



# FAMILY HANDBOOK

2026/2027



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## PURPOSE OF THE HANDBOOK

This handbook informs parents about the structure, operation, goals and guidelines of the school and provides families with information about the Montessori education approach.

## HISTORY OF THE INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF PROGRESSIVE MONTESSORIANS (IAPM)

The IAPM was founded by Angela Martin of Spain. Angela was born in Spain and during her teen years entered the Order of the Sacred Heart, which focused on education. She later traveled to England to continue her studies. There, Angela encountered the methods and philosophy of Dr. Maria Montessori and her colleague Mr. Standing. The all-embracing concept of Montessori philosophy and methodology totally captured Angela.

A gifted student and teacher, Angela used the Montessori approach to education at the Convent. With the help of others, she began training Montessori teachers. Angela's contagious enthusiasm and inspiring knowledge led to invitations to lecture abroad. In 1962, she founded the International Association of Progressive Montessorians in London, England. She then began training teachers in the United States.

Angela deliberately included "Progressive" in the name of the organization because of Dr. Montessori's emphasis that her work was far from complete. Dr. Montessori expected her followers to constantly improve the education process through diligent observation of the child.

In 1979, Angela responded to an invitation to lecture in Victoria, B.C. As a result, she was invited to move to Victoria, which she did in 1980. Angela committed herself to establishing an excellent school, and a teacher training centre. These were not easy years but Maria Montessori Academy, the Veni e Vidi Montessori Teacher Training Centre, and the IAPM were established and continue as markers of Angela Martin's perseverance. In 1991, Angela Martin purchased the site on Wilkinson Road for the school and the Veni e Vidi Training Centre where they remained until June 2007. The Training Centre was renamed the Angela Martin Montessori Training Centre upon her death in 1993. The school then moved to its present Gordon Head location in July 2007 with the goal of going from Preschool to Grade 12. We continue to grow with over 300 students, and we proudly celebrated our 12th graduating class in 2026.

## LICENSING AND FUNDING

### Licensing

Province of British Columbia

Ministry of Education, Office of Independent Schools

Island Health

Municipality of Saanich: Business License

## Funding

Tuition & Registration Fees

Charitable Donations

Grants provided by the Ministry of Education Independent Schools

Grants provided by the Ministry of Children and Families

Fund-raising

## Charitable Donations

As the International Association of Progressive Montessorians (IAPM) operates as a non-profit society, financial donations to the school are deductible as charitable donations for both federal and provincial income tax. The school's Board of Directors encourages donations, as this allows the school to minimize tuition fees charged. Tuition fees, other than those for childcare expenses, e.g., Out of School Care or Preschool are generally not tax deductible.

# GOVERNANCE

International Association of Progressive Montessorians (IAPM) is a non-profit society and as such has a Board of Directors. The Board oversees the operation of Maria Montessori Academy. Membership is by invitation to accept positions on the Board. Executive positions are determined by election and voting of the Board. In addition to participating in the collective running of school operations, each Board member has a specific area of responsibility, e.g., Education or Finance Committee. Parents of students currently attending the school are not eligible for Board membership; however, the Board welcomes current parents' participation on their subcommittees, e.g., Marketing.

# PHILOSOPHY OF MARIA MONTESSORI ACADEMY

## Our Mission:

**From a foundation of empowerment, students of Maria Montessori Academy engage with the world thoughtfully, creatively and with a global sense of purpose.**

### Guiding Principles

We recognize each child as a unique individual.

We provide a safe, nurturing, and welcoming community.

We foster the personal and professional development of educational staff

We value development of the whole child and, therefore:

- We are committed to our students becoming flexible and creative problem solvers;
- We cultivate leadership, independent thought, self-confidence and innovative thinking;
- We encourage students to try new things, to take risks, and to be themselves;
- We teach students to become adept at recognizing, correcting, and learning: from their errors in a way that promotes wellness;
- We model respect, consideration for others, and a belief in peaceful conflict resolution as foundations for building community; and
- We recognize that internal satisfaction drives students' curiosity and interest and results in joyous and lifelong learning.

Our program incorporates student focused learning in a safe, nurturing, and welcoming community

The authentic delivery of the Montessori method cultivates leadership, independent thought, self-confidence, and innovative thinking across the ages.

## Statement of Purpose

**Maria Montessori Academy is guided by the educational philosophy and methods developed by Maria Montessori. This is accomplished under the general guidance of the Society governing the operations of the Academy, the International Association of Progressive Montessorians. Society's general**

**purpose is to foster genuine Montessori education.**

The following criteria should be adhered to:

- Provide individualized instruction consistent with the needs, abilities, and interests of each student;
- Educate the whole person: that is learning activities will be included to stimulate the development of each child in the following areas:
  - *Intellectual*: basic skills of literacy, oral communication, and numeracy; good study habits; a sense of personal competence with respect to academic learning;
  - *Moral*: enduring personal and social values such as responsibility honesty, empathy and respect for others and their property friendship, respect for the environment and for the mystery of life;
  - *Emotional*: an attitude of positive self-regard and a sense of general competence;
  - *Social*: basic skills of normal peer relationship including cooperation, helping, and conflict resolution;
  - *Physical*: basic knowledge of and development of good habits in personal hygiene, nutrition, and physical fitness.
  - *Aesthetic*: an appreciation of beauty in its varieties – nature, music, art, literature; a sense of wonder and confidence that one can create beautiful things;
  - *Spiritual*: awareness pertaining to the soul or higher nature of man; pureness.
- To foster a cooperative relationship between parents, teachers, and students in order to maximize each child's overall development.

# APPLICATION PROCEDURE AND POLICIES

## Admissions Overview

Applying to Maria Montessori Academy is a multi-step process tailored to each cohort. Families interested in learning more about our school before applying are invited to attend one of our **Open Houses**.

## Step-by-Step Application

| Preschool & Kindergarten                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Elementary & Senior School                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Application form &amp; fee.</li><li>2. External assessments (Speech/OT).</li><li>3. Teacher questionnaire.</li><li>4. Principal meeting (K only).</li><li>5. Short independent visit.</li></ol> <p><a href="#">Checklist</a></p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Application form &amp; fee.</li><li>2. Most recent learning update.</li><li>3. Teacher recommendation letter.</li><li>4. IEP/Psych-ed assessments.</li><li>5. 3-day classroom visit.</li></ol> <p><a href="#">Checklist</a></p> |

## Critical Admissions Policies

### Toilet Training Requirement

All children entering MMA **must be toilet trained** and self-sufficient. If a child is not toilet trained after their start date, MMA may ask the child to leave the program.

### Probationary Enrollment Process

Students may be accepted under a **probationary period** (typically two terms) to ensure a good fit. This allows the school to evaluate if we can meet the student's needs and the family to determine if MMA is the right environment. Evaluation criteria include respect for the code of conduct and the ability to work with independence.

