



PARENT HANDBOOK AND GUIDE

Revision January 2020

***“The education of a very small child does not (only) aim
at preparing him for school but for life.”***

Maria Montessori

Beehive Montessori Pre-School reserves the right to amend this handbook as needed and will provide notice of such to parents. By acknowledging your receipt and review of the handbook you are also agreeing to abide by any terms and conditions stated in these amendments.

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We hope you enjoy reading this handbook and that you find the information useful. If you have any suggestions for other topics to include in the handbook, please contact the office. We will endeavour to include your feedback into the next revision. Thank you.

WELCOME TO THE MONTESSORI COMMUNITY

We offer you and your family a special and warm welcome to the Beehive Montessori community and hope that your stay with us will be happy and rewarding.

You have chosen Beehive Montessori Pre-School as your child's first school. We are privileged to be your child's first professional educators as they begin a long, perhaps never-ending, educational journey. We know these first years will make a profound impact in your child's attitude towards learning.

We need your full support in a joint effort to help your child maximize their potential. We encourage you to embrace the Montessori philosophy, learn about the program, and become clearly involved in the life of the school.

We plan social events during the year, which will involve you and your child. These are a great opportunity to meet and interact with other parents in your child's class. – *COVID-19 regulations may limit this.*

Montessori philosophy and methodology discussions for parents are held once a term at the school to explain and demonstrate the program. We urge you to make every effort to attend these evenings so that you will learn about and understand the work your child experiences daily. Parents should be fully prepared to learn about, and adhere to the Montessori philosophy in order to provide a consistent approach at home during the years their child is in our program. - *COVID-19 regulations may limit this*

This handbook offers an insight into our program. Please read and ensure that you and other care-givers are familiar with all the information in the handbook. Some changes may be made as deemed necessary during the course of the year.

PROGRAM GOALS

As a school staff we commit ourselves to providing a prepared environment based on the philosophies of Maria Montessori (three-time Nobel Peace Prize nominee). Recognising the rights of children, we work to provide a safe, secure and nurturing school in which the uniqueness of each individual is recognised and their individual needs are met to help them reach full potential. In an atmosphere of harmony and unity we promote the principle of respect for all things while caring and supporting each other. Through our program of varied experiences, and under the guidance of trained Montessori directresses, your child will be exposed to situations that will stimulate:

- Respect for others
- Curiosity, initiative and independence
- Self-esteem and decision-making capabilities
- Social skills
- Respect for our environment
- Communication skills
- Problem-solving skills and concentration
- Activities that develop large and fine motor control
- Activities of literature, art and music
- A love of learning

We aim to establish, maintain and encourage open communication between the school and its parents to ensure the needs of each child are fully met in the most practical manner possible.

We are committed to a multicultural, non-denominational approach in which each child may develop a positive self-concept and pride in heritage, whilst appreciating and understanding diversity.

We offer a three-year cycle at Preschool level and expect that each child will remain with us for this period. Our Montessori curriculum ensures that all children leaving the program after three years will be school ready, i.e. ready to begin Grade 1.

BEEHIVE MONTESSORI PRE-SCHOOL SCHOOL FACTS

Beehive Montessori School was established in 1983 by parents for their children. In 2009 the Toddler group opened its doors. We offer a unique environment for children aged 18 months to 6 years/Gr R without regard of race, creed, religion or national origin.

Beehive employs qualified Montessori staff.

Beehive provides a daily living and learning environment for children where they can grow socially, physically and mentally in a structure governed by the Montessori philosophy. A Montessori-based after-school care facility was added in 1991 to provide a caring and stimulating environment for children in the afternoons.

SCHOOL CONTACT INFORMATION

Address: Mauritius Crescent, Stellenberg
Email: beehivemp@gmail.com
Website: <https://montessoriconnect.co.za/beehive-montessori/>
Tel: 021 919 4223
Cell | WhatsApp: 064 435 6069

HOURS OF OPERATION

The Beehive Montessori Pre-School follows the Western Cape government school terms and public holidays of South Africa. The school is completely closed for three to four weeks from 15 December each year.

Office Hours

Office: Monday to Friday from 08h00 to 15h30
Administrator: Monday to Friday from 08h00 to 14h00
Principal: Mondays to Thursdays from 07h30 to 15h30 by appointment
School Tours: By appointment

Please book your appointments in advance at the office.

School Hours

Morning care: 07h30 to 08h00
3-6 Class: 08h00 to 12h30
(Children may be collected between 12h30 and 13h00.)
Toddler Class: 08h00 to 12h15
(Children may be collected between 12h15 and 12h30.)
After-care: 12h30 to 17h30
Holiday care: 07h30 to 17h30
½ day holiday care: 07h30 to 12h30/13h00 **or** 12h30 - 17h30

Last Day of Term – School ends at 11h00

On the last day of each term, school is dismissed at 11h00. Please plan to fetch your child early or sign up for aftercare.

Note that aftercare will not be available on the last day of the fourth term.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Our school calendar is distributed at the beginning of every new school year. The following table lists the typical events per term. Please refer to the monthly newsletters for further details. - *COVID-19 regulations may limit this*

Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4
- Parent Evening - Parent/Teacher Reviews - End-of-Term Celebration (2 nd last day of term)	- Parent Evening - Mid-year Progress Reports - End-of-Term Celebration (2 nd last day of term)	- Parent Evening - School Photo Week - School Concert - Parent/Teacher Reviews - End-of-Term Celebration (2 nd last day of term)	- (No Parent Evening) - Extra Mural Prize Giving - Graduation Ceremony - End-of-year Progress Reports, last day - End-of-Celebration (2 nd last day of term) No after-care on last day of Term.

