroom or facility) must check in with the office at the start of each visit and will be issued an ID badge. Long-term volunteers may be required to undergo a background check per DCFS regulations.

Tours by high school and college students, and by families considering enrolling their children, are a common occurrence. We enjoy sharing our environment and philosophy with others and find that discussion is needed to aid them in understanding our goals. Tours for families in the process of selecting a school are conducted by administrative staff, so our current students are not deprived of valuable time with their teachers.

Villa Montessori School is also home to the Montessori Heartland Teacher Education Center, which serves adult students from across the Midwest. As part of their training, these adult students will occasionally spend time observing VMS classrooms.

Ref. NAEYC-Code of Ethical Conduct (2005): P-1.1, P-1.8, P-4.6 & P-4.8

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CHRONIC HEALTH CHALLENGES

If the child has or develops a chronic condition requiring special care (i.e., a child with chronic bladder infections who needs to be sent to the bathroom every two hours, or an asthmatic child who must avoid certain allergens), please have the physician send us written instructions.

Families are asked to be sure to completely and accurately fill out the school's "Health Information Report."

Ref. NAEYC-Code of Ethical Conduct (2005): P-1.1 through P-1.7

HAND WASHING PROCEDURE POLICY

HANDS SHOULD BE WASHED PROMPTLY AND THOROUGHLY by all staff, parents and children upon first entering the building and when entering a new room in the building before making contact with any materials in the room.

Staff and children hand's must also be washed after handling sand and dirt or after playing with water that is shared by two or more people. Adults must also wash or sanitize their hands before and after feeding a child. Hands must also be washed as soon as possible after contact with any potentially infectious materials or articles contaminated by them (i.e. prior to and after handling any food, preparing bottles, changing diapers, using the restroom, making contact with waste or bodily fluids).

Staff will use the following procedure for hand washing and assist children as needed with appropriate hand washing techniques:

- Wet hands under warm running water.
- Lather both hands well and scrub vigorously for at least 20 seconds.
- Rinse hands thoroughly under warm running water.
- Dry both hands with a new single-use towel or automatic dryer.
- For hand-held faucets, turn off the water using a disposable towel instead of bare hands to avoid recontamination of clean hands.

VMS provides Ecolab Advanced Antibacterial Foam Hand Soap foaming hand soap in dispensers located at each hand wash location.

Always use disposable towels when hands are being washed for sanitation purposes or in a food preparation setting.

Ref. IL-Licensing Standards (2014): 407.320

Ref. NAEYC-Code of Ethical Conduct (2005): P-1.1, P-2.2, P-4.6 & P-4.8

HEALTH RECORDS REQUIRED

Each child pre-primary age and younger must have a physical on file with the school, dated within the last two years. A physical must be completed upon entrance to the elementary program, and again when the child enters fifth grade. The state requires proof of dental examination for children entering kindergarten, second grade, and sixth grade; proof of eye exam is needed for children entering kindergarten.

Ref. IL-DCFS Licensing Standards (2016): 407.310 (a) 1-10

Ref. NAEYC-Code of Ethical Conduct (2005): P-1.1, P-2.2, P-4.6 & P-4.8

INFANT SLEEP POLICY

VMS staff must always place infants on their backs to sleep in equipment specifically designed for infants, without the use of sleep positioners, unless ordered by a physician.

Infants that arrive at VMS asleep, or fall asleep in a car seat, stroller, or anything else not specifically designed for infant sleeping must be placed in appropriate infant sleep equipment.

Infants younger than 12 months are not allowed any type of soft items in cribs or infant sleep equipment.

IMMUNIZATION POLICY

“It is always better to prevent a disease than to treat it after it occurs...” CDC Vaccines and Immunizations Home

As VMS serves children too young to be fully immunized for the commonly recognized diseases of polio, measles, diphtheria, pertussis (whooping cough), rubella (German measles), mumps, tetanus, rotavirus and *Haemophilus influenzae* type b (Hib) effective June 1st, 2017, all new students enrolling at VMS are required to be current and on time for all vaccinations recommended by the AAP (American Academy of Pediatrics).

NOTE: Immunization waivers are not accepted. VMS will only enroll children who have up-to-date immunizations.