## Returning Student Policy

Occasionally, a former student of Maria Montessori Academy may wish to return to MMA. The following procedure facilitates clear discussion between teachers, administration, parents, and the student:

1. Parents meet with the Vice Principal or Principal to discuss reasons for leaving and wishing to return, and the student's current school experience.
2. Student spends 2-3 days in the classroom.
3. Student meets with the Vice Principal or Principal to discuss the visits.
4. Administration meets with staff to discuss the possibility of return.
5. Parents and student are contacted with a decision

# REGISTRATION POLICY

## Key Administrative Deadlines

- **Late January:** Re-registration period.
- **June 1st:** Annual deadline for tuition and fee payments for returning and new students.

## Student Registration

Siblings of children already in attendance at MMA are given priority.

B) In January/February re-enrollment of children already in attendance at MMA is determined for the up-coming school year. All parents wishing their child to return the following fall must pay a non-refundable deposit to hold their child's spot. This **non-refundable** deposit is deducted from the JUNE tuition for the following calendar year.

C) Subject to the qualifications previously outlined, spots are filled when vacancies for the next school year become available. These policies may occasionally vary to achieve a balance of ages and genders, as well as taking into consideration balancing Inclusive Education, Learning Disabilities, and ELL at all levels. Factors also considered for placement are previous Montessori experience, commitment to the Preschool to High school Montessori journey, and date of application.

**June 1st** - Parents of returning and new children must pay, by June 1st, one month's fees in advance, less the \$250 deposit (previously paid). These fees are credited to the June tuition of the upcoming school year and are **non-refundable**. Tuition fees for the September to May portion of the school year will be required to be processed through Pre-Authorized Debit (PAD). Any request to be exempted from this procedure must be made in writing to the Principal of Maria Montessori Academy prior to the June 1st payment being due. Paperwork relevant to the EFT processing must be completed by the requested due date as well as the signed Parent Enrollment Agreement.

## Notice of Withdrawal

1. **June 2027 Tuition:** The June payment is a pre-paid, non-refundable deposit. ***(Please note this is separate from the Withdrawal Policy below).***
2. **Withdrawal Policy:** Maria Montessori Academy enrolment represents a full-year financial commitment. Staffing and resource allocations are made based on confirmed student numbers. Families remain responsible for all deposits and the non-refundable June prepayment, regardless of withdrawal date.

In addition, the following tuition obligations apply:

Date of Withdrawal

Tuition Owed

February 1 – August 31

Families are responsible for 50% of the full annual tuition.

September 1 or later

Families are responsible for 100% of the full annual tuition (no refund).

These obligations apply in addition to forfeited deposits and the June prepayment.

**Medical Withdrawals:** In the case of a withdrawal for documented medical reasons, the school may, at its discretion, consider a partial refund of tuition beyond deposits and the June prepayment

## Absences

As a Group 1-classified Independent School we must account for all absences of students in kindergarten and above. If your child is absent, you must send an e-mail including the reason for every absence.

If you are planning an ***extended absence*** it is essential that you let the school know beforehand. The students in kindergarten and up must do educational presentation, homework, or other project dictated by the teacher(s) or their absent days will not be counted in grant calculations. Should the school lose grant money due to extended unexcused absences the parents are responsible for the difference.

**The Ministry of Education will accept the following reasons for absences:**

**Excused Absence:** illness, doctor, dentist, specialist appointments, religious holiday, inclement weather. **Educational Trip (ET):** If your school aged child is absent due to a family holiday it can be classified as an education trip only if you supply an educational presentation, homework, or other project dictated by the teacher(s) for the days they have missed. Please submit the required assignment to your child's teacher upon return to school.

## Student Enrichment Fee

The Student Enrichment Fee is required of each family. This mandatory fee (per family) will be used to supplement school programs, activities and/or equipment, and emergency preparedness supplies.

## Outstanding Tuition

If tuition fees are not current, this matter will be brought to the attention of the principal and/or Board of Directors. Students will not be permitted to attend the following term unless the matter is dealt with to the satisfaction of the principal and/or the Board of Directors.

## Annual Assessments

The **Debt Retirement Assessments (DRA – A and DRA-B)** are calculated into the monthly tuition payments.

Each assessment is per child per year. *Tuition sibling discounts apply only to the tuition portion.*

## Re-Registration

Re-registration takes place at the end of January. A non-refundable deposit is given to secure a place until May 31<sup>st</sup> of the current school year. The rest of the following June's tuition is then required to keep the placement secure. The payment does not guarantee a specific room placement, only a placement in the desired program.

## Fee Setting

Prior to re-registration, fee setting is dealt with by the Board of MMA. Tuition increases are usually somewhere between 3% and 6% depending on circumstances.

## School Supplies

At Maria Montessori Academy we prefer the students to use items that are similar in nature and in many cases to share these items as a community. Therefore, once a year a School Supply Fee is required. In the Senior School, there will be items that need to be supplied specifically by the student. E.g., in Middle and High School each student must bring their own laptop from home.

# INCLUSIVE EDUCATION ADMISSIONS POLICY

**Admission of students with diverse learning needs is subject to all the policies and procedures that apply to other students as well as to the policies and procedures outlined in our Inclusive Education Policy.**

If the child is already within the school and is requiring significant classroom adaptations and ongoing support from anyone other than the classroom teacher (more than 25 hours in a school year) MMA may require the family to have a Psycho-Educational Assessment completed. These assessments are useful in identifying a child's strengths and areas of challenge along with recommendations for how to meet a child's individual needs. These assessments must be updated every 3-5 years. These assessments are vital for students receiving Inclusive Education funding through the BC Ministry of Education. It will be expected that the parents will be responsible for the initial costs of Psycho-Educational testing unless a different arrangement is made.

It is understood that appointments for support work, e.g., speech therapy, occupational therapy, etc. may be required at facilities outside of the school. Parents, teachers, school administration, and support staff providing therapy shall work together cooperatively and openly to promote optimum development within the child. Registration within the school is for the classroom space offered to and accepted by the family. The full fee for this placement shall be paid despite absence from the program to attend outside support services.

# SCHOOL POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

## Staff at Maria Montessori Academy

The Board of Directors believes the staff of Maria Montessori Academy are its most valuable asset. The qualifications of all staff members are impressive, as well as their enthusiasm and dedication. Our staff working with the Preschool and Kindergarten children must meet the standards set out by the **Island Health Childcare Licensing Branch**. The same applies to staff working with Kindergarten-Grade 12 aged children and up who must meet the standards set up by the **Ministry of Education-Independent School Branch**.

## Outside Evaluations

### Preschool, Kindergarten, and Out of School Care

The Preschool, Kindergarten, and Out of School Care Programs are licensed by the Island Health Childcare Licensing Branch. The school must adhere to all Island Health regulations regarding safety, staffing, health, and class sizes. To ensure adherence to these regulations regular visits are made by a Child Care Licensing Officer who makes written reports. Irregularities are given a time by which to be remedied. Maria Montessori Academy has always had excellent reports from the Licensing Officer. All current reports are available online to the public.