VENUE HIRE

The Beehive Montessori Pre-School is available for hire for birthday parties and other social events. Please contact the office on (021) 919 4223 for further information and the applicable rates.

CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT

The child's need to learn by exploring is supported by the following:

- The classrooms contain carefully prepared and sequenced teaching materials and equipment.
- Everything in the classroom is child-sized and intended for the child's use.
- The children "work" because it is exciting to learn from the wide range of activities presented.
- The children learn to appreciate and care for their classrooms and the beautifully crafted Montessori materials.
- The Directresses guide the child's energy, interest and enthusiasm into self-enriching channels over a three-year period
- The Directresses help each child individually by demonstrating the special materials.
- Individual capabilities and the interests of each child are respected as each child develops at their own rate.

Pre-School Class: 3 - 6 Years

- There is 1 preschool class for the children aged 3 to 6 years. The adult to child ratio is 1:12. The class has up to 25 children with one class Directress and one Assistant.
- The children in this class focus on the Montessori 3 - 6 Pre-School Curriculum which includes Practical Life, Language, Mathematics, Sensorial and Culture areas, as well as Art activities.
- Children graduating from the three-year Pre-School curriculum will be ready to begin Grade 1.
- Children are encouraged to participate in weekly theme-based Show and Tell. Each child has a turn to be the Baker for the weekly Special Snack. – *COVID-19 regulations may limit this*
- Theme-based outings are conducted twice a year. – *COVID-19 regulations may limit this*

Toddler Class: 18mths – 3yrs

- There is 1 Toddler class for children aged 18 months to 3 years. The adult to child ratio is 1:7. The class has up to 14 children with one class Directress & one Assistants.
- The Toddler class Directress work on fostering a family environment for the children in their class. The children are encouraged to gain independence in all areas of development – washing hands, putting on shoes, serving snacks to each other, etc.
- Children are taught the social skills needed for mixing with others – sharing, kindness and respect.
- The Directress focus on vocabulary enrichment, gross and fine motor development and perceptual skills.
- The children undergo toilet training when necessary.
- The Toddler children graduate to a preschool class in the term they turn three or as soon as they have met the developmental criteria for the preschool classes and place is available in a class.

APPLICATION PROCESS

We aim to create well-balanced mixed-aged groupings in each classroom. We give classroom requests by parents' heavy consideration in deciding placement, however, the school ultimately has the responsibility to create the best Montessori balance/placement for each child enrolled.

Moving Up Procedure (Toddler Class to 3-6 Class)

Generally, children stay in the classroom assigned at the beginning of the first term for the entire school year. However, in some cases, children may be ready to move up to the next level during the year. Children in the Toddler program do not automatically move to a 3-6 class when they turn 3 years old. Children must meet the developmental criteria before a change is considered.

Should a parent or Directress feel that a change is necessary and the child meets the developmental criteria, the following steps are taken:

1. The child is recommended for a move-up by their Directress or parent.
2. Directress from the next level observes the child in their current classroom.
3. Directresses from both levels meet to discuss the readiness of the child.
4. If the Directresses agree, the child will visit the next classroom.
5. There may be one visit, or several visits to determine if the child is actually ready and **if** "they want to stay" in the new classroom.
6. The Directress and parents meet to discuss the child's readiness.
7. If a **consensus** is made that the child is ready and should move up, arrangements will be made to make the change if and when there is a space available in the next classroom.
8. If there is currently no space available in the next classroom, the child will go onto the classroom waiting list.
9. Parents of children who move up during the school year will be given a new classroom orientation by the new class Directress within the first term of the classroom change.

WHAT TO BRING TO SCHOOL: CHECK-LIST

Below please find your checklist of **what to bring to school**.

ANNUAL Checklist:

Please bring to school at the beginning of each year:

1. Sun hat (*labelled*).
2. Sunscreen (200ml SPF 30 and higher baby/children's sunscreen).
3. Full Day only: Fitted Sheet & blanket (*labelled*) – to be taken home, washed on a Friday and return on a Monday.

TERM Checklist

Please bring to school at the beginning of each term:

1. 1 X Box of Tissues
2. 1 X Box of Provitas (500g)
3. 3 X packets of Wet Wipes (70-80 wipes each).

Half Day DAILY Checklist

Please bring to school each day:

1. School bag with:
 - a. Complete change of *labelled* clothes (include warm and cool clothes in case of unexpected weather changes).
 - b. Toddler Class (if required): 3-4 disposable nappies (named)
 - c. No toys, medication, valuables, etc.
2. One fresh fruit & finger food – for Snack Time
3. One *labelled* bottle of water (put in classroom).

Full Day DAILY Checklist

Please bring to school each day:

- 1 – 3. As listed above.
4. Toddler Class (if required): Five disposable nappies in total for full day children.

For ease of reference, the checklists are summarised in the tables below.

ANNUAL AND TERM CHECKLIST				
	Term 1	Term 2	Term 3	Term 4
All	Tissues Provitas Wet Wipes Sun Screen	Tissues Provitas Wet Wipes	Tissues Provitas Wet Wipes	Tissues Provitas Wet Wipes
After-care	Fitted sheet & blanket (labelled)			

TODDLER & 3-6 CLASSES DAILY CHECKLIST					
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
All	Fresh fruit Finger Food Water Bottle Change of clothes				
Toddlers	Nappies	Nappies	Nappies	Nappies	Nappies
After-care	Healthy Lunchbox				
OPTIONAL (explanations provided in this handbook)	Art Supplies Bread Tags				

NON-ATTENDANCE

Please notify the office if your child will not be coming to school. We keep a daily attendance register.

