



## Parent Handbook

2024 – 2025

*"The child becomes a person through his work."*

- Maria Montessori

Montessori School of Woodstock

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The absorbent mind welcomes everything, puts its hope in everything, accepts poverty equally with wealth, adopts any religion and prejudices and habits of its countrymen, incarnating all in itself. This is the Child!”

Maria Montessori

# Our School

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Montessori School of Woodstock offers children from 18 months to 6 years the opportunity to learn in a Montessori environment. We follow the philosophy of Dr. Maria Montessori, which is widely utilized throughout the world to successfully nurture young minds.

MSOW admits children regardless of race, color, national or ethnic origins, handicap or religious affiliations. We welcome those from different cultures and celebrate the diversity of our student population. Our cultural diversity teaches children respect and understanding for others, for their cultural heritage and for their individual differences.

Our admissions criterion is based on age requirements and the child's readiness. All children are accepted on a conditional basis. Should the Director determine that a child will not benefit from participating in our school program, or a child behavior is disruptive and inappropriate, MSOW reserves the right to terminate that child's enrollment in our school.

MSOW also provides before and after school programs for children, as well as summer break programs. We are licensed by the Georgia State Department of Human Resources and by the Office of Bright from the Start.

## MSOW Mission

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- ❖ To provide a caring environment that nurtures each child's body, mind and spirit.
- ❖ To encourage each child to explore to his or her full potential
- ❖ To encourage a lifelong love of learning

## History and Goals

Mrs. Patricia Shahbazi opened MSOW in October 2000. Her goal is to create a true Montessori experience for the parents and children of Cobb County and the surrounding areas.

Mrs. Shahbazi is an AMI Montessori certified teacher with over thirty five years of experience. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Early Childhood Education, a Georgia State Teaching Certificate for kindergarten through fifth grade, and a Montessori Primary and Elementary Certificates. She has taught various Montessori schools in the metro Atlanta area including the well-respected Casa Dei Bambini.

Mrs. Shahbazi has seen the advantages of a Montessori education first hand having raised her two children in a Montessori environment, while working as a Montessori teacher. As each of her children transitioned into other schools, Mrs. Shahbazi heard comments such as "self-directed student", or her favorite, "loves to learn" She attributes her positive attitude towards learning to the Montessori Method.

Still excited about the Montessori Method after thirty five years, Mrs. Shahbazi continues to teach Montessori because she loves to watch young minds open and absorb.

Mrs. Shahbazi encourages not only the children, but her staff as well to fulfill their own unique potential. Mrs. Shahbazi continues in the Montessori tradition of encouraging both self-confidence and a lifelong love of learning.

*"To aid life, leaving it free, however, to unfold itself, that is the basic task of the educator."*

- Maria Montessori

# The Montessori Difference

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Montessori is a unique approach to teaching children. It is a method that teaches children to trust themselves, to enjoy learning and to fully explore their own potential.

The Montessori Method:

- Stimulates a child's interest
- Facilitates understanding and learning
- Graduates tasks from simple to complex
- Lets a child work at his or her own pace without fear of failure
- Creates learning opportunities that follow each child's interests

The Montessori Method is based on the observations and work of Maria Montessori (1870- 1952), who was a certified engineer, physiologist, educator and the first woman in Italy to receive a medical degree. In addition, Maria Montessori won a Nobel Peace prize for her work.

In 1907, Maria Montessori astounded the world with her educational approach for children. One hundred years later, doctors, scientists and educators are still affirming the validity of her approach.

**The Montessori Method features:**

## **Broad Curriculum**

Language      Practical Life      Mathematics  
Natural Sciences      Sensorial      Cultural

## **Self-Directed Learning**

Children choose materials from those provided as appropriate

Learning and understanding blossom

Children learn self-respect and respect others

Children are enabled to achieve their highest potential

## **Multi Age Groups**

18 months to 3 years

3 years to 6 years

Based on the concept that each child has an "absorbent" mind, an environment is prepared that will stimulate and encourage each child. The child is allowed to self – direct his or her 'work' within this environment. Choosing what is of interest, the child explores the 'work'. This self-direction creates the room for understanding and learning to blossom.

Maria Montessori believed that each child has a strong but transient sensibility to discover and explore physical, social and intellectual facets in his or her own development. It is the ability to trust this capability in each child, and to teach each child to trust this capability in him or herself, that separates the Montessori Method from both traditional schools and daycares.

# Building Our Montessori Community

Building a house on a strong foundation ensures it will outlast many storms. As is with architecture, so it is with educating children.

At MSOW, we utilize the following four cornerstones as the foundation for our children's education;

The Montessori Teacher

The Montessori Environment

Parental involvement

Parent/ School Communication

When all four cornerstones interact, the result is a strong Montessori Community that supports and nurtures our children.

If we look at the definition of community, it is a group of people who share common beliefs and goals. Our common goal is to create lifelong love of learning in each child, which shall sustain our children by providing the confidence and assurance they need to explore their full potential.

Children in the Montessori classroom build community. When the children interact to complete tasks together, such as making a snack during practical life experiences, they are building community. When a child communicates to another child they are building community. Every experience in the Montessori classroom helps the children to create their community,

because Montessori focuses not only on learning, but also on experiencing.

As children build community within the classroom, so we ask our parents to join their teachers and other MSOW parents in building a community within and beyond the school.

In the following pages, we will be explaining our ground rules, talking about the Four Corner Stones and communicating our priorities, expectations and policies. Let's start with our common goal, follow the ground rules, understand the priorities and exceed the expectations. This way we can build something that we can all be proud of.

## Ground Rules

We have established certain ground rules for conduct while at MSOW. These ground rules help each child achieve independence while respecting his self, others and the environment. All children, staff and visitors are expected to follow these general guidelines.

