



The Franklin Montessori School

Parent Handbook

4473 Connecticut Avenue, Washington, DC 20008
www.franklinmontessori.com



AMERICAN MONTESSORI SOCIETY®
education that transforms lives

Welcome to The Franklin Montessori School!

We are thrilled to extend a warm welcome to you and your family as part of the Franklin Montessori School community. It is an honor and a privilege to accompany you on this exciting journey of exploration, growth, and discovery alongside your child.

At Franklin Montessori School, we are committed to providing a nurturing and stimulating environment that embraces the core principles of Montessori education. Our aim is to foster independence, curiosity, and a love for learning in every child, ensuring they develop not just academically, but holistically—emotionally, socially, and physically.

This handbook is designed to serve as your guide through the Montessori experience at our school. Inside, you will find important information about our philosophy, curriculum, policies, and the vibrant community life that makes Franklin Montessori a special place for children to learn and grow. We believe that a strong partnership between home and school is vital for the success and happiness of our students, and we encourage open and ongoing communication with our parent community.

As you embark on this Montessori journey with your child, we want you to know that our dedicated team of educators and staff is here to support you every step of the way. Together, we will create a foundation for lifelong learning, respect for others, and a deep sense of wonder about the world.

Thank you for choosing Franklin Montessori School. We look forward to sharing many wonderful moments and milestones with your family in the years to come.

Warmest regards,
The Franklin Team

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Historical Profile

In September of 2002 the Franklin Montessori School opened its doors with a vibrant staff team and fourteen committed families with a mission to provide a high-fidelity Montessori early learning environment. Since those exciting early days, Franklin has grown its program with an expansion to its indoor and outdoor playgrounds, added a dedicated art studio for an immersive art experience, founded a naturalist program that has inspired documentary filmmakers, and increased its square footage by more than 50%. The Franklin Montessori School became a fully accredited Montessori school in 2016 by the American Montessori Society. Today, Franklin Montessori School offers programs for infants, toddlers, and early childhood education. Despite the growth and changes, the school's core mission, the passion of its educators, the strength of its community, and its unwavering dedication to the welfare of the children remain steadfast.

Mission Statement

The Franklin Montessori School is dedicated to nurturing each child's natural love of learning within an inclusive and diverse community that fosters independence, confidence, and joy.

Vision Statement

Rooted in the core principles of the Montessori method, we aim to expand our reach by building a vibrant community of Montessori families. Our goals include increasing student enrollment with a focus on diversity, launching innovative programs, and enhancing our team of passionate educators. In the long term, these efforts will strengthen our foundation for providing a balanced, effective education that fosters a lifelong love of learning. We are committed to nurturing children as empathetic and creative global citizens, ready to address the challenges of our time.

The Montessori Approach

Dr. Maria Montessori (1870-1952) was an Italian physician who designed a method of education by observing young children and how they learn. Her extensive early childhood research, which is supported by modern research, revealed that children experience sensitive periods for learning during their early years. They easily learn particular skills during the corresponding sensitive periods, more so than at any other time in the child's life. Dr. Montessori suggested to parents and teachers (through her books) the conditions for encouraging the natural development of the whole child from birth through maturity. Out of this research-based foundation, the Montessori "Method of Education" emerged.

As children form and develop, they take what is needed from the environment for self-construction; the child clearly shows an inner need to learn; to know themselves and their world. They want to develop their intelligence and to become

independent and responsible. As our staff prepares and provides these specialized environments, children can experience the fulfillment of their potential.

If you have never been to a Montessori classroom you have missed a great treat. The Montessori classroom is an intricate, fascinating place for children to grow and explore. The Montessori ideal is that a child's own awakened love of discovery and learning will fuel their own education. From bright, multicolored counting beads to various puzzle sets that are in fact algebraic theorems, to specific wood and fabric textures that engage greater sensory development, the Montessori method stimulates childhood learning with countless, practical, and educational tools that children love.

In the Montessori classroom children are free to choose their own work.

Perhaps the biggest difference of a Montessori education from a traditional preschool is that the Montessori curriculum emphasizes the development of the child as an independent person. The child moves freely around the room, making their choices, and independently takes that work off the shelf. They complete the work and replace it in the same place (often again and again, as children choose certain work over and over to gain mastery of it). Instead of waiting for an adult to choose for them, the child learns to think, "What do I want to do?" and takes the initiative on this repeatedly, day after day.

Because an adult is not standing over the student at every moment, praising or disciplining, a child becomes focused on his own work and behavior. A Montessori child is able to develop their own sense of concentration as well as a greater sense of confidence, character, and self-esteem. So, if the child drops or breaks something, the teacher is there to make sure the child is unharmed, and will clean up their own mess, again affirming to the child that they are capable of handling their own errors.

A Curriculum That Grows with Your Child

Montessori is focused on teaching for understanding. Memorization and the rote learning of facts is not our goal. Our students benefit by building upon the sensorial and concrete learning that occurs at Franklin. In their third year at the school, this foundation allows the more complex lessons to come together and increase their academic skills. Children form a concrete mental picture of abstract concepts such as how much is a thousand, how many hundreds make up a thousand and what is really going on when we borrow numbers in a mathematical operation. This opportunity gives the child the foundation for a lifetime of understanding. The third year of the Montessori curriculum allows the child the opportunity to not only be leaders and role models in their class, but it is a time when many of their earlier lessons come together and become a permanent part of the young child's understanding.

Six Characteristics of a Highly Effective Montessori Program

Difference #1: Specialized Montessori Materials

Dr. Montessori began her career as an educator of young children by working with a group of fifty children, three to five years old. She had a few developmental materials to help with sensory perceptions, which she had previously developed to help learning-impaired children. She discovered that once these materials were introduced, the children worked spontaneously and repeatedly with them in total concentration. Being a scientist, Dr. Montessori observed and responded to this phenomenon by perfecting the materials little by little, through the experimental process of trial and error, finally creating highly specialized materials that aided in skill development of children. After nearly a century, the Montessori materials continue to be used by children all over the world in response to their inner drives to learn.