DROP-OFFS

Please plan to arrive at school at least 15 minutes before class begins. This allows your child time to settle and socialize before the work cycle begins. Please arrive on time!

Drop-off Times

Morning care: 07h30 to 08h00 (please leave your child with the teacher on duty)

3-6 Class: 08h00 to 08h25 at the latest

Toddler Class: 08h00 to 08h55 at the latest

Settling Procedure – Gradual Entry

We recommend a gradual entry process for young children, especially if you feel the day may be too long at first, or if you anticipate separation anxiety. Gradual entry helps your child to be guided through an easy transition into their first school experience. We suggest that you bring your child to school for one hour (during outside time) for a few days, then gradually increase the time spent at school. The gradual entry process will allow your child to explore the environment and make new friends.

The goal is for your child to leave school looking forward to returning the next day. Please discuss your child's entry process with your class Directress. Once your child is settled, please adhere to the school hours.

Drop-off Hints

When you arrive at school, begin your drop-off ritual. Children thrive on consistency, so try to follow the same ritual each day.

For example: put school bag in locker, walk to classroom, give your child a warm and brief good-bye, and leave your child in the care of the teacher. Then leave and don't turn back, even if your child is crying.

Teachers will comfort a disappointed child and their success is dependent upon no interruptions. In most circumstances, your child will stop crying within a minute or two, and then have a happy and active day.

If your child discovers that you will return when they cry, a habit may begin that will grow more difficult in time. It works best for the child if the parents do not linger. Your child will sense your confidence in the teacher, and their fear should be dispelled.

Please phone the office if you are concerned and to put your mind at rest. We understand that sometimes it is as hard for the parent to leave the child as it is for the child to leave the parent!

PICK-UPS

Young children gain security through being picked up at the same time each day. Please try to be punctual and consistent.

Pick-up Times

Half-day Toddlers: Between 12h15 and 12h30

Half-day 3-6 Class: Between 12h30 and 13h00

All Full-day children must be collected before 17h30.

Late Pick-ups

Please phone the office if you are running late. Children who are not collected on time from their class are automatically taken into after-care and charged accordingly.

Late pick-ups after 17h30 will be charged R50. In addition, late parents may be required to cover the cost of safe transport, or to transport the staff member to the bus/train station or to their home.

Extraordinary Pick-ups

If someone other than the parent/legal guardian/regular care-giver is picking up your child, or if your child is going home with a friend for a play date, please inform the office and your class Directress. Children will not be allowed to leave the school with anyone other than their regular care-givers unless the school has been notified.

PARKING RESTRICTION

Please park on the road and not across the school driveway or our neighbour's driveway. Please inform taxi drivers and other care givers of this parking restriction.

· NO STOPPING OR PARKING in front of school gates or neighbour's driveways

REMEMBER TO ALWAYS CLOSE THE GATE — ALL THE TIME

AFTER-CARE

After-care operates from 12h30/13h00 to 17h30 during the school terms.

After-care is provided at a ratio of 10 children to 1 adult. Toddlers and 3-6-year children follow the same program during after-care.

The program includes:

- Lunch – packed by parents;
- Nap (for those children who require a nap).
- Various indoor and outdoor activities and entertainment as planned by the After-Care Supervisor.
- Afternoon snack.

After-care Requirements

Please provide the following items at the beginning of each year:

- A *labelled* fitted sheet and blanket.

Casual After-care

We offer casual after-care for those who require occasional supervision after school hours. Casual after-care must be booked in advance to ensure that we are adequately staffed. Please refer to the current fee schedule for the casual after-care rate.

HOLIDAY CARE

A full holiday program of purposeful activities and entertainment runs during the school holidays from 07h30 to 17h30. All the children follow the same program.

Full-day children are automatically entitled to holiday care since it is included in the full-day fee.

Holiday care is available to half-day children at a daily charge. Please refer to the current fee schedule for the half-day rate. Pre-booking is essential.

Please note that holiday care is NOT available on public holidays – refer to school calendar for further details.

EXTRA MURALS

Extra Murals at an Additional Charge

The following extra mural activities are available at an additional charge.

- **Thursday mornings: Gym-fants**
(a physical activity which develops co-ordination, body strength, etc.).
- **Thursday afternoons: Beaux-Arts (Pottery)**
- Please complete the registration form provided by the facilitator if you would like your child to participate in these extra murals.
- Children signed up for **extra murals** may only attend lessons once the relevant registration fee and

term fee is paid in advance of the term, and provided that school fees are up to date.

- There are more or less 8 lessons per term – generally starting in the second week of the new term.

FEES POLICY

School Fees

The school charges an annual fee which can be paid annually in advance or over 12 months.

1. The monthly fee is due on or before the 7th day of each month, unless alternative arrangements have been made.
2. Should monthly fees not be paid by the 7th of the month, you will be charged a 10% interest on that month and your child may be suspended from attending School. Refunds are not made for cancellation of application, absence due to holiday, or illness.
3. Children attending *extra murals* may only attend lessons once the extra mural term fee is paid in advance of the term, and provided that school fees are up to date.

One school term's **notice in writing** is required before removing your child from our school, or payment in lieu thereof will be required. Should you fail to pay, you will be liable for all legal costs (including legal costs on the scale between attorney and own client) incurred for the recovery of school fees.

One school term's notice in writing is also required should you wish to change from Full Day to Half Day, or vice versa. Please discuss at the office if your requirements change.