Proof of immunization must be provided within 30 days of starting. This info must be provided on the State of Illinois Certificate of Child Health form (Physical form).

For children 6 weeks- 3 years of age each time they receive new immunizations, proof of updated immunizations needs to be submitted to the office.

Failing to provide proof of immunization will constitute the need for dismissal.

Ref. IL-DCFS Licensing Standards (2016): 407.310 (a) 4

Ref. NAEYC-Code of Ethical Conduct (2005): P-1.1, P-2.2, P-4.6 & P-4.8

ILLNESS POLICIES

A child may not attend school programs and activities when ill. Even if a child's condition is questionable, we ask the family to be cautious and to contact a medical professional before allowing the child to return to our programs. Children may not attend school or child care if they have had a fever of 100° F or over, diarrhea or vomiting within 24 hours. Children who develop symptoms while at school will be sent home and should not be back in school for at least 24 hours. If a child becomes ill at school, staff will first attempt to contact parents; if we cannot reach the parents, staff will contact others named on the child's application for pick-up. If a contagious illness is suspected, the child will be made comfortable and will be located where new individuals will not be exposed, until the child can be picked up.

A parent, guardian, or other authorized individual should pick up an ill child from school within an hour of being notified of the child's illness.

Children who receive an out-patient surgical procedure should not return to school the same day.

Non-compliance with the illness guidelines will result in a warning and may ultimately be cause for dismissal.

Students who have symptoms of communicable disease will be excluded from school until the disease is no longer contagious. Parents should notify the school when their child has been diagnosed with a communicable disease; the school will issue a note to families to inform them that a contagious illness has been diagnosed in the classroom. If deemed necessary, the school may request a note from the child's physician indicating the child is no longer contagious. Communicable diseases and conditions include, but are not limited to: strep,

If the child requires prolonged recuperation from an illness or injury, and the attending physician recommends he/she stay inside, the physician should send the school a note with instructions for this special care. Families should consider that we go outside every day barring weather extremes; if the child cannot participate in the full range of indoor and outdoor experiences, he/she will usually need to remain home.

Ref. NAEYC-Code of Ethical Conduct (2005): P-1.1, P-2.2. P-4.6 & P-4.8

INJURY

In case of a minor injury at school which does not require immediate parental action (e.g., scratch, bump, bruise) the school will provide an incident report to alert the family to the situation.

If a family prefers to be immediately called for any and all injuries, please communicate this to the teacher.

In case of an accident at school, the parent/guardian will be called as soon as first aid has been given. If they cannot be reached, we will call the first person (other than the parent/guardian) listed on the child's application form. If that person is unavailable, we will call the child's physician. For this reason, we require the parent/guardian to sign an emergency release before the child enters school. If the family's phone numbers change, it is important that the school be notified so that emergency records can be updated. In addition to calling the family, we will provide an incident report.

Just as we provide information to the family about incidents at school, we appreciate information from the family when the child comes to school injured. We need to know if any special precautions or care is required.

Ref. NAEYC-Code of Ethical Conduct (2005): P-1.1, P-2.2. P-4.6 & P-4.8

INSURANCE

The school's property and liability insurance policy does not cover costs for medical treatment incurred by students due to injuries resulting from normal participation in any school activity, including but not limited to classroom, recess, athletic, and extra-curricular activities, whether or not these activities take place on school property.

Ref. NAEYC-Code of Ethical Conduct (2005): P-2.2 & P-4.1

MEDICATIONS

Families must completely fill out and sign a medication permit form before any over the counter or prescription medication may be given to a child. Each time a staff member administers medication, he/she must sign and indicate the date/time the medication is given. Completed medication permit forms are filed in the student's permanent file.

All medications will be kept in lockboxes (unless refrigeration is required) in the classroom's project area. All medications requiring refrigeration will be kept in lockboxes in the refrigerator in the classroom's project area.

The exception is when a medication needs to be readily available, inaccessible to children, for staff to administer such as an EpiPen, over the counter sunscreen or topical diaper crème.

The medication must be in the original container provided by the pharmacy, with the child's name on it, date, and storage and dosage information. Staff members should check medications provided by the parent to ensure the child's name, date, prescription label, administration information, etc. are present.

