



# Community Guide

Welcome to the Amare Community! We are so glad your family is here. This Community Guide is designed to help you learn about the philosophy, policies, and procedures at Amare Montessori.

**2021/2022 Edition**

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# 1. WELCOME

Welcome to Amare Montessori! We are a school that fosters a love for lifelong learning within every student and are delighted your family has chosen to be a part of our community.

You have joined the most extraordinary school in Clarksville! We are dedicated to creating a carefully prepared environment based on Montessori Philosophy and Principles. Our staff is well educated and fully prepared to provide a quality, nurturing experience to educate the whole child.

Amare Montessori is a community of adults and children, working in tandem, to meet the needs of each individual learner. We strongly encourage an open and honest dialogue among staff members and parents to ensure that each child's needs are met to the fullest degree.

I ask you to read this guide carefully to ensure that you are aware of our policies and procedures. I hope this guide answers any questions you may have as well as piques your interest to learn more about the Montessori Method and Philosophy. This guide represents the spirit of the positive expectations of everyone within our school community. Please feel free to contact me at any time should you have questions, concerns, or ideas to share. We look forward to an exciting journey with your family filled with purposeful learning, genuine laughter, and celebration of community!

Kindest regards,  
Jaime Yeager  
Head of School

## 2. AMARE MISSION, VISION, AND PHILOSOPHY

### 2.1 Our Mission

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Fostering a love for lifelong learning in an authentic Montessori community.

### 2.2 Our Vision

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Amare's vision is that each student will become an independent, confident, motivated learner, and a responsible community member as a result of the dynamic partnership between students, parents, and guides. This partnership within the exceptional Montessori environment, while developing these characteristics, enables each student to become a life-long learner.

### 2.3 Our Philosophy at Amare Montessori

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The following qualities are how we seek to build relationships with our families and with which the family-school community is best served:

- With empathy and collaboration
- With a respect for the parent as the child's first teacher
- With an obligation of advocacy by the guide when the child's development may be served
- Through tactful conversation, which fosters collaboration rather than top-down, faculty-parent relations
- With an understanding that we admit families, not merely children
- Through positive encouragement and by listening to a child's and family's needs

Therefore, the following is a list of terms and phrases that identify children’s needs, of which we are obligated to give them.

- Acceptance
- Love
- Stimulation
- Peace
- Spirituality
- Empathy
- Respect
- Predictability
- To be heard
- Ability to Concentrate
- Character
- Freedom of Movement
- Sense of Family
- Structure
- Independence
- Boundaries
- Affection
- Attention
- Responsibility
- Accountability
- Opportunity for Leadership
- Recognition
- Time
- Honor
- Encouragement
- A Place to Call their Own
- Compassion
- Courtesy
- Graciousness
- Security
- Kindness

Furthermore,

- Curriculum extends beyond the State of Tennessee curriculum requirements and is comprehensive, rich, and effective. Instruction is carried out individually, and in small and large groups.
- Our positively stated ground rules help to develop and maintain a community that reflects harmony and respect for the environment, one’s peers, and oneself.
- Multi-age students bond as a community that reflects peace and respect. Older students mentor the younger students and become the leaders in the class.
- Each classroom is guided by a Montessori trained guide.
- Montessori materials are sequentially arranged. The materials invite hands-on learning and stimulate motivation.
- Students organize their daily/weekly plans and are expected to do most work at school. They work independently and are allowed to finish their work in the time frame they need.
- Intentional classroom lessons and materials teach conflict resolution skills.
- Life skills are taught at every level at Amare Montessori.
- A strong partnering of guides, parents, and students enables students to achieve their maximum potential academically, physically, socially, and spiritually at Amare Montessori.

### 3. ACCREDITATION AND ORGANIZATION

#### 3.1 Affiliations and Accreditations

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Montessori schools vary greatly in interpretation, consistency, and faculty training. In the United States, there are approximately 5,000 Montessori schools of varying degrees of competence, standards, and sizes. Montessori schools are not franchised.

Montessori faculty training is extensive and essential to the excellence of the classrooms. To be fully certified as a Montessori Guide, one must have earned a bachelor’s degree and completed Montessori training.

The American Montessori Society (AMS) and the National Council for Private School Accreditation (NCPSA) have both awarded Amare Montessori accreditation. Amare is currently in the accreditation process with the International Montessori Council (IMC).

## 3.2 TN Department of Education (DOE) Licensing

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Our Toddler and Primary Programs are regulated by the Tennessee Department of Education (TDOE). A copy of the Rules of the Tennessee Department of Education State Board of Education is in the Administrative Office and is available for review by parents. A summary of the rules and regulations is found at the end of this guide. The Elementary and Adolescent programs are licensed through TDOE as well, via the Office of School Models and Programs and operates as a Category 3 non-public school.

## 3.3 Organizational Structure

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### 3.3.1 Toddler: (18-36 months)

A Toddler class begins the educational process during the sensitive period for language and movement, from 18 months – 36 months. In this class, toddlers are encouraged to have independence and to explore and make choices in a safe environment. Toddlers are given many opportunities for learning, including being taught to care for their own needs and the needs of the classroom. They love to help set the table for snack, fold laundry, sweep crumbs off the floor, wash dishes, and put their belongings away. They also have available to them Montessori materials, which teach language, counting, sorting, and all about the world around them.

The learning environment is home-like and fully equipped with Montessori materials, a gross motor area in the classroom, and a separate outdoor play area. Montessori Toddler programs worldwide are very successful in preparing children to enter Primary programs by meeting their developmental needs while they are 18 months to 3 years.

A child is ready for our Primary Program when ...

- The child exhibits independence for expressing their needs and desires.
- The child has mastered toileting.  
(Please see Appendix A.4 for more information about Toilet Learning.)
- The child dresses and undresses him/herself, including shoes.
- The child feeds him/herself.
- The child talks quietly and waits for a turn to talk.
- The child can walk purposefully in the classroom.
- The child can lie down quietly on his/her rest mat for rest.
- Parents of students moving to Primary from Toddler are required to attend the annual Transition Meeting.

### 3.3.2 Primary: (3-6 years, including Kindergarten)

Primary students enjoy and need repetition. The environment is sequenced so that the student can move from less to more difficult work. During work time students are absorbed in an exercise they have chosen. The student receives a presentation of how to do the exercise and then may repeat it as many times as he/she pleases. If the student chooses the same exercise repeatedly throughout a week or two it is because he/she has discovered the satisfaction of skill-building and mastery. The key to mastery is the desire to skill-build. Mastery produces confidence and the motivation to try another task.

Our extensive (ages 3-6) curriculum prepares our children for Lower Elementary.

A child is ready for our Elementary Program when ...

- The child exhibits independence for expressing their needs and desires, socially, intellectually, and emotionally.
- This child is independent in the classroom: able to choose work without adult direction, able to make decisions without involving others, able to complete the work, and able to put the work away ready for the next person.
- The child can separate from friends.
- This child demonstrates basic problem-solving skills.
- This child maintains friendly relationships by using social graces and conversation skills.
- The child can maintain an orderly workspace.
- The child can maintain focus during lesson presentations up to 15 minutes.
- The child concentrates on individual work 15-20 minutes.
- The child displays ability to read/look at books silently for 15-20 minutes.
- The child understands basic phonetic blending skills.
- The child displays basic story writing skills-putting ideas on paper.
- The child displays basic understanding of operations (+ - x /).
- Parents of students moving to from Primary to Elementary level are required to attend the annual Transition Meeting.

### 3.3.3 Elementary (6-12 years, 1st-6th)

When the Primary student meets the exit requirements and moves up to the Lower Elementary program, they discover that the new classroom is beautifully arranged with more advanced materials. They are welcomed into a class of helpful students. The ground rules are important, especially in the areas of respect, kindness, and caring. Work time continues to involve the use of appropriately sequenced Montessori materials and more advanced science, history, and literature curriculum. The classroom library allows the student to develop research skills. Like in Primary, the multi-aged Elementary classrooms give younger students opportunity to observe older students complete advanced work. Mentoring is a critical life skill that is taught and practiced in our multi-level classrooms which helps to develop leadership skills.

As the student progresses through Upper Elementary they can engage with the most advanced Montessori materials. The work cycle continues to be the focus of the classroom with an exploration of a variety of subjects. Students are expected to do most, if not all, of their work at school, edit their written papers, write the results of science experiments, give oral presentations, and improve computer keyboarding and research skills.

An important component of Montessori educational instruction is to design a classroom environment that is conducive to learning. The students continue to move from concrete toward abstract thinking, working from the big picture to increasing detail. The foundational materials, which serve as the backbone of the Montessori philosophy, will continue to be utilized and expanded upon as needed. The math, science, language, history, and geography materials give the students full advantage for comprehension and application of basic concepts as well as continue to build higher level thinking skills including analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

A child is ready for our Adolescent Program when ...

- The child exhibits high level of independence and self-direction.
- The child can maintain an orderly workspace.
- The child is fluent in mathematical operations (+, -, x, /).

- The child is fluent when reading (verbal not necessarily comprehension).
- The child can maintain focus during lesson presentations up to 15 minutes.
- The child can have a respectful discussion.
- Parents of students moving to from Elementary into Adolescent level are required to attend the annual Transition Meeting.

#### 3.3.4 Adolescent (12-15 years, 7th & 8th)

Secondary students are expected to bring a high level of independence and self-direction, a comfort with collaborative work, and a love of learning for learning's sake. The students treat each other with respect and are comfortable with the knowledge that each person has different strengths and challenges. The manipulative materials of the elementary level are rarely present, as adolescents have moved beyond their applications and are now solidly comfortable with the more adult learning techniques of reading, discussion, and application to a task.

Adolescents overcome a great deal of physical changes during this transition from child to young adult. This include growth spurts, hormone fluctuation, and outward changes (acne, hair, and odor). Patience is key for all the adults in an adolescent's life.

The adolescent desires to find a place in society. It is here that the adolescent begins to conceive of their future career and find their own cosmic tasks within the human family. The third plane adolescent benefits from opportunity to enter the life of society. A bridge between adolescents and society needs to be constructed so that there is a gradual and successful transition into society.

## 4. AMARE MONTESSORI COMMUNITY

### 4.1 Parent Responsibilities

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- Be sure your child arrives on time each day. ALL CLASSES START AT 8:15 DAILY.
- Build independence in your child through daily responsibilities at home.
- Communicate with guides (i.e. going out of town, new baby, death or change in family, etc.).
- Read the weekly e-News and classroom emails.
- Attend school conferences and school events to become involved.
- Observe in your child's classroom to gain a better understanding of how the classroom functions and how your child engages in their classroom.
- Enjoy and explore the world through daily reading with your child.
- If you have any concerns or questions, contact your child's guide or the Head of School.
- Complete all required paperwork and return it in a timely manner.
- Be financially responsible for your fees and tuition payments.
- Read the Community Guide and return the Acknowledgement Form to the office (Appendix A.3). (DOE Requirement)
- Volunteer skills, time, and services

### 4.2 Guide Responsibilities

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- Create a peaceful, stimulating environment where children can learn.
- Convey friendliness, caring, and respect to all students and parents.
- Communicate with parents regularly.

- Continually keep the best interests of individual students and the classroom a top priority in decision making.
- Clarify academic and social requirements to students and parents at each level.
- Facilitate the students' social and emotional development.
- Elementary and Adolescent: Meet with students regularly to discuss student work and review progress.

### 4.3 Student Responsibilities

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- Be sure to arrive on time each day.
- Know and follow the classroom Rules and Responsibilities.
- Dress in accordance with our dress code.
- Be polite, considerate, mannerly, and courteous to all peers, children, and adults.
- Be a contributing, positive member of Amare Montessori's student community.
- Elementary: Help develop family and personal routines for a successful school week.
  - Be responsible for your school bag, lunch box, and personal property.
  - Complete work in a timely manner and to the best of your ability.
  - Complete unfinished work at home and return it to school promptly. (This should be a rare occasion.)
- Adolescent:
  - Be responsible for your all your school materials and personal property.
  - Complete work in a timely manner and to the best of your ability.
  - Complete unfinished work at home and return it to school promptly.