Please refer to the current fee schedule for further information.

Payments

1. Only administrative staff may receive any form of fee payment, and a receipt must be issued.
2. Teaching staff may only accept monies related to special projects or outings.
3. You may pay by direct debit order or into the school bank account. We encourage all parents to use a debit order or electronic funds transfer.
4. **The office does not carry change.** Kindly bring the exact amount when paying by cash.
5. **Regrettably children who are on a bursary, who are on a payment plan or whose account is in arrears are unable to do an extra-mural until the account is settled in full.**

Banking Details

Account name: THE BEEHIVE MONTESSORI PRE-SCHOOL

Bank: Nedbank

Branch code: 103910

Account Number: 1039 007732

Reference: Account number as per statement

Email proof of payment to beehivemp@gmail.com

MySchool CARDS

We ask you to please apply for a MySchool card linked to The Beehive Montessori Pre-School and swipe at every opportunity. Every swipe at Woolies, Engen, Quickshop, Waltons, ToysRus, Kalahari.com, Reggies, SupaQuick, will help to raise funds for The Beehive Montessori Pre-School at absolutely no cost to you!

It's so easy...



1. APPLY for a MySchool Card (forms at the office, or apply on-line)
2. SWIPE your card at MySchool partners (over 2500 partner locations nationwide)
3. The partner will DONATE a percentage of your purchase to the charity of your choice. And you will qualify for REWARD Discounts at Woolworths!

Thank you for making every swipe count! For more information, go to www.myschool.co.za

COMMUNICATION

Please inform your class Directress of any changes at home or in the child's life that may have an effect at school so that we can better provide for the needs of your child. All information will be regarded as confidential. We will accept your judgment as to the kinds of changes, which may affect your child's behaviour, security, and general well-being. Common causes of distress include: either or both parents being away from home for any reason for an extended time; new person living in the home; new sibling; illness or hospitalisation within the family; accident or death within the family; new employment or moving. It is very important that both parents and any other care-givers read all communications.

Please notify the office immediately should your contact information change.

Communication Channels

School notices will be communicated as follows:

1. "Parent Information" notice board: For school-wide notices.
2. Classroom door: For class-specific information.
3. E-mail: For news flashes and the monthly newsletter, as well as the SAMA (South African Montessori Association) newsletter. If you are not receiving monthly emails then please let the office know as we may have added your details incorrectly into our database.
4. WhatsApp Parent Group.

Class Telephone Lists

Your class telephone list is available from the office and is updated each term. Please request a copy if you would like to set up play dates or distribute birthday invitations, etc. If you do not want your information available to others, please let the office know.

PARENT/TEACHER REVIEWS

Please do not hesitate to contact your child's Directress if you have a concern or question at any time. Parent/Teacher Interviews are held during the first and third terms. Both parents are strongly encouraged to attend these sessions. In addition, a written progress report is completed at the end of the second and fourth terms. Please treat these reports as confidential.

In order to facilitate positive communications, please discuss any concerns directly with your child's class Directress. If this first step does not resolve the problem, please schedule time with the Principal to discuss your concerns. Please contact the office to make an appointment.

PARENT INFORMATION EVENINGS *(COVID-19 Regulations may limit this)*

A parent education evening is presented at the beginning of each term. These are usually scheduled on a Thursday from 18h30 to 19h30 with tea and coffee served. There is no session in the fourth term.

Parents are invited to learn more about Montessori philosophy, the Montessori classroom, the work your child is doing, parenting issues and how to implement Montessori in the home. Previous non-Montessori topics have included "Boundaries and Discipline" presented by the Parent Centre and "Nutrition for Children" presented by a registered dietician. We encourage you to attend these interesting and informative sessions.

Where there is a guest speaker, a nominal charge of R10 to R15 will be levied to cover the cost of the evening.

Please sign-up for complimentary child care if required.

MISSING PIECES

If you find any foreign object or small piece, please return it to the office. It might be a vital piece of equipment or a puzzle piece.

FOOD AT SCHOOL

Daily: Fresh fruit (for the fruit platter)
Healthy lunch box for half-day and full-day aftercare children

Breakfast should be eaten at home. Please check in advance with your Class Directress if any children have food allergies when it's your child's turn for Special Snack or if it's your child's birthday celebration.

Due to various dietary restrictions and life-threatening food allergies, all **food and drinks** (e.g. Special Snack, birthday treats, etc) brought onto the school property must be handed to the class directress or handed in at the office.

Please do not leave **any food or medicine** in school bags or pockets (including sweets, sandwiches, fruit, drinks, etc). All food stuff and medication entering the school property must be **under the school's control**.

Blessing Before Meals

We sing a non-denominational blessing before morning snack and lunch. The words are listed below.

“Blessings on the blossoms, blessings on the fruit,
Blessings on the leaves and trees, blessings on our food.
Enjoy your snack/lunch.”

Morning Snack

Sandwiches: Provitas with tub margarine or honey. 3-6 Class children prepare their own Provitas!

Fruit: Fruit is washed and cut into a Fruit Salad that is shared. Please remember to bring one fresh fruit every day and put it in the fruit bowl in your classroom.

Afternoon Snack (Half-Day & Full-day Aftercare only)

Please pack a healthy lunch box if your child stays for aftercare. Prepare in easy-to-handle portions and make sure that you pack food your child will eat. Please do not send sweets, biscuits or fizzy cold drinks.

