



Lifetime

Montessori School

Excellence in Education

*Elementary
Parent Handbook*

Lifetime Montessori School

Elementary Parent Handbook

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Welcome

Welcome to Lifetime Montessori School! Lifetime Montessori School provides an educational program of excellence based upon the original Montessori principles of humanity, focusing primarily on the fundamental law of self-construction. At Lifetime Montessori School the child develops his or her own will, self-control, concentration and intellect. Utilizing time-tested Montessori principles engenders self-esteem, independence and a sense of responsibility. We are honored that you have chosen our school to nurture, support and love your child. Thank you.

Students of Lifetime Montessori School

Lifetime Montessori School currently accepts children ages 18 months to 12. Children begin their education in the Primary environment at the age of about 3 and continue in the same environment through Kindergarten. When the child is ready, around the age of 6, they move on to our Elementary environment. We offer a 5 day program for primary and elementary students. We offer a half day program for children under the age of 4.

The Second Plane of Development

It is important for all of our families to realize that the Elementary Program of Lifetime Montessori School is a 6 year program. The optimum developmental progress will come to those children that complete all 6 years. The ages between 6 and 12 were called the "Second Plane of Development by Dr. Montessori, a time when children are physically tough and intellectually strong. Our education, experience and knowledge aid us in preparing and managing the classroom for your child to thrive via this very special philosophy of the Montessori method, which is that all children need to experience 2 three-year cycles in our carefully prepared and equipped elementary environment.

The first three years in the elementary are the most material rich period a child will experience in his or her Montessori education. Through use of these materials elementary children quickly learn both the basics and quite advanced aspects of math, language, biology, geometry, geography, history, art and music. They learn to set personal goals, carry out work independently and evaluate their own progress.

In the second three years children begin to explore the more abstract aspects of these same subjects, delving more deeply into specialization. The elementary years at Lifetime Montessori School leave your child with a strongly developed intellect, a knowledge of how to learn and the self-confidence to try anything they may choose in the future – excellent skills to carry them into the teen years and the rest of their lives.

Classroom Guidelines

The Montessori environment is a prepared environment designed to aid your child in their search for independence, concentration and happiness. Children need an interactive, hands-on, educational environment to become self-motivated, successful learners. In the elementary classroom children are free to explore with their developing imagination and intellect in order to fully understand the universe and each element's place and purpose in it. Interaction with peers in a real life community is necessary. Children require ample time and space to explore their passions and perfect their abilities. The Montessori materials provide children with a variety of interactive experiences including learning activities of history, geography, biology, language, math, geometry, art and music. Dr. Montessori found that children need more than just academics; they need to be allowed to explore their world and society.

Our classroom is a community. The children care for the environment they learn in, along with the people therein. Children will have a job within their community. Our school and classmates have only one rule and that is the rule of respect. Respect fulfills so many needs within an environment. When a child follows the rule of respect, he will never say or do anything to hurt another child. With respect, the child will care for everything within the environment. Most importantly, with respect, the child will care for his own self. Respect will carry a child confidently

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and happily through the rest of his or her life. We ask that you help in fostering this respect. Respect comes in many forms. We respect people by listening to their words and looking them in the eye when we speak with them. We respect people by giving them common courtesies like saying "Excuse me", "Please", "Thank you" and "You're welcome." We respect the environment by not throwing trash on the floor, by not harming animals, by caring for the books we read, etc. These small considerations show respect and model respect for our children. This leads to a child being appreciated and cared for. Once a child feels respect, they will in turn give that respect to their immediate environment, including the animals and people within it.

Admissions Policy

It is the policy of Lifetime Montessori School to admit students without regard to race, culture, color, creed, national and ethnic origin, sex, religion or disability. When the parent or legal guardian of a child identifies that a child has special needs, the Head Teacher and the parent or legal guardian will meet to review the child's care requirements. Lifetime Montessori School does not discriminate on the basis of special needs. The program accepts children with special needs so long as a safe, supportive environment can be provided for the child. In staff hiring and student enrollment we encourage diversity.

Parents will be given a 30-day notification of any tuition changes. We ask the same of you. If you need to leave LMS for any reason, please give the school 30 days' written notice so that we may fill the spot. If you need to modify your daily or EDP schedule, please give us at least two weeks' notice to be sure we have the space to make those changes.

Consistent with our philosophy of providing the best and most relevant service, all admissions are on a trial basis. We reserve the right to observe and evaluate each child to see where he/she would best fit within our environment and without.

Classroom Procedures

The children of the elementary class learn through special lessons or presentations given to small groups by the teacher. There is a process that the child should follow in the classroom. Please go over these procedures before the first day of school.