### 4.4 Volunteerism

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Volunteering gives parents the chance to connect with the Amare Montessori Community as well as their children's classroom. It is Amare Montessori's hope that parents will contribute their personal time and skills to benefit their child's classroom and school experience. As a community supported school, Amare relies on the families to volunteer throughout the year to assist with various projects and events. Any adult family member, including parents, grandparents and caregivers, may volunteer. Families are strongly encouraged to volunteer regularly throughout the school year, as basic to the Montessori program is the concept of giving back to the community. The personal rewards parents derive from serving are priceless including mentoring to children to develop a love for giving and doing for others. In addition to the obvious benefit to our school, we believe asking parents to give of their time creates opportunities for our families and staff to develop closer relationships. Our goal is to have everyone working together to enhance the educational experience of our children. The Opportunities for Service Questionnaire (included with the application process) assists the school in understanding your interests and skills.

## 5. ENROLLMENT AND STUDENT RECORDS

### 5.1 Enrollment Policy

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We do not discriminate against anyone who wishes to be a part of our community. We invite anyone regardless of race, color, religion, sex (including gender identity, sexual orientation, and pregnancy), national origin, age, socio-economic level, physical ability or genetic information, and learning style to apply and be accepted into our school as a staff member or student.

## 5.2 Withdrawal Policy

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Amare Montessori has an established withdrawal policy that is included in the Enrollment Packet. If you have any questions about this policy, or if you have any special circumstances that are not addressed in the policy, please feel free to discuss your concerns with the Head of School. (See the Discipline Procedures section of this Handbook for other dismissal circumstances.) The withdrawal policy is as follows:

To withdraw my child before July 1st of any given year, I must submit a letter to the Head of School no later than June 30th, requesting to be released from the year's contract. If a family wishes to withdraw after July 1 but before the first day of school, tuition for August will still be owed.

After June 30th, to be released from this contract, you must give a full calendar month notice of intent to withdraw or you will owe the tuition for the following month. For example, if on March 1st you notify the school in writing that the last day of attendance will be March 31st, no tuition will be due beyond March. If notice is given on March 15th then the full tuition payment for April must be paid.

Student records will be released only after the student billing account is at a zero balance.

## 5.3 Student Records

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Files are kept for each student at Amare Montessori. Access to the files is limited to the Administration, the TN Department of Education, the student's parents, and the student's guides. Parents must approve requests for records to be sent to another school and sign a transcript release stating such. Student records will not be released if there is a balance owed on the billing account. Files will be kept for 2 years after a Toddler or Primary student has left Amare and 7 years after an Elementary or Adolescent student has left Amare.

# 6. FINANCES

## 6.1 Tuition & Fees

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Tuition is due on the 1st day of each month. You will not receive a bill unless you are late on your payment. Payment is considered late if received after the 4th.

A \$25 late fee will be applied to accounts with outstanding balances after the 4th of the month,

If necessary, a parent may temporarily make weekly payments to avoid going into arrears or losing the child's space. Amare Montessori reserves the right to fill a child's space if tuition is not paid in full by the 4th of each month, unless arrangements have been made with the Head of School. If you need a receipt, email your request to [office@amaremontessori.org](mailto:office@amaremontessori.org) and the receipt will be attached to the return email.

### *Payment in Person:*

If you'd like to pay in person, you can bring a check or cash to the office and hand deliver it to the Office Manager or the Head of School. Please do not send checks or cash in with your child or give it to a guide or other staff member.

### *ACH Payments:*

You may complete an ACH form to have tuition pulled directly from your account on the 1st of each month. Please request and complete the ACH form and return to the Amare office via email or in person.

### *Payment Online:*

Tuition may be paid online using your checking or savings account. To do so, sign in to our ParentsWeb portal and click on Family Billing under Family Information.

### *Payment by Mail:*

Checks may be mailed to the following address. (Please write your child's name in the memo line.)

### *Payment by Automatic Bank Draft:*

Use your bank's online bill-pay system to pay your monthly tuition. Use your child's name as the account number. To allow five days processing time, put the due date as the 25th of the prior month for us to receive it on the first day of each month. Please have tuition sent to:

Amare Montessori  
294 Warfield Blvd.  
Clarksville, TN 37043

## 6.2 Tuition Discounts

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A 2% discount may be applied to yearly tuition if paid in full before August 1st.

Families receive a \$50 per month sibling **discount on the first sibling's tuition, \$75 on the second, for a \$125 total discount for 3 siblings.**

## 7. GENERAL SCHOOL INFORMATION

### 7.1 Safety

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#### 7.1.1 Tools & Activities

**Students may be exposed to the following real tools and activities as part of the Montessori curriculum. There are risks involved with these activities and/or tools.**

**Woodwork/Carpentry -- Screwing, Sanding, Drilling, Sawing (hand & electric), Nailing, Staining/ Painting**

**Cooking -- Use of knives, stove, oven, grater, etc.**

**Nature Study at Fattoria and local Woods/Gardens -- Digging, Cutting/Pruning, Weeding, Low Lying Tree/Rock Climbing, Rope Climbing/Swinging; Encounters with local plant/animal life requiring precaution. Nature hikes as a group.**

**Household items-- Iron, Needles, Sewing Machines, Hot Glue Gun, Super Glue.**

**Children receive safety lessons and presentations BEFORE they can use tools for work. Please note that many of these activities and use of tools require the use of protective eyewear and/or gloves and adult supervision. Children who misuse tools will be prohibited from using them until they receive follow-up lessons and complete a period where they demonstrate responsibility for the use of materials generally. Before exploring a new area, children are shown boundaries and given guidelines as to how to behave.**

### 7.1.2 Emergency Situations

Amare Montessori has procedures in place in the event of a weather emergency, fire, and shelter in place. All classrooms have designated "safe places" and exit plans, depending on the nature of the emergency. All staff members are trained in the procedures and classrooms have regular drills to practice evacuation and shelter in place procedures.

Please contact the Office if you would like more information on the specifics of the emergency plans.

### 7.1.3 Crisis Management Plan

The safety of children and staff will be always considered. In the event of a crisis, the Head of School will make safety and physical needs decisions based upon the information available at the time. The following items address the most basic and primary concerns:

Communication Challenges: Communication with parents is offered in multiple formats. In the event of a crisis, not all communication forms may be available, but administrators will take the following steps to encompass as many forms of communication as possible:

1. All school email blast
2. Text Message to Parents – sent from the school through the **Remind App** ([join at www.remind.com/join/amarem](http://www.remind.com/join/amarem))
3. News networks
4. Phone Lists of Students & Parents & parent approved Emergency Contacts

Location of Children: Keeping children on property is always first choice due to transportation issues. Parents are advised to check with their parent-approved Emergency Contact pick-up list (grandparents, friends, etc.). **Please keep these contacts current in Transparent Classroom.** Children will be in campus locations as follows:

1. Normal campus locations (classrooms and after school care locations)
2. Normal "Safe Place" locations specified for each classroom
3. Outdoor Campus property

### 7.1.4 Accidents

Accidents that happen at school will be promptly treated by a staff member. Parents will be notified either by phone, at carline pick up, through a note, or by their child in the case of Elementary students. We are only authorized to use soap and water on wounds (DOE stipulation). Our staff are all trained in CPR/First Aid and are required to keep their CPR/First Aid certification current. An Incident report will be filled out by a staff member describing the accident and what aid was given. The report will be handed to the parent to read and sign, then given to the Head of School.

## 7.2 Health

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### 7.2.1 Illness Policy

Children are given a routine visual health check each day upon arrival. Any child who shows symptoms of being ill or infectious will not be admitted to school or will be sent home.

#### ILLNESS/EXCLUSION FROM SCHOOL:

One of the most important ways we can keep our classrooms free of illness is to ensure that the children who attend the program every day are healthy. We are careful to consider the needs of working parents when identifying illness, but we also recognize that if children come to school with contagious diseases, then all parents will lose more work time. We do our best to balance the needs of each family with the needs of the community. **We are aware that keeping your sick child at home can be a burden. Extending the period for full recovery makes the child comfortable and helps prevent relapse. It also limits exposure to the rest of the students and staff.**

The following criteria will be used to define “un-healthy”. **If a child has any of the symptoms listed below, they are considered unable to attend school for at least 36 hours, and/or will be sent home unless they have a doctor’s note confirming that their symptoms are caused by non-contagious factors such as allergies. A child who is sent home ill may not return to school the following day.**

**Amare Montessori requires that children remain out of school until they are symptom free for 36 hours without the use of medication. Students may not return until 36 hours after the following cease:**

- 1. Loose/watery stool (diarrhea)**
- 2. Fever above 100°F**
- 3. Vomiting**
- 4. Undiagnosed rashes**
- 5. Conjunctivitis, tuberculosis, untreated impetigo, coxsackie, strep throat, scabies, head lice, pertussis, mumps, measles, hepatitis, and other contagious diseases.**
- 6. Any illness that results in a greater need for care than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children.**

**Students who have had known exposure to Covid19 (as a close or household contact) shall follow the return to school flowchart. The school should be notified of any known exposure.**

**The following table lists common illnesses that occur in schools. Your child may not return to school until they meet the criteria listed in this table.**

ILLNESS:	WHEN A CHILD CAN RETURN TO SCHOOL:
Fever	A child must have a normal (non-medicated) temperature for at least 36 hours before returning to school.
Upper respiratory tract infection	A child's time at home depends upon the severity of the illness and physician's instructions. In the case of the common cold symptoms (runny nose, coughing), it is advisable to keep the child home until the acute state subsides, usually 36-48 hours.
Vomiting	The child may return to school 36 hours after the last episode.
Diarrhea	The child may return to school 36 hours after the last episode.
Strep Throat	The child must be treated for at least 36 hours before returning to school.
Conjunctivitis (pink eye)	The child must be treated for at least 36 hours, and there must be no more "sand" around the area of the infected eye before returning to school.
Chicken Pox	A child must remain home for seven to eight days from the onset of blisters or two days after the last blisters have scabbed over. Incubation averages from 13 to 17 days.
Undiagnosed rash	A child must receive treatment before returning to school. Croup Depending on the severity of the case, the child may return to school when the deep, "barking" cough has subsided.
Impetigo	A child may return to school after treatment has rendered the condition no longer contagious. The doctor may allow the child to return to school if the area is treated and covered.
Ringworm/Pinworm	With proper treatment, a child may return to school.
Head Lice	A child must be louse and nit free to return to school. Continue checking the child to verify the condition is under control.

## 7.2.2 Medicine Policy

**Authorization Form to administer medication at school must be completed and sent with medicine. Form can be found in Appendix A-2 and on the school website.** Prescription medicine, cough syrup, and suppressants may be sent to school in the original container and then inside a Ziploc bag clearly labeled with the child's name. The medicine must be handed to a guide or administrator. (Please do not send medicine in the lunch box or school bag.) Tape a reminder on top of the lid of the child's lunchbox if it is needed at lunchtime. Guides will return any medicine that is not allowed or not pre-measured. Fever-reducing medicine may not be given to a child in the morning to "hold down" a fever nor will it be administered at school. State guidelines prohibit us from giving aspirin or other pain-relieving medicine to any child at school. State guidelines classify diaper cream, sunscreen, bug spray, and Neosporin as medicine. If a child needs any of the aforementioned items applied at school, a note of permission from the parents must be submitted with the enrollment packet.

## 7.2.3 Bathroom Etiquette

To ensure a safe and enriching environment for your child to grow in independence and self-reliance, we promote certain bathroom routines at school. All Toddler and Primary students, male and female, are encouraged to sit down while urinating. This is to aid in privacy, promotion of bowel movements, and cleanliness for both the child and the bathroom.

### *Privacy*

We encourage grace and courtesy regarding bathroom manners, including always knocking and waiting for a response before entering a bathroom; however, sometimes a child will accidentally open the door while another student is at the toilet. With all children sitting, this will allow for more privacy of genitalia.

### *Promotion of Bowel Movements*

Typically, a child goes to the bathroom to urinate. However, when a child is seated and relaxed it also aids in the promotion of bowel movements. This provides all children time to listen to their bodies.

### *Cleanliness*

We strive for a prepared and clean environment--this includes the bathroom. Sanitation is so important and when children sit to use the toilet, more bodily waste goes into the toilet bowl rather than accidentally elsewhere. Having all children sit to use the toilet helps keep the bathroom cleaner at school.

Thank you for working with us to provide a clean, safe, and comfortable bathroom space for your toddler and primary child at school by promoting, "We Sit at School."

