



2025 Parent Handbook

Embracing the world  
around us



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## Our school

### About this handbook

This handbook will help to explain our school and our operational policies further. We reserve the right to update this handbook at any time, but we will let families know if we do. Please take a few minutes to become familiar with this information, along with the Enrollment Agreement provided to you. On your Enrollment Agreement, you will be asked to acknowledge your receipt and agreement to the policies outlined in this handbook.





## Our philosophy

We believe in the importance of bilingual education. As a bilingual school, we are committed to providing instruction in both English and Spanish, allowing our students to develop language skills that will enhance their academic and professional opportunities, as well as foster cultural understanding from an early age.

## Our mission

Is to provide a nurturing and stimulating educational environment that empowers children to reach their fullest potential. We are dedicated to fostering academic excellence, social development, and emotional well-being through a child - centered approach that respects each child's individual learning style and pace.

## Our vision

We envision a world where every child is equipped with the skills, confidence, and compassion to make a positive impact on their community and the world. Through our commitment to Montessori philosophy, we aim to inspire a generation of critical thinking, problem-solvers, and lifelong learners.

## Dr. Maria Montessori

Maria Montessori was born in 1870 in Italy and became the first woman to receive a medical degree from the University of Rome. In the first decade of the twentieth century Dr. Montessori observed children carefully and experimented with different materials and teaching methods.

Dr. Maria Montessori believed, "A child's work is to create the person he will become." Children are born with great mental capacities, which aid in the work of their own construction. They accomplish the task of self-construction with purposeful movement, exploration, and discovery of their environment. A Montessori classroom provides this freedom within the limits of an environment, which develops a sense of order and self-discipline.

Dr. Montessori visited various schools throughout Europe seeking effective teaching approaches. Unimpressed with the teaching styles and methods of the day she returned to her observation of the child to determine the most effective teaching approaches. From careful observation and experimentation Montessori developed the world famous Montessori Method and Montessori Curriculum Materials.

"Follow the child." This simple but profound truth inspired Montessori's lifelong pursuit of educational reform, methodology, psychology, teaching, and guide training – all based on her dedication to furthering the self-creating process of the child. Montessori was nominated for The Nobel Peace Prize for her work in developing Peace Education curricula for children.

## What makes us unique

Our curriculum is rooted in the Montessori method, which emphasizes hands-on, experiential learning and encourages children to take charge of their own educational journey.

Essential to the Montessori Method is **the prepared environment**. Attention to quality, detail, and Beauty is the cornerstone in drawing the child to activities in the classroom. By providing an attractive, enjoyable, organized, and child-centered classroom, our programs enable children to be free to explore and experience the learning-rich, prepared environment fully.

Also fundamental to Montessori's philosophy is her discovery of the **Sensitive Periods** in children's development. During these periods, children seek certain stimuli with immense intensity, to the exclusion of all others. It is during this time that a child can most easily master a particular skill. Dr. Montessori devised special materials to aid children in each specific Sensitive Period. Our guides are trained to recognize these periods in individual children and guide them to the appropriate materials in the classroom environment.

The focus of Montessori education continually changes to adapt to the **child's natural stages of development**. Montessori described these stages as Planes of Development, which occur in approximately six-year intervals, each of which is further subdivided into three-

year segments. These Planes of Development are the basis for the three-year age groupings found in Montessori school classes, ages 0 to 3; 3 to 6; 6 to 9; 9 to 12; 12 to 15; and 15 to 18.

From this environment comes concentration, a clear and peaceful mind, a profound sense of security, and respect for others and one's self. The program constantly evolves based on the needs of the children while remaining firmly grounded in the Montessori education philosophy.

**Experienced educators:** Our dedicated team of certified Montessori educators brings passion, expertise, and a deep commitment to fostering each child's growth. They guide, support, and challenge students while respecting their individuality.

**Holistic development:** We focus on the whole child, promoting not just academic skills, but also social, emotional, and physical development. Our programs include practical life activities, peace education, and outdoor learning experiences.

**Community engagement:** We believe in the power of community and actively involve families in the educational process. Our school hosts regular events, workshops, and volunteer opportunities to build a strong, supportive community.