### Elementary, Middle, and High School

Maria Montessori Academy is classified as Group 1 Independent School. This is the highest level of funding by the Provincial Government, and it is approximately 50% of the grant money received by the Public Schools. Eligibility for this funding means that certain standards and criteria must be met in terms of staffing, curriculum, finances, and administration. The process for doing this is by two major types of evaluations. The first is a Monitoring Inspection by a representative sent by the Ministry of Education. This representative looks at registration, teacher qualifications, policies and procedures and ensures that any previously recommended changes have been made. This process can take up to a day if necessary. The second type of evaluation is called an External Evaluation and is done over 2-4 days. A team of 3 or 4 representatives is sent again to have a more in-depth look at the program and its components. Usually, one person deals with the office administration, one with the principal, and the other looks at the classrooms, our staff, and the curriculum content. This External Evaluation team does not examine teacher suitability as this is the principal's responsibility.

## Curriculum

In the Preschool classes, an enriched environment is provided according to Early Childhood Education theory and Montessori practices. From Kindergarten to High School, students are taught according to the standards laid out by the provincial curriculum using the Montessori method of education. Specialists are employed to teach French, PE, Art, Music, and High School Elective Courses.

# PERSONAL INFORMATION AND PRIVACY POLICY FOR PARENTS & STUDENTS

## The School's Commitment to You

Safeguarding personal information of parents and students is a fundamental concern of Maria Montessori Academy. The school is committed to meeting or exceeding the privacy standards established by British Columbia's *Personal Information Protection Act* (PIPA) and any other applicable legislation.

This *Personal Information Privacy Policy* describes the policies and practices of the school regarding the collection, use and disclosure of personal information about students and parents, including the steps the school has taken to ensure personal and financial information is handled appropriately and securely. Maria Montessori Academy may add, modify or remove portions of this *Personal Information Privacy Policy* when it is considered appropriate to do so, and any such changes will be an effective revision of the policy. You may ask for the most recent update of this *Personal Information Privacy Policy* at the school office, or look at our website. This Personal Information Privacy Policy may be supplemented or modified by agreements entered between the school and an individual from time to time. Please see our official board policy (available on our website) for more details on the collection of information.

## REPORTING OF A STUDENT'S PROGRESS

Maria Montessori Academy follows the province's updated policy as specified by the Learning Update Order. The school provides all students and parents/guardians with at least 5 reports during the school year - 4 Learning Updates (2 Informal Learning Updates and 2 Written Learning Updates) and 1 Summary of Learning that describes student learning in relation to the Learning Standards of the curriculum. Informal Learning Updates take the form of student-led conferences, in-person or virtual discussions, e-mails, portfolio entries, etc.

For grades K-9, the Written Learning Updates provided during the school year will include:

- communication of learning in each Area of Learning currently being studied in relation to the Learning Standards, using the Provincial Proficiency Scale;
- descriptive feedback on areas of significant growth and opportunities for further development;
- information about student attendance; and
- student-generated content including Student Self-Reflection of the Core Competencies and Student Goal Setting.

For grades 10-12, the Written Learning Updates provided during the school year will include:

- communication of learning in each learning area currently being studied in relation to the Learning Standards, using letter grades and percentages;
- descriptive feedback on areas of significant growth and opportunities for further development;
- information about student attendance; and
- student-generated content including Student Self-reflection of the Core Competencies and Student Goal Setting.

For grades K-9, the Summary of Learning will include:

- a summary of student learning in all learning areas studied during the school year using the Provincial Proficiency Scale;

- summary Descriptive Feedback on areas of significant growth and opportunities for further development;
- information about student attendance; and
- student-generated content including Student Self-Assessment of the Core Competencies and Student Goal Setting.

For grades 10-12, the Summary of Learning must include:

- a summary of student learning in all learning areas studied during the school year using letter grades and percentages;
- summary Descriptive Feedback on areas of significant growth and opportunities for further development;
- information about student attendance;
- student-generated content including Student Self-Reflection of the Core Competencies and Student Goal Setting; and
- a graduation status update indicating student progress in relation to graduation program requirements.

Oral reports are given for the three and four-year olds, with one written summative update in June. At any time during the school year teachers are always glad to discuss with parents the progress of their child. Please feel free to set a time aside for this with the classroom teachers.

## FOUNDATION SKILLS ASSESSMENTS (FSA'S)

The Foundation Skills Assessment is an annual province wide assessment of all BC Students' academic skills in grades 4 and 7. This assessment measures skills in Literacy and Numeracy and provides information on how well students are progressing in foundation skills.

## COMMUNICATION

### ***Teacher-Parent-Child***

Every effort should be made to communicate a classroom concern to your child's teacher first. If you are not satisfied with the measures taken, then it would be appropriate to consult the Principal or Vice Principal. If you have an administrative issue, either the Office Administrator or Principal should be contacted.

### ***E-mail: office@mariamontessoriacademy.net***

For convenience and ecological reasons, most school communications are sent via email including a Friday newsletter each week. Regular checking of e-mails enables parents to keep current in school happenings and administrative matters. Each teacher also has an email according to their name and Montessori address.

### ***Website: www.mariamontessoriacademy.net***

Information about Montessori and current information about our school is available on our website. This includes our school calendar.

### **Phone System**

Parents may leave a message through the office if there is an emergency. **250-479-4746**

## **DISCIPLINE**

### **Discipline Policy – Maria Montessori Academy**

- At Maria Montessori Academy, discipline is seen as a means of guiding students toward self-control, respect, and positive relationships. Rooted in Maria Montessori's belief that discipline begins with purposeful work and self-worth, our approach emphasizes love, consistency, choices, and limits.

### **Philosophy of Discipline**

Discipline helps students develop appropriate, respectful behavior. We recognize that each child is unique, with varying levels of maturity and self-regulation. Our goal is to create a caring, cooperative environment where children learn to interact positively with others.

- We set clear, age-appropriate expectations and limits, always presented in a respectful and positive manner. Directions focus on behavior (e.g., "Please put the books away," rather than "Don't leave the books out") and aim to model healthy communication.
- When behavior is inappropriate, we guide the student to:
  - Reflect on their actions,
  - Understand why the behavior is unacceptable,
  - Recognize potential consequences,
  - Learn appropriate alternatives.
- We support growth through consistent, respectful intervention.

### **Unacceptable Behaviors Include:**

- Hurting oneself or others
- Bullying (including cyberbullying)
- Verbal or physical violence
- Theft, vandalism, or destruction of property
- Swearing or abusive language
- Leaving school grounds without permission
- Substance use/abuse
- Inappropriate electronics use
- Disrespecting staff or disobeying rules

### **Disciplinary Process:**

#### **Minor**

Minor incidents are addressed promptly with the goal of guiding the student toward better choices and restoring relationships.

- Behavior is discussed with the student.
- An explanation is given and a warning issued.
- The student is encouraged to make amends.

**Repeated**

When behavior concerns persist, additional steps are taken to help the student reflect, take responsibility, and actively work toward improvement.

- Temporary removal from group activities may occur.
- The student reflects (verbally or in writing) and discusses alternative choices.
- Clear expectations for improvement are outlined.
- If concerns continue, the student may be sent to the office.
- Parents and the Principal are informed.
- A formal plan for improvement is developed.

**Major**

Major incidents or ongoing issues require a higher level of intervention and collaboration between the school and family to support the student's growth and ensure a safe learning environment.

