



# Preschool Parent Manual

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2018 - 2019



*"Whoever touches the life of a child touches the most sensitive point of a whole which has roots in the most distant past and climbs toward the infinite future."*

*-Maria Montessori*

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## Goals

It is our goal to teach the child as a whole and to equally guide the physical, social, emotional and intellectual growth of a child. Through the prepared environment, calmness of the teacher and attention to grace and courtesy we strive to offer an educational environment based upon the teachings of Dr. Maria Montessori.

The following are areas of develop you can expect to see in your child:

- Independence
- A joy of learning
- Love of order
- Learning through discovery
- Concentration
- Attachment to reality
- Self discipline
- Ability to choose
- Enjoyment of quiet
- Self confidence
- Problem Solving Skills
- Community Values



## Philosophy

The Montessori environment is prepared to allow the child to gain the ability to reason. Through a level of respect and responsibility, the child experiences freedom achieved through order and self-discipline. The child chooses from his/her environment what they need and the teacher helps guide the child with the developmentally appropriate materials as the child naturally reveals themselves through their work.

## General Academic Year Preschool Class Schedule

7:30-8:25 a.m.....Before School Program (BSP) in the Ottoo Skipper preschool classroom

8:15 a.m.....Preschool students can be dropped off in the Monarch preschool classroom for supervised playtime. PreK teaching staff will bring to classrooms at 8:25 a.m.

8:30-8:45 a.m.....Group Line Time with music/movement and community building

8:45-10:30 a.m.....Independent work time

10:45-11:30 a.m.....Large Motor Coordination Outdoors

11:30-12:00 p.m.....Community Lunch Time \*

\*Please bring lunch from home daily.

12:00-12:15 p.m.....Community Clean Up

12:15-1:15 p.m.....Rest and Book Time

1:15-2:15 p.m.....Independent Work Time

2:15-2:30 p.m.....Group Line time

2:30-3:25 p.m.....Large Motor Coordination Outdoors

3:30 p.m.....Dismissal time \* *(No early release for preschoolers on Thursday)*

*\*Please meet outside classroom door.*

3:35-6 p.m.....After School Program (ASP) in the Monarch preschool classroom

### Additional Weekly Events

Science Class

Music Class

Mentor Families

Garden

### Additional Monthly Events

Physical Education Class

Art Class

ICPL Bookmobile

## Before or After School Programming

Willowwind offers a Before School Program (BSP) and After School Program (ASP). BSP and ASP programs provide a rich opportunity to engage in physical activities, arts and crafts, and culinary/ themed activities.

Older students are provided quiet study time in order to complete homework. A healthy snack is provided. **BSP drop off is between 7:30-8:15 a.m.** in the Monarch preschool room. Please contact Rachel Butler if you would like your child participate on a full time or part time basis.

**Parents are expected to pick-up their student(s) from ASP no later than 6pm.** Parents arriving late will be assessed a \$15 fee for each 15-minute increment in which they are late. Repeated tardiness may result in removal from the After School Program at the discretion of the Head of School.

## Drop Off and Pick Up

Preschool drop off is between 8:15 - 8:30 A.M in the Monarch preschool room.

We encourage a quick goodbye. In the event that your child is having a difficult transition, please feel free to read a story in the preschool library and take them to the classroom door awaiting a teacher's reception.

Pick up time is 3:30 P.M. **Please greet your child outside the classroom door, in the hallway.** You can observe the end-of-day routine through the hallway windows.

The After School Program is available from 3:35-6:00 P.M. Please contact Rachel Butler if you would like your child participate on a full time or part-time basis.

## Absences

If you know your child will not be attending school please notify the Office Manager as soon as possible by phone at 319-338-6061 or e-mail [rachelb@willowwind.org](mailto:rachelb@willowwind.org). If you do not know until the morning that your child will not be attending school, please call the school before 8:30 A.M. to notify us of his/her absence. You can always leave a message during non-business hours. It is also helpful to email your classroom teacher ([shaynel@willowwind.org](mailto:shaynel@willowwind.org) or [kayel@willowwind.org](mailto:kayel@willowwind.org)) to notify her of the absence.