## 7.2.4 COVID Protocols and Procedures

**A Daily Health Check is required for all students and their household members prior to coming to school each day by completing the Daily Google Form Check-In by 7:50 am on all school days.**

**This process includes:**

- 1. Checking for temperature above 100 degrees F.**
- 2. Answering screening questions for all household members, including:**
  - any signs of Covid19 in the last 36 hours (fever, cough, fatigue, loss of taste or smell, difficulty breathing);**
  - tested positive for Covid19;**
  - been exposed to someone with Covid19;**
  - been asked to quarantine or self-isolate in the last 10 days?**

Families who do not complete the daily screening prior to 7:50 am will be asked to pull to the side and will be screened by a staff member at the end of the arrival line.

#### Enhanced protocols in place during COVID operations:

- Frequent handwashing.
- Windows and some doors will be open to ventilate facilities. Be sure your child has a sweater or jacket at school daily during cooler months.
- Increased opportunities to work, play, and eat outdoors.
- Wearing of masks by students and staff is encouraged yet elective. Cloth masks or face shields may be worn by staff and students if they choose to do so. Masks and face shields will follow our dress code policies (thus no characters or logos will be permissible).
  - Parents should consider whether their child's maturity level is conducive to the effectiveness of properly wearing a mask.
  - For maximum effectiveness, masks should be laundered at home DAILY.
  - If you choose for your student(s) to wear a mask, email your Guide so they are aware of your expectation. All effort will be made to encourage and remind students to wear masks properly.
  - If a county or state mandate is ordered Amare staff will comply by the mandate.
- Naptime blankets/sheets and cots will be washed regularly at school.
- Extra sanitizing will happen during work cycles. High touch areas (doorknobs, faucets, bathrooms, tabletops, etc.) will be sanitized approximately every 90 minutes. Please note: we will NOT use any aerosol/spray disinfection with children present. Rather, we will use a wipe down method. Spray methods will be used when children are not present.
- If a student presents with a fever over 100 degrees or begins exhibiting any symptoms of illness, the parent will be notified immediately and expected to pick up within a 30-minute timeframe (exceptions made for those families who live more than 30 minutes from campus). Until then, your child will be kept comfortable and will continue to be observed for symptoms. Ill children may be asked to wear a mask.

If a student or staff member tests positive for Covid19 (and has been present on campus in the previous 48 hours) we will follow the direction given to us by the Montgomery County Health Department. A return to school flow chart will be followed (see Appendix 9).

In the event of government mandated closure, administration will take no more than three days for planning prior to the implementation of Learning from Home. While the decisions of county schools will be taken into consideration, Amare Montessori will implement procedures independently of those decisions. For example, if a Shelter in Place order is issued on a Monday, we will begin Learning from Home on Wednesday. Learning packets/kits will be sent home with students or available for pick up if a student is not present on the day we are made aware that we must transition to Learning from Home.

### 7.3 Attendance, Tardiness, and Absence Policy

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#### 7.3.1 Attendance Policy

At Amare we desire for each child to receive the full benefit of a Montessori education, including social cohesion, progression through the Montessori curriculum, and opportunity to develop and strengthen positive self-concept. Consistent attendance is vital to these goals. We ask that you demonstrate your commitment to your child's continued education at Amare by displaying understanding for the importance of daily attendance with punctual arrival.

Even though Montessori is self-paced, a student who misses inordinate time in school loses out academically, socially, and personally. Academically, the student misses lessons, gets out-of-step with small group learning, and misses follow-up work. Socially, the student does not have the consistent contact with other children--the basis for stable social relationships. Personally, and psychologically, self-esteem suffers when a student does not maintain reasonable academic progress or loses touch in social relationships.

A key reason behind the five-day school week is that it aids the social cohesion of the classroom environment. What is social cohesion? It's the building of the group, the dynamics and the pulse of the classroom. It's the balance between oldest and youngest; first-, second- and third-year children; and even the balance between personalities, cultures and societal norms. The children are subconsciously absorbing all that is around them, including those who are not at school on a regular basis. The children always ask where another child is whenever the child is absent from school.

Not only is each day's lesson important to the individual student, the student's participation in class contributes to the education of others. Your child is part of a larger classroom community and his or her attendance is important to the functioning of the classroom. Absences and tardiness, for any reason, are certain to adversely affect the student's schoolwork. The importance of regular, daily attendance as a basis for academic achievement cannot be over-emphasized.

Children thrive on consistency and routine. Thus, attending school for five consecutive days a week is invaluable to every child. When they attend regularly, the environment becomes more predictable, and the daily routine gives satisfaction rather than the distress or tension of becoming oriented again after a gap. Dr. Maria Montessori says, "it is through these daily experiences that a social order comes to being ... the only social life that children get in ordinary schools is during playtime or on excursions. Ours live always in an active community."

Children who attend school five days a week, week after week, consistently, also have a much easier time continuing along the progression of materials at their own pace. There is more time for receiving new lessons, less time in between receiving those lessons, better lesson retention, and more time for practicing and mastering lessons. These children are getting the full benefit of one of the cornerstones of an authentic Montessori experience — the three-hour work cycle.

Montessori observed that a minimum of three hours leads to the deepest concentration, which is followed by calm, peaceful, cooperative and kind characteristics. Concentration is considered "healing" as it brings us to feel more confident, energized, and refreshed. We want to be able to offer consistent open-ended time so that children have the freedom to independently choose what to do in their classrooms. If we do this, we observe children who become so engaged that they start to "fall in love" with work. However, a child who is not in school on time five days a week is not able to reap the full benefits of the work cycle.

Student attendance is essential to the educational process. Current and updated state legislation requires schools to be very aggressive in monitoring attendance and reporting students who are truant (missing more than five school days without adequate excuse) to an appropriate state agency (TCA 49-6-3007(e)).

Responsibilities for school attendance lie with families:

- To stress the importance of regular school attendance
- To limit vacation to the scheduled school vacations

- To schedule appointments after school hours
- To call the office or email your guide by 8:30 a.m. when there is an absence

Responsibilities for school attendance also lie with the school:

- To keep accurate records
- To follow through on absences to support the student

As a reminder, Amare does not follow any local school system's calendar; rather, we do what is best for our students and programs. We hope that families will plan to enjoy the week off at Thanksgiving, the two weeks at winter break and spring break.

*Absences:*

Absences must be reported to the school by parents. Please email your classroom guide in the case of an absence. Excused absences include illnesses, deaths, and the day prior to or return from a parent deployment. Other excused absences will be discussed on a case-by-case basis with the Head of School. Any unreported absence is considered unexcused. By state law we are required to report students having five or more **unexcused** absences.

### 7.3.2 Tardiness Policy

**Habitual tardiness is unacceptable**, and harmful to the student as well as the entire class. Please respect your child's need to be well prepared for the school day by being early to school every day. Arrival is from 8:00 to 8:15 a.m. daily for Toddler and Primary students and 8:00-8:10 a.m. for Elementary and Adolescent students. Students who are late disrupt the class routine, miss valuable presentations, and may fall behind on their work.

Toddler and Primary students need routine and must arrive between 8:00 and 8:15 a.m. The carline will end (and be blocked off for other purposes most days). School doors will lock at 8:15 a.m.

Elementary and Adolescent students are responsible for having their belongings put away and being ready to begin their work cycle by 8:15 a.m. Please help Elementary and Adolescent students be successful in arriving to school between 8:00 and 8:10 a.m. daily. School doors will lock at 8:15 a.m.

Please do not attempt to drop off any student at their exterior classroom door or the playground when they are tardy. They must be brought to the front office and signed in for the day.

Parents will need to park and walk their child to the Office and sign in their child on the clipboard at the front desk. A staff member will then walk your child to his/her classroom. Parents are not permitted to walk their children to the classrooms.

**Children are not accepted after 8:30 a.m. unless a doctor's appointment delayed arrival. Please ask your child's doctor for a note to verify appointment.**

## 7.4 Arrival and Dismissal

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### 7.4.1 Arrival

Before School Care is offered from 7:30- 7:55 a.m. Parents will park and walk their child to the Before and After School room entrance (second to last door of the South Building). A staff member will receive the child and sign them in for the day. **Before School Care can be full-time and \$50 charges added to your monthly tuition or our drop-in rate is \$5.00 per day and will be billed on the next month's student billing statement.**

- For safety, students may not be dropped off under any circumstance before 7:30 a.m.
- No students will be admitted from 7:55 to 8:00, as this is a transition time for Before Care children to travel to their classrooms for the day.

Beginning at 8:00 a.m. each morning:

- We ask parents to drop their students off in the carline and not to enter the school. A staff member will greet students at their car and escort them inside. (An exception is made for each child's first day of school at Amare. If a parent wishes to walk their child to the front door and take a picture, they may do so after parking in a parking spot.)
- Elementary & Adolescent Families: Please make sure your Elementary or Adolescent child is dropped off **no later than 8:10 a.m.** in order to be ready to start their day promptly at 8:15 a.m. After 8:15, all students are considered tardy and must be dropped off and signed in at the front office up until 8:30.
- During drop off, Elementary & Adolescent students are permitted to safely exit their vehicle, walk to the sidewalk, and into the building unaccompanied.

Please adhere to the following:

- **Amare driveways and carlines are "Tech Free Zones."** ALL electronics are to be turned off and put away before pulling into the Amare driveway. The use of TVs, tablets, phones, and gaming devices in the carlines significantly slows down students as they exit their cars. In the case of adults using the same, the example of being an undistracted driver is vital to everyone's safety.
- If your child forgets something important please consider that, in most cases, children need to experience the natural consequence of forgetting a school bag or their lunch. In the case of a forgotten lunch they will be invited to ask classmates if they have extra or to create a lunch from leftover snack items.
- **Please say good-bye to your child in the car since prolonged good-byes leave a child feeling insecure.** Empower your child with a sweet, cheerful comment such as, "Have a great day!" "See you at 3:00!," or "Be your best self!" If your child experiences separation anxiety, please remember he or she will be comforted after you leave, if needed. You are welcome to call the office for reassurance.
- Please leave all breakfast items in the car. Snack is available early and in each classroom.
- **Children are not accepted after 8:30 a.m. unless a doctor's appointment delayed arrival and have a doctor's note. Please ask your child's doctor for a note as these must be filed in the student's folder.** Missing work time disrupts your child from having a productive day. Rest time is extremely difficult for guides if a child has slept late in the morning. Amare Montessori is a school and not a daycare.

#### 7.4.2 Dismissal

##### *Authorized Individuals*

Students will only be released to Parents and Emergency Contacts (per information that is updated by the parent in Transparent Classroom). In the event of an emergency and a parent cannot be reached to pick up their child from school, the school will contact the Emergency Contacts.

##### *Car Seats*

Tennessee state car seat laws state that children may only be released to a person with proper seat restraints for the child's age and size and who present themselves capable of operating a vehicle. Employees of Amare Montessori are not permitted to buckle children into their car seat. Please assist your child with buckling if they are not able to independently do so. **It is the driver of the vehicle's ultimate responsibility to ensure the child is buckled correctly.**

### *Half-Day Dismissal (Toddler/Primary)*

Half day Toddler students will be dismissed from the Toddler play yard (when classes are still outside) or the front door of the North Building (in inclement weather) at 11:45 am.

Half day Primary students will be dismissed from the breezeway **at 12:00 pm. Children need to be picked up promptly at 12:00. If you arrive late, you will be charged a late pick up fee of \$5.00 for each occurrence.**

### *Afternoon Dismissal*

Dismissal times are as follows:

- **3:00 – 3:10 p.m. Primary students are dismissed. (If you have students in both primary classrooms, pick up from Primary South first, then loop through the neighborhood to pick up your Primary North student. This helps to ease congestion.)**
- **3:10 - 3:20 p.m. Toddler students are dismissed.**
- **3:10 – 3:20 p.m. Elementary and Adolescent Students with Primary or Toddler Siblings**
- **3:20-3:30 p.m. Elementary and Adolescent Students without Primary or Toddler Siblings**
- **3:30 p.m. dismissal ends.**
- **After 3:30 p.m., any remaining children will be escorted to After School Care and the parent will incur an After School Care fee charge. (See Before and After school care policies). There is no After School Care for Toddlers. A late fee of \$25 will be charged after 3:30 pm.**
- Staff will bring your students to your car. Please place your car in PARK before or as staff approaches your car with your child.
- When possible, place car seats so staff can load your child from the school side of the vehicle without getting into traffic.

When every driver assumes the responsibility of efficient pick-up and abides by the Tech Free Zone, dismissal time will be a pleasant closure for the school day.