- ❖ We use a quiet inside voice for speaking
- ❖ We keep our hands to ourselves
- ❖ We respect and take care of all materials so that other people may also make use of them
- ❖ We put away our work when we are finished so that it is ready for the next person to use.
- ❖ If we need to speak with the teacher, we gently place a hand on the teacher's shoulder and wait for eye contact before speaking.
- ❖ We touch others work only if invited to do so
- ❖ We do not roughhouse, run, hit, or push or name call at any time.
- ❖ We utilize talking and listening to find peaceful solutions to conflict.



# Cornerstone One

## The Montessori Teacher

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There is consensus among educators and psychologists that the single most important period in the development of intelligence occurs between birth and age six. A child's mind is extremely absorbent at this time, and curiosity is at its peak.

Because Montessori is an experiential learning process that allows children to grow at their own pace, the Montessori Method has proven to be one of the most effective methods of guiding and encouraging a child during these critical years. Part of the Montessori difference is the Montessori teacher.

While traditional teachers impart knowledge into their charges, the Montessori teacher observes and guides. The Montessori teacher is well versed in many subjects and knows how to capitalize on a child's excitement about any given subject.

The Montessori teacher does not hand out assignments and dictate what is to be studied. He or she is trained to teach one child at a time while supervising the other children who are working and learning. No limits are set as to the length of study or what interest each child pursues.

Montessori teachers engage in a one or two year training period during which they learn their entire Montessori philosophy and

curriculum. After completing the training, the new teacher must take both a written exam and practical exam where he or she guides a 'child' (usually another Montessori teacher) through his or her 'work'. Although subject matter knowledge is important, teachers are graded less on subject matter expertise, and more on how they guide, encourage and lead.

One component of leadership is being able to prioritize and teach by example.

### **The Teacher's Hierarchy of Priorities**

Our teachers have chosen a profession that places them squarely in the middle of a very delicate team of people guiding and helping your child. The team is composed of parents, teachers, classroom assistants, babysitters, grandparents, friends, neighbors and sometimes other professionals such as a speech or physical therapists. To further complicate things each teacher participates in as many as thirty teams.

To bring order to this potentially chaotic situation, the Montessori teacher utilizes a hierarchy of priorities. Her priorities are in order of importance, community, individual, child and parents. Following these priorities creates a harmonious atmosphere in the classroom and serves as a guide for resolving disagreement within the school family.

## **Community First**

When she sets her priorities, the teacher must place at the top the community that makes up her classroom. The goal is to provide the environment and opportunities that prepare the child for life in the larger community. In Montessori an incredible amount of detail and energy goes into setting up every detail of an ideal environment, within which the children can be a society that works, plays and learns together. Within this environment, the child learns to master, not others, but herself. It is the teacher's responsibility to eliminate any threats to the intricate workings of this community. She must bring her best self to this community every day.

## **Individual Child Second**

The teacher's second priority is each individual child within the community. She must observe every child to make sure he or she is getting the most out of the Montessori experience. The teacher observes the level of enthusiasm, self-confidence, initiative, frustration, social comfort and apparent emotional status of each child and attends to his or her spiritual wellbeing. Academic achievement becomes secondary because, until a child's emotional, physical, social and spiritual needs are met, a child is not adequately prepared to bring his best to the work. As children progress at their own rates, viewing each child as an individual and

meeting each child's unique needs takes a great deal of energy and attention.

## **Parents Third**

The teacher's third priority is the parents. The teacher shares her teaching objectives and the child's progress with the parents. As the child's advocate, she brings up issues that she believes are affecting the child's emotional, spiritual, social and physical needs. In the normal course of events, parents bring their concerns and questions to parent conferences for discussion.

## **Using the Teachers Hierarchy of Priorities to Resolve Conflicts**

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Nearly every child faces extraordinary circumstances at some point that require a greater share of his or her teacher's attention. For example, a beloved pet may die, someone in the family may be ill or the family may be adjusting to a move or a divorce.

These types of circumstances make it more difficult for the child to participate in the community and require the teacher to maintain a higher level of observation, problem solving and communication with the parents. Teachers expect to deal with situations in the normal course of work and solutions are almost always found that can return the child and the community to a harmonious equilibrium.

However there may be an extreme case where one child draws an inordinate

amount of the teacher's attention away from the community, thus disrupting the equilibrium of the community. In these cases, the hierarchy of priorities determines the teacher's response. In these situations, the decisions may be made to remove the child from the community either temporarily while a solution is sought, or permanently if the child is not responding appropriately to the help that is being given.

This decision is always made with the teacher's recommendations and with full communication with the parents.

In the same way that a child with extraordinary behaviors can distract a teacher so also can a parent with oversized needs. When a parent's level of trust falls the needs for assurance and communication naturally grow. Most often, the issue can be resolved to everyone's satisfaction. But when the parents interfere with the solution demanding more communication than is reasonable or useful, again the teacher's hierarchy of priorities comes into play. We cannot allow our teachers to take time away from the needs of both the community and the individual children to deal with inappropriate parental demands.

In both of these situations, the teacher is placed in an unworkable position where her ability to meet the needs of the community and the individual children is diminished. The most advantageous result for all parties is usually the conclusion that the family

would be better served in another school environment.

The decision to remove a child or a family from MSOW is made when only there is no other way to preserve the healthy hierarchy of attention that our teachers and students need to fully participate in a mutually rewarding Montessori experience.

Our goal is a strong community involving school, teacher, child and parent.

## Cornerstone Two

### The Montessori Environment

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#### *A Prepared Environment*

The Montessori classroom is what is called a "prepared" environment. Filled with sensorial materials placed on child level shelves, the classroom is a place of freedom where each child develops at his or her own capacities in a supportive environment.

Child chooses which previously introduced materials he or she will work with

- Child decides when he or she is done with the materials
- Child has freedom to ask for help when he or she needs help
- Child self- directs his or her own 'work'

Unlike traditional classrooms, the Montessori classroom is at once busy and quiet. Filled with specific areas arranged

according to subject, materials are readily accessible to the children.