WELLNESS POLICY

General Health and Hygiene

1. Please apply **sunscreen** on your child each morning. During summer and spring, sunscreen will be re-applied in the classroom before outside time, as well as before children go outside during after-care.
2. Please ensure that your child's **nails** are short at all times. A friendly pat can easily turn into a blood-drawing scratch! Remember nails grow faster during growth spurts, so please check daily!
3. Please check for **head lice** daily and report any outbreak to the school office immediately.

“Stay at Home” Symptoms

The school environment is conducive to the rapid spread of illness. For this reason, we ask you to keep your child at home if they display the following symptoms:

- Headache, body aches or general flu symptoms

- Elevated temperature
- Vomiting or diarrhoea
- Listlessness
- Persistent cough or sore throat
- Profuse or discoloured mucous discharge
- Bloodshot eyes
- Evidence of head lice.

Illness and Medication

If your child is sick, they should recover in a **caring** home environment and return to school once they are well enough to cope with a busy school day.

Children on medication may feel drowsy, nauseous or hyperactive. We encourage you to keep your child at home until the course of medication is completed.

Do not leave medication in your child's school bag under any circumstances.

Medication for chronic conditions such as asthma or diabetes needs to be recorded in our medication register, labelled and kept in the office once you have made the medical condition known to the Administrator and the class Directress.

Infectious Disease

Please notify the office if your child has contracted an infectious disease. For highly contagious diseases, we will notify the other parents so that they can be on the look-out for symptoms. In some cases, we are required to notify the Department of Health.

Allergies

Please ensure that the school is informed in writing of any and all allergies your child may have. This information should be completed on your application form and updated as required. Please discuss any allergies with your class Directress and provide anti-histamines as required.

Medical Emergencies

In case of injury or illness during school hours, the child may be brought to the school office. Parents will be notified by phone to pick up a sick or injured child. If a parent cannot be reached, the office will call the alternate contact persons listed on the application form. **Parents are responsible for keeping all emergency information current by making any changes in addresses, telephone numbers, or emergency contact information at the office.**

If we are unable to contact a parent/guardian/alternate contact person in case of an emergency, we will take the appropriate action to ensure your child has the necessary medical care. All medical costs are for the parents' account, including the services of an ambulance or call-out of a doctor.

First Aid and CPR

All our Directresses are trained in First Aid and CPR, and they hold valid certificates. We host a First Aid course annually and parents are welcome to enrol for the course.

Blood/Vomit Spill

If a child injures him/herself in such a way that blood is spilt, the staff member who administers first aid is required to wear the latex gloves. Such is the rule when cleaning up vomit. Gloves need to be worn and a clearly labelled vomit bucket is available in each classroom.

DRESS GUIDELINES

For ease of identification, please clearly **label** your child's clothing, as well as shoes, hats, school bag, bottle, nappies, sheets, blankets, etc with their first name and the initials of their last name, e.g. John B. We do not recommend that you label items with your full last name for security reasons.

Children should come to school in sensible washable clothing that permits full movement and outdoor play and is easy to slip on and off. We do not recommend belts, dungarees, etc. Clothes that have elastic waistbands are excellent.

In order to avoid colds and flu during autumn and winter, children need to be dressed appropriately. We will check the children to ensure jackets/shoes are taken off or put on as required. Some children may be more difficult to persuade. If they cannot be persuaded, we will not force the children to change what they're wearing and will respect their wishes. Please could you help us by dressing your children in layers, for example, wearing a vest, T-shirt, and tracksuit top. This allows for easy adjustment throughout the day with the least amount of persuasion!

Personal Items

Please leave all personal property such as jewellery (with the exception of earrings), toys, sunglasses, games, etc. at home. The school is not responsible for damage to, loss, or theft of any personal items brought to school. If these items are brought to school, they will be held in the class Directresses possession at the office until the end of the day.

Dress Code

For more peaceful play, we ask that you do not send your child to school in clothing that encourages aggressive behaviour. The school's **dress code** policy is that children should not wear "fantasy character" clothing to school since it upsets other children and it affects behaviour in class.

Character Guidelines:

- ✗ A character is **not** allowed if it performs any action that you would not want your child to emulate, e.g., flying off buildings (Spiderman, Batman), turning into an alien and shooting people (Ben 10), wearing provocative clothing (Bratz), tackling someone by the hair (WWE Raw), etc.
- ✓ Friendly characters such as Pooh Bear, Mickey Mouse, Barney, Bob the Builder, Thomas the Train are acceptable.

Change of Clothes

We do a lot of painting and pasting at school and, although the children do wear aprons, occasional accidents are inevitable. Please provide a weather appropriate change of clothes in your child's school bag. In autumn and spring when temperatures fluctuate unexpectedly, please provide both a warm and a cool set of clothes. For children who are potty training, please provide more than one change of clothes as discussed with your class Directress.

Lost and Found

Please regularly check the Lost and Found Box for clothing, shoes, jackets, etc. Unclaimed items will be donated to our school in Philippi at the end of the year.

SHOW AND TELL (only for 3-6 Class)

During class circle time, children are invited to show and tell their class about a special theme-related item or 'letter of the week' they have brought to school. This activity helps the children build their confidence and vocabulary. Note that children only participate if and when they feel comfortable to do so - so at first, we may have some "showing", but not much "telling".

Please assist your child to find or make a theme-related item to bring to class. Please do not send valuables or sentimental items.

SPECIAL SNACK (COVID-19 regulations may limit this)

Special Snack is included in our program to ignite and develop entrepreneurial skills. Please check when your child is scheduled to be the Baker. When it's your child's turn, you will be asked to bring a healthy snack for the class. Your child will be invited to "offer" the items to the class. Then the class will sit down to enjoy the special snack. If you can make the time, Special Snack Day is a great opportunity to cook and bake with your child. If you are unable to do so, store-bought items are also acceptable.