### *Irregular pick-up during school hours:*

If your child has a doctor's appointment, please send an email to the guide and office prior to the date or before 8:30 am the day early pick-up is needed. We need time to have your child ready when you arrive. If possible, please schedule appointments for after school. When it is not possible, please schedule them for after 11:45 so that your child can depart at the half-day dismissal time, causing less disruption to his/her day. When you arrive at school, please report to the office. Please sign your child out on the clipboard while you wait in the front office.

### *When school is a scheduled half-day:*

- Students are dismissed from 11:45 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
- After School Care is closed.

### *We require your written (email is acceptable) permission for your child to:*

- Be picked up at any irregular time other than normal dismissal time for a standing appointment.
- Be picked up by anyone other than parents or approved adults listed in Transparent Classroom

### 7.4.3 Campus Driveway Instructions

#### *Drop Off/Pick-up:*

- Please follow the instructions of our staff members while in the carline.
- Drive slowly at all times when on campus.
- Do not leave your car unattended in the drop-off/pick-up lane.
- Never leave your car with the engine still running. Drive safely and please buckle up.

## 7.5 Room Placement

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Next level placement is determined by guides and administrators based upon several factors, including space availability. Parental requests will be considered but final determination is made by the administration, after meeting with guides and parents as needed. Based upon our accreditation status, all rooms are staffed with highly qualified guides and are strong both academically and socially.

For students transitioning mid-year to a new classroom, decisions are made as the student approaches the transitioning date.

## 7.6 Discipline Procedures

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In Montessori we try to assist our children in developing the skills necessary to live peacefully in the world. Our guides work very hard to create peaceful, well-run classrooms where children can thrive and grow academically, socially, and spiritually. Grace and Courtesy lessons aid the children in becoming kind, thoughtful, and peaceful members of their community and are presented throughout the year on all program levels.

Discipline is also necessary for this peaceful existence. "Discipline" means to educate or train. The first step to discipline or guidance is for a positive connection to be established between the student and their guides. Montessori encourages the growth of self-discipline within the child. We do our best to build up the child's self-confidence so that he can handle the situation better the next time. Montessori children obtain this discipline through their work. For the work to occur uninterrupted, we must have a few simple classroom rules. Classroom ground rules are presented to students as guidelines necessary to develop and maintain the kind of community that reflects harmony and respect for the environment, one's peers and oneself. Each rule represents a goal to be achieved individually and collectively.

The ground rules are as follows:

- We walk inside.
- We work quietly at a rug or table.
- We put our work away ready for the next person.
- We respect ourselves and others.
- We use time wisely.

CONFLICT	RUDE	MEAN	BULLYING
Occasional	Occasional	Once or Twice	Is REPEATED
Not planned; in the heat of the moment	Spontaneous: unintentional	Intentional	Is planned and done on purpose
All parties are upset	Can cause hurt feelings; upset	Can hurt others deeply	The target of the bullying is upset
All parties want to work things out	Based in thoughtlessness, poor manners or narcissism	Based in anger; impulsive cruelty	The bully is trying to gain control over the target
All parties will accept responsibility	Rude person accepts responsibility	Behavior often regretted	The bully blames the target
An effort is made by all parties to solve the problem			The target wants to stop the bully's behavior; the bully does not
Can be resolved through mediation	Social skill building could be of benefit	Needs to be addressed/should NOT be ignored	CANNOT be resolved through mediation

Source: Jennifer Astles, DASA Newsletter, January 2014, TST BOCES

### Toddler and Primary Procedures:

Toddler and Primary staff will address violation of these rules with redirection. If redirection is not logical or sufficient, the following problem-solving process will be utilized.

#### Problem Solving Process:

1. Stop! I think we have a problem! The adult helps children realize they are in a conflict situation.
2. What is the problem? Through observation and questioning, an adult helps children verbalize the problem. This also involves a statement of commitment from all parties involved to come to a peaceable and win-win situation.
3. What are all the solutions to the problem? The adult guides the children through possible ways to solve the situation.
4. What is the best solution? The adult guides the children to agree on a solution and implement it.
5. Is it working? The adult checks back through observation and questioning to make sure that the solution agreed upon is meeting the needs of the children.

This model of problem solving also helps children learn critical thinking skills. We hope you will use this model of problem solving with your child. We think you will be amazed at how well a three and four-year-old can be stepped through this process. And it is heartwarming to see a five-year-old use it with no adult guidance!

Guides will address unwanted behaviors with the children immediately and an incident report will be completed, sent home, and filed with the Head of School.

In the Toddler program, it is developmentally appropriate to see behaviors such as biting, pushing, and hitting. However, the school does not take these behaviors lightly. These behaviors can become habitual and widespread very rapidly if both the school and the parents do not address them.

Guides use many strategies in the classroom to help children succeed in their environment. These strategies include redirection, removal of a child from a situation he/she cannot handle, encouragement to make more appropriate choices, guided conflict resolution, and helping the child choose purposeful work.

Furthermore, children will be encouraged to help restore a relationship as needed through guidance of finding practical solutions for their actions. For example, a child who has accidentally bumped into another child because they are running through the classroom will be asked to check in with that child to see if they are hurt, if they can do anything to make them feel better, and then asked to retrace their steps using walking feet. Natural or logical consequences will be utilized as appropriate. Examples include:

- Redirection
- Removal of a child from a situation he/she cannot handle
- Encouragement to make more appropriate choices
- An adult helping the child choose purposeful work
- Offering a hug, ice pack, Band-Aid, or tissue to a child they have hurt
- Writing a letter or card
- Having a discussion afterward about the incident
- Responsibly cleaning up after themselves
- Taking time to repair a maimed material
- Repeating an action appropriately when it is not done properly (e.g., walking around a work rug or wiping a spill until the surface is dry)

If behavior issues arise in the classroom, the guide, after careful observation, will consult with support staff and an administrator about the difficulties experienced. The guide may take the child to discuss the problem and possible solutions with an administrator. We do our best to build up the child's self-confidence so that he can handle the situation better the next time. Usually we will not send a note home with a child on the child's first visit with an administrator but will do so if the problem cannot be resolved without the parent's help.

If more help is needed, the guide will communicate with the parents and arrange a parent conference. Recommendation for outside professional assistance (OT, Speech, PT or other services) may be suggested in some cases. A follow up conference will be scheduled to review if behavior has improved.

Because we are a school that promotes peace, inappropriate behavior including any of the following: disruptive or rude behavior, aggression whether physical or verbal, abuse or bullying of any kind that violates the rights of others, will have the following consequences for Toddler and Primary Students:

- **First offense:** An adult will help to mediate the problem-solving process. An Incident Report may be written depending on the severity of the action.

- **Second offense same day:** The child will be asked to sit in an observation chair or stay next to the guide or assistant until the child is ready to work again peacefully. This is not considered punishment, rather as an opportunity for the child to compose himself and observe the appropriate behaviors being modeled by the adults and classmates. An Incident Report will be completed.
- **Third offense same day:** The child will be taken to the office and sent home. Parent will be called. The guide and administration will determine the number of days the child is to refrain from attending school. Parent will be given a sheet of expectations of the child's expected behavior at school and at home.

**Toddler/Primary Incident Reports** are written by either a guide or staff member describing the inappropriate or harmful behavior and what the follow up was with the student. The report will be handed to the parent to read and sign, then given to the Head of School.

If a child reaches more than 3 offenses in a 2-week period, it may be considered a severely disruptive behavior pattern. A conference will be scheduled to devise a behavior modification plan.

#### *Harmful Behavior:*

The following action will be taken in the case of harmful behavior, which includes but is not limited to assault, biting, hitting, kicking, fighting, throwing objects, spitting, pushing, pinching, name calling, screaming, harassment, fleeing the environment, or severely disruptive behavior that continues over a period of time:

- The child will be removed from the classroom and sent to the office.
- An Incident Report will be made for all disruptive or destructive behaviors.
- Parents will be notified and asked to pick up child from school or event.
- A conference will be held with the parents.
- A Behavior Plan will be developed that may include but is not limited to recommendations for evaluations/consultations (OT, PT, Speech, Behavioral Therapy, Counseling, etc.), plan of action for when the behavior occurs, journaling of behaviors by parent and guide and possibly food diary if deemed necessary.
- Possible dismissal

If the inappropriate behavior does not improve and all the above procedures have been utilized without success, the parent will be asked to withdraw the child and to find a place in which the child's needs will be better met. This is a "no fault" policy and there will be release from the enrollment contract without penalty.

#### **Elementary and Adolescent Procedures:**

Our guides work very hard to create peaceful, well-run classrooms where children can thrive and grow academically, socially, and spiritually. We use a positive approach to discipline to help the student become successful, productive members of our community. We use the Ground Rules, and the Rights, Responsibilities and Consequences chart (see below) to help guide the students into behavior that is appropriate for our community at Amare Montessori.

Because we are a school that promotes peace, inappropriate behavior including any of the following: disruptive or rude behavior, aggression whether physical or verbal, abuse or bullying of any kind that violates the rights of others, will have the following consequences for Elementary and Adolescent Students:

- **First offense:**  
Student is given a warning by a staff member.
- **Second offense in the same day:**  
Student is brought by the guide to the office for a conference with the Head of School. A plan is worked out to help the student change his/her behavior. Student writes an \*Incident Report in the office and brings it back the following day with a parent signature in order to re-enter the class. The student is sent home. Usually this is sufficient to change the student's behavior.

As a community, the guides, faculty and staff at Amare will monitor the child's actions on a daily basis. Amare may begin a record of incidences in order to help determine and track habitual behavior and possible causes for the behaviors. On the Elementary and Adolescent levels, the child is now prepared to take more responsibility for his behavior.

**The Rights Responsibilities, and Consequences Chart** is presented yearly, as well as when needed throughout the school year. Students and Parents are expected to review the chart and sign agreement to it yearly.

- PLEASE NOTE: If an Elementary or Adolescent student intentionally physically injures another child or staff member, even if it is the first offence, the consequences will be as follows depending on the severity of the injury: immediately sent home, immediate 1-3 day out-of-school suspension, or immediate expulsion from school.
- Bullying of any kind is not acceptable or permitted and will be handled with diligence. Please refer to the chart at the Jennifer Astles chart above to clarify bullying behavior. Bullying includes but is not limited to habitual verbal threats or demeaning speech towards another child or adult. Bullying is defined as intentionally and habitually cruel behavior towards others. Interpersonal conflict; however, is not bullying and is part of the developmental process we help students work through. Working as a team, we can help all our students to become strong, considerate, contributing members of our Amare Montessori community and future leaders of the world. Please let your child's guide(s) know if your child needs help in this area.

### ***Amare Montessori reserves the right...***

Amare Montessori reserves the right to skip all of the above steps and to suspend, dismiss, or ask for the immediate withdrawal of any student at any time, at the sole discretion of the Head of School, if that student's work, progress, conduct, or influence (on or off campus), falls below acceptable educational or social standards. Each student's enrollment is subject to the rules and policies adopted or amended by the Head of School.

Child's Rights	Child's Responsibilities	Child's Consequences
The child is free to use material displayed in the environment.	The child must use the material respectfully. The child may not use it in a way that disturbs others. The child will return the material to the appropriate spot on the shelf.	Misuse of material will require a break from material use until such time as the child has demonstrated respectful use of other classroom material.
The child may work at a table or on a rug; whichever is suitable to the work chosen.	The child may not use the material at or on a display shelf as his presence there would obstruct access to the other materials.	The child will be offered more suitable work location options by the guide.
The child has the right to work undistracted by others.	The child is not allowed to disturb or to distract others. No child may interfere with another's learning cycle.	A child distracting other children will leave the classroom until they are able to engage in meaningful work.
The child need not join a group activity and may continue his/her activity individually or he/she may stand apart as a silent observer.	A child is not allowed to interfere an activity if he/she has chosen not to join; this is his/her responsibility to the group.	A child distracting a group activity will be redirected by an adult to appropriate choices.
The child is free to sit or move around quietly. He/she may be observing or thinking or he/she may simply be relaxing.	The child has the responsibility to engage themselves in meaningful work.	A child choosing not to engage in meaningful work may be asked to spend a few moments in an observation chair watching children engaged in meaningful work.
The child will be treated respectfully in the Montessori classroom.	The child will treat fellow community members with respectful words and actions.	A child that is disrespectful in words or actions will leave the classroom until they are prepared to return respectfully and able to discuss their behavior. Continued neglect of this responsibility will result in being removed from the classroom for the remainder of the day.