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## Weather Emergencies

Willowwind follows the Iowa City School District for school cancellations and for early dismissal due to inclement weather, **with the exception of heat related events.** In the event of early dismissal due to inclement weather, there is no after school care. Listen for announcements regarding Iowa City Community Schools. School cancellations are announced as soon as possible on the following TV stations: KCRG-TV, KGAN-TV, KWWL-TV . You may also sign up for text alerts related to Weather Emergencies through KCRG-TV.

## Rest

Montessori believes in the importance of a calm environment in order that children are given the opportunity to internally regulate themselves. All Willowwind preschool students are provided the opportunity to calm themselves during rest time after lunch. Please provide a large reusable bag to store rest items. Students rest on cots covered with a cot sheet. Cots are cleaned daily. We require that the rest items go home on Friday and are laundered and are brought back on Monday.

### Bring:

A small pillow and/or small blanket.

### DO NOT Bring:

Toys or stuffed animals for rest time.

## Items from Home

Our classrooms engage children in multiple curricular areas and we find that students learn best without distractions. **Personal items such as toys, gadgets, stickers, fantasy books, workbooks, purses with candy, gum, lip balm, etc. should be kept at home.** These items cause a distraction not only to the child who brought in the item but other children in the class.



## Healthy Lunch

Please work with your child to pack a healthy lunch and a bottle for water. **To support our nutritional practices, please avoid sugary snacks and/or soda products.** To complement our emphasis on the independence of a child, please use containers that children are able to open by themselves.

## Holiday Snacks

Teachers and students will prepare most snacks that will be used for any holiday celebrations. We will maintain a "no candy" policy at Valentine's Day and Halloween. Parents will be notified of additional snack needs for holiday celebrations.

## Snack Procedure

At Willowwind Montessori Preschool, we promote care of self. Part of care of self is learning healthy eating habits and being active. The preschool staff would like to emphasize the importance of a nutritious and well balanced diet for preschoolers. **Each week one student from each class will bring requested fruits, vegetables and grains.** These items are shared throughout the classrooms and are used for snack twice a day each day for a week. The Wednesday before your snack week your teacher will give you a handout to bring in snack the next week. We kindly ask that you bring in flowers to contribute to our living environment and help to foster the love of nature and beauty Maria Montessori encourages.

### One Fruit- 2 Large bunches or bags

Apples  
Oranges  
Strawberries/blueberries  
Grapes  
Bananas  
Kiwi  
Peaches  
Any dried fruit

### One Vegetable- 2 Large bunches or bags

Frozen peas  
Celery  
Carrots  
Cucumber  
Tomatoes  
Fresh green beans  
Sweet pepper  
Broccoli/cauliflower

### One Grain- 2 Family Sized packages

Rice cakes  
Graham crackers  
Tortillas  
Triscuit crackers  
Wheat Thins crackers  
Corn tortilla chips  
Pita  
Veggie Straws

### Optional

Yogurt  
Cheese  
Hummus  
Peanut butter (depending on classroom allergies)

Snack is an anticipated part of the day. The children enjoy sharing their food and socializing with their friends. **Please bring your snack contribution on the first day of your child's snack week.** Please consider any classroom allergies, when considering your purchase. Below are some foods you may be asked to bring or suggestions for an additional snack.

## Montessori Birthday or Half Birthday Celebration

A Montessori Birthday celebration is a fun and unique line time. It begins with an explanation of the Earth and Sun. A 'sun' is placed in the middle of the circle and the birthday child will walk around the circle, each time representing a year of their life. The child holds a globe of the Earth as s/he walks around the "sun". The teacher reads from the birthday form the parents have filled out ahead of time. This discusses the child's accomplishments each year. Then the class sings "Happy Birthday."