### *Subjects*

Subjects that are covered in the Montessori classroom include: practical life, language, math and natural sciences, sensorial and cultural. Children learn how to scoop, pour and measure. Each subject interrelates with other subjects. Math is taught well in practical life; natural science is taught as well in sensorial.

### *The "Work"*

Children work side by side on their own tasks. As each child finishes his or her "work", he or she places the materials where they belong. He or she is free to select another set of materials to work with. There are no time limit set and each child is always free to move around the room.

This arrangement allows each child to lose himself in the task at hand, which opens the child to learning and understanding. The Montessori teacher stands by, ready to direct the child toward materials appropriate for that specific child's interest and particular stage in development.

### ***Differences in Environment***

There are two major differences between a Montessori environment and traditional environments:

The use of Montessori materials

Mixed age groupings

### *Montessori Materials*

Montessori materials are specific to the Montessori Method. While the materials vary from one Montessori school to the next they all have certain features in common.

The materials:

Are self-correcting

Graduate from one simple to more complex, abstract concepts

Build concentration and self-discipline

Encourage analytical thinking and problem solving

Encourage and build independence

### *Age Groupings*

The Montessori environment includes children in three year age groupings. A child can work with older children in one subject and younger children in another.

There is no positive or negative stigma to level of ability

Child's learning is determined by readiness rather than age

Child learns flexibility, tolerance and respect for those who are different

Children imitate and internalize lessons prior to receiving lessons

Children build self-esteem by helping younger children

Additionally, because of the concept of age groupings, the Montessori teacher is with your child from age three to age six, and an invaluable relationship is built. The teacher will get to know your child fully, allowing her to understand your child's strengths and areas for further development.

*"The environment itself will teach the child, if every error he makes is manifest to him, without the intervention of a parent or teacher, who should remain a quiet observer of all that happens."* -Maria Montessori

## Cornerstone Three Parental Involvement

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We have an open door policy at MSOW; and parents are welcome at any time to observe and participate. Parental involvement broadens the complete Montessori experience for both parents and child. By being involved, you will better understand your child's experience and the basic principles of Montessori Method.

Parental involvement is encouraged through:

Observation in the classroom

Assisting in the classroom

Repairing or making materials

PTO involvement

Participating in school activities and meetings

Fundraising

Donation of skills or materials

Parent Work Days

### *Volunteering in the Classroom*

For some parents, it's easy to schedule in a consistent time to read to their child's class. For others, consistency is difficult due to hectic schedules, travel and other business and family obligations.

Whether you can come into the classroom once a week or once a month, your child is always happy and proud to have you there. Many psychologists say that making time to visit your child's classroom helps both your child's self-esteem and your relationship with your child.

At MSOW, visiting your child's classroom has added benefit. You can see firsthand how MSWO classroom functions and participate in one of the most important times in your child's life.

Assisting in the classroom does not have to be an everyday or every week event. By being creative with your time, you may find that you can take a few hours every other week, or once a month to do something fun in your child's classroom. You may also find that you can assist in classroom preparation on the weekends or during special events. Speak to your child's teacher to look at possibilities.

### Donating Time, Skills or Materials

We also encourage parents to participate in their child's schooling by donating skills or materials. Please ask the Director or the PTO President for a "wish list" of projects that need parental involvement.

### *Montessori at Home*

The Montessori Method is also a very effective tool at home. When Montessori is used both at school and at home, your child will experience an enormous benefit. The consistent environment created by this follow through continues to boost both the child's learning and development.

*"The adult ought never to mold the child after himself, but should leave him alone and work always from the deepest comprehension of the child himself"*

*Maria Montessori*

# Cornerstone Four

## Parent School Communication

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At MSOW we fully encourage communication between parents and our school staff. It is important to us that you are fully aware of how your child is progressing and what specific areas your child is particularly interested in, as well as any positive or negative behavior that needs attention. The dialogue between parents and teacher- the sharing of observations and ideas- is necessary in the creation of the community that supports our children.

### *How to Address Questions and Concerns*

**Academic** questions and concerns should be directed to your child's teacher after class. Other questions such as how long your child napped may be addressed to classroom assistants at the end of your child's day at MSOW.

As teachers and assistants are preparing the environment and concentrating on the day ahead before school, please do not speak with them before class. If you need to communicate with your child's teacher in the morning, you may leave a note with the classroom assistant or pin a note to your child's clothing.

When calling the school during class hours, 8:00 am – 2:30pm, please be brief as phone calls disrupt the flow of the classroom.

Please use phone calls during school hours only to communicate urgent information or to quickly check in that your child is fine.

You may communicate in person with your child's teacher after school when you pick up your child or you may call her after 2:30pm.

### *Bulletin, Notes, Front Desk, etc..*

Check the school bulletin boards and the front desk frequently. We use the bulletin board for school wide announcements such as celebrations, activities and programs. We send notes to parents and notices of events (usually in your child's Friday folder). Sign-up sheets for events and meetings will be at the front desk. We send e-newsletters monthly and have Facebook information.

### *Parent Orientation Meeting*

Parent orientation meeting is held the first week of the academic year. We overview our parent handbook and take questions that parents may have.

### Parent Conferences

We schedule two formal oral parent conferences during the school year and request that both parents attend each of these conferences **without** the children. Should you need to bring up issues at any other time, you may schedule an informal conference with your child's teacher. Parents will receive a written progress report at the second Parent/Teacher

Conference for the students who are graduating (finishing Kindergarten).

## *Feedback*

Your feedback and insight are crucial for us. We would like to be informed of both small and large changes in your child's life such as:

- Not sleeping well
- Allergies or other illnesses
- Parent starting a new position or changing employment
- Move to a new home
- Arrival of a new sibling
- Divorce or passing of a loved one

This information will allow us to provide the environment your child needs to ease the adjustment he or she is making. In addition you know your child best. These are insights that only you as your child parent can provide. We welcome your questions and comments.

