

# Welcome to The Montessori Footprints Learning Center's 2019-2020 Parent Handbook

To all new and returning families, we extend a warm welcome to the new school year. We are so happy you are a part of our Montessori Footprints family. Over the course of this year our children will grow in a Montessori environment to become self-assured, vibrant students who love to learn. Parents are the most important teachers in the lives of their children and are a very important part of what makes our school community so special. We are honored to be partners with you in the development of your child. We rely on your communication, energy, support, and involvement to ensure a successful experience for your child. Our learning center can benefit your child best when you understand the roles played by parents, teachers, and children. As we enter into our first year, we are delighted to share the many wonderful things about us and to orient you to our policies, procedures, resources, and events.

Please review carefully the information included in this handbook. It is intended to acquaint you with the policies and procedures of the school. It is important that you read it thoroughly. A copy of this handbook is available onsite.

We do our best to remain in close communication with our families in a number of different ways.

- We use email to send our monthly newsletter and to communicate important information. Please make sure that we have your most updated contact information.
- You may visit our website at [www.montessorifootprints.com](http://www.montessorifootprints.com) for information about the school and to keep up to date on school events and news. Our school calendar can be accessed on the website.
- If you have suggestions, ideas or concerns, contact your child's teacher and make arrangements to meet. She is your first line of communication.
- If you believe your ideas or concerns are not being addressed, please contact us at [Penny@montessorifootprints.org](mailto:Penny@montessorifootprints.org)
- Questions and suggestions about billing should be directed to Megan Marcus: [admin@montessorifootprints.org](mailto:admin@montessorifootprints.org)

We look forward to a wonderful and productive year!

Penny Marcus

*Director*

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### **School Information**

## I. MISSION STATEMENT

The staff at MFLC is dedicated to preparing an outstanding Montessori environment that fosters collaboration, cooperation, and peace, and provides experiences that promote curiosity, inquiry, and concentration-- thus enabling each child to reach his/her highest potential academically, spiritually, and socially.

## II. EDUCATIONAL GOALS

The goals of our learning center can be subdivided into three conceptual categories: spiritual, intellectual, and social.

### ***Intellectual***

- To lead children toward the mastery of daily life skills
- To foster student initiated inquiry
- To nourish a child's innate joy in learning and a love of work
- To develop graceful movement and muscular control
- To present an individualized program that encourages children to think, question, and discover through hands-on exploration with self-correcting materials

### ***Spiritual***

- To help the child develop spontaneous self-discipline
- To instill in each child a sense of personal responsibility for the world in which we live
- To spark in our children- wonder, imagination, and joy
- To promote an atmosphere that celebrates diversity, inspires compassion, and develops the potential in every human being

### ***Social***

- To develop poise, grace, and self-confidence
- To provide a safe nurturing environment that fosters independent and cooperative learning, embraces strengths as well as weaknesses, and builds self-esteem.

- To form a warm welcoming partnership among educators, parents, and students, whose goal is to cultivate confident, knowledgeable, and empathetic leaders

## III. SCHOOL OVERVIEW

### A. Philosophy

Our approach to education is based on the philosophy and methods of Maria Montessori. Dr. Montessori believed that the goal of the educational process was to cultivate a child's natural desire to learn. Dr. Montessori observed that all children have the same basic needs:

- The need for order – to organize, classify and interpret reality
- The need for independence – the impulse to act personally upon and within reality
- The need for social relationships
- The need to experience reality through imagination

The teacher carefully prepares the classroom environment in which the child experiences freedom within limits. The prepared environment guarantees exposure to materials and experiences through which the child develops intelligence as well as physical and psychological abilities. The Montessori method is designed to take full advantage of the unique ability of young children to develop their own capabilities through self-motivation.

Montessori Footprints stresses the need for trust in the child's potential for self-development, the role of the teacher as a patient observer and sensitive guide, and the prepared environment featuring organized work in an atmosphere of responsible freedom.

Montessori Footprints is an advocate for the child, developing education programs that follow the natural needs and development of the child. We believe each person has the potential to achieve success through an ordered, challenging, nurturing educational environment that includes the whole person – intellectual, emotional, spiritual, and physical. At the center is the child, whose needs are the focus of the learning process.