- Longer removal from group activities may be implemented.
- A conference is held with the parents, student, teacher, and Principal.
- At-home learning or a behavior contract may be required.
- Continued issues may result in counseling, probationary enrollment, or removal from the school.

**Behavior Documentation:**

Our staff are required to document concerning behavior:

- **Step 1:** Observe and problem-solve with the student.
- **Step 2:** Record behavior using a Behaviour Report.
- **Step 3:** Submit:
  - Minor incidents → Homeroom teacher
  - Major incidents → School office

**Examples of Minor Behaviors:**

- Teasing or name-calling
- Disruptive behavior
- Inappropriate language
- Disrespect toward property or rules

**Examples of Major Behaviors:**

- Physical aggression (hitting, biting, etc.)
- Verbal threats or intimidation
- Defiance
- Theft
- Educational Misconduct
- Social exclusion or spreading rumors

**Possible Disciplinary Actions:**

- Alternative recess or community service
- In-school suspension (half or full day)
- Suspension
- Probationary return

- Expulsion

# BULLYING OR HARASSMENT

## **Bullying and Harassment Policy**

At Maria Montessori Academy, we are committed to creating a safe, respectful, and inclusive environment for all students. Bullying and harassment are not tolerated in any form.

### **What Is Bullying or Harassment?**

Bullying or harassment is a pattern of repeated, intentional aggressive behavior involving a real or perceived power imbalance. It can be physical, verbal, or social in nature and is harmful to the individual being targeted.

### **Types of Bullying and Harassment:**

#### **1. Physical**

- Hitting or kicking
- Pushing or shoving
- Stealing or defacing property
- Spitting
- Threatening with a weapon

#### **2. Verbal**

- Name-calling or mocking
- Teasing or taunting
- Verbal threats (toward people or property)
- Racist, sexist, or homophobic remarks
- Coercion or extortion
- Intimidating calls or texts
- Daring others to do dangerous acts
- Cyberbullying (via text, apps, or social media)

#### **3. Social Alienation**

- Gossiping or spreading rumours
- Public humiliation
- Excluding others on purpose
- Sharing private photos or messages without permission
- Giving hurtful looks or gestures
- Setting someone up to take blame
- Inciting others to exclude or dislike someone

## **Our Approach**

Our staff at Maria Montessori Academy are trained to recognize and respond to bullying and harassment. All reports are taken seriously and addressed promptly through the school's discipline and support processes.

Students are encouraged to speak up and support one another. Our motto is:

**"If you see something, say something."**

We want every student to feel safe coming forward, knowing they will be heard and supported.

### **Reporting Bullying**

We understand that not all bullying occurs in person; some incidents happen online or outside of school hours. Regardless of when or where it occurs, if it impacts a student's well-being, it is taken seriously.

Students can report bullying:

- Directly to a trusted adult at school
- Anonymously through the [ERASE Reporting Tool \(available online\)](#)

By working together, we can ensure our school remains a safe, welcoming place for all.

## **GENDER/SEXUAL ORIENTATION**

The school will promote a safe environment, free from harassment and discrimination, by implementing proactive strategies and guidelines to ensure that LGBTQ+ students, employees, and families are equally welcomed and included in all aspects of education and school life and treated with respect and dignity. Any language or behavior that degrades, denigrates, stereotypes, incites hatred or fear, prejudice, discrimination, harassment toward individuals based on their real or perceived sexual orientation, or gender identification will not be tolerated. Please see our Gender Inclusion Guidelines (available on our website) for more specific details.

“All our handling of [them] will bear fruit, not only at the moment,  
but in the [person they are] destined to become.” Maria Montessori

## **CLASSROOM OBSERVATION**

An excellent way to become familiar with the Montessori approach is to observe the teachers and the children interacting in the classroom. Each classroom will have their own schedule and we encourage each parent to spend a short period of time observing in their child's classroom.

## **SCHOOL TIMES**

All classes begin at 8:30 am and end at 3:00 pm. Lunch hours are staggered throughout the various ages.

At 8:30 am all students from kindergarten and up start the day with morning exercise. There may be some exceptions in the Senior School.

## PARKING

The situation becomes critical at the start and close of the school day. We require everyone's assistance in spending brief times parked in the lot and on the road. Please respect our neighbour's needs and park only in a designated parking place. Respect Fire Lane access, bus parking, and designated pick up/drop off only zones.

## NUTRITION

**Maria Montessori Academy is committed to following and modeling good nutritional habits.** We prioritize and promote nutritious, balanced eating habits among all students during the school day.

### Lunches

Full day children should bring a nutritious lunch packed in reusable containers. **We strongly encourage packing a litter-free lunch.** In keeping with building on good nutrition habits we suggest lunch include a variety of foods recommended by the Canada Health and Food Guide. *All remainders including packaging from lunch and/or snack food will be sent home with your child.* Please send a water bottle to school, also water is always available in the classroom or by water fountains near the classrooms.

### Snacks

#### *Preschool/Kindergarten*

Students bring their own healthy snacks from home and eat during the school day as needed. They are given a minimum of 30 minutes to sit and eat their lunch. At the beginning of the year, it is quite common that the excitement of the new year means they may not always finish their lunch, but this does correct itself.

#### *Elementary, Middle, and High School*

Students bring their own healthy snack from home and can eat it during the school day as needed. Students are given approximately 25 minutes to eat their lunches. Please send a water bottle to school, also water is always available in the classroom or by water fountains near the classrooms.

### Lunch Program

The MMA Parent Group regularly organizes lunch programs that you may voluntarily participate in. The types of food may vary each year as well as what age groups it is offered to.

**PLEASE BE ALERT FOR ANY ALLERGIES IN YOUR CHILD'S SPECIFIC CLASS.**

## HEALTH

The Staff and Directors of Maria Montessori Academy make every reasonable effort to safeguard your child's health and ensure their general well-being. However, we need your full cooperation to do so. Please be guided by the following information and by good sense. It is essential that we always have a current telephone number where we can contact you, or your named responsible alternate, in case of emergency.

***Any lifesaving medication (including an epi pen) must be kept permanently***

***at school. A student will not be allowed to stay at the school  
on any day when their emergency medication is not on location.***

## Life Threatening Allergies See Anaphylaxis Policy available from the office

Although it is impossible to guarantee an allergen-free environment, Maria Montessori Academy will do everything reasonable to limit the possibilities of targeted allergens from being present or around the allergic child in the school environment. Maria Montessori Academy expects the parents of anaphylactic children to participate as actively as possible in the development of procedures to protect their children, in sharing information with school staff and other parents, and in helping their children assume responsibility for their own safety. The school will:

- ensure that all teachers and any other appropriate school personnel have all necessary information regarding life threatening allergies in the school
- ensure that all parents and other students have all necessary information regarding life threatening allergies in the school
- ensure appropriate staff are trained to administer the required medication in response to an anaphylactic reaction.
- provide in-services for appropriate staff regarding anaphylaxis prevention, recognition and management, school policy, and the use of the Epi-pens with the Public Health nurse.
- maintain a current file with up to-date medical information (often including a photo) and an emergency treatment plan for each allergic child
- provide allergen free areas when possible, and avoid, whenever possible, allergens hidden in school activities (e.g., Playdough, pouring exercises, crafts)
- take special precautions in planning special events, field trips and extra-curricular events.