# Expectations

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## *What You Can Expect*

You can expect us to be honest and truthful in all our dealings with you and your child

You can expect us to apply our highest level of expertise to all of our interactions with you and your child.

You can expect your child's teacher to be professional whom you can view as part of your child's learning team.

You can expect your child's teacher to provide both individual and community guidance and instruction.

You can expect that your child's teacher will work to understand your child and his or her own characteristics; and that she will utilize this knowledge to tailor the Montessori experience for your child.

You can expect feedback about your child's progress in conferences twice a year, and throughout the year in less formal settings.

You can expect that we will provide an environment that encourages learning and supports your child's progress.

You can expect that your child's experience will prove to be beneficial educationally and socially.

## *What MSOW Expects*

We expect parents to regard their child's teacher as a professional, to communicate with their child's teacher promptly about any issues that arise and to keep all requests to their child's teacher in line with the teacher's hierarchy of priorities.

We expect parents to gain understanding of the unique benefits and features of a Montessori education by reading information that is provided and attending informational meetings.

We expect parents to support their child's participation in all aspects of the Montessori program including activities and events



We expect parents to want to be a part of their child's classroom by volunteering for classroom events

We expect parents to be an active part of the larger Montessori community by participating in school functions and the MSWO PTO

We expect that parents regard school attendance as priority, and that parents will be responsible for getting their children to school on time

We expect that parents will keep up to date on school activities and events by reading the newsletter information

We expect that parents will check their child's cubby frequently for information, changes of clothing or other items.

these materials. She chooses the subject matter she wants to study and which lessons she wants form the teacher.

When a child is having difficulty with particular area, the teacher will encourage the child toward certain materials that will ensure that she works on that area. The teacher's job is to be watchful and knowledgeable about each child's particular strength and weaknesses and to guide each child to balance both. Through the school year, each child will complete the Montessori curriculum. The teacher's focus is to ensure that each child covers all necessary areas of study.

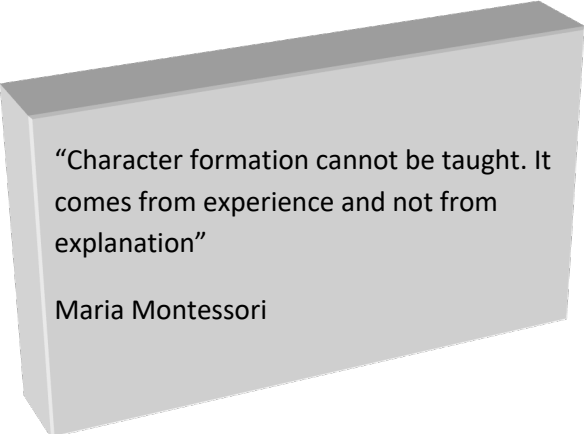
MSOW provides Montessori programs during the school year, Beginning Montessori and Primary Montessori (All programs are five days of the week). During the summer months, we offer our Summer Enrichment Program (monthly or weekly).

### *Beginning Montessori*

In this program, for children 18 months to 3, we focus on both gross and fine motor skills that each child will need to facilitate learning. We also teach each child the basic skills they will need when they move on to the Primary Montessori classroom. Moving to the Primary Montessori classroom is predicated on potty training and readiness.

### *Primary Montessori*

In this program, for children from 3 to 6 years, we focus on experiential learning. Children engage in physical tasks that are



"Character formation cannot be taught. It comes from experience and not from explanation"

Maria Montessori

## MSOW Programs

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The curriculum for our programs is child determined, but teacher guided. Each child chooses the materials that she wants to work with and how long she will work with

geared to help them learn concepts, such as math or science. By utilizing concrete objects, the child has a context from which to understand these concepts. Studies include practical life, language, and math, sensorial and cultural subjects. **It takes three years to complete this program.**

### **Half Day**

Our half day Montessori program runs from 8:00 am – 12:00 pm and includes breakfast and lunch.

### **Full Day**

Our full day Montessori runs from 8:00am – 2:30 pm and includes breakfast and lunch.

### **Extended Day**

Our Extended Day Montessori program runs from 7:00am – 6:00pm and includes breakfast, lunch and afternoon snack.

Children may arrive between 7:00am and 8:00 am and may be picked up between 2:30 and 6:00pm. This program includes our full school day and the Before and After School Enrichment Programs.

### **Before and After School Enrichment**

Our Before and After School program runs from 7:00am -8:00am. Our After School program runs form 2:30pm -6:00pm. Enrichment activities include arts and crafts, music, imaginative play and other activities.


### **Summer Enrichment Program**

During the summer months, we continue to provide a core Montessori program, with opportunities to continue on learning paths undertaken during the school year, while adding other less formal activities.

Parts of the day children work with Montessori materials, while the rest of the day is given over to varied pursuits such as drama, arts and crafts, gardening, geography, reptile show, wet days, picnics, or other fun activities.

This program is open to children ages 18 months to 8 years.

Children do not wear uniform during June and July summer months.



*“Do not erase the designs the child makes in the soft wax of his inner life.”*

- Maria Montessori

# Application and Enrollment

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The following steps detail our admission process. Please feel free to discuss any questions you may have with our Director.

- ❖ Parent visits MSOW. Parent fills out a parent interest form and receives the MSOW brochure, the “Montessori Education at Montessori School of Woodstock” handout and a tuition Schedule.
- ❖ Parent Schedules a Classroom Observation, for parents only.
- ❖ Parent fills out application forms, typing or printing all information fully and submits the application for admissions forms to MSOW with a nonrefundable \$50 Application fee. The following documents must accompany your application: Immunization Certificate (GA form 3231) and health insurance card. For children 4 and 5 years old a certificate of ear, eye and dental examinations.
- ❖ Parents schedule a Child Readiness Interview and a complementary visit with our Director.
- ❖ Child readiness interview with our Director. Parent receives Enrollment forms, the “Parent Handbook” and the “Yearly Calendar”.