### B. Curriculum

Each classroom at MFLC is carefully arranged and offers an inviting space for activity that is focused and calm. Learning materials are displayed on shelves that are

accessible to the children to foster independence as the students go about their daily work. There are spaces in the classroom that allow for group activity as well as areas where the student can work alone. There are well-defined spaces for each part of the curriculum, such as Language, Art, Math, and Science. Each of these areas features shelves or display tables with a variety of inviting materials from which students can choose.

### **C. Staff**

The staff at MFLC are highly motivated, educated, and compassionate. They treat each other, the children, and their families with respect and empathy. We model appropriate behavior at all times. The child's needs are our main priority. We strive to make all children feel comfortable, safe, and happy. These conditions lead to a positive classroom experience which helps foster a life-long love of learning.

Each classroom has at least one Montessori certified teacher, attend continuing education classes to keep up to date with North Carolina teaching standards. Per Montessori philosophy, the child is his/her own teacher; the teacher is but an observer whose role is to facilitate the internal learning process.

Teachers change lessons and materials according to the child's needs, current events, and seasons.

### **D. Family Commitment**

Parents are a fundamental part of the well-being of our school and of a successful educational experience for their child. We welcome parent involvement at many different levels.

It is the hope and expectation of Montessori Footprints Learning Center that parents make every effort to understand and embrace the mission of the school. To that end, we aim to help parents learn about the Montessori approach by providing information and opportunities for parent education.

Additionally, we hope this handbook familiarizes families with the philosophies, policies, and procedures of our center.

## **IV. ADMISSIONS AND ENROLLMENT**

## A. Admission Guidelines

To be considered for enrollment in the toddler class, children must be at least 15 months of age and walking. To be eligible for enrollment in the 2yr old class, children must be 2 years of age by the first day of school. To enter into our primary classes, children must be 3 years of age and fully potty trained. Classes are multi-age, and the school will make every reasonable effort to balance each class with respect to age and gender. Montessori Footprints Learning Center is open to all children regardless of race, sex, religion or creed, national origin, ancestry, ethnicity, handicap or sexual orientation. Summer program can accept previous alumni up to age 9.

## B. Admission Process

**Tour and observation.** Though not required, a tour of our campus is strongly recommended. During this tour, you will meet our teachers, and will have the opportunity to observe a classroom “in action.”

**Application.** Interested families are encouraged to submit a completed application form accompanied by a \$30 non-refundable registration fee. Enrollment is on a first come first serve basis. However, siblings of enrolled students will be given priority.

**Enrollment.** Upon acceptance, parents will be asked to fill out an ACH. This provides us with the information necessary to obtain the materials fee and the first month’s tuition by direct withdrawal. Prior to attendance, we will have to have on file the following forms:

1. Application
2. Emergency Care Authorization
3. Departure Release
4. Parent Permission
5. Nutrition Opt Out
6. Discipline/Behavior Management

\* Medical forms and immunization records will be required within two weeks of starting school.

## C. Tuition and Fees

### Tuition:

Tuition is an annual fee based on a 10 month school year which can be made in one payment or divided into equal installments due the fifth of each month. Tuition is paid by automatic bank withdrawal. Families opting for annual payments will receive a 5% discount payable by August 1<sup>st</sup>. Early morning care and extended day care do not require an annual commitment. Families pay full tuition for the first child and receive a 5% discount for siblings. Discounts are for full day students only.

If your ACH is returned due to insufficient funds etc. you will be charged a bank re-processing fee.

## **Fees:**

A \$30 application fee is due with the application. The materials fee is one month's tuition divided by 10 per school year. It may be possible for the occasional use of early morning care, after school care, or an additional day please see director for current fees. Payment is due the day of service. We also have limited space for extra early arrivals at 7:15 if needed. Please ask the director for more information regarding extra early care. Our extended day program begins promptly at 3:00. Any student remaining in our care after 3:05 will be charged \$25, the extended day fee.

**\*All fees and tuition are non-refundable**

## **Materials Fee:**

To assist with the expense of replacing and updating the unique Montessori classroom materials, a materials fee is charged. This amounts to 10% of the monthly tuition and is part of the monthly ACH withdrawal

## **Vacations/ Absences:**

Montessori Footprints does not make any allowances for absences or vacations.