Difference #2: A Highly “Prepared Environment” for children

As children form and develop, they take from the environment what is needed for self-construction; the child shows clearly an inner need to learn, to know themselves and their world. They strive to develop their intelligence and to become independent and responsible. When adults prepare and provide these specialized environments, children can experience the fulfillment of their potential.

Each Montessori classroom is a prepared environment designed to support the child's need for learning and growth. It is a “child's house” where there are many carefully designed materials to meet the child's natural interests. The atmosphere is positive, supportive and non-competitive. The classroom has six distinct areas to encourage a child's natural budding interest with the main objectives of providing both creative and stimulating developmental experiences for the young child.

Difference #3: Multi-age Groups of Children

The Montessori classroom offers the child the opportunity to choose individual tasks from a wide variety of graded materials. Children can grow as their interests lead them from one level of skill to another. Having children of different age groups together provides models for younger children to imitate and gives the older ones an opportunity to reinforce their knowledge by helping the younger ones.

Difference #4: Specially Trained Teachers

Montessori teachers are specially trained in child development and the Montessori approach. The teacher's task is to observe children “at work”, keeping a record of the child's work with the materials. Noting periods of readiness, the teacher may divert a child who chooses materials which are beyond his or her abilities while at other times the teacher might encourage a child to try a new, more difficult task. Whenever a child makes an error, the

teacher allows the child to discover their own mistake through further manipulation of the self-correcting material. The Montessori teacher tries to be sensitive to the needs of the child and values the process over the product. By letting children work toward their own goals, teachers are able to encourage children's natural enthusiasm for learning.

Difference #5: An Integrated Approach

In addition to the Montessori materials and specific areas of the classroom, quality Montessori programs includes a full complement of traditional aspects of an early childhood curriculum. Children have daily opportunities to use their large motor skills during outdoor play, and enjoy creative dramatics, art, music, food exploration and special classes that offer children many options for self-expression. Such integration provides children the ability to make a smooth transition to other educational settings.

Difference #6: A Life- Long Approach to Learning

Dr. Montessori once wrote, "It is true, we cannot make a genius; we can only give each individual the chance to fulfill his or her potential possibilities to become an independent, secure, and balanced human being." Montessori classrooms provide children with a solid foundation on which to build later learning experiences. Children who are encouraged to be creative, independent and responsible during early childhood grow into competent, happy adults

Programs at Franklin

- Infant Program (12 weeks to 24-months)
 - Toddler Program (18-months to 36 months)
 - Early Childhood Program (30-months to 6 years)
- Student eligibility depends on student readiness and all children beginning in the Early Childhood program must be fully potty trained.

Infant Program

Each infant classroom is comprised of up to 9 infants, ranging in age from 12 weeks to 24-months old, with a ratio of 1:3 in each classroom. The infant program is a 12-month program, Monday through Friday from 8:00am-6:00 pm.

Our infant program is Montessori based and incorporates the RIE philosophy developed by Magna Gerber and Dr. Emmi Pikler. Quality infant caregiving is based on developing a respectful and responsive relationship between the infant and caregiver. Caregivers are trained to meet the needs of infants through sensitive, careful observation. When infant needs are met, they become confident and satisfied.

As our caregivers engage with each infant, deep attachments form. Consistent caregiving routines develop predictable, language rich experiences that promote individualized, joyful dialogue between the caregiver and the infants in their care. These anticipated experiences stimulate cognition and understanding, promote cooperation and language development, and foster the social and emotional aptitude of the infant.

Infants are individuals who are initiators, explorers, and self-learners. As much as possible, the infant is involved in all care activities as an active participant, not merely a passive recipient. Within a carefully prepared environment, time is given for uninterrupted exploration and interaction with other infants. In sum, our infant room is a safe, joyful environment in which discovery is bountiful, peaceful, and productive. (For more information, see *Being with Infants and Toddlers: A Curriculum that Works with Caregivers*, by Beverly Kovach and *Your Self-Confident Baby* by Magda Gerber.)

Toddler Program

Each Toddler classroom is comprised of up to 12 students ranging between 18-months and 36-months.

The Montessori classroom is a child's world geared to the size, space and interest of the toddler. It is designed to put the child at ease by giving them freedom in an environment prepared with attractive and stimulating materials. The classroom enhances each child's innate sense of independence, order, respect, and kindness.

In Practical Life, the toddlers will experience real life situations and activities promoting care of self and care of the environment. These activities include dressing, grooming, toilet learning, and grace and courtesy.

Children perfect their gross motor skills by moving freely around the classroom, balancing on a line, and climbing and exploring the woods adjacent to the school in our nature program.

The toddlers gather for lunch as a group. Table manners, conversation and dishwashing are introduced and perfected in this daily activity. The group lunch fosters community and aids in a smooth transition to the Early Childhood program.

Montessori Primary Program

The Montessori curriculum is designed to accommodate various stages of development in children, which occur in roughly three-year cycles. During the time from 30-months to six years of age, Children reach a stage in which repetition and manipulation of the environment is critical to the development of concentration, coordination, independence, and a sense of order. They learn skills for everyday living: sorting, grading, classifying - all of which lead to the development of writing, reading and a mathematical mind.

Under the direction of a credentialed Montessori teacher, learning is individualized and self-paced. Our beautiful, light-filled Montessori classrooms are a comfortable and stimulating environment for 20 to 30 children ages 30 months to 6 years. Each Early Childhood classroom has a lead Montessori-trained teacher along with 1 or 2 assistant teachers.

Each classroom activity is executed from beginning to end with careful attention to the accuracy of sequence and process. The classroom contains six interrelated sets of materials. The following information gives a brief description of the objectives of each area. A more detailed description of the use and purpose of the classroom materials are available from the office and your child's classroom teacher.

Practical Life

The child develops an independent approach to personal care and care of their surroundings, while increasing small motor coordination through the use of various exercises. Buttons, brushes, pitchers, water, and other objects that the child might recognize from home help the child feel comfortable and successful. The child also learns to pay attention to detail as they follow a regular sequence of actions. This emphasis on task completion and continuity encourages good working habits.