1. You may only take work from a shelf that you have had a lesson on after having recorded in your work journal the name of the work you plan on doing and what time you are starting that work.
2. Please take your work to a table or mat and sit down.
3. You may practice work that you have had a lesson on, as often as you like, any day that you are in school.
4. You must budget your time carefully so as to get the most out of every day. You must include lessons from the Public School Curriculum in your budget so as to complete it in a timely manner. The teacher will help with this if necessary.
5. Please put the material back in order and where it belongs on the shelf. Record in your work journal how much work you did with the material and what time you finished.
6. Please remember to push in your chair or roll up your mat.
7. When you need to speak to the teacher or another child who may be busy, please rest your hand on that person's arm or shoulder and wait patiently for them to call upon you.

Thank you for helping your child in adjusting to this new environment with these rules. We appreciate any consistency that can be offered at home.

Arrival and Departure

School attendance is required 5 days a week, except for holidays. Please see the school calendar for details. Class time in the elementary program starts promptly at 8:30. Please drop your child off between 8:15 and 8:30. School ends promptly at 2:45. Please pick your child up between 2:45 and 3:00.

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We ask that parents drop their child off in our drop-off line every morning. Parents pull to the front of the line, wait in their cars, and our teachers help the children out of their car and into the building where they can walk on their own to their classroom.

When it is time to pick up your child, please meet him/her in the classroom. We will not allow your child to go home with anyone who is not on your emergency card, so please do not send anyone to get your child who is not on this list. Anyone on your emergency list picking up your child must have their ID ready to show the teacher every time. Please note that we will charge a late fee for late pick-ups. Our rate is \$15 for the first five minutes and \$1 per minute thereafter. Please be prepared to pay this fee upon picking up your child.

Extended Day Program

Lifetime Montessori School offers an Extended Day Program (EDP) before and after school to all students. Parents may drop their child off at school at 7:30 in the morning and they may also use our EDP services after school until 6:00 pm. The prepaid EDP rate is \$6 per hour. Please note that we will charge a late fee for late pick-ups. Our rate is \$15 for the first 5 minutes and \$1 per minute thereafter. Please be prepared to pay this fee upon picking up your child. Please fill out an EDP application/schedule to let us know your EDP needs each month. We charge \$8 per hour (and any part thereof) for drop-in EDP. Please call the front office 24 hours in advance to check for availability for drop-in EDP.

Student Attendance/Ill Health Policy

We would like to stress the importance of your consistent and prompt arrival at school every day that your child is well. If you are having a hard time getting your child out the door in the mornings, please see the Director as she has many helpful ideas. It is also very important that your child comes to school every day that they are well so that they will feel more comfortable as they are familiar and happy within their environment.

STATE LAWS REQUIRE – and in the interest of each child’s health and as a courtesy to the other children – that you **KEEP YOUR CHILD HOME** if you notice any sign of illness such as temperature, sore throat, headache, excessively runny nose, cough, diarrhea, vomiting, etc. **within 24 hours of class time.** If your child needs to stay in from outdoor activities, it is best to keep them home. It is very difficult to keep one child inside while the others are all outside. We will ask any child that we see to be sick, unhealthy or contagious to be picked up and brought home immediately. We understand how hard it may be to take off work, but please consider how unhappy your child feels at school when they are sick and uncomfortable. If a child spends one extra day resting during an illness, it is probable that they will heal more quickly. Please keep your child home during signs of illness. Please let us know if your child has any contagious disease, such as chicken pox, whooping cough or measles, so other parents can take necessary actions. We are required by law to keep records of contagious diseases. Thank you.

Dress for Success

We ask that you send your child to school dressed in comfortable, non-restrictive clothing. In the elementary, we work hard and we play hard. We garden, paint, build, construct rivers – we get **dirty**. So please help your child choose clothes that wash well. We also ask that you send your child with appropriate shoes. Your child may not come to school in shoes without a tread like Crocs (too slippery). The shoes must be comfortable and preferably sneakers. In contemplating shoes for your child, please buy something they can manage on their own. We prefer elementary children to wear tie shoes. If they do not yet know how to tie, it is time they learned.

Please bring a spare change of clothes (socks, underwear, pants/shorts and top). Your child will let you know when replacement items are needed. Please **label all clothes** brought to school, especially jacket as those are often misplaced. We urgently ask you: **Please do not allow your child to wear clothes depicting violent acts or cartoon characters.** It is very important that we keep Lifetime Montessori School a neutral, friendly place and we do not condone violent play of any kind. Thank you.

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Medication and Medical Emergencies

If your child must use medication during school hours you may bring it to the office at the appointed time and administer it yourself. We do not have a nurse and are not allowed to give medication to the children. Exceptions may be made under certain circumstances, please see the Director for more information if needed. Please do not send medicine in lunch boxes, as other children will have access to it. Please refrain from sending cough drops. Thank you.