## Illness

In the interest of safety and good health we require that sick children be kept away from school. If you have any doubt, please do not bring your child to school. Colds and flu travel very quickly in the classroom. If your child has been ill during the night (this includes fever, throwing up etc.), **do not bring them to school the following morning.** If your child becomes ill during the day, we will phone you to come for your child.

**Sending a child to school with a fever reduced by medication is not acceptable.**

We ask that any child with open sores or any other potentially infectious or communicable condition be kept at home until healing is complete.

## Medicine

We will administer prescription oral medicine to your child only after prior written authorization has been given to the school office. You must supply adequate quantities of the prescription needed, and any measuring devices and directions required for its administration. While every care is taken, we cannot accept responsibility for any medicines or equipment left with the Academy.

Staff do not have the skill, nor can they legally undertake the administration of complex treatments, give regular injections, or change dressings. The school does not administer or provide any non-prescription drug (for example, Tylenol) without prior written permission. If your child finds difficulty accepting medicine from a staff member, the medicine will not be administered, and you will be informed when you collect your child

at the end of the school day.

## Communicable Diseases

If your child contracts a communicable illness (including, for example, but not limited to measles, mumps, chicken pox, pink eye, rubella, diphtheria, hand foot & mouth disease etc.) please report this to the school as soon as possible. If our staff believe your child has a communicable disease, you will be informed immediately. Please ensure that all immunizations are up to date by the time your child begins school at Maria Montessori Academy.

## Head Lice

Head lice is no longer seen as a health hazard. Parents will be notified if their child has been found to have lice. Parents are expected to treat their child who may then return to school once he/she has been properly treated and is completely clear of any lice. When lice have been noted, parents in the school will be given this general information via email. Names of children will not be disclosed.

## No Smoking

Parents, staff, students, and visitors cannot smoke/vape or use tobacco or marijuana anywhere on school property at any time, whether school is in session; that is 7 days a week 24 hours a day. This prohibition applies to the school building, parking lots, sports fields, playgrounds, driveways, courtyards, and private vehicles in the school parking lots. It applies to school vehicles or vehicles transporting students at any time. This also includes any venue where a Maria Montessori Academy event is being held.

It does not matter whether the above areas described as Maria Montessori Academy property are being used for school purposes or by sports clubs or other groups renting or permitted access to the facilities or property. Groups using Maria Montessori Academy property after school hours will be required to ensure that smoking and other use of tobacco or marijuana do not occur. No Smoking signs will be posted in and throughout the internal and external property.

Please see our board policy for more information.

## REPORTING SUSPICION OF CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT

All staff must report personally to a child protection social worker at the Ministry for Children and Families office any suspicions of child abuse or neglect as defined by The B.C. Handbook for Action on Child Abuse and Neglect. Staff are to share information only with those whom it is appropriate to receive this information (e.g., child protection social worker, the police, the principal and/or Appointed Board Member). The Principal, or alternatively, the Vice Principal, must be notified about any abusive behaviour occurring at school but staff does not need their permission to make the report to the child protection social worker.

## RELEASE OF A CHILD

Parents must fill out the Authorized Persons section on the Maria Montessori Academy Information form that lists all persons who have parental permission to remove their child from the premises. A child will not be released to any person not on the list unless the parent informs the Administration in writing or by phone call that a person not on the list will be picking up their child. In this instance it will be understood by both the parent and the person picking up the child that photo identification will be required to be shown at the

office if that person is unknown to our staff. It is the parent's responsibility to keep the authorized persons list current.

A child will not be released to anyone deemed to be exhibiting potentially harmful conduct such as intoxication, medication, or unusual behavior.

## DISMISSAL/AFTER SCHOOL PICK UP POLICY

At the end of the day, students in grades - 12 are dismissed at 3:00 pm. Preschool children must be signed out by a parent/guardian/approved adult and picked up between 3:00 and 4:00 . Students in Kindergarten - grade 6 may attend After School Care until 5:00 pm on a pre-registered basis. Students who are not picked up by 3:05 pm, will wait in the office while parents are called, and arrangements are made for pick up.

**Students in grades 4-6 must either go directly to After School Care at 3:00 pm or may wait for parent/guardian/approved adult pick-up on the gym wall near the pickup/drop-off lane or on the black top play area where they are to be picked up by 3:30 pm at the latest.**

Students in Grades 1-12 may walk, bike, etc. home after school with their parents' permission.

## MISSING CHILD POLICY

If a child is discovered to be missing, the following procedures are to be initiated:

1. The Principal or the designated Person in Charge and the Office Administrator will be notified immediately of the circumstances surrounding the disappearance of the child
2. The Office will supply a picture of the missing child, if available, to the Principal or Person in Charge, to confirm his or her identity
3. All staff will be discreetly notified, questioned, and shown the picture as necessary
4. An appointed person will stand at the front door to act as a central communicator
5. A school wide page will be made calling that child to the office
6. A room by room and playground search will be done simultaneously
7. If after 10 minutes, the missing child is not found, a decision to inform the police and parents will be made by the Principal or the Person in Charge
8. After the child is found, an incident report will be written, and a meeting will be held to decide what remedial action should be taken to avoid future incidents of a similar nature

## FIELD TRIPS

Trips to other locations, organized to augment or reinforce the learning taking place in the classroom are usually for children in Kindergarten and up. When possible, the children use our school or city buses, but parent volunteers for driving are sometimes essential. All drivers must fill in a declaration of car license number, insurance coverage (a minimum of 2 million is required), individual seatbelt use, and current safety of their vehicle. *All drivers must have a valid driver's license.* Cell phones must not be used while driving. Cars equipped with airbags should not transport children under 12 years old in seats with airbags. Signed parent/guardian permission forms for each child are required for participation in field trips. These are signed

at the beginning of the school year with advance notice prior to each trip given by the classroom teacher, including a description of the trip. Children are expected to behave as if in the classroom on these occasions and failure to do so may result in their removal and the loss of future privileges. *Whenever an off-site field trip and/or event is planned every precaution will be taken to ensure the safety and wellbeing of those attending (staff, students, parents, visitors). Each trip will be evaluated according to specific and appropriate standards.*

As required by legislation all children over nine kg (20 lbs.) need to be in booster seats until they are 1.45 metres (4'9") tall or age nine. Children over one year old and between nine and 18 kg (20-40 lbs.) are required to be seated in a child car seat.

Supervision ratios (other than Island Health regulated ratios) will vary according to each trip but for most it will be 1 adult to 15 children.

Overnight field trips away from the school:

- Parent's permission is required with full knowledge of the trip's particulars including the name of supervisors.
- Students are not allowed the use of drugs, alcohol, or cigarettes.
- Medications are to be given to the supervisors and with prior permission.
- Safe and appropriate transportation will be proved by qualified personnel.
- The venue will be appropriately checked for any concerns regarding safety.
- An emergency back-up plan and/or contact will be put into place.
- Parents should be aware that failure to comply with the rules of the field trip may result in disciplinary action including a call to the parent to come and pick up their child from the field trip site.
- Different age groups will have distinct levels of requirements and activities which will be made clear before each trip and in some cases, waivers or Acknowledgement of Risk will be required to be signed.