Suggestions for Special snacks include:

- Plain popcorn
- Muffins
- Crumpets (plain or buttered)
- Oat crunchies
- Rusks
- Yoghurt
- Jelly
- Custard
- Cheese straws
- Cheese on crackers
- Mini pita breads with a savoury filling
- Banana bread (plain or buttered)
- Madeira cake (plain vanilla sponge)
- Fruit zingers/sticks
- Dried guava/mango roll slices
- Plain pretzels (unsalted)
- Other nutritious and delicious snacks!

Cakes and cupcakes are only acceptable if they have a small amount of icing and are relatively plain. Please avoid unhealthy high sugar/salt items such as sweets and chips. Please check in advance with your class Directress if any children have food allergies so that you can plan accordingly. Please ensure that there are **no nuts** and **no alcohol** in home-baked and store-bought items.

PLANT CARE

Class Garden Patch

The Toddler Class and 3-6 Class have a designated garden patch. During the year, your child will plant seedlings in this area. Please take an interest in your child's class garden and enjoy watching it grow. Where we have a successful vegetable yield, we will harvest and cook the vegetables at school for the class, or invite you to take the vegetables home for dinner!

ART SUPPLIES

We need used materials to use in our art projects. Please help us by bringing the following items to school:

- Newspapers and magazines
- Scrap paper
- Egg boxes
- Cereal boxes
- A4 paper used on one side
- Attractive perfume bottles
- Attractive screw lid bottles
- 1kg Yoghurt tubs with lids
- 2l Ice cream tubs with lids
- Margarine tubs with lids
- 2l Plastic cold drink bottles
- Sponges from medicine bottles
- Empty toilet paper rolls
- A4 paper (used on one side)

Please ensure items are **clean and dry** before placing them in the Art Supplies basket in the locker area. Also please ensure that there are no choking hazards, i.e. small lids have been removed. Please do **not** put any glass, tins, and containers of any toxic substances or other potentially dangerous materials in the Art Supplies basket.

NOTE: This is not a recycling facility. We only need items that can be used for art projects!

BREAD TAGS

Please collect ALL your bread tags, i.e. the plastic tie on the bread bag. Please bring these to school and slot into the box in your child's classroom or at the office. Our bread tag collection is part of a drive across schools to raise funds for wheelchairs for the underprivileged. Every tag counts!

BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays are a special event for a Montessori child. Please confirm arrangements in advance with your class Directress. You are very welcome to attend your child's birthday celebration! Your child may bring a birthday cake OR cupcakes and some fruit juice to share with the class. Please ensure that cakes or cupcakes do not contain any nuts or alcohol. **Note** that party packs are not allowed at school, instead your child can give their whole class the gift of a new book via our Birthday Book Club.

Birthday Book Club

We invite you to donate a book to the school in honour of your child's birthday. A book plate will be placed in the front cover of the book thanking the family for the gift. Teachers read birthday books on birthdays as well as other times in the year.

Montessori Birthday Circle and Time-line

In the Pre-school classes, we celebrate the child's birthday with a special birthday circle where we walk through the time-line of the child's life. Please could you bring photographs depicting special events or milestones in your child's life, e.g. day they were born, birthday party, etc. Up to 3 photographs per year of your child's life will be sufficient to illustrate their time-line in a poster or booklet format.

Birthday Invitations

If you are planning a private home birthday party and do not wish to invite the whole class, please distribute birthday invitations via WhatsApp or discreetly via the message pockets. Birthday parties and invitations are a sensitive topic for most children and they become very upset if they feel left out.

PRESCHOOL OUTINGS *(COVID-19 regulations may limit this)*

We arrange one outing per term for the 3-6 class. Parents will be required to sign permission forms for each outing. Children who do not return a signed permission slip will not be permitted to attend the outing.

An outing fee will be requested from you (dependent on entrance fees) is charged each term per child. Please pay your outing fee to your class Directress. This fee will cover the child's entrance as well as any parents/drivers accompanying a trip. Parents should only transport as many children as they have seatbelts.

Any left-over money is put into the kitty for the end of term party.

Directresses (teachers) are not permitted to transport children so that they are free to supervise arrangements. The Directresses will assign the parent/driver to a group of children (usually their own child and friends known to the parent.) The parent will then be responsible for these children throughout the entire trip, as well as attending to their needs (toilet, snack, clothing etc.). Siblings may only attend if they are independent and with the prior permission of the Directress. On return, parents/drivers are to see each child safely into the classroom where the Directress ensures everyone has returned.

On outing days, please ensure that your child arrives early, as we cannot wait for latecomers. Children who are ill are **not** admitted on outings. Please phone in if your child is going to be absent on an outing day.

We always need the help of parents for lifts to our outings and encourage parents to avail themselves to at least attend one of their children's outings. It is a time when you can get to know the other parents and also see how your own child interacts with their peers.

Outing Snack

For most outings, you will be asked to pack a disposable snack. Please pack a healthy and balanced snack and small juice (not box juice but rather one that can be sipped at and sealed again for later) in a disposable packet with your child's name clearly written on it. We do allow a few luxuries like chips and sweets, but please try to avoid lollipops and yoghurts tend to be very messy.

PLAYGROUND RULES

The following are some of our playground rules. Please support us by abiding by these rules when you play with your child in our playground or at other parks. Children thrive on consistency and these rules will help your child to play more safely!