## **Schedule changes:**

Part-time students need to adhere to their scheduled days. They may not switch their attendance days for any reason including absences or school closing. If you wish to permanently change your scheduled days, you will need to fill out and sign a change of schedule form. The director will check space availability to determine whether the scheduled change can be approved. Excessive request for changes in schedule will result in a \$50 processing fee per a change.

# **VI. SCHOOL POLICIES**

## **A. School Hours**

Early morning care	7:15-8:30
Half-day program Toddlers/2s	8:30-12:30
Half-day program Primary	8:30-1:00
Full day - Toddlers/2s	8:30-2:30
Full day - Primary	8:30-2:45
Carline Primary Students Only	2:50-3:05
Extended day- Toddlers/2s	2:30 – 5:45
Extended day - Primary	2:45-5:45

## B. School Calendar

You will be given a copy of the school calendar at the beginning of the school year. You will be notified about any changes made to this calendar via email. A copy of a current school year calendar will be posted in each classroom as well as the multipurpose room.

## C. Arrival and Dismissal

### Key Cards

Each family will receive two key cards soon after enrollment. These electronic cards document your child's presence at school as well as arrival time. If by chance you forget or lose your card and need to ring the bell, a **staff member** will let you in. The safety of our students is our utmost importance. Use your own personal key card. Please open the door for your family **only**. This enables the staff to keep track of all persons entering the building.

\*A \$15 fee will be charged for replacement cards.

### Upon Arrival

- Please label your child's lunchbox with their name and current date.
- Have your child wash their hands
- Check your child's cubby
- Drop your child off in their designated classroom

\*Some children struggle with varying degrees of separation anxiety throughout their preschool careers. Rest assured that your child's teacher has been trained in redirection techniques to help when these situations arise. A quick confident goodbye helps assure your child that he/she is in safe loving hands.

\*It is important that your child arrives on time as the beginning of the school day sets a tone for the classroom. Children who are rushed and arrive late may not be in the right frame of mind to begin their activities.

\*If a class is already in session, parents are asked to enter classrooms quietly with as little disruption as possible to maintain a calm atmosphere. If you need to speak with the teacher, please send an email to the class or admin and someone will respond at their earliest convenience.

### Dismissal

- Dismissal for the Toddler and 2s is 2:30. Parents must arrive with plenty of time to gather their child's belongings and touch base with teachers. All vehicles must be out of the parking lot by 2:45 in order for the primary carline to form.

- Dismissal for primary classes is done by carline. This begins promptly at 2:45. The first car will pull up so that it is parallel to the front gate. Please remain in your car. A teacher will bring your child to your vehicle and buckle them into their car seat unless you have requested to do so yourself.
- Carline ends at 3:00. If you arrive after the end of carline, you must park and come into the building to pick your child up.
- We will only release your child to a parent/guardian or individuals that you have designated on your departure release form. Please note that ID is required of all individuals not recognized by staff members.
- The school closes promptly at 5:45. Please arrive a few minutes prior to this time to ensure that you have an appropriate amount of time to gather your child's belongings. In the event of unforeseen circumstances, please call the school and alert staff.

## D. Inclement Weather

When making the decision to delay or close school due to inclement weather, we consider the following: road conditions for staff as well as families, weather warnings and advisories, and a sufficient amount of staff to comply with staff/student ratios.

On the morning of the day in question, we will send a message via automated telephone.

We will also have an announcement on WLOS channel 13 and the WLOS website as early as possible. Families are encouraged to sign up to receive text alerts from WLOS.

If weather conditions deteriorate during the course of a school day, there is a possibility of early dismissal. We will notify all parents via automated telephone. We will also post this information on WLOS.

## E. No School/No Childcare Days

Please refer to our current school calendar for scheduled school closings.

## F. Health Policy

**Immunizations** All children who attend MFLC must be adequately immunized, Exemptions to these requirements are granted for medical, religious and other objections, provided that the waiver forms are properly prepared, signed and delivered to school administrators.