**"Education is not something the teacher does, it is a natural  
process which develops spontaneously..."**

-Maria Montessori

## PLAYGROUND SAFETY

Everything possible is done to ensure a safe and suitable playground. Children must be under adult supervision on the playground. Supervisors are on duty during all scheduled play times and do everything in their power to make sure the children are following the safety rules in place. Aggression and rough play are not allowed at any time and will be dealt with in an appropriate manner.

**PLAYGROUND rules include but are not limited to:**

- Respectful behavior always
- Every item is treated with respect
- Equipment is to be used in the correct area and for the purpose and age group it was intended (e.g., Skipping ropes for skipping)
- Rocks, sand, and other projectiles remain on the ground
- Wait your turn to use equipment or apparatus
- Play only in designated areas

- Retrieval of an item that goes over a fence can only be done with supervision and/or permission from a supervisor
- Any injury or dangerous play should be reported immediately to a supervisor
- All items to be returned to their appropriate spot after each playtime
- Aggressive or violent items (e.g., toy guns) are not allowed
- The sandbox is covered after each playtime
- Playground use before and after school is permitted provided all school rule are followed and the student must be supervised by an adult

## ACTIVE PLAY POLICY

Preschool/Kindergarten children have a minimum of 30 minutes of active play each day.

Elementary students have a minimum of 30 minutes of active play each day.

Senior School students have a minimum of 30 minutes per day or 150 minutes of active play each week.

## SCREEN TIME POLICY

This varies between the age groups.

- Our Preschool/Kindergarten students do not have any screen time during their day.
- Our Elementary students may use educational videos to support class learning and introduce information technology.
- Our Senior School students will use personal devices to support their learning and complete their assignments. Also, Senior School students will be shown videos sometimes to support in-class learning.

\*\*\*It is important to note that, with the exception of laptops in our Senior School, we do not permit any of our students of any age to **use** phones, or other personal electronic devices on school grounds at any point during the school day. Students have access to the phone in the office should they need to contact their parents.\*\*\*

## INTERNET USE POLICY

Internet access is available to students and staff at Maria Montessori Academy. The Academy's goal in providing this service is to facilitate resource sharing, innovation, and communications consistent with our school's educational objectives. Access includes local, national, and international connections to:

- libraries, companies, agencies, and businesses;
- discussion groups on a variety of subjects;
- information news services;
- electronic mail communication.

## Responsibilities of Staff Members

It is expected that faculty members at Maria Montessori Academy will use the Internet for instructional purposes. Staff members should maintain the highest ethical behaviour in using the Internet and should promote that behaviour among students. Staff members will:

- Make every attempt to maintain the curricular focus of Internet use by locating and directing students toward worthwhile sites on the Internet
- Supervise student use
- Model and provide instruction in the ethical and appropriate use of the Internet in a proper school setting as provided in the following guidelines
- Follow the same criteria for Internet resources that are acceptable to Maria Montessori Academy's curriculum and principles

## Responsibilities of Students

Students will learn and follow the Guidelines set forth in this Internet Use Policy.

## Guidelines for Internet Use

Acceptable Use: Maria Montessori Academy networks are to be used responsibly, efficiently and legally and must support the educational objectives of Maria Montessori Academy. Transmission of any material in violation of any federal or provincial regulation is prohibited.

Adherence to all guidelines and/or policies within the Maria Montessori Academy Parent, Student, and/or Staff Handbooks, but are not limited to, the following:

- Violating copyright laws
- Forwarding personal communications without the author's prior consent
- Using threatening or obscene material
- Distributing material for commercial purposes
- Providing political or campaign information

## Netiquette Rules

Users must abide by network etiquette rules. These rules include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Be polite
- Use appropriate language – swearing, using vulgarities, or any other abusive language is inappropriate
- Never reveal your personal address or telephone number or those of anyone else
- Never reveal credit or checking account information or social security number across Internet
- Do not disrupt the use of the network
- Do not attempt to gain unauthorized access to system programs or computer equipment
- Assume that all communications and information accessible via the network are private property
- Understand we do have a security system that blocks access to certain sites and social media.

## Acceptable Use:

Internet use must support the educational objectives of Maria Montessori Academy. Use of other organizations' network or computing resources must comply with the rules appropriate for that network. Transmission of any material in violation of any Canadian or provincial regulation is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to: copyrighted materials, threatening or obscene material, or material protected by trade secret. Use for commercial activities is generally not accepted. Use for product advertisement or political lobbying is also prohibited.

## Privileges:

The use of the Internet at Maria Montessori Academy is a privilege, not a right. Inappropriate use will result in limitation or cancellation of user privileges and school disciplinary action.

*\*Disclaimer:* Maria Montessori Academy will not be responsible for any damage suffered, including loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, service interruptions, or inaccurate information.

**Security:** Security on any computer system is a high priority, especially when the system involves many users. Attempts to login to the system as any other user or to share a password will result in cancellation of user privileges. If a security problem is identified, notify the Principal at the school. Do not demonstrate the problem to other users. Note that electronic mail is not guaranteed to be private; system operators have access to all mail. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities will be reported to the authorities.

## Vandalism:

Vandalism will result in the cancellation of user privileges and school disciplinary action. Vandalism is defined as any malicious attempt to harm or destroy equipment, programs, and/or data of anyone connected to the server and/or the Internet. This includes uploading, creating, or transmitting computer viruses.

## Privacy:

Network administrators may review files and communications to maintain system integrity and ensure that users are using the system responsibly. Users should not assume that files stored on servers and hard drives of individual computers would always be private.

Please see Board Policy regarding Internet use.

## Personal Electronics:

In alignment with BC's provincial policy on cell phone use in schools, Maria Montessori Academy has implemented the following guidelines to support a focused and respectful learning environment:

### Grades K–8:

Students in Kindergarten through Grade 8 are not permitted to use cell phones during school hours (8:30–3:00). If parents need to reach their child during the day, they are asked to contact the school office.

Any student found using a cell phone during the school day, including on the playground, in washrooms, changerooms, or hallways, will have the device taken and stored safely in the office until dismissal at 3:00 PM. Continued violations may result in a requirement to leave the phone at home.

### Grades 9–12:

Students in Grades 9–12 may use their phones only while off campus during their lunch break. Use of phones on school grounds, including on the playground, in hallways, washrooms, changerooms, or classrooms, is not permitted during the school day (8:30–3:00).

### All Grades – Electronic Devices:

Other handheld electronics must remain stored in lockers during school hours unless used for a designated class activity (e.g., Media Arts). Students may not make or answer calls on personal devices while on campus. Messages may be checked off campus after school or during lunch breaks (Grades

9–12 only).