The permission slip and medication must be delivered by the responsible adult to the child's primary classroom teacher (room where the child is dropped off).

Only designated staff who have completed a certified training in *Medication Administration*, may administer medications to children. The majority of the time, there will be one trained staff person in each classroom. There will always be at least one trained staff person in each Wing, with an additional person available in the Administrative Office to cover for any absent trained staff.

A written medical or dental procedure that specifies that if a physician has ordered a special medical management procedure for a child in care, an adult trained in the procedure must be on-site whenever the child is present.

Ref. IL-DCFS Licensing Standards (2016): 407.360

Ref. NAEYC-Code of Ethical Conduct (2005): P-1.1, P-2.2, P-4.6 & P-4.8

PERSONAL CLEANLINESS

A child's hands will be washed with soap and warm running water before meals and snacks and after toileting or diapering. A child's hands and face will be washed after meals. VMS staff members and volunteers working with children will wash their hands with soap and warm running water before handling food, and after assisting with toileting and after wiping bodily secretions from a child with a disposable tissue. Wet or soiled clothing and diapers will be changed promptly from an available supply of clean clothing.

If running water is not immediately available when outdoors, soap and water-based wet wipes will be used. When running water becomes available, hands will be washed immediately with soap and running water. Disinfecting hand sanitizers will not replace the use of soap and water when washing hands.

Ref. NAEYC-Code of Ethical Conduct (2005): P-1.1, P-2.2, P-4.6 & P-4.8

SUN SCREEN

When in the sun children should have sun-protective clothing and/or sunscreen or sunblock with UVB and UVA protection of SPF 15 or higher).

It is advisable that sunscreen be applied at home prior to your child coming to school. If families wish their child to wear sunscreen, parents should send a labeled bottle of sunscreen and sign a sunscreen permit form so that sunscreen may be applied at school before going outside.

UNIVERSAL PRECAUTIONS

VMS staff will adopt universal precautions when exposed to blood and blood-containing body fluids and injury discharges of all children. All persons exposed to blood or blood-containing body fluids and tissue discharges will wash their hands immediately with soap and warm running water. Single use disposable gloves will be worn if there is contact with blood-containing body fluids or tissue discharges. Hands will be washed with soap and water after removal of gloves. Gloves will be discarded in plastic bags. For spills of vomit, urine, feces, blood or other body fluids, VMS staff will clean and disinfect the surface that has been contaminated (i.e. floors, walls, bathrooms, tabletops, toys, kitchen countertops and diaper changing tables).

Ref. NAEYC-Code of Ethical Conduct (2005): P-1.1, P-2.2, P-4.6 & P-4.8



FEE PAYMENT AND REFUNDS

The one-time non-refundable registration fee is due with submission of the Registration Application. The first month of tuition payment is also due prior to the child's first day of class. Tuition Payments will be handled exclusively thru Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT), other sources will be accepted based on arrangements made with the Head of School.

Reserving placement for a child may be available depending on the desired start date and availability. Reserving placement requires payment of the registration fee. This payment is non-refundable should a parent choose to withdraw prior to their start date and will not be applied to future tuition. Alternate arrangements may be made based on the discretion of the Head of School.

WITHDRAWING A CHILD

Written notice must be given at least 4 weeks in advance before withdrawal of a child from VMS ("Notice of Withdrawal" forms are available in the office). In the event that withdrawal is made without such notice, the parent shall assume financial responsibility of four weeks of tuition per child. A withdrawal fee will be assessed, per child, to the family's account upon notification of withdrawal. If a child is withdrawn prior to the end of their contract year, the two-week tuition credit will not apply. Withdrawal of an Elementary student from the school will not excuse the parent from the duty to pay all 10 tuition payments required for the child's total "school year". Once a family has left VMS, it is the parents' responsibility to request a refund of any credit balance. Should a family choose to re-enroll, the standard enrollment procedure must be followed – including payment of the registration fee.