**Illness** For the protection of all of the students at the school, the director reserves the right to send a child home whose health (according to Department of Health guidelines)

poses a threat to other children in the program. Any ill child should be kept home. Children should not be brought to school if they:

- Have vomited within the last 24 hours
- Require more rest time than that provided by the program
- Have had a fever in the last 24 hours
- Have had 2 or more loose or watery stools unless a doctor's note is provided
- An unidentified rash
- Pink eye
- Strep throat until treated for 24 hours

You will be notified and required to pick your child up in a timely manner.

In addition, if your child has a communicable disease e.g., mumps, strep, chicken pox, hepatitis, pneumonia, measles, rubella, scarlet fever, scabies, pertussis, influenza type b, encephalitis or meningitis you **must** report this to the school office.

In an event that a communicable disease has been diagnosed by a physician, you will be notified via email and a link describing the symptoms will be provided.

Additional information is available from staff members concerning health issues and Health Department guidelines. If you have any questions, please ask.

**Hand washing** children and staff wash their hands upon arriving at school daily. Children and staff wash their hands before eating, and after using the bathroom and blowing their noses.

**Handling bodily fluids** all staff members are trained in universal cleaning procedures to protect the children and themselves from possible contamination from bodily fluids.

**Cleaning and sanitizing cots and equipment** cots and sheets are washed and sanitized weekly. Equipment is regularly cleaned and sanitized to minimize the spread of disease.

**Controlling infection** The school uses disposable paper products to control the spread of disease. If the staff notices a child showing symptoms of an infectious disease, we send the child home immediately. When waiting for parent/guardian pick up, the child will be removed from the other children and be in a separate room under staff supervision. The school will contact the childcare health consultant to discuss course of recommended action for this particular illness. We place out print outs, including symptoms, in each child's mailbox, folder, or cubby and institute special daily disinfection procedures.

**Medications administration** Any medicine, including vitamins, chaps stick, cough drops that is brought to school must be given to the teacher. It **cannot** be kept in your

child's diaper bag, cubby, or lunch box. There are three things you must know about how we handle medications. These policies are for the protection of your child.

- A *Permission to Administer Medication* form must be filled out and handed to your child's teacher. It must include:
  1. Your child's first and last name
  2. Name of Medication
  3. Physician's name
  4. Specific dosage instructions
  5. Exact times and dates to administer medication
  6. Expiration date
  7. Parent/Guardian's signature
  8. Date signed
- No medications are to be in lunch boxes. If you want your child to have vitamins or nonprescription drugs, please administer them at home.
- The medication to be dispensed must be in its original, labeled pharmacy container with your child's name on it. This rule is for clarification in case of an allergic reaction and to help prevent any mistakes in medications.
- Diaper rash creams, sunscreens, and bug sprays are treated as medications and a *Permission to Administer Topical Ointment* form must be completed as stated above and handed to your child's teacher.
- Please note that we do not administer any medication if your child has a fever.
- Some parents may choose to personally administer eye drops or inhalers at a designated time. Arrangements would need to be made with the director.

## **G. Child Safety**

**Parent Notifications** Parents or their authorized emergency contacts will be notified immediately of any accidents/injuries which occur from the shoulders up. Such reports are written by the witnessing teacher and placed in the child's folder, mailbox, or cubby. The teacher will determine whether to communicate with you immediately by phone or at the end of the school day for less serious matters.

**Child Abuse & Neglect** All schools, child care centers, physicians and others who work with children are required by law to inform the Department of Social Services of any suspected abuse or neglect of children. By law, a suspicion of child abuse generally means that the reporter has "reasonable cause to believe" or "reasonable cause to know or suspect" that a child is being maltreated physically, emotionally or mentally. If a staff

member of MFLC suspects a case of child abuse and/or neglect, they will notify the director immediately and an appropriate course of action will be taken.

**Employee Screening** All employees are subject to a criminal background check and are fingerprinted as mandated by the DCDEE. They also must pass a TB test.

**Program Evaluation** The program is evaluated by childcare consultant visits as well as Health Department visits at least twice a year.