- ❖ Determination of readiness.
- ❖ MSOW notifies parent of determination of child readiness. Should a child be ready to be admitted to MSOW, parent fills out the enrollment forms, submits forms with enrollment fee of \$175 and supply fee of \$175 due on or before the academic year begins.
- ❖ Parent schedules child’s first day of school and pays first month’s tuition.
- ❖ Child attends first day of school at MSOW.

It is our policy to consider each child placement individually, without regard to race, color, gender, nationality or religion. We admit each child on a six week, provisional basis. At the end of that time, we will meet with you to discuss your child’s progress.

*“One test of correctness of educational procedure is the happiness of the child itself”*

– Maria Montessori

# Tuition and Fees

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## *Tuition Policies*

### **Tuition Payment**

Tuition is set on an annual assessment. Tuition for the academic year consists of ten equal monthly installments due by the **first of each month**. Tuition is late after the **fifth day of the month** and will incur a \$50 late fee for each week that it is late. A service fee of \$35 is charged for returned checks and tuition will be due in cash. We will work with each family on a case by case basis should financial arrangements need to be made. However we reserve the right to terminate your child's admission to MSOW should your account be past due.

MSOW plans and maintains the curriculum and staff on an annual basis, therefore tuition for each month is non-refundable for absences due to illness or injury. Tuition will not be refunded for the days that MSOW is closed for holidays or weather related closings. Tuition is due prior to any absence, a two-week notice is required and a \$125 per child enrollment fee will be charged at the time of re-enrollment.

### **Vacation Policy**

No tuition rebate is given for any time that your child is absent for vacation. During the summer, you may choose either weekly or monthly enrollment in our Summer Enrichment Program. Families may tailor

their summer schedule to individual vacation needs.

You may choose to enroll your child in MSOW for the school year only or for the school year and the Summer Enrichment Program, without worrying about losing your child's place in next year's class. Please see "Re-enrollment Fee".

### **Summer Enrichment Program**

At the beginning of the summer, each family fills out a Summer Choice Calendar to schedule their child's participating on our Summer Enrichment Programs so we may provide adequate staffing.

If you switch from monthly participation to weekly participation for any given month, you will be billed at the weekly rate for the week occurring in that month. No tuition rebate will be given if child is absent due to illness or injury, or if you change your child's participation dates without two weeks notice. If you make any changes you must fill out a new Summer Choice Calendar.

### **Withdrawals**

Montessori School of Woodstock requests that a two week written notice be provided prior to withdrawing your child from our school year or summer program. In the absence of a two week notice, parents will be held responsible for two weeks of tuition after their child is withdrawn. This policy is waived in the event of a severe medical emergency or condition.

## Tuition

Note: We give a family discount on tuition when two or more children from the same family are enrolled in our program. The family discount of 10% is given on tuition for each of the additional children enrolled (applicable for regular tuition only), with this exception: if the first child enrolled is in a shorter day program than any of the additional children, the 10% discount will be given on the lower tuition amount(s).

### Beginning Montessori, 18 MOS - 3 years

Half Day	8:00am-12:00pm	\$775.00/MO
Full Day	8:00am-2:30pm	\$875.00/MO
Extended Day	7:00am-6:00pm	\$975.00/MO

### Primary Montessori, Ages 3 - 6 years

Half Day	8:00am-12:00pm	\$775.00/MO
Full Day	8:00am-2:30pm	\$875.00/MO
Extended Day	7:00am-6:00pm	\$975.00/MO

### Other Programs

Before School	7:00am-8:00am	\$150.00/MO
After School	2:30pm-6:00pm	\$50/day, \$400/MO
School Closings	7:00am-6:00pm	\$70/day, \$300/WK

### Summer Enrichment Program

Half Day	8:00am-12:00pm	\$275/wk, \$775/mo
Full Day	8:00am-2:30pm	\$300/wk, \$875/mo
Extended	7:00am-6:00pm	\$325/wk, \$975/mo

## Fees

### Application Fee

For newly enrolled students, an application fee of \$50 per child is due with signed Application for Admission forms. There is no family discount with the Application fee.

### Enrollment Fee

A one-time, non-refundable enrollment fee of \$175 for a single child or \$250 for two or more children from the same family is due with your filled out enrollment forms.

### Supply Fee

A supply fee of \$175 per child is due and payable on the first day of each academic school year and is nonrefundable. For first time students, the supply fee is prorated depending on the month of enrollment. There is no supply fee family discount.

### Re-enrollment Fee

A nonrefundable re-enrollment fee of \$125 for a single child or \$175 for two or more children from the same family is due by March of each year to reserve your child's place for the next school year. If you choose not to enroll your child in the Summer Enrichment Program, you do not lose your child's place at MSOW for the following school year, as long as the re-enrollment fee is paid in the spring.

### Late Pickup Fees

MSOW is open from 7:00am- 6:00pm, Monday through Friday. In the case of a late pickup of your child, a fee of **\$1 per minute** per child will be charged.

# General School Policies and Information

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## Operational Information

### Hours and Months

MSOW offers school year before and after school and summer programs. Our school academic year starts in August and ends in May. Our summer program runs from June through July.

Half Day Program            8:00am-12:00pm

Full Day Program            8:00am-2:30pm

Extended Day Program    7:00am-6:00pm

### Holidays

Each year, MSOW observes the following holidays:

Labor Day

Thanksgiving (1 week)

Winter Break (2 weeks)

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Presidents Day

Spring Break (1 week)

Memorial Day

Fourth of July

We hand out MSOW Yearly Calendar at our First Parent Orientation Meeting each year and post it on the bulletin board. Please refer to that calendar for exact dates when students do not have school, so you can make arrangements for your child.

### Inclement Weather

MSOW follows the Cobb County System or to the **discretion of the Director** for inclement weather closings. Please tune to the TV news stations for closings at the bottom of the screen. If the surface roads are unsafe in your neighborhood but MSOW is open on that day, please call us to let us know that your child will be staying home.