For the above items, Ref. NAEYC-Code of Ethical Conduct (2005): P-2.2 & P-4.1

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SNOW AND STORM DAYS

We strive to be open every day of the school year, regardless of weather. However, we do not wish to endanger the safety of our staff and families if weather conditions make travel inadvisable. Villa Montessori School will utilize the Moline/ Rock Island/United Township schools as a guideline for determining weather related school closings. In the event that heavy snow, ice or severe weather is forecast for later in the day, the school may announce an early dismissal. There is no tuition reimbursement for weather-related school closings.

Listen to TV and radio stations for cancellation information; KWQC-TV Channel 6 is usually the first station notified, with WQAD-TV and CBS4QC (WHBF) following. The school's Facebook page will also notify families of any weather-related closings.

Ref. NAEYC-Code of Ethical Conduct (2005): P-1.1, P-2.2, P-4.6 & P-4.8

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BEHAVIOR

ANTI-HARASSMENT/ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Villa Montessori School is enriched by the diversity of its members. The School recognizes and respects individual differences in background regarding culture, race, ethnic origin, religion, gender, and sexual orientation. Each person at Villa Montessori has the right to participate fully in the life of the school without harassment.

To provide an environment of mutual respect, tolerance, and sensitivity, it is important that every member of the community recognize certain guidelines for appropriate behavior. Inappropriate behavior, either verbal or physical, or posted online or via text, that disregards the self-esteem of others is unacceptable. It includes unwelcome physical advances, unwarranted verbal remarks, derogatory statements, or discriminatory comments, and can occur between any two individuals or groups of individuals. Verbal, written, online, or text communication which degrades the school, or a staff member is also unacceptable.

Listed are some examples of inappropriate behavior:

- uninvited pressure for sexual activity, whether explicit or implicit
- obscene or suggestive remarks or jokes, verbal abuse, insults
- display of explicit, offensive, or demeaning materials-hazing, threats
- comments which are demeaning with respect to race, religion, ethnic origin, gender, or sexual orientation
- inappropriate or foul language

Retaliation against an individual who reports harassment or bullying is grounds for dismissal and may be reported to police if necessary.

Ref. NAEYC-Code of Ethical Conduct (2005): P-1.1, P-1.2, P-1.8, P-2.9, P-4.4, P-4.6, P-4.7 & P-4.8

BEHAVIOR GUIDELINES

The stated goals of the Villa Montessori School written guidance and discipline policy is to limit or eliminate the use of suspension, expulsion and other exclusionary measures. Villa Montessori School operates under the premise that children are born good. With that being said the primary expectation is that the child will behave in a manner that is developmentally appropriate. Usually, when a child under the age of five acts in a manner that is inappropriate, VMS staff members will re-direct a child to appropriate activities/ behaviors. If redirection is unsuccessful a child may be asked to sit with a staff member to observe the classroom and appropriate behaviors occurring. Time out is not used by staff members when working with any child. Typically, a child under four needs the positive guidance of an intervening adult when disruptive behavior occurs. The setting of clear cut limits for the children is an integral part of a Montessori classroom experience. Children are taught respect as a primary guidance tool and adults within the classroom reinforce this through both modeling and verbal re- enforcement. The goal is for the child to develop self-control, self-esteem and a respect for others. Appropriate ways to manage crying, fussing, or distraught children are given to staff members during the orientation process, as well as in the continuing professional development opportunities provided for staff.

Any actions by staff that would be psychologically, emotionally or physically painful, discomforting, dangerous or potentially injurious are prohibited.

In accordance with IL-DCFS Licensing Standards (2014): 407.270 (c-5 &6): Children will not be disciplined for toilet accidents. The following behaviors are also prohibited in all child care settings:

- A) Corporal punishment, including hitting, spanking, swatting, beating, shaking, pinching and other method intended to induce physical pain or fear;
- B) Threatened or actual withdrawal of food, rest or use of the bathroom.
- C) Abusive or profane language
- D) Any form of public or private humiliation, including threats of physical punishment; and
- E) Any form of emotional abuse, including shaming, rejecting, terrorizing or isolating a child.*

*This also includes any form of coercion.

Under NAEYC Standard 1B.10: Appropriate use of restraint for safety reasons is permissible. This would only be used as a last resort to assure that child's safety or the safety of other children. Example: A child attempting to dart away from a teacher towards the street.