Language

Language is introduced through tactile and auditory experiences, as well as by the naming of everything in the child's environment. For example, sandpaper letters are used to introduce individual sounds. Once the child has mastered these sounds, they increase their language skills by making words with the moveable alphabet.

Sensorial

Young children meet the world around them through the constant use of their senses. This is an ideal time to provide experiences that will sharpen the child's senses and enable them to understand their many sensorial impressions. Each of the sensorial materials defines one quality such as color, weight, size or sound.

Mathematics

If a child has access to concrete mathematical equipment, they can easily assimilate arithmetic concepts. Sensorial mathematical materials help the child through manipulation and repetition. The program provides concrete tools with which the child can approach the exploration of abstract number concepts.

Social Studies

The objective of the social studies program is to increase the child's awareness of his own environment, both universal and local, while providing a foundation from which to understand the experiences of people in other places. Continent boxes, full of objects brought back from our parents' frequent trips abroad, provide the children with a tangible connection to people and places around the world.

Science

The objective of the science program is to increase the children's awareness of the world around them. It is built upon their natural curiosity and helps them discover the workings of the physical world. Science materials are often woven throughout the many areas of the classroom as the children explore specific subjects like astronomy, geology, and the human body.

Montessori Afternoons

Children 4 years old and older can join the Afternoon Montessori work time for a secondary work cycle. Montessori Afternoons are from 1:00 to 3:00 PM. This program provides an additional opportunity for our students to engage with more advanced Montessori materials, while younger kids have their afternoon nap. During this period, the students embark on an in-depth journey through social studies, with a particular emphasis on exploring a country including the geography, culture, people, and customs. Additionally, they investigate a variety of subjects in science, including botany and zoology. This group of students will also take learning beyond the walls with our nature program and field trips that are related to their current unit of study.

Enrichment Programs

Art

Franklin's art program provides a unique and enriching experience for our Toddler and Early Childhood Montessori students. Our dedicated studio space provides endless opportunities for students to explore a wide range of materials and techniques not typically introduced in an early childhood environment.

Using the child-centered Montessori philosophy and Picasso's tenet that "All children are artists" as the guideposts of the program, our art guides (artists themselves) work with the students on intentionally guided prompts and projects, process-oriented explorations and open-ended compositions led by the interests of the child.

The program's goal is to foster the natural and distinctive creative process of each young artist while operating as an organic extension of, and complement to, the Montessori classroom. The flexible studio space allows for the creation of immersive environments installed/created by the art guides, as well as for large scale collaborations with students in a variety of media. The individual and collaborative creations of each class are showcased in our famous "Franklin Art Night" art shows.

"Beyond the Walls" (Nature Program)

At Franklin, we firmly believe in the significance of nature within our educational framework. Engaging with nature not only nurtures their curiosity but also fosters a deep respect for the environment. Each child is given the chance to spend meaningful time in Rock Creek Park, where they become intimately acquainted with the local flora, fauna, birds, and the creek. By harnessing the "art of questioning", we motivate children to delve into the wonders of the natural world. This hands-on experience is crucial for their development, as it enhances their observational skills, supports their mental and physical well-being, and cultivates a sense of responsibility towards preserving natural habitats.

Program Calendar Options

At The Franklin Montessori School, we offer flexible scheduling options tailored to meet the diverse needs of our families. There are three calendar options available: 10-Month calendar, 11-Month calendar and 12-Month calendar. The Infant Program is a 12-month program. Our Toddler (18- months to 36 months) and Early Childhood Programs (30-months to 6 years) are available in both Full-Time and Part-Time options, ensuring a comprehensive and adaptable approach to early education. Our goal is to provide a nurturing and engaging environment that accommodates the unique requirements of each family, fostering the growth and development of our students in a supportive community.

Full-Time Programs includes: 5-days/week.

- 12-month, all-inclusive option
 - Infant Program: 8:00am - 6:00pm
 - Toddler Program: 7:30am - 6:00pm
 - Early Childhood: 7:30am - 6:00pm
- 10-Month and 11-month options:
 - Half Day Program: 8:45am - 12:30pm
 - School Day Program: 8:45am - 12:30pm
 - Extended Day options:
 - Before Care available from 7:30am to 8:45am
 - After Care from 3:30pm to 6:00pm.

Part Time Program Includes: 3 days/week.

For those seeking a part-time option, we also offer 10-month and 11-month options with customizable schedules that include:

- Half-day Program - 8:45am to 12:30pm
- School Day Program - 8:45am to 3:30pm
- Extended Day options:
 - Before Care available from 7:30am to 8:45am
 - After Care from 3:30pm to 6:00pm.

Part-time schedules (days) are established at the time of enrollment and are fixed throughout the school year.

Extended Day Options

- Before Care: 7:30am - 8:45am

Before Care spend their early mornings in playtime at the gym/playground.

- After Care: 3:30pm - 6:00pm

After Care is a structured and engaging program where children explore through art, crafts, cooking, outdoor and indoor playtimes and more!

Should you require the Extended Day Program, kindly reach out to the school for coordination. Availability is limited, and we aim to accommodate all who are enrolled for the Extended Day Program.

Additional Extended Care

The Extended Day Program is available on an as needed basis if space is available. Payment will be added to your next FACTS payment.

- There is a \$25.00 per day charge for Before Care (7:30am – 8:45am)
- There is a \$40.00 per day charge for After Care (3:30pm – 6:00pm)

Franklin closes promptly at 6:00 pm. If you cannot be here by 6:00 pm, please make alternative arrangements for pick up.

The following charges will be assessed for late pick-up:

\$15.00 for the first five minutes & \$2.00 for each additional minute after five minutes.

Tuition

Tuition for The Franklin Montessori School is payable through the FACTS Tuition Management Plan. Tuition payments are due on the 5th or 20th of each month as preferred by the family. These payments can be made by ACH or credit card. Tuition credit cannot be given for absences due to illness, vacations, or other personal plans.