1. We wear a hat and sunscreen during outside time.
2. We do not leave shoes in the playground. We put them in the class shoe boxes.
3. We do not climb up the slide. We climb up the ladder and then go down the slide.
4. We do not slide head first down the slide. We sit or lie and slide legs-first down the slide.
5. We may climb up the tree if we are able to climb down on our own.
6. We do not stand on the swing. We sit on the swing.
7. We do not climb over the fence. We walk down the steps to the sand area.
8. We do not climb on the balustrade. We walk up and down the stairs.
9. We do not climb through the Wendy House windows. We walk through the Wendy House door.
10. We do not throw anything over the fence or wall. We keep sandpit toys in the playground, and extra hats and shoes in the class boxes.
11. We do not throw stones over the fence or at each other. We play with stones on the ground.
12. We do not play with sandpit toys on the paved area. We play with sandpit toys in the sand.
13. We do not ride bikes in the sand. We ride bikes on the paved area.
14. We do not throw sand at our friends. We do not pour sand on our friends' heads. We dig in the sand.
15. We do not throw sand at the bunny. We feed and look at the bunny.
16. We do not use spades for banging or hitting our friends. We use spades for digging.
17. We do not hurt the plants or play in the plants area. We water and look after the plants.
18. We sit in the wagon before it moves.
19. We place the bikes down carefully when we are finished riding them.

Note: **No adults** are allowed on the outside equipment, especially the swings and small benches. They break!

GUIDELINES FOR TODDLER PARENTS

In order to help us to help your child become independent, please follow these guidelines:

- Ensure your child has breakfast before coming to school.
- Encourage your child to drink water. Do not send fizzy drinks, Coke, Lucozade, Energade, etc.
- Send a soft toy for comfort when first settling at school.
- Ensure your child wears shoes they can put on, fasten, and take off by themselves
- Arrive at school on time.

Toilet Training

Toilet training is part of the Toddler curriculum and when your child is ready for this phase, we ask you to follow some guidelines to help make this phase as easy and pleasant as possible.

- Discuss your child's readiness for toilet training with your child's Directress and agree the way forward.
- Please do not send your child with "pull up" nappies - this gives a false sense of security, and requires all clothes to be removed (including shoes) when a nappy need to be changed.
- Please do not revert to nappies after school and over weekends/holidays - this confuses the child and makes it more difficult for them to understand.
- Provide your child with proper underwear.
- Dress your child in clothes that pull up and down easily, e.g. elasticised waistbands (instead of belts, buttons, dungarees and jeans).

"Watering the Garden"

When boys are toilet training and especially with older boys, parents should resist the temptation to allow them to urinate anywhere but in the toilet. It quickly becomes a habit to quickly whip their trousers down and "water the garden". It is a health hazard and rather unpleasant for the rest of the school when the sand pit or our favourite tree becomes a urinal. Note that we regularly spray the sand with disinfectant and salt to maintain an acceptable level of hygiene and cleanliness in the sand areas.

HINTS FOR HAPPY CHILDREN

Dear Mom and Dad

- *Please bring me to school on time!* I should be at school by the latest **15 minutes before class starts**. When I am late, I don't get an opportunity to socialise with my friends before the work cycle. I also disrupt the morning program and this makes me and my class feels unsettled.
- Please be on time to fetch me as well! I feel anxious and don't like to be the last one to go home when you are late.
- Please do not enter the class after it has started for the morning (08h30) as it disturbs the children who have settled into their work.
- If you need to drop something off, please leave it in the office with the administrator.
- It is SO important that I have a nutritious breakfast before I come to school. This helps me to concentrate and gives me enough energy to play with my friends.
- Please make sure that I have a set of clean clothes at school in case I spill or have an accident.
- Please remember that I am NOT allowed to wear fantasy clothes e.g. Ben Ten, WWE Raw, Batman, Superman, Spiderman, Bratz, etc to school.
- Please read the notice board daily so that I don't miss special events, and please check my message pocket every day.
- All my work is valuable; please admire it and keep it for me.
- Please offer to help with field trips sometimes.
- Please ask me about my theme and tell me something that you know so I can share it with my class.
- Please help me to find or make something theme-related to bring to Show and Tell each Friday or for our weekly theme table.
- Please come to all special events and functions and make friends with my friends' parents.
- Please invite my friends home to play sometimes, and let me visit them.
- If you support my school and teachers, it makes me feel secure and happy.

Thank you

TYPICAL FULL DAY IN TODDLER PROGRAM

The following outlines a typical day at school with examples of what a 2-year-old's day might include.

		Toddler Class	Example
07h30 - 08h00	Morning Care	Activities in the Aftercare Classrooms	Put bag in locker/ in row for when you go to class. Put fruit in classroom fruit bowl Work with blocks, puzzles, etc Read a book
08h00		Walk to classroom	
08h00 - 09h30	Montessori Program	Work cycle	Choose hand transfer activity, work 3 times, and return to shelf. Watch pouring activity presentation by teacher. Choose and work with puzzle, and return to shelf. Choose and work with knobbed cylinders, and return to shelf. Choose art activity and complete.
09h30 - 09h45		Circle time with singing	"Hello" song Date and weather chart "Days of the week" song Grace and Courtesy, or Theme Presentation
09h45 - 10h00		Morning snack	Help to serve snack Sit and enjoy sandwich and fruit salad
10h00 - 10h15		Wash and toilet routine Apply sunscreen	Wash own hands/face with clean face cloth Nappy change/toilet
10h15 - 11h15		Outside time	Play on playground equipment and sandpit Participate in water play activity Socialise with friends
11h30 - 12h00		Wash and toilet routine Story time	Wash own hands/face with clean face cloth Choose book from shelf Sit and listen to story time Nappy change/toilet
Half day children go home			
12h00 - 12h30	After-care	Lunch and wash up	Enjoy lunch in classroom Wash own hands/face with clean face cloth
12h30 - 14h00		Nap time	Nap on own sleeping bag/ bed
14h00 - 14h45		Outside time	Play on outside equipment and sandpit Do activity with teacher in small group
14h45 - 15h00		Wash and toilet routine	Wash own face/hands with clean face cloth Nappy change/toilet
15h00 - 15h30		Afternoon snack and wash up	Eat a sandwich if still hungry Wash own face and hands with clean face cloth
15h30 - 16h30		Outside time	Play on outside equipment and sandpit Do activity with teacher in small group
16h30 - 16h45		Wash and toilet routine	Nappy change
16h45 - 17h15		Children's story	
17h15 - 17h30		Prepare for pick up	Fetch bag from locker and wait for parents