**Optional:** You may decide to bring in a healthy treat (ask the teacher for recommendations if needed) and/or a wrapped book to either give to the child as a gift from their family or the book can be a gift from the child to the classroom. **We ask all invites to birthday celebrations outside of the classroom to be sent directly to the children's homes or put into the family mailboxes. The school directory, provided near the beginning of the Academic Year, provides addresses.**



## Health and Wellness

It is a requirement of admission to the preschool that a student be potty trained upon their start. Willowwind School is not a licensed day care, and thus toilet training assistance cannot be provided. Montessori preschool emphasizes independence in the bathroom along with self-dressing and hand washing. Willowwind Preschool's definition of bathroom independence is the child's ability to initiate bathroom trips, wipe independently, and change clothes with minimal assistance. We also understand that students occasionally have accidents (especially when starting a new environment). We only admit students who wear underwear full time (no pull-ups or diapers.) Parents will be informed of accidents via a duplicate form to be sent home the day of the accident. Should a need arise for an enrollment change based upon identified potty training issues, parents will be contacted individually. We do ask that each child leave a weather appropriate change of clothes at school. A clean set of clothes needs to be brought to school the day following an accident to replace the spare outfit.

When a child has a fever, we ask that the child is fever free for 24 hours before returning to school. When a child needs to stay indoors during outside time, please provide a doctor's note if duration for staying indoors is more than a day. When a child displays a fever over 100.4 degrees at school, parents will be called and the child will need to be picked up immediately and kept home until they are fever free for 24 hours. The same policy applies in cases of diarrhea and vomiting.

## Preschool Behavior Protocol

Within the preschool community there are sometimes behaviors displayed that directly threaten the safety of other students and therefore will not be tolerated. Unsafe behaviors will necessitate an incident report as well as a first meeting with parents. These behaviors include: biting, hitting, aggressive pushing or pulling, putting a body on others, scratching, and any other actions that may cause gross physical harm to the self or another.

Other harmful or severely disruptive behaviors that recur throughout the same day may require that a child leave the program until a meeting with parents to discuss consequences or a plan for prevention of future issues can be arranged. These behaviors include the aforementioned behaviors as well as defiant behaviors, aggressive or violent behavior towards other students or teachers, inappropriate language, and destruction or misuse of the environment. Repeated behaviors that affect classroom dynamic and/or transfer to other students' homes are treated with equal consequences. These behaviors and the according responses made by the teacher(s) will be clearly documented and a call home would be made only if no progress has been documented and at the teachers' discretion.

### Protocol for Behavioral Issues:

- 1) Incident reports or behavioral documentation is recorded by the teacher.
- 2) Up to 3 incident reports for the same behavior (depending on severity could possibly be the first incident report), parents meet with the teachers and possibly the Head of School to create an Action Plan. Head of School is informed of meeting if not attending.
- 3) If incident occurs again, a second meeting with teachers is scheduled, with the Head of School in attendance. Together we evaluate and revise Action Plan.
- 4) Repeated behavioral issues that are not corrected by an Action Plan may result in further actions up to dismissal, at the discretion of the Head of School.

Montessori philosophy emphasizes the characteristics of peace, movement with purpose, ability to choose independently, respect for themselves, others, and environment, as well as ability to focus. Students, families, and teachers are encouraged to work together to embrace this philosophy. Additional information about the Montessori philosophy can be found here:

<http://amshq.org/Montessori-Education/Introduction-to-Montessori>

## Outdoor Classroom Policy and Procedure

Outdoor time is a wonderful extension of our learning environment and an opportunity to develop large gross motor skills. During this time, it is vital that we are safe and appropriate with our bodies and respectful to our environment and others in a way that reflects the principles of the Montessori philosophy. Rules for the outdoor classroom are:

- 1) We put the materials away when we are finished with them.
- 2) We ask others to use their materials.
- 3) We share.
- 4) We are kind to others and use our words.
- 5) We are safe with our bodies by going up the stairs or ladder and down the slide.
- 6) We ask a teacher before going inside.
- 7) We are respectful towards others by not pulling on our friends and their clothing.
- 8) We are safe with our bodies by not play fighting, hurting others, or aggressive play.
- 9) We make others feel safe by not using pretend weapons or play fighting.
- 10) We are safe and have fun!