Enrollment

Families will have an option to re-enroll every Spring for the upcoming school year. Re-enrollment is required in order to secure your child's space for the upcoming school year. The period of enrollment is for the entire school year or the expanded school year as selected by the family.

Required Enrollment Forms

All forms are available to download from our website and in the Enrollment packet on the FACTS SIS website. These include:

- Emergency Forms
- DOH Universal Health Certificate – This form must be filled out by the pediatrician with proof of current vaccinations, TB test, Lead test and a physical within the calendar year. It must be updated annually. By OSSE regulation, your child is not permitted to attend school without these items being on file in the office.
- District of Columbia Registration Record for Child Receiving Care Away From Home
- District of Columbia Oral Health Assessment Form – For children over 3. Must be updated annually.
- District of Columbia Authorization For Child's Emergency Medical Treatment
- District of Columbia Travel and Activity Authorization
- Sunscreen and Insect Repellent Form

Program Change: Change of Calendar Option or Hours

Calendar and/or hour options can be changed once per contracted year. Requests will be granted or denied at the sole discretion of the School. No calendar changes will be approved during or in anticipation of a Force Majeure closing.

Program changes must be approved and confirmed in writing, otherwise such requests will be considered to have been denied. All changes will be made subject to the following fee schedule with payment due at the time of the request's approval. Any previously paid tuition amounts are non-refundable.

10 & 11 month calendar.....\$100.00 fee to change calendar and/or hours

12 month calendar.....\$1,000.00 fee to change calendar

Withdrawal

Written notice must be received by the administration 60 days prior to the desired withdrawal date. Before written notice can be effective, the \$500.00 Withdrawal Fee for 10- and 11-month programs, \$1,000.00 for 12-month program must be paid in full. Any overpayments will be remitted within 60 days after the date of withdrawal.

Voluntary Withdrawal

In consideration for the timely payment of the annual tuition, all fees and compliance with the policies of the School as explained in the School handbook, the Student may withdraw from School and the Family may terminate this agreement under the following conditions:

1. A written letter to the School of your intent to withdraw from the School accompanied by a nonrefundable withdrawal fee (\$500.00 for the 10-month calendar, \$1,000.00 for the 12-month calendar). The letter shall be effective on the first day of the calendar month following the date of submission (the "Effective Date").
2. Sixty (60) days from the Effective Date, the student will be considered to have voluntarily withdrawn from the school ("the Withdrawal Date").
3. Any payments due after the Withdrawal Date shall be cancelled, except any outstanding balance accrued up to the Withdrawal Date.
4. After the Withdrawal Date, installment payments as well as any prepayments shall be refunded to the extent they exceed any tuition due under this contract.
5. All fees, including the annual student fees are non-refundable.

Mandatory Withdrawal

The school may terminate a child's enrollment as follows:

- Upon two (2) weeks notice for the following reasons:
 - Parental failure to abide by this agreement and by school policies.
 - The school program is not meeting the developmental or special needs of the child as determined by the School.
- Immediate withdrawal may be requested for the following reasons:
 - Health or behavioral problems that threaten the safety, health or well-being of the child, other children, or the staff.
 - Disregard of tuition policies.
 - A pattern of late pick-up.
 - Conduct of parents or guardians of the child that threatens the well-being of the children or staff.
 - Observation by the staff that the child in the Early Childhood program is not fully toilet trained.

Termination

The Franklin School may terminate a child's enrollment as follows:

1. Upon two weeks notice for the following reasons:
 - Parental failure to abide by school policies and enrollment agreement.
 - School's program is not meeting developmental or special needs of the child, as the director shall determine.
2. Immediate termination may result for the following reasons:
 - Health or behavioral reasons that threaten the safety, health, or well-being of the child or other children and staff.
 - Chronic disregard of tuition policies.
 - A pattern of late pick-up.
 - Other conducts of parents/guardians or a child that threatens the well-being of students or staff.

Grievance Procedures

Should any parent disagree with a policy, action, or decision made by Franklin Montessori School, a conference may be arranged with the Director and/or appropriate faculty member to discuss the nature of the disagreement.

The Director is available for phone calls, conferences, questions and concerns every day. Every reasonable attempt will be made in a timely manner to reach satisfactory solution for all parties involved.

Discipline Policy

At The Franklin Montessori School, we believe in fostering a respectful, supportive, and safe learning environment for all our students, from infants as young as 12 weeks old to children up to 6 years of age. Our discipline policy is rooted in the Montessori philosophy, which emphasizes respect for each child, freedom within limits, and the development of inner discipline. We view discipline not as punishment but as guidance, helping children learn self-regulation, social responsibility, and mutual respect.

Our discipline policy aims to:

- Support the development of self-discipline and self-regulation in our students.
- Encourage positive behavior through understanding, patience, and consistent guidance.
- Promote a sense of responsibility and community among students.
- Ensure a safe and nurturing environment that respects individual needs and fosters learning.

Strategies to guide students to inner discipline:

Positive Reinforcement: We use positive reinforcement to encourage desired behaviors. This includes modeling behaviors, constructive feedback and recognition.

Setting Clear Boundaries: Clear, consistent, and age-appropriate boundaries are established in every classroom. These guidelines help children understand expectations and the limits of acceptable behavior.

Natural and Logical Consequences: When boundaries are tested, we apply natural and logical consequences that are directly related to the behavior. This approach helps children understand the impact of their actions in a real-world context. We DO NOT use “time out” to address misbehavior.

Redirection: For younger children, especially those under three years of age, redirection is often the most effective strategy. This involves gently diverting the child’s attention from inappropriate behaviors to an acceptable or purposeful activity.

Conflict Resolution: We guide older children in resolving conflicts through communication and problem-solving strategies. This helps them develop empathy, respect for others, and the skills to manage interpersonal conflicts constructively.

Parental Involvement: Parents are viewed as partners in the discipline process. We communicate openly with parents about their child's behavior and work together to develop consistent strategies for guidance at home and at school.