## 7.7 Communication

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### 7.7.1 Office Hours

Office hours are **7:45 a.m. to 3:45 p.m.** Monday through Friday when school is open.

### 7.7.2 Online School Directory

For our online school directory, please utilize that feature in Transparent Classroom. We reserve the right to keep private any personal information that a parent does not want published. USING THIS INFORMATION FOR THE PURPOSE OF SOLICITATION IS PROHIBITED.

### 7.7.3 Tools for Communicating

The School phone number is 931-368-3818. Messages are checked throughout the day. Kindly leave a message if your call is not answered.

All classrooms have an email address to communicate more effectively with parents. Guides will check emails by 1:00 p.m. each day. If you send an email in the evening, it will not be checked until the next day. **If you would like to talk with a guide or schedule a conference**, please send a short email to your child's guide or hand a note to the greeter during carline drop off and a guide will call or email you as soon as he/she is free. **If it is urgent**, call the office and we will contact the guide. Please email your classroom and office if your student will be absent or picked up early for an appointment. This aids in both the classroom and the office being prepared for an early dismissal. Should you need to unexpectedly pick up your student early, please call or email the office to inform us, as guides may not check emails and see the request.

#### Staff Emails:

- Adolescents (Morgan Terry), [adol@amaremontessori.org](mailto:adol@amaremontessori.org)
- Upper Elementary (Andrea Ellison), [upperel@amaremontessori.org](mailto:upperel@amaremontessori.org)
- Lower Elementary (Becky Bittner and Leigh Bowron), [lowerel@amaremontessori.org](mailto:lowerel@amaremontessori.org)
- Primary South (Maria Thomas), [psouth@amaremontessori.org](mailto:psouth@amaremontessori.org)
- Primary North (Michelle Eidman), [pnorth@amaremontessori.org](mailto:pnorth@amaremontessori.org)
- Toddler (Connie Gomez), [toddler@amaremontessori.org](mailto:toddler@amaremontessori.org)
- Technology Services (Elizabeth Coleman), [ecoleman@amaremontessori.org](mailto:ecoleman@amaremontessori.org)
- Creative Arts Director (Julie Rullmann), [creativearts@amaremontessori.org](mailto:creativearts@amaremontessori.org)
- Student Support Coordinator (Courtney Hester), [courtney@amaremontessori.org](mailto:courtney@amaremontessori.org)
- Office Manager (Donna DeNisco), [office@amaremontessori.org](mailto:office@amaremontessori.org)
- **Bookkeeper (Chris Coletta), [ms.c@amaremontessori.org](mailto:ms.c@amaremontessori.org)**
- Head of School (Jaime Yeager), [jyeager@amaremontessori.org](mailto:jyeager@amaremontessori.org)

Contact the Office Manager via email or the school phone at 931-368-3818 regarding the following:

- School uniform and **T-Shirt sales information**
- Dates and times for school events (after consulting your Amare calendar)
- Early dismissals
- Transparent Classroom questions

**Contact the Bookkeeper via email regarding the following:**

- **Tuition/ParentsWeb/Student Billing**
- **Before and After School Care billing**
- **Tuition statements**

Contact the Head of School via email or phone regarding the following topics:

- Philosophical or programming inquiries
- Enrollment process/information
- Class placement
- Support Services
- Fundraising/Donations
- Staffing/Licensing/Accreditation

#### 7.7.4 Communication Avenues

**Parent Orientations, Parent Meetings, and Montessori Journeys** are pivotal to your understanding of Montessori philosophy and curriculum. Each meeting will be unique and will help you understand your child's developmental and academic progress. At these important meetings, parents will meet your child's guides and learn about the classroom routine, program objectives, daily schedules, and current classroom events.

**Back & Forth Folders** will contain work, notices from school, and extra-curricular programs.

**Weekly e-News** sent via e-mail from the HOS and each classroom

#### Normalization and Progress Reports

**Conferences** – scheduled twice a year. There is no school on these days. Childcare is provided at no charge during your scheduled conference time for siblings not involved in the conference. An optional third meeting is available at year's end by parent or guide request. Other conferences with the guides as needed by parent or guide, throughout the year may require a classroom observation beforehand. Classroom Observations are highly encouraged. They can be scheduled through the front office.

**Transition Meetings** are REQUIRED for parents of students moving to a new program level.

### 7.8 Classroom Observations

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Please invest an hour in the fall (after your child has been enrolled for 6-8 weeks) and the spring of each school year to observe your child's classroom. Observations are scheduled for 45 minutes and a discussion can occur afterward with the Head of School, if desired.

To set up an observation:

- Attend the Parent Information Meeting on Observation (offered yearly) or meet with the Head of School for an orientation on Classroom Observation.

Then,

- Contact the office to schedule a date/time for the observation. After the visit, you may schedule a follow-up conference with the guide to discuss your observations, if you wish.
- Please check-in at the office before your scheduled observation time. You will receive a form to aid in your observation of the classroom and a "Visitor's Badge" to wear.
- Your child's classroom will have an "Observation Chair." Please do not sit with your child during this time. You need to be free to watch the entire classroom.
- Remember that observations are not a time for a conference.

## 7.9 Time Management/Homework Policy

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### 7.9.1 Time Management (Elementary)

All our Primary and Elementary classrooms have a 3-hour uninterrupted work time each morning. We feel strongly that if a student works hard during his work time at school that he/she should not have to spend the entire evening working on homework. Just like adults, students need time with their families in the evening in order to be refreshed and ready to work hard again the next morning.

The student who can mentally plan his day is also able to survey and reflect on how much he is accomplishing. The Montessori philosophy of flexibility is accomplished when the student is choosing the order or sequence of the work assignment – enjoying either the fun or stimulation of doing a favorite subject first or saving the best until last by getting the most difficult subject out of the way. This is one of the ways the Montessori student becomes increasingly responsible, motivated and self-confident.

Make time management a part of your family meetings. Let your child set goals for daily routines. This is especially helpful in the morning. If he needs more time to prepare for the day, then he can get up earlier. If he needs less time, he can sleep longer. By empowering your child, you can eliminate many family conflicts.

### 7.9.2 Homework Policy

**Lower Elementary (LE):** Daily homework includes daily shared and independent reading. An established, designated daily reading time is critical to your child's academic progress. Your child should read a book on his/her reading level. The book parents read to their child should be several grade levels above his/her reading level in order to build excitement, vocabulary and imagination. We suggest finding time each week for silent reading as a family with each member reading something in the same room.

**Upper Elementary (UE):** Homework assignments involving additional practice with reading, spelling/word study, writing, and library research will be expected for reinforcement of these skills, as needed. The Montessori 3-hour morning work cycle allows most students the time to complete assignments during the school day, although some project-based assignments may need to be worked on or finished at home. If a student brings home an excessive number of unfinished work, it may be an indicator that the student is not using his/her time wisely at school. Alternatively, it may indicate a desire within the child to extend their classroom work at home. A conversation with your student will help determine the reason behind work coming home.

**Adolescents:** Homework will involve literature reading and research. Writing assignments will be done on the computer through Google Classroom, a format that enables students to have access to their work both at home and school. The Montessori 3-hour morning work cycle allows most students the time to complete assignments during the school day, although some project-based assignments may need to be worked on or finished at home. If a student brings home an excessive amount of unfinished work, it may be an indicator that the student is not using his/her time wisely at school. Alternatively, it may indicate a desire within the child to extend their classroom work at home. A conversation with your student will help determine the reason behind work coming home.

## 7.10 Field Trips/Going Out (Elementary & Adolescents Only)

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### 7.10.1 Field Trip Guidelines

- Parents must sign **the Elementary/Adolescent Field Trip Permission Slip** for a student to travel and participate in any field trip.
- **All field trip fees will be posted to the student's billing account. (See Section 6.1 Tuition & Fees.)**
- **All students must bring the appropriate car/booster seat that meets state regulations or use a school provided car seat.**
- Car assignments are arranged by the guides, are filed in the office, and must be adhered to until students return to school, except in a case of an emergency.
- Field trips are cancelled if enough drivers are not available.

Tennessee's passenger child restraint law is covered in Tennessee Code Annotated 55-9-602. The part that relates to our students on field trips states that any child four through eight years of age and measuring less than four feet nine inches (4' 9") must be in a "belt positioning booster seat system" and in the rear seat if the vehicle has a rear seat. Students not required by law to be in a booster seat must still be secured with a safety belt.

### 7.10.2 Chaperones/Field Trip Driver Responsibilities:

All Field Trip Drivers must have completed a Volunteer Driver & Vehicle Information Form prior to the day of the field trip, which includes having a background check, provide proof of a valid driver's license, and current vehicle insurance. This form must be submitted each school year. You can request a copy from the office or download and print one from the school website.

- Supervising and safeguarding the students in your care is your primary responsibility!
- Each chaperone/driver must be able to take at least 3 seat-belted students. Younger siblings are not permitted on field trips.
- Arrive at school at least 15 minutes in advance of our scheduled departure time to allow time to get organized and get the children safely into their designated cars.
- Chaperones may not leave their group and must always eat with their designated students.
- Do not use your mobile phones during the trip unless it is related to the field trip.
- Do not stop for food or drinks for safety reasons.
- Escort your children back to their classroom and stay with them until the guide arrives.

## 7.11 School Closing Procedures

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If school will be closed for inclement weather, Amare Montessori will:

- send an email
- post to the Amare Families private Facebook page
- send an alert via the Remind app (To sign up go to [www.remind.com/join/amarem](http://www.remind.com/join/amarem))

Do not call the office if you need to pick up your child early due to weather conditions. Rather, simply do so. In inclement weather we do not have the staff manpower to both answer calls and retrieve children who are being picked up early.

We try to avoid unnecessary closings by waiting until early morning to make the decision and announcement. The safety of your family is most important, thus, please use your best judgment about bringing your student late, picking him/her up early, or just staying home on those troublesome days. If

the weather worsens as the day progresses and we must close early, we will announce the closing time on our email, Amare Families Facebook page, and the Remind app.

## 7.12 Videotaping School Programs/Events

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We encourage you to take pictures and videos of your own children as a record of their growth and accomplishments through their years at Amare Montessori. We have families in the school whose privacy is extremely important from the standpoint of safety. We are extremely careful about publicizing pictures or information about these families, which is why we use a formal photo release form. We ask that you bear this in mind when videotaping performances. You may post pictures of your own children on the internet (YouTube, Facebook, etc.) at your discretion. However, please do not post pictures of children of other families to any of these websites without the parent's permission.

## 7.13 Religion and Amare Montessori

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Amare Montessori is focused on Montessori philosophy and not a particular creed, belief system, or religious doctrine. That is not in any way to diminish the value of those things in the lives of the families who are a part of our school community. Instead it values those things enough to not let them become divisive issues that stand in the way of educating children within an authentic Montessori framework.

It is the policy of Amare Montessori to not make accommodations for any specific religion or manifestation of that religion on campus by students or faculty during the school day. We value those religious and cultural tenets that bring meaning to people's lives and invite families to share their heritage and traditions through pre-planned events with their classroom Guides.

## 7.14 Transparent Classroom

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**Amare Montessori utilizes the online program Transparent Classroom for multiple services including daily attendance records, student and parent directory, photos, student allergies and medical alerts, approved and emergency contact information, re-enrollment forms, and individual student records. Parents are responsible for keeping their child's record updated. Reminders will be sent throughout the year. Parents may set their own preferences for updates for receiving photographs of their children.**

# 8. CLASSROOM GUIDELINES

## 8.1 Entering the Classrooms During School Hours

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If you are volunteering or observing in a classroom (including the Outdoor Classroom) during school hours, please check-in first at the office. All parents, visitors, and volunteers need to sign-in at the office.

## 8.2 Lunch and Snack

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### 8.2.1 Lunch

A lunch box is required for each child having lunch at school as we do not provide lunch.

- Lunch boxes and containers should be labeled with child's name.
- Lunch boxes **shall be free of licensed characters, logos, and cartoons.** Solid colors or simple designs and patterns are preferred.