When a child is not following directions, it is the teachers' discretion of follow up with a discussion, to have the child take a break to calm their body, or other consequences. Teachers will encourage and discuss safe and respectful choices, as well as help brainstorm ideas of alternative actions. If a behavior persists, additional steps may be taken as outlined in Preschool Behavior Protocol.



## Volunteer and Donation Opportunities

Willowwind values parent engagement. Here is a list of specific volunteer opportunities offered to preschool parents. Your child's teacher will inform you when an individual classroom need arises. Also, look for direct sign-up links for upcoming volunteer needs in the weekly e-newsletters.

Families are asked to contribute 20 hours of volunteer time per year.

### Volunteer opportunities:

Making/repairing materials (i.e. sewing, cutting, pasting, laminating)

Gardening

All-school event prep or clean-up

Reading books to children

Washing cot sheets weekly

Keeping preschool library organized

Cutting paper for classroom use

Making play dough (See recipe below)

Field trip chaperone

### Donations:

Plastic Grocery Bags

Play dough ingredients: Flour, Salt, Vegetable Oil, Cream of Tartar

Travel soaps

Old greeting cards/decorative paper

Used children's clothing (for spare clothes)

Hard Cover Books

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### To make preschool play dough:

1 ½ c. boiling water plus a few drops of food coloring, any color

2 c. plain flour

1 c. salt

2 Tbsp vegetable oil

2 Tbsp cream of tartar

Heat water/food coloring mixture. Mix remaining ingredients in a bowl. Add warm liquid mixture to dry ingredients. Stir to combine. If too dry, add a bit more oil. If too wet, add flour. Turn out onto a table to kneed, adding flour to make it less sticky.

Store in an air-tight container.

## Communication

### Seesaw

Families are provided information to sign up for the Seesaw app during Curriculum Night in September. This app provides direct communication between teachers and parents to share photos and notes of classroom happenings. Each Friday teachers post important classroom information to Seesaw. Please read the posts as they are the main form of weekly classroom communication.

### Bulletin Boards

Teachers will use the dry-erase boards located outside of each classroom for day-to-day communication. It may include curriculum information, classroom highlights, Montessori information, and upcoming events. Hallway space is also used to display larger projects and learning happening in the classroom.

### Conferences

We value ongoing conversations with parents regarding children. Please feel free to e-mail or call. In addition, there will be two formal conferences with your child's teacher throughout the school year. During the conferences we will discuss your child's progress and ways we might further facilitate his or her growth. Please do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher between conferences if the need arises.

### Family Mailboxes

Remember to check your family's mailbox on the main floor near the preschool stairway weekly. This is another way the school staff keep families informed of upcoming events. It is a place where other Willowwind families can communicate with you as well.



## Preschool Staff

### Lead Teachers

Kaye Lindsley	kayel@willowwind.org	Monarch Classroom
Shayne Lanning	shaynel@willowwind.org	Ottoe Skipper Classroom

### Co-Teachers

Alec Cassatt	alecc@willowwind.org	Ottoe Skipper Classroom
Ally Tippe	allyt@willowwind.org	Monarch Classroom

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## Office Staff

Main Office: 319-338-6061

Head of School	Michelle Beninga	michelleb@willowwind.org
Office Manager	Rachel Butler	rachelb@willowwind.org
Communications	Dana Smith	danas@willowwind.org
ASP/BSP Coordinator	Ashley Lorsung	<u><a href="mailto:ashleyl@willowwind.org">ashleyl@willowwind.org</a></u>

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## Resources

To learn more about Montessori, Willowwind School recommends the reading: A Parents' Guide to the Montessori Classroom by Aline Wolf.

The internet also offers a number of informative websites related to Montessori may serve as helpful resources for families.

The American Montessori Society site <http://amshq.org/Family-Resources>

Montessori Today site <http://www.montessori.edu/prod.html>