Prohibited Practices include:

- Physical punishment of any kind is strictly prohibited.
- Verbal abuse, shaming, or any form of emotional maltreatment is not tolerated.
- Withholding or using food, rest, or bathroom privileges as punishment is not permitted.

Procedures for Addressing Behavioral Issues

1. Observation: Teachers will first observe the behavior to understand its context and possible triggers.
2. Documentation: Significant behavioral issues are documented, noting the context, frequency, and any interventions used.
3. Communication: Teachers communicate with parents to discuss concerns and collaborate on strategies to support the child.
4. Plan of Action: A tailored plan is developed to address the behavior, utilizing appropriate strategies, and involving specialists if necessary.
5. Follow-Up: The child's progress is monitored, and the plan is adjusted as needed. Ongoing communication with the family ensures a cohesive approach.

Our discipline policy at The Franklin Montessori School is designed to respect each child's individuality while promoting a harmonious community. Through guidance, understanding, and consistent support, we aim to cultivate an environment where every child can develop self-discipline and a sense of responsibility towards themselves and others.

Child Abuse and Neglect Policy

All individuals involved with children, including parents and teaching staff, carry the statutory duty to be alert to and report any indications of child abuse. If a member of our team suspects a child may be suffering harm in line with the established legal criteria for abuse, it is incumbent upon them to promptly communicate their concerns to the school's leadership. Subsequently, a coordinated effort will be made to promptly report the matter to the relevant local agencies tasked with the protection of children, who will take the necessary steps to investigate the situation.

Anti-Bullying Statement

At The Franklin Montessori School, we are committed to fostering a safe, nurturing, and inclusive environment for all children, staff, and families. We believe that every child has the right to learn and grow in an atmosphere of respect, kindness, and security.

Although bullying is less common in early childhood, we recognize that negative behaviors such as exclusion, intimidation, and aggression can emerge in young children. As part of our educational philosophy, we take a proactive, developmentally appropriate approach to teaching children about empathy, respect, and conflict resolution.

Our Commitment to Preventing Bullying:

- We promote positive social-emotional development by modeling and teaching kindness, problem-solving, and respect for others.
- Our educators use age-appropriate strategies to help children express their emotions, resolve conflicts, and develop healthy peer relationships.
- We maintain a zero-tolerance approach to any form of aggression, exclusion, or harassment and intervene immediately if such behaviors arise.
- Teachers and staff receive ongoing training in early childhood behavior management and conflict resolution.
- We encourage open communication with families to work together in addressing concerns and reinforcing positive behaviors at home.

By cultivating a culture of kindness and respect, we help children develop the foundational skills they need to build healthy relationships and become compassionate members of their community.

If you have any concerns about your child's experience at The Franklin Montessori School, we encourage you to speak with a teacher or administrator so we can work together to support your child's well-being. Together, we create a safe and caring school community where every child can thrive.

Wellness Policy

To ensure a secure, clean, and wholesome environment, we diligently sanitize our facilities and maintain rigorous hygiene practices, which include regular handwashing for both staff and children. We also manage illness by keeping unwell children apart from their peers. Minimizing infection transmission is a collaborative effort, and we depend on parental support for this. Please refrain from bringing your child to school if they exhibit any of the following symptoms:

- A temperature of 100.4°F or above
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye)
- Diarrhea (2 loose stools in 3 hours)
- Vomiting
- Incidents of unexplained skin rashes

- Multiple symptoms such as a runny nose, cough, tiredness, skin rash, or abdominal pain
- Head lice or body lice

A fever is specifically identified as an ear temperature reading over 100.4°F. Your child can return to school after being fever-free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medications and when they are well enough to engage fully in school activities, including time spent outdoors.

Notification of Illness

In the event your child will be absent due to sickness, promptly inform both the school office and your child's teacher. Additionally, if your child is or might be suffering from an infectious/contagious disease, let us know within a day so we can notify the school community as necessary.

Procedures for Illness at School

If a child shows illness symptoms at school, Franklin Montessori will:

- Contact the child's parent or an alternate authorized person.
- Provide a comfortable, separate space for the child to rest, under the supervision of an adult.

Any child who is unwell will be separated from their peers and stay in the office until picked up. We ask that arrangements for pick-up be made within one hour. Should you fail to arrive within this timeframe, we will reach out to your emergency contacts.

If a child is sent home due to fever, vomiting, diarrhea, or multiple symptoms that a doctor cannot attribute to non-contagious causes, they will be required to stay home the next day.

Guidelines for returning to school: Children must meet the following criteria to return to school-

- Child will be symptom-free for at least 24 hours (a full day of school) before returning to school.
- Children that have a fever of 100.4 degrees or higher (teething-induced included) cannot return to school until the temperature remains normal for 24 hours (a full day of school) without the assistance of a fever-reducing medication.
- Children that have vomited cannot return to school until their symptoms have not been present for at least 24 hours (a full day of school).
- Children experiencing diarrhea (teething-induced included) cannot return to school until their symptoms have not been present for at least 24 hours.
- Children with any type of communicable illness cannot return to school until their symptoms have not been present for at least 24 hours.

If medication is prescribed by a physician for an illness, it must be administered at home for 24 hours before the child can return to school.

If a doctor prescribes medication, the child should receive treatment at home for at least 24 hours before coming back to school.

Please understand that these measures are in place to protect the well-being of all our children and staff. Your cooperation is vital in reducing the spread of illnesses.

Policy for Handling Blood Borne Pathogens

The Franklin Montessori School is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for all students and staff. This policy outlines the procedures to prevent and manage exposure to bloodborne pathogens within the school premises. This policy will be designed to minimize the risk of exposure to bloodborne pathogens for students, staff, and visitors, in accordance with OSHA's Bloodborne Pathogens Standard (29 CFR 1910.1030) and best practices in health and safety.

Definitions:

- Bloodborne Pathogens: Microorganisms such as viruses or bacteria that are carried in blood and can cause disease in people. These include, but are not limited to, hepatitis B (HBV), hepatitis C (HCV), and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).
- Exposure Incident: A specific eye, mouth, other mucous membrane, non-intact skin, or parenteral contact with blood or other potentially infectious materials that results from the performance of an employee's duties.

