



Preschool Parent Manual

2022 - 2023



"Children are human beings to whom respect is due, superior to us by reason of their innocence and of the greater possibilities of their 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
- Self confidence
- A joy of learning
- Concentration
- Problem Solving Skills
- Self discipline
- Ability to choose
- Patience
- Learn order & process
- 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 their 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.

“The greatest sign of success for a teacher... is to be able to say, ‘The children are now working as if I did not exist.’”
- Maria Montessori

General Preschool Class Schedule for the Academic Year

8:15 AM ... Preschool students can begin drop-off by preschool playground gate

8:30-8:45 AM ... Group line time

10:15-10:30 AM ... Independent work time

Snack & specials

10:30- 11:30 AM ... Recess

11:30 AM ...Half-day dismissal

11:30 AM -12 PM ... Lunch

12:00-12:30 PM ... Story time

12:30 -1:15 PM ... Rest

1:15 - 1:30 PM ... Quiet book time

2:15-2:30 PM ... Independent work time & snack

2:30-3:25 PM ... Recess

3:30 PM ... Dismissal (MTWF)

2:30 PM early dismissal on Thursdays



Specials Classes

Art with Ms. Megan

Music & P.E. with Mr. Alec

“Let us treat them [children], therefore, with all the kindness which we would wish to help to develop in them.”

-Dr. Montessori's Own Handbook, Maria Montessori

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 and a healthy snack is provided at ASP.

BSP drop off is between 7:30-8:15 a.m. in the Monarch preschool room.

Preschool ASP runs from 3:30-6 p.m. M-F.

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.

Email Programs Coordinator, Mary Iverson at maryi@willowwind.org with questions or to register for B/ASP.

Drop Off and Pick Up

Preschool drop off is between 8:15 - 8:30 A.M. Please park and walk your child to the west side of the building to the lower level entrance by preschool playground gate. Families will be asked to say their goodbyes at this point. We encourage everyone to establish a routine with their child to have a successful goodbye. In the event that your child is having a difficult transition, there will be a designated hug spot marked on the sidewalk. Your patience is requested and appreciated as we navigate this important step to ensure the health and safety of all.

Pick up time is 3:30 P.M (MTWF) and 2:30 PM on Thursdays. Please park and walk to the west side of the building to the lower level entrance by preschool playground gate. The teacher will dismiss the students in similar regards to drop off.

Absences

Email is our preferred method of communication regarding early pick ups, late arrivals, illness, etc.

Monarchs, please notify Ms. Kaye and Cassidy at kayel@willowwind.org and cassidy@willowwind.org as well as Rachel Butler and Michelle Beninga at rachelb@willowwind.org and michelleb@willowwind.org.

Swallowtails, please notify Ms. Mae and Ms. Bri at maek@willowwind.org and briannav@willowwind.org as well as Rachel and Michelle. You can also leave a voice message during non-business hours at 319-338-6061.

Weather Emergencies

School cancellation, early dismissal, and late start are announced as soon as possible at KCRG-TV, KWVL-TV, Facebook, and email. 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 be given the opportunity to internally regulate themselves. Resting can mean laying calmly, looking at a book quietly, or sleeping. All Willowwind preschool students are provided a rest time after lunch.

Please provide a rest time blanket that can fit inside your child's backpack. Fresh rest items sent to school Monday, they stay for the whole week, get sent home Friday to be washed. A cot sheet will also be provided and will be washed onsite following laundered sanitation procedures. No toys or stuffed animals are allowed.

Bring:

A small blanket.

Optional: small pillow & one comfort item with the caveat if child needs it for resting.

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 & Snack Procedure

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.

Reusable lunch bags and containers are allowed and highly encouraged. To complement our emphasis on the independence of a child and reduce multi-person exposure, please use containers that children are able to open and close by themselves. All containers and water bottles **MUST** be taken home and washed nightly. We ask that families send ice packs with any lunch items requiring refrigeration.

There will be no community snacks for preschoolers. **ALL students will provide their own AM & PM snacks and lunch.** Please establish and designate AM snack and PM snack items with your child so they know what is for lunch. This could be a separate container or bag. Students will eat snack and lunch in classrooms or assigned outdoor spaces. If your child has any food allergies, let their teacher know what they are and their severity. Families may be asked to omit packing certain items if necessary due to severe allergies in the class.

Montessori Birthday or Half Birthday Celebration

A candle, representing the sun, is lit in the middle of the rug. Labels with each month of the year are laid out in a circle radiating out from the "sun." The children and teachers sit in a wide circle around the sun and months of the year, while the birthday child stands next to the month of their birth holding a globe to represent the Earth. The child then walks around the sun one time for each year of their life. As the child walks, the teacher reads from the birthday form filled out by families, sharing special events from each year. At the end the child blows out the candle and the class sings "Happy Birthday".

If you wish to provide something special for your child's birthday, families can consider a wrapped book to 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. The school directory, provided near the beginning of the academic year, provides addresses

Bathroom Independence

It is a requirement of admission to the preschool that a student be completely bathroom independent upon their start. We only admit students who wear underpants full time (no pull-ups or diapers). 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 understand that students occasionally have accidents (especially when starting a new environment). Families 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 ask that each child have a change of clothes at school. This includes bottoms, top, underpants, and socks. As the seasons shift please bring in and exchange weather appropriate clothing. A clean set of clothes needs to be brought to school the day following an accident to replace the spare outfit.