Behaviors of very young children are often the result of a lack of communication skills, vocabulary, or personal experience. Physical discomfort of younger children experienced during a period of teething can cause a child to seek relief in many different ways, including, but not limited to, biting, or other aggressive actions.

Repeated aggressive behaviors by a child will require a parent – VMS staff meeting to discuss possible causes and solutions.

Any child who, after attempts have been made to meet the child's individual needs, demonstrates inability to benefit from the type of care offered by VMS, or whose presence is detrimental to the group, shall be discharged from the VMS facility (Source: Amended at 34 Ill. Reg. 4700, effective March 22, 2010).

Ref. NAEYC-Code of Ethical Conduct (2005): P-1.1, P-1.2, P-1.4, P-1.6, P-1.7, P-2.2, P-2.3, P-2.4 through P-2.10

OTHER BEHAVIORS

Biting: Children that bite will be encouraged to use verbal language to communicate. Staff members will take appropriate first aid measures for the child that has been bitten and an Incident Report form will be filed, keeping all identities of those involved confidential.

Parents will be notified immediately if a child is has bitten 3 times in one day.

Toileting: This is developmental, and each child should be respected for the appropriate time to be introduced. VMS will not use a child's ability to use the toilet independently as criteria for class placement.

Ref. NAEYC-Code of Ethical Conduct (2005): P-1.1, P-1.2, P-2.2, P-2.3

SCHOOL/HOME PROBLEMS (DISCIPLINE AND GROUND RULES) AND DISMISSAL

Questions about a child's experiences at school should be directed first to the child's teacher. She is in the best position to answer your questions. She observes each student as an integral part of her role.

The ground rules of the school are:

- 1) You will respect yourself.
- 2) You respect others.
- 3) You will respect the environment.
- 4) You are expected to attend class.

The purpose of these ground rules is to aid in the development of self-respect and respect for others. Any violation of these ground rules will result in the following consequences:

1. The child and teacher(s) talk about the problem and look for the best resolution.
2. Parents/Guardians will receive a written notice or a personal call from the teacher. Parents/Guardians must respond by the following school day to make arrangements for a special conference with the teacher(s), which must occur within 24 hours of notification.
 - (a) The conference allows an exchange of ideas about how to help the child. If there is a question about whether the child can function happily in this school, the school may set a "probationary" period of one to four weeks to attempt to work out the problem.
 - (b) Upon prior arrangement with the parents, the child who is unable to control unacceptable or disruptive behavior will immediately be sent home from school if the unacceptable/disruptive behavior occurs again. This approach will help the child understand that such behavior cannot and will not be allowed. Should a family member or guardian not be available when needed, immediate dismissal from the program will occur.
3. At the end of the probationary period the parents and teacher(s) will hold a personal or telephone conference to decide what further action will best meet the needs of the child, as well as the school community.

If a parent has a concern or question about the classroom procedures or child's progress, the classroom teacher should be consulted.

If in the estimation of the parent or teacher, the issue or concern has not been satisfactorily resolved, then the Head of School should be consulted for resolution.

The Board of Trustees does not act as a grievance committee and does not supersede decisions made by the Head of School

When a serious problem arises that threatens the well-being of a student, staff member, or the school, or if a child exhibits continuous disruptive behavior, then faculty/administration may recommend that the student be dismissed. If, in the school's view, a family has not exhibited cooperative behavior in supporting the school's administration in regard to the child's education or school community as a whole, the family may be dismissed.

Serious problems which could result in a recommendation of dismissal, include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Consistent aggressive or violent behavior, as defined by the school, dependent upon the age of the child.
2. Using electronic toys/devices from home (especially those producing sounds) or cell phones in school.
3. Lying to a staff member or teacher.
4. Using profane language/gestures, name calling, etc.
5. Bringing in to the school or utilizing in the school gambling games of chance played for money or other tangibles.
6. Students wearing clothing that violate the school's dress code.
7. Conduct or actions by students or their family members which is disruptive, undermining, and subversive to the overall operation of the school.
8. Inappropriate behavior violating the anti-harassment/bullying policy.

Bringing any life-threatening weapon (e.g., gun, knife, etc.) to school is cause for immediate dismissal.