Response to Exposure:

- First aid treatment followed by medical evaluation for the exposed individual.
- Immediate cleaning and disinfection of the area using appropriate disinfectants.
- Documentation and reporting of the incident to school administration and, if necessary, local health authorities.

Medical Emergency Policy

In the event of a medical emergency requiring immediate intervention, we will adhere to the following protocol to ensure the safety and well-being of the child:

Life-Threatening Medical Situations:

1. Emergency Medical Services (EMS) will be promptly called.
2. The child's parent or guardian will be contacted immediately.
3. A certified staff member will administer any necessary first aid/CPR until EMS personnel take over.

4. If the child requires transport to a local hospital for additional care, a staff member will accompany the child to the hospital.

Non-Life-Threatening Medical Situations:

1. The parent or guardian will be notified as the first course of action.
2. The parent or guardian will be responsible for deciding and coordinating subsequent medical care.

Protocol for Children with Severe Allergies:

Children who have a documented history of severe allergic reactions requiring the use of an Epi-Pen should provide the school with the medication, clearly labeled with the child's name, and a doctor's note outlining the prescription details and administration instructions. Franklin Montessori is committed to administering the Epi-Pen without delay when exposure or suspected exposure to the specific allergen occurs, in accordance with the provided medical guidelines.

Accident Reports

Despite our best efforts, occasionally accidents still do occur. When they do, we issue an 'Unlucky Duck Report'. Parents will receive one copy of this report to take home, and another will be filed for our records. We take special care to immediately inform parents about any injuries involving the head or face, regardless of the severity. Our policy is to err on the side of caution and ensure the utmost protection for our students.

In instances of physical conflict, such as hitting, pushing, or biting, our teachers will not disclose the names of the involved children. Although the child may speak of the incident, the teacher will maintain student confidentiality. Should such behaviors become recurrent, the Director will arrange a meeting with the parents of the involved students. Persistent behavior may lead to the recommendation of consulting with a specialist to help the child address and manage their actions/behaviors.

Medication Administration Policy

To ensure the safe administration of medication, our procedure requires a Medication Authorization Form that has been fully completed, signed, and dated, to be on record in our office before any medication is dispensed. Only staff members who have successfully completed Medication Administration Training, accredited by the Office of Child Care (OSSE), are authorized to administer medication to children.

- All medications for children must be delivered to the office by a parent/guardian/caregiver. Please avoid placing any medications in your child's lunch box or backpack.

- Over-the-counter medications must be presented in their original, tamper-evident packaging with your child's name, dosing instructions, and expiration date clearly indicated. Such medications will be dispensed only when accompanied by a Medication Authorization Form filled out by a parent.
- Both prescription and over-the-counter medications must be provided in their original, properly labeled containers. Prescription drugs must be in their original pharmacy container with tamper-evident features and labeled with your child's name, dosing instructions, and expiration date. Over-the-counter medications must remain in their original packaging with clear labeling. Both types of medication will only be administered if a Medication Authorization Form, completed by a parent and authorized by a physician, is submitted to the school.
- The initial dose of any new medication should be administered at home, not at school.
- Every instance of medication administration will be documented with the time and date in the Medication Log Book.

Emergency Preparedness

The Franklin Montessori School is committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of our students, staff, and community through comprehensive emergency preparedness measures. Recognizing the importance of readiness in the face of unexpected situations, the Emergency Preparedness Plan, addresses a wide range of potential scenarios. In strict compliance with regulations set forth by the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE), we conduct scheduled fire drills, shelter-in-place and lockdown drills to ensure that our students and staff are well-versed in evacuation procedures and can respond quickly and efficiently in the event of an emergency. Furthermore, in the event that evacuation from our premises becomes necessary, we have established the Sheridan School (4400 36th St NW, Washington, DC 20008) as our designated relocation center, ensuring a safe and secure environment for our community until it is safe to return/reunify with families.

Transportation

The school does not provide daily transportation to and from school. When field trips take place, the school may contract with an outside bus company and request for parent volunteers to chaperone. The contracted bus company must be licensed, hold all required insurance, and comply with all state and local safety regulations. When being transported in a licensed school bus or motor coach, there is at least one adult present who is currently certified in CPR and first aid.

Special Events

Throughout the year, Franklin Montessori fosters community building by offering numerous occasions for parents, children, and staff to connect during and beyond school hours. Details regarding parent socials, conferences, performances, and celebrations are shared via frequent newsletters and school calendars, promoting an inclusive and engaged community spirit.

Pets and Animals

Franklin Montessori shall ensure that all pets or animals permitted on the premises are in good health, show no evidence of carrying disease, are friendly towards children and do not present a threat to the health, safety, and well-being of children. Franklin shall also maintain all animals or pets in a visibly clean manner.

Inclement Weather Policy

In the event of inclement weather, we closely monitor and follow the determinations made by the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) regarding weather-related delays or closures. Our approach to handling inclement weather aims to prioritize the safety of our families and staff, who reside within or outside the district, while also ensuring we can maintain regular operations and appropriate teacher-to-child ratios in our classrooms.

Parents are responsible for staying informed about closures or delays. Weather-related alerts are available by registering for AlertDC. Moreover, notifications will be communicated through the Transparent Classroom platform and the REMIND app to keep parents informed about weather-related delays or closures.

Inclement Weather Procedures:

- Closed
 - When DC Public Schools (DCPS) are closed due to inclement weather, The Franklin Montessori School will also be closed.
 - If DCPS childcare centers in DCPS facilities remain open while DCPS school systems are closed, The Franklin Montessori School will be closed as well.
- Delayed Opening:
 - When DCPS announces a delayed opening, The Franklin Montessori School will open at 10:45 am (which is two hours from the start of our School Day program which begins at 8:45 am).
- Early Dismissal:
 - In the event of an early dismissal by DCPS, The Franklin Montessori School will dismiss all students at 12:00 pm.
- After Care Cancelled:

- If DCPS cancels all aftercare activities, The Franklin Montessori School will dismiss all students at 3:00pm.
- **Extended Cancellation:** Although our approach generally follows DCPS guidelines concerning school schedules affected by inclement weather, FMS retains the authority to reassess rare and prolonged closures lasting more than three days. Under exceptional circumstances, such as extended closures resulting from issues that specifically affect DCPS operations (such as facility damage or transportation difficulties due to inclement weather), we reserve the right to diverge from the DCPS system.