**Building Security and Emergency Preparation** A Fire Safety inspection is done on a yearly . MFLC conducts monthly fire drills at different times during the day and in various weather conditions. We follow safety and emergency plans that are reviewed on an annual or as needed basis. During the day, all entrances to the building are locked (doors can be opened from the inside or with an issued key card or key). There is a doorbell located by the main entrance.

**Visitors** We welcome and encourage visits to the school from parents, outside teachers, prospective families, and the larger community. When you visit the school, please sign in.

**Weapons** No weapons of any sort – including play or pretend guns, knives, and similar items – are allowed on our campuses.

**Tobacco** Please note that our school is a tobacco free environment. School policy prohibits the use of tobacco products including electronic cigarettes everywhere by everyone at all time.

## H. Communication

Most of the communication coming from the school will be disseminated electronically. It is essential that we have your email address and that you keep us current if that address changes.

**Email** In our ongoing efforts to be more conscientious in the use of resources, most communication between the school and home will be made electronically. All regular correspondence from the school will be sent via email. Each classroom has an individual email set up so you can directly communicate with your child's teacher. Please check this email daily for important information including an occasional surprise picture of your child. Questions involving school policy, schedule changes, etc. should be sent to [admin@montessorifootprints.org](mailto:admin@montessorifootprints.org) or [penny@montessorifootprints.org](mailto:penny@montessorifootprints.org).

**Voicemail** The children are our primary concern. There may be times that no one is available to answer the phone. When this occurs, please leave us a voicemail. Voicemail is convenient for leaving us after-hour messages. We check voice mail regularly throughout the day. If it is an emergency and imperative that you speak with someone at MFLC immediately, let the voicemail pick up and then hang up and call back right away.

A second phone call from the same number alerts us of an urgent matter and a staff member will answer the second phone call.

**Website** Montessori Footprints has its own website. General information, the calendar of events, important forms, and other useful Montessori links can be found at our site: [www.montessorifootprints.com](http://www.montessorifootprints.com)

**Social Media** Social media can serve as a bridge between the school and the broader WNC community. MFLC provides information about school events as well as other items of interest to the community via an active Facebook page. We encourage you to 'Like' us on Facebook and to share our information with your community of family and friends.

**Changes of Address or Emergency Contact Information** Whenever you change your address, home phone, work phone or emergency notification information, ACH, bank information, or email be sure to let the classroom teacher know. In addition, be sure to notify the school office directly. Please do not rely on your child's teacher to update the office. It is only by alerting both the teacher and the office to any changes that you can be sure we will change all documentation throughout the school. This includes our Child Information Sheet, billing list, mailing lists and classroom files. Both the office and the teacher emergency records need to be up to-date. This is beneficial for your child's safety and protection.

**Problem resolution** We believe that open communication and supportive relationships between home and school are imperative for the full development of the child. However, we know that we are all human and things don't always go perfectly to everyone's satisfaction. Occasionally there might be issues, misunderstandings, conflicts, or communication confusion between parents and the school. If you have questions or concerns that you want to address, please start by contacting your child's classroom teacher. You may schedule a meeting if you wish. If you are not comfortable with the outcome of that meeting, you are encouraged to contact the Director.

\*At some point, your child's teacher may feel a need to meet with you about your child's development at a time other than our regularly scheduled parent/teacher conferences. If so, she will arrange a meeting time with you that is convenient for all parties. She may request that the Director attend that meeting.

## **I. Nutrition: Lunches and Snacks**

Nutritious food is essential for young, growing bodies. We encourage parents to establish sound eating habits at an early age. We also feel that a parent has the right to choose what their child consumes. We also understand that some food choices do not coincide with state regulations. Therefore, we have chosen to have all families sign an Opt Out form so they may choose the foods they pack.

**Lunches** Please send your child's lunch in a lunch box clearly labelled with your child's name and the current date. All items must fit inside the lunch box including all

drinks and afternoon snacks. If your child requires a second lunch box to accommodate everything, please label it accordingly and place it in the fridge. Each classroom has a microwave that allows us to reheat foods to a safe temperature. Please do not pack candy, gum, soda, cookies, or Jell-O. These foods often distract children from eating their more wholesome foods. All food that is not consumed will be repackaged and placed back in your child's lunchbox.

\*Please include a washcloth for your child to use as a crumb catcher and all necessary utensils.