- Lunch boxes shall be **rectangular in shape**. Approximate preferred dimensions are 12" in length, 10" in width and 4" in height. This is to accommodate our limited storage space.
- **We ask for a trash free lunch**. Any non-compostable trash will be placed back in the child's lunchbox to be disposed of at home.
- Containers should be reusable and easy for students to open by themselves. (It is helpful for the toddler students to have Velcro closures so that they can be more independent with their lunch.)
- Please send a cloth napkin inside the lunch box for your child to use at lunchtime daily.
- We serve water daily with snack and lunch therefore separate drink containers are not necessary.
- Lunches may be kept cool by putting a frozen cool pack in the lunch box. Please write your child's food allergies on the top of his/her lunch box with a permanent marker.

Each child is allowed approximately 15-25 minutes to eat his/her lunch each day. Children will bring home, in the lunch box, uneaten items so parents are able to adjust lunch proportions appropriately.

We encourage parents to send lunches that reflect good nutrition when preparing lunches. A nutritious lunch means one that provides nutritional value in addition to calories. We ask for your support as we establish and maintain healthy habits. Keep in mind that the lunch should include protein as well as be nutritional in terms of vitamins and minerals. Meat, casseroles, soups, rice and vegetables can be sent in a small thermos.

Please refer to the following lunch suggestions and have your child choose something from each category daily for their lunch:

Protein:	Cheese, meats, tuna, nut butter, Greek yogurt, boiled eggs, nuts, hummus, legumes
Grains:	Whole grain breads, bagels, pita, crackers, tortillas, pasta, lentils, quinoa
Veggies/Fruits:	Carrots, celery, peppers, cauliflower, broccoli, salad, tomatoes, cucumbers, apples, oranges, bananas, peaches, pears, raisins, or dried fruit

Kindly refrain from sending the following items to school for lunch:

- Jell-O, push-up yogurt, pudding, anything with chocolate chips, cupcakes, frosted cookies, sugar-coated cereals, candy, chewing gum, Frito's, Cheetos's, or similar high-calorie low-nutrition foods. Any food with more than 9 grams of added sugar per serving is not permitted.

Child May Request:

Squeeze tube fruit sauce or yogurt

An item with more than 9 grams of added sugar per serving

Packaged food

Try This Instead:

Use a resealable container for yogurts and fruit sauces and pack a spoon

We recommend fruit as a great dessert for lunchtime!

Consider opening a desired food and packing it into a reusable container. Your child can help by opening the package with scissors!

## 8.2.2 Snack and the Sharing Basket

Each family provides snack for the entire classroom through the Sharing Basket during the school year; thus, your child gets to enjoy nutritious snacks all year. Your classroom guide will let you know which week has been assigned to you and will provide you with a shopping list when it is your family's turn to provide the Sharing Basket. Please bring the complete Sharing Basket on Monday morning no later than 8:00 am. This provides ample time for it to be unloaded and snack prepared for the day. Occasionally other shared and consumable items may be requested in the sharing basket. The cost varies by classroom, but the average cost should be between \$50 and \$75 each time.

## 8.2.3 Afternoon Snack

If your child stays for After School Care, please send a snack in your child's Amare snack pouch. Replacement pouches are \$5.00 and can be requested through the office.

## 8.3 Dress Code and Personal Items

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### 8.3.1 Dress Code

**Our hope is that the dress code:**

- 1. Allows children to focus on finding their passions, building their skills, making friends, participating in the community, thinking deeply, generating ideas, and expressing themselves through their work instead of worrying about what they are wearing or who is wearing what.**
- 2. Provides developmentally appropriate choice. We want children to have choice without feeling overwhelmed or needing to spend too much time making a simple decision.**
- 3. Encourages children to work and play comfortably without adjusting their clothing. On a typical day, children will be working at tables and on the floor, cooking, gardening, running, jumping, climbing—the list goes on!**
- 4. Gives families flexibility to purchase items at the stores of their choice, so they can stay within their own budgets.**

Please help your child learn to dress him/herself at home so he/she can do it at school as well. Beginning in Primary students should dress themselves daily. Students should dress in clothing that does not bring undue attention to them or distract the classroom.

Clothing worn to school, as well as the change of clothes, are to follow these guidelines:

- **Shirts:** Solid colored collared shirts (any color). For Primary aged children and older, all school shirts must be embroidered with the Amare logo.
- **Pants/Shorts/Skirts:** Solid colored pants, shorts, or skirts may be worn.
  - All clothes should be easy for children to take off when using the restroom. Pants with elastic waistbands for toddlers and primary students are encouraged, until mastery of buttons, zippers and snaps are acquired.
  - Please note: Leggings are NOT considered pants. Leggings are to be worn ONLY with dresses and skirts.
  - Only Elementary & Adolescent students may wear belts.
- **Dresses:** Solid-colored, polo dresses with the Amare logo, if they do not zip in the back, as they are impossible for students to manage and should not be worn. Shorts or leggings should be worn underneath.

- **Shoes:** All shoes should be comfortable, close-toed and provide safety when the child runs, climbs and plays on the playground.
  - o Cowboy boots, "light up shoes," "squeaky shoes," cleats, and shoes with wheels may not be worn to school, as they are a distraction in the classroom and can pose a safety hazard.
- **Hoodies/Sweatshirts/Sweaters: Shall be embroidered with the Amare logo or purchased through our school T-shirt/Sweatshirt sale. They should be free from all other licensed logos, characters, and words.**
- **Hats and scarves may be worn outside in appropriate weather and inside at a Guide's discretion if they are not a distraction to others.**
- Sunglasses may be worn outside in appropriate weather.

#### *Friday Attire:*

- On Fridays, students may wear their Amare T-shirts in lieu of their polos.
- Elementary and Adolescent Guides may also elect to have students wear their Amare T-shirts on field trips. T-shirt orders occur annually in the summer/early fall and again in the winter. Extra forms may be requested from the office.

#### *Change of Clothes:*

Children do occasionally have accidents, spill something on their clothing, or soil it while gardening. For these reasons we require that EVERY student have a complete change of clothing at school that complies with the dress code.

- Please send extra clothes in a gallon-sized Ziploc bag labeled with the child's name to be left at school. Re-useable wet bags are encouraged for Primary and Toddler students.
- If your child has had an accident, replace the clothing in a Ziploc bag the very next day. (Make sure your child always has a change of clothes at school.) If we cannot find a change of clothes, extras may be used and must be returned.
- As the weather changes, please send a new set of weather appropriate clothes.

#### *Raincoats and Rain Boots:*

- All students are required to have raincoats and rain boots that remain at school for the duration of the school year. For Toddler and Primary students, we highly recommend rainsuits (e.g. Tuffo Unisex Baby Muddy Buddy Coverall). All items should be labeled with the child's name or initials and free from ALL distracting images, designs and all licensed characters and cartoons.

#### *School Bag/Backpack:*

- Toddler and Primary students will be required to purchase a back & forth school bag. Elementary and Adolescent students are required to purchase a backpack.
- School bags and backpacks are to be purchased from Keelyn Kreations. Keelyn Kreations accepts payment on their website or personal checks should be made directly to Keelyn Kreations. Bags and Backpacks will be embroidered with your student's first name.
- Student back & forth bags and backpacks are to come to school and go home daily. Please check the bag daily for messages from your child's guide or the school. School bags are for the following items:
  - a back & forth folder
  - your child's lunchbox – must fit inside the back & forth bag or backpack.

**Keelyn Kreations** can be accessed from the school's website under the Community tab and then at the bottom in Parent Resources ([www.keelynkreations.com](http://www.keelynkreations.com)).

### 8.3.2 Personal Items

- Jewelry is discouraged for safety reasons and the possibility of it getting lost or broken. Small earrings are permitted.
- All students' hair should be neat, clean, and conservatively styled so that it does not interfere with their schoolwork. Longer hair is more easily maintained when braided, in a ponytail or held back with a headband or barrette. Mohawks, dyed hair and other attention drawing hairstyles should be avoided on school days.
- Please label all personal items brought to school (books, coats, sweaters, mittens, winter hats, changes of clothing, etc.).
- Backpacks or overnight bags are permitted only if the child is spending the night elsewhere directly from school. These bags may be left in the office, with the student's name, as there is not room in the classrooms for these items.

Items that may not be brought/worn to School:

- Pants worn below the waist.
- Shoes with built-in roller skates, roller blades or roller skates of any kind, or skateboards.
- Trading cards (Pokémon, Harry Potter, etc.) and other related items, games, and toys
- Music players, hand-held and/or lap-top computers or tablets, hand-held video games, any electronic device or gadgets, or cameras (cameras may be permitted on some field trips if the Guides grant permission).
- Onesies and leotards.
- Money (unless given directly to the office).
- Candy
- Umbrellas

### 8.3.3 Uniform Exchange

Donations are accepted of slightly used uniform clothing, (i.e. logoed shirts/dresses, shorts, pants and skirts). Please bring clean donations to the office or during an all school gathering. The clothing will be offered to all families that can use them, especially new students who need logoed shirts. The exchange will be available at the New Family Orientation and at all school gatherings. **You can also contact the office to arrange for a time to check the collection boxes.** A monetary donation of \$1.00 for each item will go towards Amare's Tuition Assistance Program.

### 8.3.4 Lost and Found

Clothing and items found on school property are sent to the office. If you have lost something, check with the Office Manager. Also, please join the Amare Lost & Found Facebook page as pictures of items are posted here. If items have been left in the Lost & Found for the school year, they will be either donated to the Uniform Exchange or a charity.

## 8.4 School Day Enrichments

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### 8.4.1 Language

Spanish language instruction is incorporated at all levels, Toddler through Elementary. Students will be exposed to Spanish within their classroom setting. Elementary students will receive formal lessons that build upon vocabulary and conversational skills.

## 8.4.2 Art

All Elementary students attend art classes each week. An art show each year will showcase the fabulous work of all students. This thorough curriculum is presented in a three-year cycle and explores visual art from various historic periods and art forms from around the world. Students will receive their portfolio at the end of year.

## 8.4.3 Performing Arts

Students at Amare Montessori experience music in every level. In our Toddler and Primary classrooms, our Guides provide exposure to various musical genres, singing, simple instruments and introductory musical terms and vocabulary. Elementary students will have weekly instruction in Drama. Theatrical performance, set design, costumes, and production will be focused on throughout the year, culminating in a spring performance.

## 8.5 Before and After School Care

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**Before School is offered from 7:30- 7:55 a.m. in the Adolescent Classroom. Parents will park and walk their child to the Before room entrance (second to last door of the South Building).** Before Care will mainly consist of time in the library and plant and animal care. A staff member will receive students at the door, sign them in for the day, and escort them to their classroom.

Before School Care can be full-time with \$50 charges added to your monthly tuition or drop-in with a rate of \$5.00 per day. Drop in charges will be billed on the next month's student billing statement.

After School Care is offered from 3:30 – **4:30** for **Primary, Elementary & Adolescent students ONLY**. Pick up in fair weather is from the playground. On inclement weather days pick up will be from the back door of the North Building. Parents and approved adults may pick up from the Breezeway in either scenario.

After School Care can be full-time from 3:30-4:30 with charges added to your monthly tuition or drop-in with a rate of \$10 per day. Drop in charges will be billed on the next month's student billing statement. Contact the office for more information.

There are a few days throughout the school year that After School Care will be closed due to staff development and training. There is also no After School Care on early dismissal days. Check the School Calendar for these dates.

After School Care closes daily at **4:30 p.m.** At 4:30 After School Care staff are ready to leave campus. If there is an emergency and you anticipate arriving **after 4:30 p.m.**, please call the school at 931-368-3818 as soon as possible. Habitual lateness will result in a call from the Head of School and the possible suspension of After School Care privileges.

Picking up after **4:30** will result in a \$25 Late Pick Up Fee regardless of reason.

## 8.6 Birthday Celebrations

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Montessori schools throughout the nation observe a child's birthday with a "Celebration of Life" ceremony. Please speak with your child's guide to discuss how your classroom celebrates birthdays and to schedule a celebration, as they are unique and vary by program level. When attending your child's birthday celebration, please check-in at the office and a staff member will escort you to the classroom.

**Toddler:** Birthday celebrations are kept purposefully low key in the Toddler environment, so as not to disrupt the rhythm of the day.

**Party Invitations** may be brought to school to be placed in the child's Back & Forth Folder only if ALL children in the class are invited. **We are not authorized to distribute parent e-mail addresses, but you may consult the directory in Transparent Classroom.**

## 8.7 Use of Computers

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Computers are available for Upper Elementary and Adolescent students to use in the classrooms once they have demonstrated proficiency with print materials. The annual Technology Agreement is included in the Appendix A-1 of this Handbook and outlines expectations and guidelines. Elementary and Adolescent students must have a signed agreement each school year on file prior to using school computers. Refusal to abide by the rules will result in loss of computer use privileges.