TYPICAL FULL DAY IN 3-6 CLASS PROGRAM

The following outlines a typical day at school with examples of what a 4-year-old's day might include.

		Preschool	Example
07h30 - 08h00	Morning Care	Activities in the Aftercare Classroom	Put bag outside door ready to take to class Work with blocks, puzzles, etc Read a book
08h00 - 11h00		Work cycle (Morning snack is available from 10h00/10h30)	Choose whisking activity, work 5 times, and return to shelf. Watch individual presentation of polishing activity by teacher. Choose and work with puzzle, and return to shelf. Choose and work with sand paper letters, and return to shelf. Prepare own snack and eat with friend. Wash bowl at "sink". Choose art activity and complete. Choose and work with pink reading activity, and return to shelf.
11h00 - 12h00		Outside time	Play on playground equipment and sandpit Participate in water play activity Socialise with friends
12h00 – 12h15		Wash routine Reading time	Wash own hands/face in class basin Choose book from shelf Sit on mat and read book (Note that there is no set time for toileting in the pre-school program. Children use the toilet when they need to.)
12h15 – 12h30		Circle time & Story time	Hello" song Date and weather chart Sing various songs Grace and Courtesy, or Theme Presentation Listen to story and ask/answer questions at the end
Half day children go home			
12h35 - 13h00	After-care	Lunch and wash up	Enjoy lunch in own classroom Wash own hands/face in class basin
13h00 - 14h00		Nap time (if required)	Nap on own sleeping bag/ bed
14h00 - 14h45		Outside time	Play on outside equipment and sandpit Do activity with teacher in small group
14h45 - 15h00		Wash routine	Wash own face/hands in the bathroom
15h00 - 15h30		Afternoon snack and wash up	Eat a sandwich if still hungry Wash own face and hands in bathroom
15h30 - 16h30		Outside time	Play on outside equipment and sandpit Do activity with teacher in small group
16h30 - 16h45		Wash routine	Wash hands and face in bathroom
16h45 - 17h15		Story time	Listen to a story
17h15 - 17h30		Prepare for pick up	Fetch bag from locker and wait for parent

TYPICAL WEEK AT SCHOOL

The following table describes the structure of circle times during a typical week, as well as the extra mural activities offered. The class Directress amends the weekly circle time plan to accommodate public holidays, birthdays and other special occasions as required.

		Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Circle Time	Daily Topic	Share your news	Theme presentation	Afrikaans	Gross motor activity	Show and Tell Special Snack
	General	"Hello" Song Date and weather chart Songs and rhymes Word games, e.g. sounds-like Group presentations Grace and courtesy presentations e.g. how to handle books, walking around mats, etc				
	Additional charge				Gym-fants Pottery	

THE ALPHABET

Did you know that of some 500,000 words in the English dictionary, 85% are phonetic! The Montessori approach to learning the letters of the alphabet is to first learn their shape and phonetic sounds using the lower-case sandpaper letters. The children trace the letters while saying their sound. This provides a multi-sensory approach to learning letter formation and phonics. A solid foundation of phonics gives the child the tools to master most words and the confidence to start reading.

Please use the phonic sounds rather than the names of the letters when initially introducing the alphabet to your child. Isolate and clip each sound, for example, say “j” almost as a puff of air, not “juuh”. Keep vowels crisp and clear, for example, say a short “a” not “aaaa”. Long vowels will be introduced later, e.g. the long a – as in able.

THE PHONETIC ALPHABET		
a – as in apple	j – as in jam	s – as in sit
b – as in ball	k – as in king (kicking king)	t – as in tap
c – as in cat	l – as in lap	u – as in up
d – as in dog	m – as in mat	v – as in van
e – as in egg	n – as in nut	w – as in wet
f – as in fan	o – as in orange	x – as in box (ks)
g – as in gate	p – as in pig	y – as in yo-yo
h – as in hat	q – as in queen (kw)	z – as in zip
i – as in ink	r – as in rabbit	

SONGS AND RHYMES

Wondering what your child is singing about? Wish you knew the words? Below are the words to some of the songs sung regularly at school. Please refer to the newsletter and notice boards for theme-related songs. Enjoy singing along with your child!

The “Hello” Song

Hello, how are you? Hello, how are you? Hello, how are you? How are you today?

It’s good to see <child name 1>. It’s good to see <child name 2>. It’s good to see <child name 3>. How are you today?

Repeat until all children have been welcomed.

Days of the Week

To the tune of “Oh my darling Clementine”:

There are seven days, there are seven days, there are seven days in a week x 2

Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday x 2

Repeat

Ask your class Directress for any other lyrics or hear many of them at our annual concert.