### Emergencies and Unusual Circumstances

In the event of a power failure, climates control failure, tornado or strong storm warning, or other instances in which your child would be better off at home all children will be dismissed as soon as their parents or authorized persons can be notified. Under these circumstances you are required to pick up your child as soon as possible. Arrangements will be made by the Director or school staff for any children whose parents or authorized persons cannot be reached.

### Meals

Our programs include:

Breakfast at 8:10 am – 8:25am

**No breakfast will be served after 8:25am**

Lunch at 11:00- 11:30 am

Healthy Nutritious afternoon snack at 3:00pm

Children are provided with milk at breakfast lunch and water at snack. Water is always available to them. Please let us know if your child is lactose intolerant, vegetarian, has food allergies or if you are limiting sugar in your child's diet and we will make appropriate substitutions.

The meals we serve at MSOW are nutritionally sound and meet or exceed the GA State Department of human Resources guidelines. Monthly menus are available at the front desk and are posted on the bulletin board.

### **What's Inappropriate?**

It is inappropriate to bring food or juice in (except for food exceptions or parties).

### **Attendance**

Consistency

Consistent attendance ensures that your child receives a continuous Montessori experience, and reinforces key issues about responsibility and consistency. Your child knows that his or her place is at MSOW from Monday to Friday, and will look forward to attending school. Please call us every time your child for any reason will not attend school on a specific day.

### **Arrival**

You may drop your child 15 minutes before the start of class. Please drive carefully through the parking lot to drop your child off at carpool time. A teacher or assistant will accompany your child into the school. **All children are expected to arrive by 8:00 am.**

### **Late Arrival**

If you are arriving late, please wait by the front desk with your child and signal an assistant. She will walk your child into the classroom. Classrooms in progress are not to be disturbed for any reason.

### **Dismissal**

We expect that all children will be picked up promptly, but we provide for a 10 minute 'grace period' with the exception of the 6:00 pickup time. When picking up your child at 2:30pm, please pull through to the last cone in the parking lot, to accommodate other cars that may be in line as well, and a teacher or assistant will bring your child to the car. When picking up your child from the After School Program, please come into the school to get your child. Never allow your child to leave the building ahead of or without you. Failure to pick your child up by 6:00pm will result in the late pickup fee of **\$1 per minute.**

### **Absences**

If for some reason such as illness or family obligations, your child will not be attending MSOW on a given day, please call us to let us know.

There are no refunds for the days your child is absent from school.

### **Attendance Problems**

Each child's unexcused tardiness and absences are observed and recorded by your child's teacher. In the event that tardiness or absenteeism is deemed disruptive, parents will be contacted and asked to correct the problem.

### **Confidentiality**

We keep information about each child's progress and behavior confidential. Parents, teachers, volunteers and assistants will not discuss any child progress or behavior with anyone not directly involved in the child's education.

### **Student Record**

MSOW maintains a permanent cumulative record of each child's personal data and academic progress. A copy of this record may be obtained by requesting it in writing.

### **Behavioral problems and Complaints**

#### **Discipline**

In a Montessori classroom discipline problems do not tend to be frequent occurrences. We clearly communicate what is appropriate behavior and what is inappropriate behavior, and we establish and maintain clear limits.

Each child is taught to be responsible for his or her own actions, and is taught that

inappropriate behavior has consequences. Consequences can include working in isolation in the classroom, or the teacher speaking with the child's parents.

Children who are repeatedly engaging in disruptive or inappropriate behavior make preserving the classroom community difficult for the teacher. In these situations, progressive steps are taken. The teacher will initiate a dialogue with the parents, and together they will utilize frank, open and regular communications to determine appropriate strategies to help the child control his or her behavior. Under no circumstances is corporal punishment used or condoned.

### **Damage to School property**

Parents are financially liable for loss, breakage or destruction of school property caused by their child(ren).

### **Dismissal with Cause**

Any student that repeatedly disrupts the classroom activities can temporarily or permanently be dismissed from MSOW at the discretion of the Director. We will make every attempt to work with the child and parent prior to utilizing either temporary or permanent dismissal; however disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. We expect parents to make every attempt to work with the school if this issue should arise. No tuition will be given for dismissal with cause.

Other grounds for termination or enrollment include family conduct that



maligns the School's, Teacher's or Director's credibility and/or character and failure to comply with MSOW policies and rules as outlined in this Parent Handbook.

### **Concerns**

Any concerns about MSOW's actions or any child's or staff's behavior should be addressed to your child's teacher. Should you not be satisfied with the results, a formal, written complaint may be addressed to the Director.

### **Safety**

At MSOW the health and safety of your child is our top priority. Our facility is fully licensed by the Georgia State Department of Human Resource and the office of the Bright from the Start. We meet or exceed their licensing criteria, and keep current on any changes or additions to their guidelines. In addition, each staff member is trained in both first aid and CPR. We require yearly training in child development for our staff to keep them current.

### **Disaster Drill, Fire and Tornado**

Fire and Tornado drills will be conducted at the beginning of the school year and periodically thereafter to ensure that all children and staff understand disaster procedures. At all times, school evacuation routes are posted in each classroom, main entrance, the kitchen and the office of MSOW.

### **Authorized Persons**

Only those persons authorized on your child's enrollment form may be allowed to pick up your child. We may ask for a valid photo ID to validate any person's identity that comes to pick up a child.

Please make sure that all names, addresses and phone numbers of authorized persons in your child's file are current at all times. Changes to the authorized persons' list must be made in writing by filling out and signing a new Authorized Persons form.

MSOW will not release a child to anyone under the age of 18, including baby sitters or nannies, unless that person is the child's parent.

### **Incidents**

Sometimes, despite our best efforts there is an incident between two children. When this happens we attend to any injuries that may have occurred and when we utilize communication and time to think about it to discipline the offender. If this occurs, you will be required to sign an Incident Report and an Injury Report (if necessary).