## Family and school partnership agreement

As staff, parents, guardians, and students, we believe we are all stewards of our school community. We believe we have an obligation to care for and treat each other with respect and compassion. We assume positive intent. We work together to lift each other and our school up to our greatest potential. When we see something that needs improvement, or just a little love, we act on it. Most importantly, we come together in partnership for our children to provide a warm, safe, and supportive community that nurtures a lifelong love of learning.



## The 5 Principles of Montessori Education

### 1: Respect for the child

Children are treated as individuals with their own unique potential.

### 2: Sensitive periods

Sensitive periods refer to critical windows of opportunities when children are particularly receptive to learning specific skills or knowledge. Montessori Educators observe and identify these periods to introduce appropriate activities that align with children's natural interest and developmental readiness. By capitalizing on these sensitive periods, children achieve remarkable growth in areas such as language, order, movement and social relations.

### 3: Self-education

Children are natural learners who educate themselves in the right environment. Children gradually develop self-discipline through freedom of movement and freedom of choice. The Montessori materials give them a sense of satisfaction, which encourages them to concentrate and complete activities.

### 4: The absorbent mind

Children possess an acute sensitivity for absorbing and learning from their environment.

### 5: Prepared environment

A classroom designed to facilitate independent learning and exploration. Children are encouraged and guided toward independence as early as possible to become well-adjusted and able to function confidently by themselves and within a group.

Children gain an understanding of their importance and impact on their community and world through practicing the skills necessary for self-care and tending to the environment.

## Our peace commitment

At [7 Continents Montessori](#), we are committed to helping children grow up as confident individuals who respect others and embrace the rich diversity of their community and world. Our peace and cultural curriculum develop an awareness of the similarities and differences among people in their own communities and around the world. **The essential components of the Montessori peace curriculum are:**

- Self conscious
- Consciousness of others
- Love and respect of nature
- Global conscious
- Peaceful conflict resolution

Our peace curriculum also focuses on each individual's development and sense of inner peace. By creating an environment that allows the child to explore at their own pace, our hope is that our children develop a deep appreciation for the peacefulness that can be achieved through concentration on a particular task or work. As our children grow into adults and move out into the world, we hope that the foundation of peacefulness through concentration will stay with them as they engage in the responsibilities of adulthood.

Finally, the classroom has a peace table where children can go to discuss and work through misunderstandings and conflicts. Initially, children are guided through the language they need to express their feelings before becoming confident and comfortable in both sharing their feelings and listening to the feelings of a friend on their own. As they mature, children refine their communication skills and resolve conflicts to utilize the peace table independently without adult mediation. Our children carry this skill into the world to use with peers, siblings, parents, and others.

## Our classroom and curriculum at 7 Continents Montessori

At [7 Continents Montessori](#), we create an enriching, child-centered environment designed to foster independence, creativity, and a lifelong love of learning. Our classrooms are thoughtfully designed to support the holistic development of each child—intellectually, socially, emotionally, and physically—through a structured yet flexible curriculum that encourages self-discipline, exploration, and personal growth.

### The Montessori classroom environment

A Montessori classroom is a warm and inviting space filled with natural light, carefully designed to promote independence and discovery. The layout and organization of the room reflect the Montessori philosophy, with distinct areas of learning that allow children to freely explore a variety of activities that support their development. These areas include practical life skills, sensorial activities, mathematics, language, and cultural studies.

### Key characteristics of our Montessori classroom include:

- **Child-sized furniture:** Our furniture is specifically designed for children, enabling them to move around and interact with materials at their own level. This creates a sense of ownership and independence as they access resources independently.
- **Natural materials:** Materials in our classroom are selected for their educational value and made from natural materials like wood, fabric, and metal. These materials engage children's senses and provide opportunities for hands-on exploration.
- **Open shelving:** Montessori materials are displayed on low, accessible shelves that invite children to choose what interests them. This fosters a sense of autonomy and decision-making as children take responsibility for their learning journey.
- **Hands-on, self-correcting activities:** Our materials are designed to be hands-on and self-correcting. For example, children may use wooden geometric shapes to explore mathematical concepts or practice pouring water between containers to refine fine motor skills. This supports the Montessori principle of learning through discovery and repetition.
- **Teacher role as facilitator:** Teachers, or "guides," serve as facilitators rather than traditional instructors. They observe the children's progress and offer gentle guidance when needed. Teachers provide challenges and support to encourage further development but largely allow children to direct their own learning.
- **Calm and respectful atmosphere:** The classroom environment promotes cooperation, self-regulation, and mutual respect. Children are encouraged to work independently and collaborate with their peers, learning to manage their time, care for their environment, and interact positively with others.