Health and Wellness

Willowwind asks all families and employees to please stay home if sick. If your child's temperature has:

- 100.0 degrees or more
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea (or other GI symptoms)

They must stay home and remain at home until symptom free (unmedicated) for 24 hours. Children will be asked to stay home for COVID related symptoms. See the link below for further information.

If a student becomes ill and experiences any of the symptoms above during the day they will be sent home. The "Feel Better Room" will be available for ill children waiting to go home. This room will be thoroughly sanitized after each use.

Willowwind reserves the right to send home individuals that display symptoms of respiratory illness and may request the individual consult with their health care provider to follow relevant guidance before their return to Willowwind School. Documentation of consultation may be required.

For COVID-19 specific symptoms and illness please reference the [Willowwind School 22-23 Safety Measures Guide](#) We ask families to notify Willowwind School immediately if potential exposure, diagnosis or test has occurred.

The AAP encourages families to stay up-to-date on well-child visits. Immunizations should be a top priority, and Willowwind encourages all students and employees to get an influenza vaccine.



Preschool Behavior Protocol

In case of injury an incident report will be filled out describing the incident. This document will be signed by the care provided, office staff and family. A duplicate form will be sent home and stored in the office. Depending on the severity or nature of the injury families will be contacted.

Willowwind fully acknowledges and accepts age appropriate behaviors testing boundaries and developing self control. However, behaviors displayed that directly threaten the safety of other students or teachers will not be tolerated. Unsafe behaviors will necessitate an incident report as well as communication with families. An incident report will be filled out describing the incident. This document will be signed by the care provided, office staff and family. A duplicate form will be sent home and stored in the office. These behaviors include: biting, hitting, aggressive pushing or pulling, scratching, and any other actions that may cause gross physical harm to the self or another.

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. The Head of School is informed of the meeting if not attending.
3. If an incident occurs again, a second meeting with teachers is scheduled, with the Head of School in attendance. Together we evaluate and revise the 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: <https://amshq.org/Families/Why-Choose-Montessori>

“We must help the child to act for himself, will for himself, think for himself; this is the art of those who aspire to serve the spirit.”

- Education for a New World, Maria 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 ask a teacher before going inside.
6. We are respectful towards others by not pulling on our friends and their clothing.
7. We are safe with our bodies by not play-fighting, hurting others, or aggressive play.
8. We make others feel safe by not using pretend weapons or play-fighting.
9. 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 appropriate to the child's behavior. 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.

Cold weather will not stop us from enjoying the outdoors, unless it is a safety concern. Once the colder weather arrives please be sure to send your child with the appropriate outdoor gear. This includes coats/jackets, hats, gloves, snow gear, rain/snow boots.

Communication

Seesaw

Families are provided information to sign up for the Seesaw app via email at the start of the year. **This is a the primary means of weekly communication between the preschool classroom and home. Families should download this app and check it frequently.** Daily posts will highlight classroom activities of focus, student work, and who napped. Parents should plan to read the weekly posts from Lead Teachers each Friday as they may contain important information about the week ahead.

Conferences

We value ongoing conversations with parents regarding children. Please feel free to email or call the teachers when the need arises. 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 will further facilitate their growth.

Preschool Giving Opportunities

Willowwind highly 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 from the office.

Full-time preschool families are asked to contribute 20 hours of volunteer time per year, part-time families are asked to contribute 10 hours per year.

Welcomed Donations:

- Plastic Grocery Bags
- Travel soaps
- Books
- Old greeting cards/decorative paper
- Envelopes (any size)
- Ice cream salt
- Peppercorns
- Used children's clothing (for spare clothes)

Volunteer opportunities:

- Making/repairing materials (i.e. sewing, cutting, pasting, laminating)
- Preschool playground maintenance
- Gardening
- Coming into the classroom to share a hobby, passion, or cultural celebration

Additional giving opportunities may be available throughout the year. Details will be provided as needs arise in the community.



Preschool Staff

Monarch Room

Lead Teacher: Kaye Lindsley kayel@willowwind.org

Assistant: Cassidy Daugherty cassidyd@willowwind.org

Swallowtail Room

Lead Teacher: Mae Kandler maek@willowwind.org

Assistant: Bri Vogel briannav@willowwind.org

Office Staff

Main Office: 319-338-6061

Head of School	Michelle Beninga	michelleb@willowwind.org
Office Manager	Rachel Butler	rachelb@willowwind.org
Business Manager	Anne Ehlinger	busoffice@willowwind.org
Director Communications	Dana Smith	danas@willowwind.org
Director of Development	Yassie Buchanan	yassieb@willowwind.org
Programs Coordinator	Mary Iverson	maryi@willowwind.org

Resources

To learn more about Montessori, Willowwind School recommends the reading:

- *A Parents' Guide to the Montessori Classroom*, by Aline Wolf
The American Montessori Society site <http://amshq.org/Family-Resources>
- Montessori Today site <http://www.montessori.edu/prod.html>
- North American Montessori Center <https://www.montessoritraining.net/>