While we try to work with each child and set of parents to understand why the child is behaving in this fashion and to redirect unproductive behavior, we reserve the right to terminate enrollment of any child who repeatedly engages in disruptive and injurious behavior.

Please let us know immediately if there is any change in your child's behavior or home

environment. This will allow us insight into potential behavioral; problems while at school. Similarly we will keep you informed of any behavior problems that occur at school.

## **Health**

### **Immunization**

Georgia State law requires that all children attending a school or daycare must be immunized for certain diseases. We must have a current immunization certificate from your private doctor or public health department in your child's file at all times.

Should you have a religious or philosophical objection to immunization, you must supply a waiver for immunization (notarized) to be placed in your child's file.

### **Illnesses**

Children quickly pass germs between each other, despite our best efforts. The most effective way to keep our classrooms germ free and to keep your child comfortable while ill, is for children to be kept at home when they are sick. We ask that you do not bring your child to MSOW if the following symptoms or conditions are present:

- Fever over 99.5 prior to medication
- Cold symptoms such as sore throat, runny nose, sneezing or coughing
- Yellow or green discharge

- Pink eye, conjunctivitis, or any discharge form eyes or ears
- Any sign of diarrhea or symptoms of gastrointestinal distress
- Severe sunburn
- Any rash or skin lesions that blister
- Lice
- Bronchitis or any symptoms of respiratory distress
- Chicken Pox, Measles, Pin Worms, etc
- Strep Throat

In the event that your child exhibits any of these symptoms while at MSOW, we will place a call to the primary, secondary or alternative authorized medical contact. Any person picking up your child must be on the Authorized Persons list. We expect that you will pick up your child as soon as possible to ensure that he remains comfortable while ill.

### **Returning to School After An Illness**

The following guidelines will protect your child from exhaustion following an illness, and protect her classmates from infection. In general, children should be free of fever (99.5 degrees or less) prior to medication for 24 or more hours prior to returning to school. We reserve the right to send a child home should we determine that she is not ready to be back in school.

Bronchitis: child should be on antibiotics and free form fever 24 or more hours prior to return to school.

Chicken pox: child may return when lesions are crusted over, approximately one week.

Conjunctivitis: child may return to school when the child's doctor clears him to return, with a doctor's note. For bacterial conjunctivitis, this is when the discharge from the eyes has stopped or about 46 hours after the application of antibiotic eye drops. Consult your physicians for return to school (Dr. note) in case of viral infections.

Diarrhea: child should be free of diarrhea for 24 hours or more prior to return. Some antibiotics may cause diarrhea that is not contagious. Use your best judgment as to whether your child will be comfortable at school with this condition.

Ear infection: child should be on antibiotics and free of fever for 24 or more hours prior to return to school.

Fever: child should be free of fever prior to medication (99.5 degrees or less) or more hours prior to returning to school

Head Lice: We will notify you if head lice are discovered in your child's classroom. School wide and classroom head checks will take place upon reported incidences of head lice. Children with head lice will be sent home, along with any sheet or towel from their cot and may not return until they have a doctor's note certifying that they are lice and nit free (minimum 24 hours). A handout outlining methods of dealing with head lice is available in the office and will be sent home with any child carrying nits.

Pin worms: child may return to school after treatment.

Rashes: Child should be seen and cleared by a physician prior to return to school.

Runny Nose; Yellow or green mucus may be related to an infection. Your child should not be at school with these symptoms. Child may return when nose drainage is clear or absent. Clear mucus is acceptable in the absence of any other symptoms such as fever or coughing.

Strep Throat: the child must be on antibiotics and free of fever for 48 hours or more hours prior to return to school.

Vomiting: child should be free of vomiting for 24 hours or more prior to return to school. Please let us know if the child is recovering from vomiting so that we may encourage your child to keep hydrated.

## Medication

By law, MSOW cannot dispense any medications, whether over the counter or prescribed to any child without the expressed permission of that child's parent. Please fill out the "Authorization to dispense Medication" form and hand that form to the child's teacher or the Director with the medication. All medication must be in its original container with your child's name on it. A new form must be filled out each week that your child needs to receive medication. **You must write down the exact time medication needs to be given.**

At no time should medicine be put in child's pocket, bag or clothing or cubby. If medicine is found in any of these locations, it will be confiscated and returned to the parents. This policy is to ensure the safety of all children in our care.

### **Minor Injuries**

Every child falls down and skins their knee, or hits some part of their body while playing. When these minor injuries occur, we treat the child with appropriate first aid (and healthy doses of kindness and care). After treatment, we utilize an Injury Report to let you know what has happened. You will be asked to sign the Injury Report when you pick up your child. Should your religion or beliefs prohibit the dispensing of certain types of first aid, please let us know in writing, so we may treat your child appropriately.

### **Major Injuries and Emergencies**

At MSOW, we make every effort to keep your child safe; however accidents can occur and do occur. In the case of a serious accidental injury or emergency involving your child we will follow this procedure. (Parents will be responsible for the cost of any medical care received by their child)

- You or your spouse will be contacted immediately
- If we cannot reach you, we will contact the emergency medical contact on your enrollment form to

make medical decisions for your child

- Your signed emergency medical release in your child's file will ensure prompt medical treatment
- If the Director cannot reach you, your spouse or your emergency medical contact your child will be transported to the nearest hospital and we will follow the recommendations of the attending physician
- Your child will be attended at all times
- We will follow up with an Injury Report

## **Clothing**

### **Appropriate Clothing**

Montessori is an active, participatory program. Both indoor and outdoor activities (weather permitting) are encouraged. Please dress your child in comfortable, seasonally appropriate and easy to wear clothing, (MSOW uniform).