\*Per-licensing foods that pose a choking hazard must be cut lengthwise before packing in your child's lunch box. Examples include - grapes, olives, hot dogs, carrots. Foods that are not cut up will be sent home.

**Snacks** MFLC will provide morning snack. A snack schedule is posted by the kitchen for your convenience. If your child attends our extended day program, parents must provide an after-school snack and extra drink such as a juice box.

\*On special occasions, you may choose to send in a special snack for your child to share with his/her classmates. All snacks that will be shared with the entire group must come from an approved source such as a farmer's market, bakery, or grocery store and be pre-packaged for retail sale. Be sure to check with the school to find out any allergies students may have.

## **J. Naps and Quiet Time**

Preschool children benefit from scheduled periods of rest. This rest may take the form of actual napping or a quiet time for children staying all day. At MFLC all children under four are required to take a nap. Children who do not fall asleep will have a quiet rest time that may involve but is not limited to looking at books, listening to tapes, or other such quiet activities. **We do allow children to bring a soft comfort object (aka- a lovey) with them for naptime cuddling. A lovey is defined as a small soft animal needed by a child during naptime. It is not something to be played with. By January most children in primary classes will not be in need of a lovey. Please direct any questions concerning this policy to the director.**

## **K. Clothing and Footwear**

**Clothing and Extra Items** Dress should allow children freedom to engage in a wide range of activities. Please help your child select clothing and shoes that allow freedom of movement. Encourage your child to wear clothing that will not be a distraction to them or their friends i.e. we discourage crowns, tutus, capes, princess dresses, scary figure shirts. If there is an issue a teacher will send home an email. All children have outdoor playtime and/or physical education every day and should dress accordingly. Younger children should wear clothing that enables them to dress themselves easily. Students in Primary classes should be sure to have a full set of extra clothing, including socks and underwear. Please put all items in a plastic bag labeled with the child's name.

**Outside Wear** All students go outside most days. Outerwear should be appropriate to the weather. Appropriate shoes for school are sneakers or other casual shoes that may get dirty. Clogs, party shoes, or open-toed sandals are not appropriate for safe outside play. When there is snow or mud, boots are required. When it is very cold, snow pants, mittens, and hats are required.

**Indoor Shoes** Children attending our primary program wear indoor shoes (or slippers) while in the classroom for several reasons. The Montessori method recognizes the child's need for quiet and order in the classroom to allow him or her greatest opportunity for concentrated work. The opportunity to take off and put on shoes increases their level of independence and dressing skills. Slippers also eliminate a higher noise level in the classroom. The children use mats for a great deal of floor work and slippers help to maintain the cleanliness of the environment, alleviating mud and dirt being tracked into the classroom with street shoes. We ask you to provide slippers to be kept at school. Please encourage your child to choose simple and comfortable ones, **Ballet or Isotoner-type** slippers are preferred as they are easier to wear and store. **Slippers with large character heads or that light up are not appropriate.** Please mark the child's name on both slippers.

\*To avoid confusion and prevent loss of clothing, **please label all garments with your child's name.**

## L. Outdoor Play

Our program is designed to include outdoor play in all seasons. Students who stay in school all day need fresh air, exercise and free time on the playground. For our preschool students, we maintain a ratio of one adult for every 10 students. Therefore, we are not able to have a staff member stay inside with one or two children who are sent to school with a cold, lingering ear infection, etc. Your child should be well enough to participate fully at school if he/she is in attendance.

Please be sure your child has appropriate clothing for outdoor play: sturdy, warm and easy to put on. Also, label ... label ... label. Please label everything you send to school. Children often do not recognize their own clothing. Labeling helps your child and us to sort out the myriad items that come into the School each day. Use names, not initials, and mark in an easily-read place.