The Head of School is the final authority in the dismissal of any student or family. If the child is dismissed from VMS, the school will offer assistance to the family in accessing services and an alternative placement.

Villa Montessori School complies with all Federal and State Civil Rights Laws.

Ref. NAEYC-Code of Ethical Conduct (2005): P-1.1 through P-1.7, P-2.2 through 2.7 and P-4.6 through P-4.10



BREAKFAST POLICY

With the exception of infants not yet consuming solid foods, there is no option for breakfast at school.

The school is not licensed for the serving of breakfast.

Families need to allow time for their child to eat breakfast prior to arrival at school. Sippy cups, water bottles, and/or any breakfast/snack foods are not to be brought into the classroom.

Ref. IL- DCFS Licensing Standards 407.330 (f) 1, (j) 1

FOOD ALLERGIES

If a child is allergic to any food or beverage, the family should note it on the Application Form, on the Health Information Report, and directly to the child's teacher. If an allergy develops while the child is enrolled, it is vital to alert our staff immediately. DCFS regulations state that non-milk based formulas require a note from the child's doctor.

Ref. IL- DCFS Licensing Standards 407.330 (f) 1, (j) 1

LUNCH

State law requires that all 0-3 program children in our care during the lunch period must be served a hot lunch by the school. Children are encouraged to feed themselves when they are ready.

Primary and elementary children may choose to purchase a hot lunch or bring a sack lunch from home.

Parents should be respectful of nutrition requirements of the child, based on the child's age and ability to make wise food choices.

Pop or candy will not be allowed for consumption at lunch time and will be sent home; this includes "lunchables" which contain candy, cookies, or sugary drinks.

Drinking water is available to all VMS students throughout the day. Water or juice bottles are not allowed at school for individual use by students during the day.

Parents should notify the school in writing if the child has food allergies or food restrictions of any kind.

Ref. IL- DCFS Licensing Standards 407.330 (f) 1, (j) 1

Infants: Parents need to provide all food and drink for infants until their child is eating table foods and drinking school milk (VMS provides 2% milk, parents have the option of bringing in whole milk for their own child if they choose.

Parents will need to provide all bottles and factory-sealed formula, baby food, and cereal. Bottles need to be taken home daily to be disinfected.

Once an infant has started on table foods, parents are asked to communicate any special dietary needs based on the monthly lunch menu directly with the child's teacher.

As part of our food safety policy, staff must discard any foods with expired dates. Formula or breast milk that has been out for one hour or more will also be discarded.

Staff working in the Infant Classroom, must always document the type and quantity of food the child consumes and will provide parents with a copy of this documentation at time of pick-up.

Ref. IL- DCFS Licensing Standards 407.330 (f) 1, (j) 1

Ref. NAEYC-Code of Ethical Conduct (2005): P-1.1, P-2.2, P-4.6 & P-4.8

SNACKS

Nutritious foods for snack time are provided by the school. Children are encouraged to feed themselves when they are ready. Children are never forced to eat. Children are offered snack in the morning and afternoon, in addition to lunch.

Drinking water is available to the children at all times throughout the day

VMS has a diverse community and the snacks and lunches served reflect the diversity of the cultures within it. VMS provides balanced, nutritious food in groups and serving size as recommended by the Illinois Department of Children & Family Services (rules 407-330).

Ref. IL- DCFS Licensing Standards 407.330 (g), (h) & (p) 5

Ref. NAEYC-Code of Ethical Conduct (2005): P-1.1, P-2.2, P-4.6 & P-4.8



CLOTHING - DRESS CODE

The dress code is in effect at all times in the building as well as at school-related activities. The dress code is one that allows the child and parents to select their own responsible style of dress. We do insist, however, that the following criteria be met:

1. Students should not wear anything that will impair their health or safety.
2. Students should be neat and clean.
3. The child's appearance (including hair, clothing, foot coverings, etc.) should not distract, such as costumes, make-up or other items causing distraction from the learning activities.
4. Students should not wear anything that is publicly indecent or that would tend to disrupt the educational process.
5. Foot coverings must be worn at all times for children older than infants. Open-toe sandals are discouraged to avoid possible bee stings or stubbed toes. For children of walking age, an extra pair of tennis shoes should be kept at school if a child does not wear tennis shoes to school.
6. Infants learning to walk are encouraged to be barefoot. The use of socks with grippers or leather shoes may be useful to keep feet warm.
7. Students may not wear or display any clothing, jewelry, emblem, badge, symbol, or other items associated with membership or in affiliation with a gang or secret society.