## SCHOOL SCHEDULE AND CALENDAR

In setting a policy for annual school schedules, it is necessary to consider the requirement of preparing a true Montessori environment and the schedules that most other Public or Private schools follow. At Maria Montessori Academy we follow the public-school board policy for holidays but usually close earlier and open later, to provide essential classroom cleanup and preparation. We have established breaks in November and February to facilitate family time. Professional development for our staff includes approximately 3 days per year. To provide the continuous time block needed to prepare Montessori materials adequately, the school closes one week before the end of June. This allows the staff to devote these days to material production for the next year, planning, for classroom cleanup, and readiness for the new school year. Calendars are provided to the parents in the summer via email, posted on our website, and updated in the weekly newsletter.

## SEASONAL CELEBRATIONS

Each holiday season has its own special flavour and celebration. At school, we try to keep the students on an even keel through each. Outlined below are the themes usually followed at school.

*Thanksgiving:* Our emphasis at Thanksgiving is to give out of our abundance to those less fortunate. We do this by collecting nonperishable food for the Mustard Seed Food Bank.

*Halloween:* We continue with a harvest theme and use pumpkins for food items.

*Winter Celebrations:* Leading up to the break in December, students will engage in winter celebration themes in a manner that is respectful to all backgrounds. Our emphasis is on the spiritual elements of the season including Christmas, Hanukkah, and Kwanzaa with a downplaying of the commercial aspects.

*Valentine's Day:* The children are free to exchange cards but with the provision that they give to **all** the children in their class (Preschool, Kindergarten, and Elementary). The cards are distributed to individual holders either by the teachers or parents and/or children. The cards are then opened at home, avoiding confusion at school. Some years, Elementary classes do an in-class "Secret Valentine" project, in which no Valentines from home are required.

*Easter:* While there is no curriculum dedicated to the Easter season, we do endeavor to answer student's questions regarding the origins. Our focus is on spring and new life.

*Birthdays:* On or near the date of the child's birthday you are welcome to send a previously agreed upon snack for the class. In place of a birthday snack/treat, Preschool/Kindergarten classes often celebrate at circle time with singing and circling the "sun" for each year of life. Teachers are not responsible for distributing party invitations. Please use parent emails as this helps avoid disruption and disappointment.

## RECYCLING AND COMPOSTING

Recycling is an ongoing project at Maria Montessori Academy. We feel this project serves to educate the students and reinforces our role as stewards of the earth.

## CLASSROOM VOLUNTEERING

Parents can volunteer throughout the year in individual classrooms or with classroom events such as field trips or concerts. Teachers appreciate offers to assist in sewing, or repairing items used in the classroom or for projects.

## TOYS AND OTHER PERSONAL ITEMS

It is important to consider the nature of items brought to school. Violent, (e.g. toy guns) aggressive or suggestive toys or books are **NOT** acceptable. **If loss, damage, and/or theft of an item is likely to cause distress the item is better left at home or given to a teacher for safekeeping.**

## BOOK FAIRS

There are usually 2-3 Books Fairs held each year in the library where students and their families can purchase reasonably priced new books. This is not only a fundraiser to help provide the library with new books, but it also promotes reading in a fun and supportive manner.

## OUT OF SCHOOL CARE

Out of School Care is offered to children in kindergarten - grade 6 and currently attending Maria Montessori Academy. Before School Care is offered from 7:30 am to 8:30 am and after school hours are 3:00 pm to 5:00 pm. The Out of School Care Program is by pre-registration only and is for a one school year commitment. Fees may be paid in full or monthly. Any withdrawals require two-month's written notice or equivalent fees.

Please see our Out of School Care Handbook for more information regarding our Out of School Care Program.

## PHOTO DAYS

Individual photos and class photos taken in the Fall. Notices are given out beforehand for each of these photo sessions. Proper grooming and full mandatory school uniform are expected. If students do not have their photo taken, parents must provide a photo to the office for ID purposes.

## EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Each classroom teacher will regularly practice all emergency procedures (including lock down) and allow for various scenarios. In addition, the staff and students will regularly practice emergency procedures to ensure the safety of the school population.

## SCHOOL CLOSURE

Several reasons such as snow, flooding, or lack of electricity or heat may necessitate a school closure. Teachers will keep an up-to-date list of school families at home. The Principal will direct Teachers as to a

course of action to take regarding a school closure. Emails, social media, and the website will be used to communicate any decision. Closure may also be advertised on the local radio station.

*Refunds will not be given if the school is closed for safety and/or emergency reasons.*

## EARTHQUAKE SUPPLIES

The school has a container that has all the items needed for 3 days should there be an earthquake or other disaster. A specific amount is taken from the Student Enrichment Fee to keep the supplies at the right number and current. We do not have individual student survival kits but rather community supplies.

## OUTREACH DAYS

The families at Maria Montessori Academy support selected areas of need both within Victoria and further afield. On these special days (marked on the calendar) the students bring \$2 (or more) for the jar outside the office and can wear appropriate casual clothes. Some days may have an optional theme (e.g. jersey day). If it is a holiday, Outreach Day will not be rescheduled. Occasionally, a class or group may not be participating due to another activity requiring them to be in full uniform.

## PARENT GROUP (MMAPG)

The MMA Parent Group is a vital part of the school. Many enrichment opportunities would not be available without their support. Their two main functions are to raise funds and to build community within the school. Parent Group meetings are held monthly at the school. There is usually a Parent Group Chairperson, Secretary, and Treasurer as well as several other sub-committees for various projects and/or activities. Information will mostly be sent out by email.

## PARENT READING

For those who are new to the Montessori method, we suggest the following list of three highly recommended books. These books are an excellent place to begin to learn about Montessori so that you can better share in your child's education and understand what is taking place in the classroom.

The Absorbent Mind - Maria Montessori, c. 1964 Schloken Books Inc.

Montessori: A Modern Approach - Paula Polk Lillard

A Parents' Guide to the Montessori Classroom - Aline Wolf, c. 1980 Parent-Child Press

Montessori: The Science Behind the Genius – Angeline Stoll Lillard, Oxford University Press; 2016

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**What is the Montessori Method of Education?**

Montessori is a scientific method of education, a philosophy of child development, and an approach to children that helps them maximize their potential. Doctor Maria Montessori, who lived from 1870 to 1952, was a brilliant and original educator. Her most important discovery was that children learn in a fundamentally different way than adults. When Montessori studied children's innate capacity to absorb knowledge, she discovered that they learned best when they were free to work and play in a carefully prepared, nurturing environment. In time, Montessori went on to create schools where teachers and parents worked together to create prepared environments where children worked with specially designed learning materials that optimized their potential.

### **Why do you have multi-aged groupings in one classroom?**

Multi-age or family groupings maintain a social setting normal in life. Children reach developmental stages at varying times so their needs are more readily met. Young children are stimulated and motivated by what they witness others doing. Older children act as role models for younger children and can often be teachers for them. This builds confidence and cooperation.

### **Why do you wear uniforms?**

There are many positive reasons for wearing uniforms. An attractive uniform can instill a sense of pride and belonging to a school environment that is nurturing and safe. Studies have shown that schools that have converted to uniforms have decreased aggression and competitiveness. Wearing a uniform allows the student to resist peer pressure and put their concentration on their schoolwork. In many cases, school uniforms are less expensive than the clothing a student would wear to school and help keep financial status in the background. There are several opportunities during the school year for the children to wear casual clothes if they choose. When the students go out in public for a field trip their behavior and their uniform show them as exemplary students thus enhancing our reputation.