School Communication

At Franklin Montessori School, we understand the critical role that effective and frequent communication plays in the educational experience and community engagement. To ensure our families are well-informed and connected, we communicate with families via:

1. The Franklin Weekly: Our regular newsletter provides a snapshot of the upcoming school activities, events, and important announcements, as well as recaps of the dynamic happenings across various programs.
2. Transparent Classroom: This platform allows us to share daily care reports, along with snapshots of their day-to-day experiences and growth.
3. Classroom Newsletters: Tailored updates that keep parents in the loop about the specific events, projects, and learning milestones of their child's class.
4. REMIND app: A text messaging service for immediate and crucial updates regarding any unexpected changes to our schedule, including unscheduled school closures.

By leveraging these varied channels, Franklin Montessori School ensures that our families are always in the know, fostering a transparent and collaborative community.

Parent-School Communication

At Franklin Montessori School, we greatly appreciate and foster a collaborative relationship with our parents. Open communication is vital, and we encourage parents to keep us informed about any changes that may affect their child's routine. This includes notifying the school of schedule adjustments, such as late arrivals, early departures, or when a child will be away on vacation. Prompt communication about illnesses is also essential to ensure the health and well-being of our school community.

Additionally, keeping us updated about any changes in the individuals authorized for your child's pick-up and drop-off is critical for maintaining a secure environment. We are here to support your family and understand the nuances of each child's situation, and we encourage parents to email us at office@franklinmontessori.com for any updates or concerns. Our partnership with parents is invaluable, and together, we create a supportive and thriving environment for our students.

Pick-up Procedures

For your child's safety, children will be released only to parents, legal guardians, or individuals listed on the emergency contact list. If a friend or another adult is picking up your child, you must inform the school office in advance, preferably in writing to ensure clarity and avoid misunderstandings. All individuals not recognized by school staff will be required to show photo identification before picking up a child.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-Teacher conferences at Franklin Montessori are an important aspect of our educational journey, serving as vital checkpoints for discussing student progress and milestone development. Twice a year, in Fall (November) and again in the Spring (March/April), we schedule meetings that provide a dedicated time for parents and teachers to engage in in-depth discussions about the child's individual milestones, academic growth, social development, and more. These conferences are not just routine meetings; they are a cornerstone of our commitment to personalized education and play a crucial role in fostering a collaborative educational partnership between home and school.

Office Hours

To encourage communication between home and school, Franklin Montessori provides office hours for all lead teachers. These office hours are reserved for teachers to respond to emails, return phone calls, and hold meetings with parents. We kindly request that parents utilize this time to reach out to teachers. Please avoid initiating extended discussions with teachers during pick-up and drop-off times or when other children are present, as these are moments when our educators need to be fully attentive to the children and the transition process. For more in-depth conversations, please contact your child's teacher during their scheduled office hours, allowing for a dedicated and private dialogue about your child's progress and needs. Your cooperation helps us ensure that every child receives the care and attention they deserve.

Parent Education Series

The Franklin Parent Education Series is an enriching and continuous journey that unfolds throughout the year, offering a suite of workshops meticulously designed

to support and enlighten our parent community. With each season, we provide a fresh array of topics to explore, ranging from the core tenets of Montessori pedagogy to practical parenting strategies and a breadth of subjects in between. These sessions, held regularly, are a testament to our commitment to parental involvement and education. Guided by our adept Montessori Lead Teachers, each workshop not only delivers deep insights but also highlights a variety of community resources that are accessible to our parents. Embrace the opportunity to learn, to grow, and to connect with fellow parents, as we collectively enrich the lives of our children and families throughout the year.

Nap Time

Nap is a designated time to ensure that every child under the age of 4 years old receives a scheduled rest period. This quiet time is an essential part of our daily routine, offering a chance for your child to rest and recharge between 12:00 pm to 2:30 pm (start-end times vary per program). For our toddlers and Early childhood students, we encourage you to send along a favorite stuffed animal, a snugly small blanket, or a comforting small pillow with your child. These familiar items from home, affectionately known as 'cuddlies', can help make the transition to nap time seamless and peaceful. Remember, a familiar 'cuddly' can indeed make nap time a snap!

Toy Policy

To ensure a focused and equitable learning environment, we kindly request that all personal toys remain at home. The school provides a variety of learning and recreational materials for student use. We cannot take responsibility for personal items that may be lost or damaged during school hours. This helps us maintain a productive setting for all students and keeps their cherished items safe. All toys should remain safely at home.

Lunch Bunch

Lunchtime is a special occasion at school, as it gives our students the chance to enjoy a meal in the comfort of their own classroom, surrounded by their friends and teachers. Parents provide lunches from home. We ask that each child's lunch be packed in a Bento-style box or a thermos, with their first and last name clearly written on it. Please consider packing a lunch that is not only to your child's liking but also nutritious and fitting for a school day. Rest assured, any food that isn't eaten will be sent back home in their lunch box. To complement their meal, we provide milk and water during lunch and snack time.

Snack

Franklin School is committed to ensuring our students receive wholesome snack options. We happily supply these nourishing snacks for our students to enjoy during morning and afternoon breaks. For those occasions when your child wishes to bring a special snack to share with the class in celebration of a personal

milestone or festive event, we kindly request that you coordinate with your child's teacher. This will help accommodate any specific dietary needs and determine the most suitable time for the treat.