It is recommended that parents dress children in clothing that can take exuberant learning and serious play. The child's day may include activities such as painting, science experiments, and rigorous outdoor play. Clothing should be appropriate for these activities.

Girls may consider having a pair of shorts or leggings to slip under dresses. The school will not be responsible for any damage done to clothing, or for lost jewelry or hair accessories.

Ref. NAEYC-Code of Ethical Conduct (2005): P-1.1, P-1.2, P-2.2 & P-3C.3

CLOTHING (OUTERWEAR)

To protect against cold, sun, injury, and insect-borne disease, the school helps ensure that children wear clothing that is dry appropriate for weather conditions. Children have the opportunity to play in the shade. When in the sun children should have sun-protective clothing and/or sunscreen or sunblock with UVB and UVA protection of SPF 15 or higher (see SUNSCREEN information). All classrooms will go outside daily except during inclement weather. Inclement weather is described as extreme heat (over 90 degrees, heavy rainfall, extreme cold: under 30 degrees with wind chill for children under 2 and under 10 degrees with wind chill for children over 2).

Each child should be appropriately dressed to play outside. Boots are needed for fall, winter, and spring. Boots that go over shoes are sometimes difficult for young children to manage, so each family is asked to provide boots that the child can learn to put on and to remove. Waterproof boots, if toasty warm, are ideal. Water repellent boots are acceptable, provided the child understands that his or her boots will NOT keep his or her feet dry if splashed in puddles. Waterproof mittens are also recommended.

In warmer weather, it is recommended that children avoid wearing crocs, sandals or open-toe shoes. Sandals often slip off when the child is running or climbing outdoors, and also contribute to stubbed toes. For all children of walking age, an extra pair of tennis shoes should be kept at school if a child does not wear tennis shoes to school.

The child's name must be marked on all outerwear. A "sharpie" marker works well on most items. During mitten season, we especially appreciate each family who checks to be sure the child has EVERY item needed for safe outdoor play. This includes a hat, gloves or mittens, warm coat, snow pants, and boots. A fee of \$2 for school-supplied hats or mittens given to the child (to keep) will be charged if a child has no hats or mittens/gloves for outdoor time during cold weather. Additional action may be taken if a child continues to come to school without proper outerwear.

Please check the "Lost and Found" container for any lost items, and turn in clothing items you may discover.

School clothing should be neat, comfortable, non-distracting, and appropriate for the weather. It should also be easy for the child to manage himself, and labeled with the child's name. For the child who is learning to use the toilet, it is especially important that he/she can quickly remove key items.

Families need to be sure their child has a complete set of spare clothing which the child may change into in case of an accident. These will be stored in the classroom. The school is not responsible for providing extra clothing for children who need them.

Parents will be notified if the child consistently comes to school without appropriate clothing for participation in outside activity or physical education classes. Without appropriate clothing, children may be unable to participate in those activities.

Ref. NAEYC-Code of Ethical Conduct (2005): P-1.1, P-1.2, P-2.2 & P-3C.3

DIAPERING POLICY

Diapers, underwear, and other clothing are changed when wet or soiled. Staff are required to check children for signs that diapers are wet or have feces when sleeping children awaken, and they check at least every two hours when children are awake. There is a designated changing area in each classroom that is to be used only by that age group of children. Surfaces used for changing and on which changing materials are placed are not to be used for any other purpose, including temporary placement. Containers that hold soiled diapers have a lid that opens and closes tightly by using a hands-free device. Containers are kept closed and are not accessible to children. Licensing procedures must be followed for the handling of cloth diapers.

All diapering supplies for children not yet toilet learned should be brought by the child's parents. School personnel will notify parents when a child is running low on diapers. Families will be charged \$1/diaper for school-supplied diapers if the child has no diapers at school.