## A.1 Annual Computer Usage Agreement (this entire agreement has been updated)

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Dear Parents and Guardians,

Throughout the course of this school year, your student will be utilizing various technology tools to enhance their learning experience in the classroom. The following is a technology agreement that covers specific terms of technology use, to be followed at all times. Please read this over with your child, then sign and return the last two pages to your child's Guide and keep one copy for yourself.

This school year, your child will have access to the following technology equipment:

- Chromebook
- Access to Google Drive, Docs, Slides, and other Google Apps
- Access to the Internet
- Access to a library-based database
- Access to interact with other classmates

The use of these technology tools allows teachers to expand instructional methods and enhance instructional delivery, enrich student performance, and increase student engagement. Internet access is available to all Upper Elementary and Adolescent students and staff, offering a wide variety of educational opportunities.

Students will be educated throughout the school year on appropriate online behaviors, including how to properly access materials and how to interact with others accordingly.

As a school community, we invite families to consider the role that media plays in your family. Portions of this agreement encourage students to maintain open communication with parents and to begin identifying limits for their own screen time usage. We encourage families to use this document periodically throughout the year to reinforce expectations in your homes. As a school, we recognize that our young students will make mistakes and we encourage students to be honest and open about these stumbles. We hope that your family will see the missteps our youngsters may make as opportunities, not disappointments.

Thank you,  
Amare Montessori



## Amare Student Technology Agreement Terms

As a student at Amare Montessori, I promise to use technology tools correctly and responsibly. I agree to follow these rules. I, \_\_\_\_\_, will:

... take care

- I will use all technology tools in a responsible and careful manner.

... be honest

- I will use technology tools and the Internet at school for approved schoolwork only.
- I promise to obey the copyright laws and not take credit for someone else's work.

... stay safe

- I will not give out personal information about me or others on the Internet.
- I will only share my passwords with my Guide and parents; I will not use another student's password to access his/her account for any reason.
- I will not download, view, send, or display pictures or messages I would not be comfortable sharing with my parents, grandparents, Head of School, and Guide.
- I will tell an adult if I see or read something that is inappropriate, dangerous, or makes me feel uncomfortable.

... think first

- I will use technology tools to interact with others kindly.
- I will not use technology tools to tease, harass, frighten, or bully anyone; I will be an upstander and report any inappropriate incidents to a trusted adult
- I will make sure that what I share is something I don't mind showing my parents, grandparents, Head of School, and Guide.
- I understand that everything I do online can be traced back to me and can never be fully erased.
- I will also respect the rules for technology use in my home. I will:

... stay balanced

- I will help my family set media time limits that make sense, and then I will follow them.

... communicate openly

- I will talk to my family openly and answer any questions they have honestly.
- I will tell my family if I have made a mistake online or need help.

### Consequences

Should a student be found to have violated these terms or to have utilized technology improperly in any way, consequences may be applied. As with our typical discipline procedures, all infractions will be handled individually, and the application of consequences will be determined by the Guide and/or Head of School. Consequences may include, but are not limited to:

- conversations with the Guide, Head of School, and/or Technology Coordinator
- conferences with parents
- loss of computer privileges
- reimbursement to the school for materials lost/damaged

Students: I have read this agreement and understand all the school rules and consequences related to using computers and the Internet at Amare Montessori. I also understand that my family has expectations for using technology at home. I will do my best to be a good digital citizen. I understand that my work on the computer is not private and that use of the computer and Internet at Amare Montessori is a privilege, not a right.

Student Name (Print) \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian: I have read and discussed this Technology Acceptable Use Agreement with my child. I give permission for my child to use technology tools at Amare Montessori, and I understand that it is a privilege for my child to utilize them. I agree that my child will do their best to follow the rules and will abide by the consequences if any rules are broken. I will do my best to help my child become a good digital citizen.

Parent/Guardian Name (Print) \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

A.2 Acknowledgement of Permission to Administer Medication

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### Permission to Administer Medication

Child's Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Program Level/Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Medication/Reason needed:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

Was medication given at home this morning? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ (Time given: \_\_\_\_\_ ) No \_\_\_\_\_

Does medication need to be in the refrigerator? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Dosage: \_\_\_\_\_

Times to be given: \_\_\_\_\_ am/pm \_\_\_\_\_ am/pm

Name of prescribing doctor: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent signature giving authorization to dispense the medication:

\_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\*PLEASE READ THIS NOTE\*

\*\*THIS AUTHORIZATION IS GOOD FOR ONE WEEK ONLY (MON-FRI)\*\*

\*\*\*NEXT WEEK YOU WILL NEED A NEW AUTHORIZATION FORM\*\*\*



## Annual Family Acknowledgment of Amare Montessori’s Policies & Procedures Updates

Dear Parents & Students:

Please take time to carefully read through the **2021-2022** edition of the Community Guide.

There have been several changes and updates which we want to be assured that you have indeed received this important communication from Amare Montessori.

Thank you for returning this form to your child’s classroom at Parent Orientation or send via email to [office@amaremontessori.org](mailto:office@amaremontessori.org) on or before the first day of school.

All Parents must read and sign:

I have read and understand all the policies and procedures contained in the 2021-2022 Edition of the “Amare Montessori Community Guide,” and our family will abide by them.

I have also reviewed these changes and updates with my child(ren), as appropriate, and I feel they understand the school policies.

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(Parent or Guardian Signature)

Date

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(Student’s Name)

Classroom

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(Student’s Name)

Classroom

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(Student’s Name)

Classroom

## A.4 Toilet Learning – Toddler Students

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The Montessori approach to toilet mastery is unique. We observe and follow the child's interest. Often toilet training is accomplished early, at age 18 to 24 months, not due to pressure from adults, but rather because the child is more open to the experience at that time.

**Toilet mastery is accomplished most easily with preparation that begins far in advance of the time when the child is ready.**

Around the age of 12 months children often become quite interested in the bathroom. They want to explore, play with the water in toilets, and may persistently follow their parents when they go into the bathroom. These are early signs of the child's first interest in toilet learning.

By the age of 15 months, children often show interest in wearing underpants. Many become fascinated with the process of dressing and undressing and may undress themselves when it is least expected. It is not uncommon for children of this age to try on their older siblings' or parents' underpants. What may seem to be simply cute or attention getting behavior is probably another indication that they are becoming curious about using the toilet.

Between 13 and 15 months, many children will want to sit on the toilet or a potty chair in imitation of their parents and siblings, even though they may not yet have learned to control their bladder or bowel. At this point, parents can easily begin to introduce young children to the entire toileting routine: pulling down their pants, sitting on the toilet, correctly wiping their bottoms, pulling their pants up, flushing, and washing their hands. Most children will easily master this routine, just as they learn so many other practical life skills in the Montessori classroom.

Allow children to experiment with flushing the toilet and when you sense that they are curious explain body functions to them. Respond to their questions with clear honest answers appropriate to their level of understanding. "Everybody poops. It's normal. It's our body's way of getting rid of that part of our food that it doesn't need."

It is best that parents be comfortable and prepared for this process. They need to be very patient and reassuring when a child has an accident. Underpants should be stored on a low shelf, in a cubby, or in an easily accessible drawer so the child can get them for him/herself as needed. A hamper should be provided for wet underpants and towels used for the cleanup. The parent can be encouraging and can prepare the environment to support the child when he/she is ready by:

- Using cotton training pants.
- Allowing access to the bathroom.
- Providing an appropriate way for the child to explore both the use of the toilet and to play with water.
- Offering a patient explanation of body functions.
- Providing old towels for cleaning up accidents.
- Providing gentle understanding when accidents do occur.

Clothing should be manageable for the child—loose shirts and socks, elastic waist pants, Velcro shoes or slip-on shoes. The child is soon capable of dressing and undressing with little assistance.

## A.5 Recommended Reading for Parents and Grandparents of Montessori Students

Author	Titles
Montessori, Maria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>From Childhood to Adolescence</i></li> <li>• <i>The Absorbent Mind</i></li> <li>• <i>The Secret of Childhood</i></li> <li>• <i>To Educate the Human Potential</i></li> <li>• <i>The Discovery of the Child</i></li> </ul>
Aron, Elaine	<i>The Highly Sensitive Child</i>
Faber, Adele, Mazlish, Elaine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>How to Talk So Kids Will Listen and Listen So Kids Will Talk</i></li> <li>• <i>Siblings without Rivalry</i></li> </ul>
Galinsky, Ellen	<i>Mind in the Making: The seven essential skills every child needs</i>
Kohn, Alfie	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Unconditional Parenting</i></li> <li>• <i>Beyond Discipline: From Compliance to Community</i></li> <li>• <i>Punished by Rewards: The Trouble with Gold Stars, Incentive Plans, A's, Praise &amp; Bribes</i></li> <li>• <i>The Homework Myth</i></li> <li>• <i>The Schools Children Deserve</i></li> </ul>
Lillard, Angeline	<i>The Science Behind the Genius</i>
Lillard, Paula Polk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Montessori: A Modern Approach</i></li> <li>• <i>Montessori Today: A Comprehensive Approach to Education from Birth to Adulthood</i></li> <li>• <i>Montessori from the Start</i></li> </ul>
Louv, Richard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The Last Child in the Woods</i></li> <li>• <i>Vitamin N</i></li> </ul>
Nelson, Jane	<i>Positive Discipline A-Z, Revised and Expanded 2nd Edition: From Toddlers to Teens, 1001 Solutions to Everyday Parenting Problems</i>
Nelson, Jane, Glenn, H. Stephen	<i>Raising Self-Reliant Children in a Self-Indulgent World: Seven Building Blocks for Developing Capable Young People</i>
Schmidt, Maren	<i>Understanding Montessori</i>
Seldin, Tim	<i>How to Raise an Amazing Child the Montessori Way</i>
Siegel, Daniel J & Bryson, Tina Payne	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The Yes Brain</i></li> <li>• <i>No Drama Discipline</i></li> <li>• <i>The Whole Brain Child</i></li> </ul>

## A.6 Summary of TN Department of Education Rules and Regulations

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### Standards for School-administered Child Care, Chapter 0520-12-01 SUMMARY, provided by the TNDOE

#### Program Organization and Administration, 0520-12-01-.05

- A Child Care Center must have an adequate budget. General liability, automobile liability, and medical payment insurances must be maintained on all properties and vehicles owned or operated by the program.
- Children's files must include a complete application, an official immunization record (exceptions do apply), and health history.
- On-going parent communication is expected. Programs must provide a parent handbook with the policies, procedures, and the TDOE requirements, chapter 0520-12-01. It is expected that parents sign for receipt of the policies and requirements, and this would be kept in the child's file. All parents shall be given a pre-placement visit opportunity.
- Parents must have access to all areas of the center when their child is present.
- The parents must receive an educational program regarding child abuse detection, reporting and prevention.
- A written plan must be in place for the release of each child, this should include individuals who are allowed to pick up the child at the end of the day or any given time by the parent.
- Children must be signed out of the program by the custodial parent. Staff may require to see a person's identification when releasing a child from the program.
- Injuries and incidences will be reported to the parent as soon as possible or at the end of the school day. This shall be documented in the child's file.
- Staff records must be kept on each employee that includes educational background, reference checks, TBI check, in-service training, physical exams and performance reviews.
- If the center provides transportation, the driver should be appropriately licensed, have a drug screening on file, and certificate of CPR/First Aid, there must be liability insurance and the children must have adequate space and supervision. Transportation provided by the center or under center authorization shall comply with state law.
- Programs must have the current Certificate of Approval posted where parents and visitors can easily see it, along with the Department of Human Services childcare complaint number and the Department of Children's Services Child Abuse Hotline number.
- No smoking must also be posted in a conspicuous manner.
- A copy of the state board rules (chapter 0520-12-01) must be maintained in a central space and available to all staff and parents.

#### Program Operation (Supervision), 0520-12-01-.06

- Careful supervision of each group is expected at all times and suited appropriately for each age grouping.
- Adult: child ratios and group sizes must be followed.