### **Uniforms**

All students wear khaki bottoms (skorts, shorts or pants) and white or navy blue polo shirts with the school logo. Please see the **MSOW uniform handbook for more information.**

### **Appropriate Shoes**

Please make sure that your child is wearing flat shoes in which he or she can comfortably run, jump and play; either

sneakers or closed shoes (no flashing lights). No stacked heels, platform, sandals, crocks, cowboy or rain boots will be allowed.

**Please see the uniform handbook for more information. Parents purchase the school uniform at Academic Fashions Store.**

### **Spare clothing**

All children get dirty sometimes, either by spilling food or while playing outside. Occasionally, a child may have an “accident”. To ensure that your child is clean and dry at all times, make sure that she has at least one set of seasonally appropriate clothing in her cubby at all times, including socks and underwear.

### **Check the Cubby!**

Please keep track of both the changing seasons and your child’s growth. Check the clothing in his or her cubby every week. Of course, when wet or soiled clothing is sent home with your child, please bring a new set of clothing with your child the next day.

### **Potty Training and Diapering**

(Beginning Montessori Program)

If your child has recently potty trained, or is currently potty training, please ensure that he or she comes to school each day with several changes of underwear, pants, shirts and socks. Clothes need to be practical (**no belts or snaps**). If your child is in diapers or pull ups, please ensure that we have an adequate supply of diapers and wipes at all times. We will notify you when we are running low on your child’s diaper supplies.

## **Personal Belongings**

### **What’s Appropriate**

The following is what we consider appropriate for your child to bring to school:

- Clothing (MSOW uniform code).
- Three years and over: a crib sheet with elastic, a beach towel, small enough to fold and store with his cot ( no comforters, pillows, blankets or stuffed animals).
- Under three years: a crib sheet with elastic, a beach towel, small enough to fold and store with his cot (no comforters, pillows, blankets or stuffed animals, dolls or toys).
- Educational materials such as books, tapes or CDs and pictures or items that your child has made that he wishes to share with her class. (Items that are to be returned must be labeled with your child’s name)

Please place all of your child’s belongings in a gallon Ziploc bag that can easily fit in his cubby. **We do not allow backpacks** or any other large bags in the children’s cubbies, only the **MSOW canvas bag**. We reserve the right to send inappropriate clothing, blankets, pillows or stuffed animals home.

### **What’s Inappropriate?**

The following items are inappropriate to bring to school:

Pillows for nap time

Games or toys

Stuffed animals or dolls

Gum, candy or money

Jewelry

These items should be left in your car. MSOW will not be held responsible for any personal items that your child may bring to school or leave in his cubby.

### **Blanket and Folder Fridays**

Please take your child's crib sheet and blanket home each Friday for laundering and return it the following Monday morning. Take your child's paper work out of folder. Send it back empty on Mondays.

**Please do not send checks or money for tuition in this folder.**

### **Montessori Miscellaneous**

#### **"Borrowed Classroom Materials**

The Montessori materials are extremely attractive to a young child, and beads, cubes, etc may find their way home in a child's pocket. Please return them to school the following day, as the materials do not function correctly without all the pieces.

#### **The Montessori Campus**

Alcohol may not be served at any school meeting or function where children are also present. Smoking is prohibited on campus at all times.

### **MSOW Staff as Babysitter**

Although staff members of MSOW may be willing to baby-sit for MSOW families, MSOW cannot participate in fostering this relationship by giving out names and/or phone numbers of staff for the purpose of baby-sitting. These relationships may be formed between the two parties with no affiliation by MSOW. MSOW will not be liable for any unforeseen consequences of such a relationship.

### **Lending Library**

In the Teacher Resource room, there is a small but growing Parent Lending Library. Materials include Montessori and other related educational books and materials to help you learn more about the Montessori Method and other topics of interest to our parents. Please sign out the materials and return them within two weeks. Parents are welcome to suggest titles or donate books to our Parent Lending Library.

*"The concept of an education centered upon the care of the living being alters all previous ideas. Resting no longer on a curriculum, or a timetable, education must conform to the facts of human life"*

- Maria Montessori

## Celebrations

### Birthdays

At MSOW, we understand that your child's birthday is very important and very special. We welcome you to send a **low sugar treat such as mini-muffins** to school to celebrate. Many parents also choose to donate a book on our school "Wish List" in their child's honor to commemorate his or her birthday.

Each child's birthday is an opportunity to teach other children about their unique heritage or culture. Help us create learning adventure by bringing food and objects that reflect your child's unique background. Or share photographs, stories or mementos from your child's birth or early childhood, so we may all enjoy each child's special uniqueness. We welcome you to contact your child's teacher in advance, so she can work your visit into her lesson plan.

No birthday parties will be held at the school. Please leave birthday party invitations at the front desk.

### Holidays

Celebrating holidays are of great importance to children. Each holiday we will spend time with your child, working on special projects related to that holiday. Part of making holidays special is throwing parties for each holiday.

We will ask you throughout the year to participate in holidays by bringing in certain items, such as, valentines cards, food items, etc. to decorate or include in a holiday

project or party. We will place a list on the front desk of items we need for our holiday parties, and ask that you look at the list and speak to your child's teacher around the holidays to see what items your child's class might need.

#### **Maria's Wisdom**

*"Respect all reasonable forms of activity in which the child engages and try to understand them."*

*"Bring the child to the consciousness of his own dignity and he will feel free."*

*"Imitation is the first instinct of the awakening mind."*

*"Growth is not merely a harmonious increase in size, but a transformation."*

*"What advice can we give mothers? Their children need to work at an interesting occupation: they should not be helped unnecessarily, nor interrupted, once they have begun to do something intelligent."*

*"The hand are the instruments of man's intelligence...the human hand follows the mind to reveal itself."*

*"To give a child liberty is no to abandon him to himself."*

*"Any Child who is self-sufficient, who can tie his shoes, dress or undress himself, reflects in his joy and sense of achievement the image of human dignity, which is derived from a sense of independence."*

- Maria Montessori