When parents feel the child is ready to begin the toilet learning process, please talk to the classroom teacher.

Ref. NAEYC-Code of Ethical Conduct (2005): P-1.2 & P-2.2

PERSONAL BELONGINGS

Children who sleep at school may bring one special item to sleep with; however, the item will be kept in their backpack or diaper bag until sleep time so that it will not cause disturbances during class time. Cribs (for infants), mats, cots, and blankets are provided by the school for sleep time; no toys may hang from cribs. Due to limited storage space, other items such as pillows, sleeping bags, etc. are not allowed.

Personal items (backpacks, small diaper bags, etc.) will be placed on the child's box so as not to disturb work in the classroom. Car seats may be taken to the child's classroom and stored in the teacher's office. The school is not responsible for the condition or loss of personal items brought to VMS. Teachers or staff may remove and send home any items which are deemed inappropriate for the classroom. Toy guns or weapons of any kind (including squirt guns) are not allowed.

Ref. NAEYC-Code of Ethical Conduct (2005): P-1.2 & P-2.2

TOILET LEARNING

Teachers will plan toilet learning in cooperation with the parent so that a child's toilet routine is consistent between the center and the child's home. Families should consider that VMS has the following guidelines in place regarding toilet learning:

- No routine attempts will be made to toilet learn a child under 18 months of age.
- No child will be forced to use the toilet against their will.
- No rewards will be offered at school for using the toilet.
- "Pull up" style diapers are not allowed.
- Children must wear diapers or appropriate undergarments while toilet learning
- Children may take longer to toilet learn at school than at home due to the difference in environment and context of their surroundings.

Ref. NAEYC-Code of Ethical Conduct (2005): P-1.1, P-4.6 & P-4.8

★ REFERENCE INFORMATION

COMMUNITY FAMILY/HEALTH/EMERGENCY SERVICES INFO

The following is a list of family, health and emergency services available to families in the Quad Cities. This is not a complete directory of services in the community but is provided as a “starting point.”

InfoLink (community-wide information/referral service)		2-1-1
Black Hawk Area Special Education District (BHA SED)		
(vision/hearing/developmental screening)		(309)796-2500
Child Abuse		
To report suspected child abuse:	Illinois	1-800-252-2873
	Iowa	1-800-362-2178
Child Care Resource & Referral		(563)324-3236
Children’s Therapy Center of the Quad Cities		(309)762-9552
Disaster Services: Red Cross, Quad Cities Chapter		(309)743-2166
Domestic Violence Shelter: 24 hr. CRISIS LINE		(309)788-2273
Drug/Alcohol Abuse:		
Center for Alcohol & Drug Services, Inc.		(563)326-1150
Alcoholics Anonymous:	Illinois	(309)764-1016
	Iowa	(563)324-5655
Education Services:		
Augustana College		(309)794-7473
Black Hawk College		(309)796-5000
Mississippi Bend Area Education Agency		(563)359-1371
Rock Island Regional Office of Education		(309)736-1111
St. Ambrose University		(563)333-6000
Scott Community College		(563)441-4000
Western Illinois University		(309)762-9481
Family Services (adoption, foster care, family counseling, teen pregnancy, etc.):		
Bethany for Children & Families		(309)797-7700
Catholic Charities		(309)788-9581
Family Resources		(563)326-6431
Lutheran Social Services of Illinois		(309)786-6400
Lutheran Services of Iowa		(563)322-7419
Health Department (vision, hearing, health, immunizations, dental, nutrition services):		
	Rock Island County	(309)793-1955
	Scott County	(563)326-8618
Mental Health:		
Robert Young Center for Community Mental Health		(309)779-2800
Vera French Community Mental Health Center		(563)383-1900
Poison Control Center		1-800-222-1222
Runaways: National Runaway Switchboard		1-800-RUNAWAY
School Districts:		
	Bettendorf	(563)359-3681
	Davenport	(563)336-5000
	Pleasant Valley	(563)332-5550
	Moline/Coal Valley	(309)743-1600
	Rock Island	(309)793-5900

Ref. NAEYC Code of Ethical Conduct (2005): P-2.15

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