Clothing

As you prepare your child for a day at Franklin, please consider the following guidelines for their attire and essentials:

- Dress your child in practical, comfortable clothing that is suitable for engaging in creative, possibly paint-splattered activities and playtime outdoors.
- We make every effort to get outdoors daily. Please be sure that your child is dressed appropriately for the weather daily.
- We promote independence. It's wonderful to see children beam with pride when they are able to navigate bathroom breaks solo and put on their jackets and footwear by themselves.
- Be sure to send an extra set of clothes, complete with underwear and socks. Check your child's extra clothes supply regularly to maintain the stock and check for seasonally appropriate extra clothes.
- Label all your child's garments clearly with their name, paying particular attention to coats and other outdoor wear.

Outdoor Fun

Outdoor play is an essential part of every day at school. The brisk, rejuvenating air is a perfect counterbalance to time spent inside, particularly during seasons when colds are prevalent. We believe that fresh air plays a crucial role in maintaining health and well-being. Therefore, if a child is well enough to attend school, they are also well enough to partake in the important daily routine of outdoor play.

Student Records

The confidentiality of personal, family, enrollment, and academic information is of utmost importance. Records at Franklin Montessori School are securely maintained for three years after a student departs. Teachers and administrators may access these records as needed. However, external access requires explicit written consent from a parent, guardian, or the court to ensure the privacy of the student's records. Parents or guardians have the option to request, in writing, that a performance report of their child be shared with other individuals or institutions. Franklin Montessori School will comply by sending the report as directed, unless there is an outstanding balance on the account. Furthermore, parents or guardians are entitled to review their child's records, provided they submit a written request to the school.

Confidentiality Policy

At our school, we pride ourselves on cultivating a personal and welcoming atmosphere. However, we recognize that sensitive matters may arise, necessitating a high level of respect for the privacy of every family. To preserve the trust of our families and staff, adherence to the following confidentiality guidelines is essential. Breaches of these guidelines may lead to corrective measures, which could include removal from our program.

Confidentiality Guidelines:

- Refrain from discussing children or their families in public or shared spaces, both on school premises and beyond.
- Limit conversations about a child or their family to the involved child's family members or school administrative staff only.
- If you are both a parent and a staff member, it is imperative that you do not share staff-provided information with other parents.
- All records, documentation, discussions, and meetings are intended to support the child's well-being and are to be treated as strictly confidential.

Non-Discrimination Policy

The Franklin Montessori School is committed to fostering an inclusive and diverse environment. We do not discriminate based on race, color, national or ethnic origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, age, disability, genetic information, or any other characteristic protected by applicable law. This policy applies to the admission of students, the employment of faculty and staff, and the administration of all school programs and activities. We are dedicated to providing equal opportunities and a welcoming environment for all members of our community.

Community Outreach

Throughout the academic year, we will occasionally seek your involvement in our Community Outreach initiatives. In the spirit of giving during the holiday season, we donate to local charity or organization. Additionally, we hold bake sales twice yearly to support various charitable causes and contribute to our teachers' ongoing professional development. These efforts are designed not only to support our local community, but it is an integral part of the Montessori approach that prepares children to be compassionate, and engaged members of society.

Holidays and Celebrations

Birthdays

Birthday milestones are significant. Our students often enjoy marking these occasions with their peers by sharing a treat at school. If you're considering

sending a special snack with your child, please inform their teacher ahead of time. Encourage your child to be enthusiastic about their birthday treat, but also guide them to make healthy selections. For summer birthdays, celebrating their half-birthday at school is a delightful alternative!

Birthday Invitations

Making birthdays joyous is essential! To ensure inclusivity and avoid any feelings of exclusion, please refrain from sending birthday invitations or presents to school.

Celebrating Diversity Through Holidays

We recognize a diverse range of cultural festivities throughout the year. Parents will receive notifications about holiday events happening throughout the school. We take pride in our multicultural student community and invite families to share their unique cultural traditions. If you have a special holiday you wish to celebrate at school, please reach out to the administration and your child's teacher.

Where Our Graduates Go

Montessori alumni are noted for being strong and capable persons. They model initiative, independence, dignity, selflessness, sound judgement, and ability to work well with others. These are individuals whose education has helped them nourish their passions and hone their skills so that they may find their place in society. The journey of education continues for our graduates as they spread their wings to various reputable independent, public, and charter schools within the Washington region. Our alumni have proudly secured places in recent years at renowned schools including Beauvoir, Blessed Sacrament, Georgetown Day School, Lowell, Maret, Norwood, Sheridan School, Sidwell Friends, St. Patrick's Episcopal, Aidan Montessori, The British School, The Potomac School, Washington Episcopal, and Washington International School. These institutions are now enriched by the dedication and knowledge instilled in our graduates during their foundational years with us.

Become a Montessori Teacher

Follow a career that positions you as a child's trusted guide on the path toward creative, compassionate, respectful, and independent adulthood. Montessori teachers are conduits between their students and the vast world of knowledge and discovery that surrounds them. This profession, founded on Dr. Maria Montessori's wisdom about how children grow and learn, can inspire you and enable you to make a meaningful contribution to the lives of children, their families, and your community.

Consider a local (AMS) Montessori Teacher Training Institute

- **Montgomery Montessori Institute**
10500 Darnestown Rd, Rockville, MD 20850, USA
www.teachmontessorimmi.com

Program Director: Aline Feledy
(301)279-2799
info@TeachMontessoriMMI.com

Montgomery Montessori Institute (MMI) was founded in 1993 for individuals interested in becoming credentialed Early Childhood or Infant & Toddler Montessori educators. MMI is affiliated by the American Montessori Society, accredited by MACTE (Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education) and approved as a private career school by the Maryland Higher Education Commission.

MMI's two-phased Early Childhood Montessori Teacher Education Course consists of an Academic Phase which begins in early June and continues for eight consecutive weeks to early August with classes held from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and a Practicum Phase from September to June.

MMI's two-phased Infant & Toddler Montessori Teacher Education Course consists of an Academic Phase which begins in early June and continues for 5 consecutive weeks through mid-July with classes held from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and a Practicum Phase from September to June.

To learn more about MMI's courses, visit the website: teachmontessorimmi.com or call 301-279-2799.