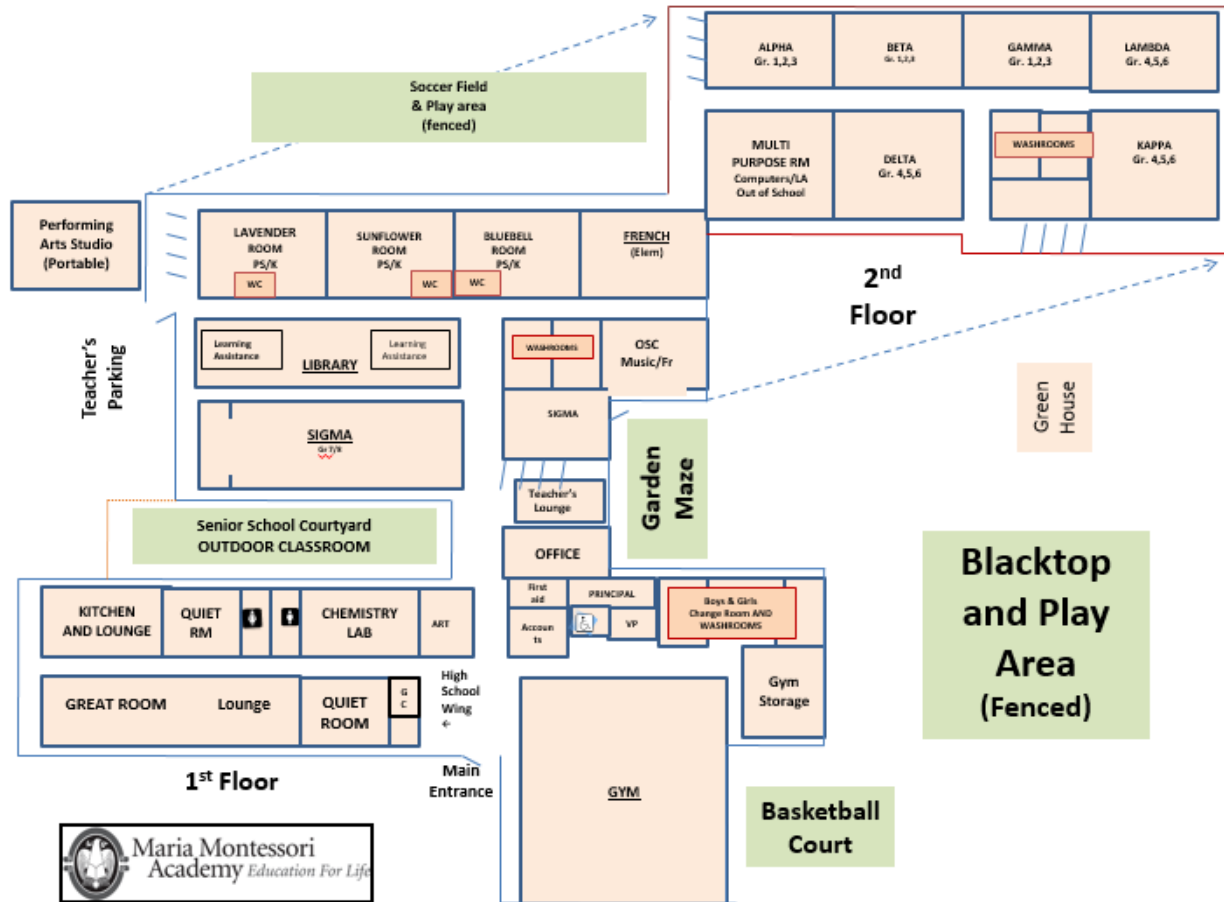
### **How can I get involved in the school?**

Parent involvement is welcomed and adds to our community spirit. Parent Group fund-raising is important for enriching your child's education as Montessori equipment is more expensive than textbooks and store-bought toys. Listening to children read is a wonderful way to get involved. Each classroom has different needs and the teachers in each classroom will make their needs known. Parent-child classroom evenings are also becoming more frequent at the school. See what your child is doing and prepare to be impressed!

### **What happens when my child leaves Montessori?**

For a variety of reasons, children do go on to other schools rather than completing their schooling at Maria Montessori Academy. Since one of our goals has been to give our students skills towards independence, we find children can successfully adapt to new and different learning situations.

## **MAP OF SCHOOL AND CLASSROOMS**



## MARIA MONTESSORI ACADEMY CLASSROOMS

### **Preschool and Kindergarten (ages 3 - 5)**

Bluebell

Lavender

Sunflower

### **Lower Elementary (ages 6 - 8 or grades 1 - 3)**

Alpha

Beta

Gamma

### **Upper Elementary (ages 9 - 11 or grades 4 - 6)**

Kappa

Lambda

Delta

### **Senior School**

Sigma (Middle School) (ages 12-13 or grades 7 & 8)

Omega (High School) (ages 14-17 or grades 9 to 12)

## **APPENDIX: EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES**

### **KEY MONTESSORI CONCEPTS**

**Emphasis on cognitive structures and social development**

**Teacher has unobtrusive role in classroom activity**

**Child is an active participant in learning**

**Environment and method encourage internal self-discipline**

**Instruction, both individual and group, adapts to each student's learning style**

**Mixed age groupings (3 years)**

**Children are encouraged to teach, collaborate, and help each other**

**Child chooses own work from interests and abilities**

**Child formulates own concepts from self-teaching materials**

**Child works if they wish on chosen project**

**Child sets own learning pace to internalize information**

**Learning is reinforced internally through the child's own repetition of an activity and internal feelings of success**

**Multi-sensory materials for physical exploration**

Organized program for learning care of self and environment (polishing shoes, cleaning sink, etc.)

Child can work where they are comfortable, moves around and talks at will (yet does not disturb the work of others)

## GLOSSARY OF IMPORTANT MONTESSORI TERMS

**Absorbent Mind:** a special mind characteristic of children ages 0-6 that allows them to take impressions from the environment through the senses and through manipulation.

**Freedom:** the ability to act directly without the need for intervention.

**Isolation of Difficulty:** the removal of specific distractions and/or difficulties that allows the learner to focus on one particular aspect of the task.

**Liberty:** the opportunity for spontaneous activity within the educational framework of order and discipline.

**Normalization:** the process where the true nature of the child is allowed to reveal itself through their work.

**Sensitive Period:** a special intense predisposition to the acquisition of a particular trait, knowledge or skill that lasts for a limited time and where optimal learning can occur.

### **Prepared Environment**

A Montessori classroom is a specially prepared learning environment designed to meet the developmental needs of young children and to appeal to their diverse learning styles. The Montessori environment is also prepared to foster independence, grace and courtesy and a sense of personal responsibility. Each classroom is organized into five curriculum areas: Activities for daily living, sensory education, language skills, math, and the cultural subjects, which encompass the arts and sciences.