### Single-age grouping chart:

<b>AGE</b>	<b>GROUP SIZE</b>	<b>ADULT: CHILD RATIO</b>
Infant (6wks-12 m)	8	1:4
Toddler (11m-23m)	12	1:6
Two (2) years old	14	1:7
Three (3) years old	18	1:9
Four (4) years old	20	1:13

### Multi-age grouping chart:

<b>AGE</b>	<b>GROUP SIZE</b>	<b>ADULT:CHILD RATIO</b>
Infant – 18 months	8	1:4
18 – 36 months	16	1:8
3 – 4 years old only	20	1:10
3 – 6 years old*	24	1:13

\*Not including first grade children

- Group sizes must be maintained in the classroom, but classes may combine while outdoors, in common dining areas, or common napping areas.
- Each group must have their own space. Infants cannot be group with children older than 30 months; a separate area must be provided for infants and toddlers.
- At naptime, ratios may be relaxed for groups (except for infants and toddlers).
- A written playground supervision plan is required.
- Field trips requires adult: child ratios to be doubled. Swimming has a separate ratio chart and the lifeguard is not included in the ratio.

### Staff, 0520-12-01-.07

- All programs must have a director and enough teachers and staff to meet the required ratios for adequate supervision.
- Staff must be physically, mentally and emotionally stable to work with children and have knowledge of early childhood behaviors and development.
- Teachers and assistant teachers must be 21 years of age if hired after June 30, 2017. Any staff member under the age of 21 must be supervised by an adult, except for before and after school programs.
- All new staff must complete 2 hours of orientation before assuming duties and receive annual instruction in early childhood topics that are required in this chapter section.
- The program must maintain written documentation that each employee has read the full set of all rules.
- A copy of the entire rules must be maintained and readily accessible to all employees.
- All staff must have a criminal background check upon hiring and must be cleared before assuming duties. A new fingerprint sample is required every 5 years for all employees.
- A director shall be responsible for the day-to-day operations, shall be physically present in the facility for at least half the hours of operation, be at least 21 years of age, and follow the qualification guidelines listed in this chapter section.
- An assistant director may be designated in charge when the director is absent.

- All directors, assistant directors, teachers, assistant teachers, and other staff working directly with the children must have professional development training. 24 hours is required for the 2017/2018 school year and 30 hours is required for the 2018/2019 school year and beyond. At least 6 hours of this professional development must be in developmentally appropriate literacy practices.

#### **Program, 0520-12-01-.09**

- Educational activity must be developmentally appropriate for the age and ability of the children enrolled. (See TN-ELDS for Birth-48 Months and TN-ELDS for 48 month-Kindergarten)
- Any technology used by the children must be reviewed by staff, approved by parents, and shall not exceed 2 hours per day.
- Children shall not be left in restraining devices (swings, car seats, high chairs, etc.) for periods longer than 30 minutes.
- Children should have opportunities to play together and also alone when they choose to do so.
- Personal safety must be taught each year for children ages 3 years through school age.
- Outdoor play must be provided for all ages that are in care for more than 3 daylight hours, weather permitting (temp ranges 32-95 degrees).
- Behavior management and discipline must be reasonable and age appropriate. Spanking or other corporal punishment is not allowed. Timeout must be based on the age of the child and take place in an appropriate location.
- Children shall not be in care for longer than 12 hours in a day.
- Routines such as snack, meals, and res shall occur at approximately the same time each day.

#### **Health and Safety, 0520-12-01-.10**

- A first aid kit must be on the premises and a comprehensive first aid chart or list must be available.
- A staff member must be present at all times who has a current certification in CPR and first aid training.
- A written plan to protect children during disasters is required. Drills must be practiced and documented each month. At least one drill must be practiced during extended care hours.
- Smoking and the consumption of alcohol are not allowed on the premises of a childcare program.
- Firearms are not allowed on the premises or in a vehicle used to transport children.
- Kitchen knives or other potentially hazardous tools must be kept inaccessible to children.
- Staff's personal belongings must be kept inaccessible to children.
- Emergency contact numbers must be listed and posted near all telephones.
- Conduct regular morning health checks of each child & notify parents when a child is sick or injured.
- Medication may not be given to any child without the written consent of the parent/guardian.
- Safe sleep practices for infants must be followed:
  - Infants placed on their back to sleep, in a crib or pack 'n play with only the sheet. Soft bedding for infants is not allowed.
  - No swaddling or wrapping in a blanket.
  - Infants must be touched by a teacher every 15 minutes to check breathing and body temperature.
  - Infant room teachers must have SIDS and safe sleep training before reporting for duty.
- Hand washing and diapering procedures must be followed to minimize the spread of germs.
- Developmentally appropriate equipment that is in good repair and easily cleaned is required. All manufacturer's safety instructions must be followed.

- Electrical cords and outlets should be inaccessible to the children.
- Children must have a place to store their belongings that minimizes the spread of germs.
- Each child must have their own napping equipment (2" thick mat or cot; sheet or cover for the mat; and a coverlet for their body)
- All staff must report reasonable suspicions of child abuse to DCS hotline number or local law enforcement. Annual training for this is required.

#### **Food, 0520-12-01-.11**

- Children will receive meals based on the number of hours spent in the program.
- Food should not be forced or withheld from children.
- Infants must be held while bottle feeding, and bottles may not be heated in the microwave.
- Special diets and instructions must be provided in writing.
- A menu must be posted each week. Changes to the meal must be documented before the meal occurs.
- Teachers and children must wash hand when handling and eating food.
- All eating surfaces must be washed with soapy water and sanitized before eating and after eating.
- Children must be seated at appropriately sized tables. Adults must closely supervise them while eating.
- Milk must be placed in the refrigerator immediately after it is served. All formulas remaining in bottles after feeding must be discarded.
- Highchair manufacturer's restraints must be used.
- Food must be properly handled and stored to protect from it contamination.
- Milk and perishable food must not sit on the table longer than 15 minutes before being served.

#### **Physical Facilities, 0520-12-01-.12**

- All facilities must pass an annual fire inspection and health inspection.
- A working telephone is required.
- A minimum of 30 square feet of usable indoor play space for each child is required.
- The area must be clean and safe for the children to use.
- A minimum of 50 square feet per child is required outdoors.
- The outdoor area must be fenced.
- Outdoor play equipment must be age appropriate for the group of children.
- Outdoor equipment must be placed to avoid injury and have a proper amount of resilient surfacing material to cushion a fall.
- The outdoor playground must be properly maintained with a written playground maintenance plan. A pre-play inspection is required before children play outdoors.
- Drinking water shall be provided in all occupied rooms.
- Adequate temperature must be maintained in all classrooms.
- Classroom pets must be kept in a clean cage & kept away from food storage or food preparation areas.

#### **Transportation, 0520-12-01-.13**

- All transportation laws must be followed at all times and are defined in State board of education Pupil Transportation Rule 0520-01-05-.01 (2).
- Liability insurance coverage is required on all vehicles.
- 15 passenger vans are strictly prohibited.
- Proper child passenger restraints are to be used when transporting children in passenger vehicles.

- All school bus drivers must be properly licensed, have received a background check through the department, complete an annual physical and mental exam, complete annual school bus driving training, and complete CPR certification.
- Adult monitors in addition to the driver may be needed to properly supervise children while in route.
- Passenger logs must be kept and inspection of vehicles at the end of the route is required to insure no child is left inside.

**Care of Children with Special Needs, 0520-12-01-.14**

- When children with special needs are enrolled, all reasonable and appropriate efforts shall be made to provide those children equal opportunity to participate in the same program activities as their peers.
- Adaptations to the environment shall be directed toward normalizing the lifestyle of the child with a disability by helping him/her become independent and develop self-help skills.
- The program shall inform parents of any specialized services available from the program, and if the program is aware of any specialized services available through third parties, shall additionally inform the parent of such services.
- Governing agency shall develop policies and procedures, in accordance with 0520-01-09-.23, governing personnel authorized to use isolation and restraint, training requirements and incident reporting procedures.

**School-Age Before and After School Programs 0520-12-01-.15**

- All staff shall be 18 years of age.
- Professional development training hours are required: 18 hours for directors and 12 hours for staff.
- Ratio for Kindergarten-12 years old is 1:20 and for 13 years and older is 1:30.
- Ratio and group size requirements when pre-k is enrolled in the program

AGE	Group Size	Adult: Child Ratio
Including 3-year-olds	15	1:10
Including 4-year-olds	20	1:12

COMPLAINT HOTLINE:  
 (LONG DISTANCE) 1-800-462-8261  
 (NASHVILLE AREA) 615-313-4820

## A.7 Recognizing and Reporting Child Abuse

Below are indicators of child abuse and neglect, please note that the signs in each category may pertain to one or more types of abuse or neglect. If you suspect abuse, please call the Tennessee toll free [Child Abuse Hotline at 1-877-237-0004](tel:1-877-237-0004).

Signs of Sex Abuse	Signs for Sexual Exploitation of Minors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Soreness or bruising, pain or itching in genital or anal areas</li> <li>• Sexually transmitted diseases</li> <li>• Nightmares or bedwetting</li> <li>• Unexplained loss of appetite</li> <li>• Becoming isolated or withdrawn</li> <li>• Excessive masturbation or sexual play</li> <li>• Abuses children, animals or pets</li> <li>• Attaches very quickly to strangers or new adults in their environment</li> <li>• Obsession with pornography or viewing sexually explicit photos</li> <li>• Repeated runaway or suicide attempts</li> <li>• Self-destructive behavior/self-injury/cutting, risky or delinquent behavior</li> <li>• Substance abuse</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• History or presence of emotional, sexual, or other physical abuse</li> <li>• Sexually transmitted diseases</li> <li>• Evidence of homelessness; no identification and runaway</li> <li>• Inexplicable appearance of expensive gifts, clothing, or other costly items</li> <li>• Presence of an older boy-/girlfriend</li> <li>• Evidence of drug use</li> <li>• Possesses multiple phones and hotel room cards</li> <li>• Repeated statement of urgent need to leave or get back home</li> </ul> 
Signs of Physical Abuse	Signs of Neglect
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unexplained fractures or injures</li> <li>• Previous injuries in various healing stages</li> <li>• Patterned injuries consistent with objects of abuse (cigarettes, belt, hands)</li> <li>• Burns on extremities, buttocks or genitals</li> <li>• Frightened of or shrink at approach of adult caregiver</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emotional turmoil (anxiety, depressed, suicidal); developmental delays</li> <li>• Self-isolation or undue aggression</li> <li>• Fear of going home; many school absences</li> <li>• Abuses animals or pets</li> </ul>
Signs of Emotional Abuse	Signs of Neglect
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anxiety, depression or humility</li> <li>• Constant belittling, shaming, and humiliation</li> <li>• Developmental delays; failure to thrive</li> </ul> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abandonment or reports that there is no one at home to provide care; lack of supervision</li> <li>• Constant hunger or begs or steals food for money, signs of malnutrition</li> <li>• Abuses alcohol or drugs</li> <li>• Lacks sufficient clothing for the weather or clothes are filthy</li> <li>• Neglected personal hygiene (body odor, matted hair) or untreated medical issues</li> </ul>

## Amare Montessori Personal Safety Policy

The Department of Education requires that children be taught personal safety as a deterrent to child abuse. In addition to using the state provided curriculum, Second Step, Amare integrates those concepts in the everyday respect that is given and taught to each child.

At Amare Montessori, personal safety is taught, modeled, and reinforced daily in all classes.

Children are taught that they have a right to an undisturbed working space. They learn to prepare a space, a mat on the floor or table, on which they place the work they have chosen. They are taught and practice how to walk around a mat on the floor so that they do not violate the space of another student. They are taught what it means to respect another's chosen work. They learn to wait patiently instead of interrupting another child who is working.

Children learn to negotiate when in conflict. They learn to use words instead of body parts to express themselves. They learn to tell how they feel when another person acts in a way that shows disrespect or emotionally or physically hurts them. Adults model these negotiating skills when dealing with the behavioral differences of all children.

Children are taught to use words to protect themselves or their space. They are taught to be assertive with their words so that their message has only one meaning. Phrases that are commonly modeled are: move away, stop, you can't touch me like that, etc.

Adults in the environment ask permission before they look at a child's work, touch or move their work or possessions, or touch their bodies. Examples: May I sit in the chair next to you? May I give you a hug? May I help you move your work to a more private place? If the child declines, the adult accepts that. By extending the child this courtesy, the child learns to extend it to others.

Our experience is that these daily procedures help make strong children who know when and how to protect themselves and feel the right to do so.

# RETURN TO SCHOOL/WORK FLOWCHART