If your child requires and Epi-Pen for an allergy, please be sure your Pediatrician indicates as such on the Physicians report and bring two (2) Epi-Pens to the front office before the first day of school. We will keep one in the classroom's first aid kit and one in the EDP room's first aid kit. Please bring all relevant paperwork from your doctor to be included.

If your child has a medical or dental emergency we will first call the necessary emergency services and then contact the parents. If a child needs to go to the hospital then a staff member will accompany them if a parent is not available and stay until the parent has arrived. It is very important to completely fill out your emergency information paperwork so that the staff can call anyone needed in an emergency.

Going Out

From time to time in the elementary class, small groups of children will be leaving the school grounds, "Going Out," in order to begin or continue an area of study or special interest or to fulfill a task for which they are responsible (animal care, for example.). Places they would go might include the Public Library, around the neighborhood to gather botany specimens, to a local shop to purchase something for the class, or to a local park for some fun and recreation. These trips are arranged ahead of time, planned for carefully, the parents are informed the day before they are to take place and the office is aware of which children are going and when they return. These trips are strictly adult supervised either by the teacher or a parent volunteer.

For your child to participate, a permission slip needs to be signed and returned to the classroom. This will go home with the child on the first day of school. This will tell the teacher that you think your child is ready for this kind of activity. Please be aware that Going Out is not for all children, only those who show by their behavior and attention to responsibilities that they can handle this type of activity. This is a privilege to be earned and some will come to be ready for it sooner than others.

Nutrition/Lunch

As you can imagine, we stress healthy snacks and lunches for you and your children. The elementary children bring their lunches and snacks to school. We urge you to allow your child to plan their own food for the day and to prepare it himself. Try to introduce your child to many new fruits and vegetables so they may discover what they enjoy.

Breakfast is a very important meal in the day and we ask that your child get some form of protein during breakfast as they are expending a lot of energy during our 4-hour work period. Fruit is also important as it is a complex carbohydrate and will last longer than the quick fix of pop tarts or other like items. We suggest eggs, whole grain breads or muffins, fruits, hot cereals and yogurt as a good way to start the day. These foods have "staying power" and your child will be happy to work all morning. Proper food will feed the brain, allowing it to function at a higher level!

We ask the same for your child's snack (an extra item in the lunchbox) and lunch. There are still another 2 hours of school after lunch and your child will need lots of energy. Please provide **Protein:** meat, fish, chicken, boiled egg, yogurt, cheese, cottage cheese, almond butter, etc., **Vegetables:** carrot, tomato, celery, cucumber, jicama, peas, corn, etc., **Fruits:** banana, apple, orange, grapes, melon, peaches, plums, etc., **Grains:** please provide whole grain foods and seeds (no loose nuts). It is our experience that if the child prepares his/her own lunch and snack, it is very unusual for him/her to claim that they do not like what has been prepared. However, in the rare instance that this might happen, we have the child wrap the food back up and bring it home so the parents can be aware of what the child has eaten during the day. We request that you do not bring

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desserts to school. The Montessori method has a strong base in real-life activities and materials. For this reason we ask that you supply "real" and healthy items for your child to put in his/her lunch, not heavily processed and packaged foods like lunchables and go-gurts. Thank you.

Items from Home

We know that some children feel the need to bring things from home to school, whether for comfort reasons or just to share with friends. We do understand this need but have seen the unhappy consequences of allowing this. Please discourage children from bringing anything to school from home. If something does come, we will hold it for the child outside of the classroom. We have, in the elementary, an "interest table" where children may display education items such as books, seashells, plants, rocks, and things they have made by hand (no Legos, please). The items are accompanied by the child's nametag so that interested people can ask about them. Please do not send any jewelry, purses, money, sunglasses or makeup to school. You would be surprised at how often this is an issue. Even Chap Stick is discouraged as children share it (and their germs). We take your child's work very seriously and ask that nothing be done to distract from it. Thank you.

Parent Communication and Participation

Unfortunately, the teachers are not available to discuss your child's day in detail at arrival or dismissal time as that time is needed to say hello and goodbye to the children. If you need to speak with your teacher you may call the office to leave a message for the teacher to call you back during their break or after school, you may send a note into school with your child asking the teacher to call you, or you may call the teacher after school as the teachers stay until 3:30 each day. We conduct Parent-Teacher conferences a few times each school year in order to keep you updated on your child's progress. These conferences are required for all parents at Lifetime Montessori School and are crucial to your child's success. Each teacher has also made their email address available for parents to contact them. Open and ongoing communication with all our families is of the utmost importance to us. We will be starting a new web-based program called Montessori Compass. This is a new way for the teachers to keep track of lessons they give to the children. The program allows for the parents to log in and see the items that their child is working on. It is also a great platform for parents and teachers to contact each other. As this is a new program there will be "kinks" to iron out and as always, we welcome your feedback and help when it comes to parent/teacher communication. Parent participation takes many forms: observing your child in the classroom setting, sharing on of your talents or skills with the class, assisting with material preparation, volunteering as a Going Out parent or fundraising activities.