## M. Personal Possessions

Children often want to bring favorite possessions to school, but we ask parents to discourage this practice. We welcome books, items made by the child, or objects related to culture, science, or nature. Sharing these items with other children in the class will become a part of the classroom learning experience. We do not allow children to bring toys, playthings and electronic devices including cell phones into the classroom. If your

child asks to bring a toy or other personal property, simply explain that such items are not allowed at school. Please do not send valuables, including money and label all items that are sent to school. **We do allow children to bring a soft comfort object (aka- a lovey) with them for naptime cuddling. A lovey is defined as a small soft animal needed by a child during naptime. It is not something to be played with. By January most children in primary classes will not be in need of a lovey. Please direct any questions concerning this policy to the director.**

## **N. Discipline**

Montessori Footprints Learning Center grounds its entire program in the significant relationship between adult and child. A positive, supportive and loving bond promotes the child's self-esteem and sense of security. The role model provided by the adult teaches children positive problem-solving techniques and courtesy. Children are continuously taught how to solve problems, deal with frustration, and express feelings in a manner that is growth-producing and positive.

Equally important to the Montessori experience is the growth of the child's character. Montessori teachers strive to engender in the child a sense of responsibility and the connectedness of people and things. Children learn that their choices have consequences, not only in their immediate interpersonal relationships, but also in the world at large. By allowing safe consequences to flow freely from the child's choice, he learns to exert control over himself to limit negative results and promote positive ones. This development of executive function, most particularly self-regulation, is at the core of the child's drive towards confidence and independence.

Understanding children's developmental needs is important in creating positive parent/child relationships. Children, especially very young ones, are intensely driven by their developmental needs, which can sometimes clash with the needs of parents and caregivers. By understanding the child's drive towards independence, we learn to offer him/her the time and skills he/she needs to complete the task him/herself. The intense effort the child puts into small, repetitive tasks is deeply satisfying, and the end result gives him/her confidence and comfort in his/her skills. If a child is not allowed to work through the task to completion, the child may react strongly. This kind of opposition, originated in the conflicting needs of the adult and child.

Montessori Footprints works cooperatively with other agencies within our community. We only share information with these agencies with the written consent of a parent/guardian. We communicate with several therapists in the area and can help families find the right fit for them. Therapy services can often provide screenings and therapies at the school.

If a teacher feels that a child's behavior requires extra assistance, the director will call a meeting with the family to discuss an appropriate course of action.

## **VII. SPECIAL EVENTS AND PROGRAMS**

### **A. New Student Orientation**

Please discuss with your child's perspective teacher for the best way to handle orientation. Montessori philosophy typically encourages independence and child self-confidence. Please drop your child off cheerfully and respectfully. The teachers have had a lot of experience in helping children become acclimated to their new environment. If you drop your child off after class has already started please be sure to do so quietly without disturbing his/her classmates work cycle.

### **B. Parent Observation**

If you would like to observe a class, we ask that you make arrangements with the classroom teacher or our Director in advance to minimize disruption to the classroom and to make sure that the students will be in the room when you visit. When you arrive for your observation, please sign in on the visitor's form.

### **C. Parent Information Nights**

At the beginning of each year each classroom holds an informational meeting for new and returning parents. These parent-only evenings are an opportunity to explain the school and classroom plans, policies and procedures for the new year. Parents have an opportunity to get acquainted, meet all classroom staff, and learn about the specifics of their child's classroom. The teachers will answer questions about field trips, classroom procedures, volunteer opportunities, etc. Dates for the informational meetings can be found on our website at [www.montessorifootprints.com](http://www.montessorifootprints.com)

### **D. Parent/Teacher Conferences**

Parent-teacher conferences are scheduled in the Fall and early Spring. Parents are given the opportunity to select a convenient time for the conference. Teachers are available for special conferences as necessary. Speak directly with your child's teacher to make arrangements. We believe good communication between home and school is essential to the best learning environment for the child. Issues arising before conferences may be addressed by email, an in-person meeting with your child's teacher and/or director.

## **E. End of Year Celebration**

The families of Primary students are invited to join together for an end of the year celebration and graduation. Families of children in the Toddler and Twos program are invited to attend an end of the year celebration which will be held at a different location and time.

## School Information

School Address: 158 Bradley Branch Road  
Arden, NC 28704

School Phone & Fax: (828) 483-6869

Director's Email: [Penny@montessorifootprints.org](mailto:Penny@montessorifootprints.org)

Assistant's Email: [Admin@montessorifootprints.org](mailto:Admin@montessorifootprints.org)

Website: <http://www.montessorifootprints.com>