Grievance Policy

If a parent is having a problem with any aspect of the classroom, then we ask that they first meet with their child's teacher to discuss the issue. If the issue cannot be resolved then a meeting should be set up with the parent, teacher and Director. If the parent is still not satisfied with the Director's end decision, then the parent should notify the Board of Directors in writing. Parents should follow the same procedure if unsatisfied with a policy or program at Lifetime Montessori School.

Discipline Policy

Each teacher finds their own voice when it comes to disciplining the children. We do not believe in punishments or "time outs" for a child having problems working, concentrating, listening, etc. Each teacher will find a way to help the child through any work related problems they may be having. The Director is always available to consult or brainstorm new ideas for working with children. There are only certain times when a teacher may have to rely on removing a child from the environment and that would be when a child's behavior is disruptive, cruel or unsafe to the child or others. These behaviors cannot and will not be tolerated by the staff of Lifetime Montessori School. If we have a child continuing to be unsafe after we have explained our concerns to them, then they will be removed from the classroom. We cannot endanger other children. We stand by our non-

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negotiable discipline on aggressive behavior. Every time a child is physically aggressive to another person they will be removed from the immediate environment. If their aggression is severe (example: biting) your child must go home immediately. We feel this is so important for the safety of all the children in each environment. We also hold a firm stance on hitting: most children will be sent home for hitting another person, but we do understand that every situation is different and this option may be discussed between a Teacher and the Director before a decision is made. There will be no corporal punishment or violation of children's rights at Lifetime Montessori School.

Homework

We feel that school work is work that occurs only at school and homework is work done in the home; therefore, in a Montessori environment, the children are not given school work to take home. Except for the occasional special project, elementary children will not be bringing assignments home. We do encourage appropriate work to be done in the home and your child will receive a rather extensive list on the first day of school. Please review this list with your child and choose a few activities from it to augment their work at school. We also do not regularly send home paperwork from the classroom. Since most of the work produced in the elementary classroom is group or collaborative work, it would be hard to decide which home to send it to. Please understand that the work your child is doing is solely for themselves, not for others to see. **We encourage the child to be proud of their work, not to look for approval from others.** When the child loves their work, then they will want to work for themselves and will therefore be much better at what they accomplish. Parents are invited to visit the classroom at any time to observe and see how their child is getting along at school. There will be work available for viewing.

Birthdays/Holidays/Celebrations

On each child's birthday (or a date of your choice if their birthday is not during the school term), your child may bring a special educational gift for the classroom (like a special book). Please ask your child to wrap their gift and present it to the class on their special day. The child will then be allowed to open it and share it with all of their classmates.

Please do not send party invitations or gifts to distribute as this causes hurt feelings if each child is not included in your child's "out of school" birthday celebration. We recommend using Evite and will provide email addresses as needed.

On the day selected for your child's celebration, all his or her classmates are invited to create a very special book to honor your child. Each child contributes a page, a very special cover is created, and the book is then presented to your child as a keepsake. Songs are sung, bubbles are blown. Each child feels very celebrated by the end of the special day. If you would like to bring a snack to share, please make sure it is healthy and it does not include chocolate, nuts or frosting. Please see the teacher for more information and please make all celebration arrangements in advance with the head teacher.

There are many celebrations and holidays in each nationality. These special days make life interesting and full of heritage. The children have the opportunity to learn about the culture of other children. Each family is invited to share any special holiday they celebrate with the class. We ask that you come to give a short presentation about what the name of your holiday/celebration is and how the children of your nationality celebrate it. You may come dressed in the clothing of your country and bring traditional food to further impress upon the child the beautiful differences and similarities of our world. We ask that the presentation be brief, simple and non-denominational. Please make arrangements in advance with your teacher. Look in the class newsletter for the days that will be celebrated and intersperse your own special ones into the class calendar.

Religion

Lifetime Montessori School has no affiliation with any religious orientation or organizations.

Smoking/Drugs/Alcohol

SMOKING, DRUGS OR ALCOHOL ARE NOT PERMITTED ON SCHOOL PROPERTY AT ANY TIME.

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Soliciting

There shall be NO soliciting on the premises except by salespersons previously cleared by the Directors or Board of Trustees. The school roster is for personal use only and may not be used for solicitation unless approved by the Administration.

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Parent Handbook Agreement

*Please sign and return this sheet to the LMS office within two weeks of receiving your handbook.
If you have any questions, you may address them with the office at that time.*

I, _____, have read and understand the information outlined in the Lifetime
Parent/Guardian

Montessori School Parent Handbook. By signing below, I agree to follow the policies and procedures described in the Handbook.

Signature _____ Date: _____
Parent/Guardian

Signature _____ Date: _____
Parent/Guardian