## Developmentally appropriate curriculum

Our curriculum is carefully designed to meet the developmental needs of each child, allowing them to grow at their own pace and build a deep love for learning. The Montessori curriculum is divided into five key areas of work:

### 1. Practical life

Practical Life activities help children develop independence, coordination, concentration, and responsibility. These activities mimic real-life tasks that children will encounter at home or in the world around them. They involve everyday actions like pouring, sweeping, buttoning, or washing dishes, and help children refine both fine and gross motor skills. Children practice following steps in sequence, gain confidence in their ability to care for themselves and their environment, and learn the value of contributing to the community.

- **Benefits:**
  - Builds concentration and focus
  - Encourages responsibility and self-reliance
  - Develops fine and gross motor skills
  - Supports practical problem-solving and sequencing skills

### 2. Sensorial

The Sensorial area is designed to refine the child's senses—sight, touch, taste, smell, and hearing—through structured, hands-on activities. Montessori materials in this area focus on isolating specific qualities such as color, size, shape, texture, and sound, which children explore and compare through sensory exploration.

- **Benefits:**
  - Develops classification, comparison, and categorization skills
  - Refines the ability to observe and pay attention to details
  - Enhances sensory awareness and memory
  - Encourages self-awareness and differentiation of senses



### 3. Mathematics

Montessori math materials provide a hands-on approach to understanding mathematical concepts. Using concrete manipulatives like number rods, golden beads, and fraction circles, children explore fundamental math concepts such as counting, addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, and even more advanced topics like fractions and algebra.

- **Benefits:**
  - Builds a solid foundation for abstract mathematical thinking
  - Encourages an understanding of mathematical relationships through tangible, visual materials
  - Fosters logical thinking and problem-solving
  - Develops early numeracy skills with precision and confidence

### 4. Language

The language area supports children's development in speaking, reading, and writing. Through the use of sandpaper letters, movable alphabets, and reading cards, children are introduced to phonetic sounds, letter recognition, vocabulary-building exercises, and both oral and written communication. As children engage with language, they learn to express themselves clearly, understand the basics of reading and writing, and gain confidence in their language skills.

- **Benefits:**
  - Develops phonetic awareness and early literacy skills
  - Promotes fine motor skills through writing and tracing
  - Builds vocabulary and oral communication skills
  - Encourages a love for reading and storytelling

### 5. Cultural studies

Cultural studies in Montessori encompass subjects like geography, history, science, art, and music, designed to help children understand the world around them and appreciate the diversity of human experiences. Through hands-on activities, children learn about the continents, ecosystems, and cultural practices around the globe. They explore natural environments, learn about history through storytelling, and connect to different cultures.

- **Benefits:**
  - Fosters an appreciation for diversity and global citizenship
  - Encourages exploration of the natural world and environmental awareness
  - Helps children understand concepts of history and culture in a relatable way
  - Stimulates curiosity and engagement with global issues

### Encouraging a love of learning

At [7 Continents Montessori](#), we believe that learning is a lifelong process. Our curriculum is designed to cultivate curiosity, encourage independence, and promote intellectual and emotional growth in children. By providing a rich, hands-on environment with carefully selected materials and a focus on self-directed learning, we prepare children for success in the world around them. Our goal is not just to teach academic concepts but to instill in each child a deep love for learning, a strong sense of responsibility, and the skills to thrive in the world beyond the classroom.

Through our Montessori approach, we nurture the development of the whole child—intellectually, socially, emotionally, and physically—allowing each child to reach their full potential and embrace the world with confidence.



Our administrative organization





## A brief history



### Board of director

Rocio Acevedo Lobato, Executive Director,  
Owner and Business Manager.

[7continentsmontessori@gmail.com](mailto:7continentsmontessori@gmail.com)

Cell phone: [407-969-1897](tel:407-969-1897)

### Background and education

Rocio Acevedo is the Early Childhood Specialist of the School. She is responsible for staff development of the teachers, and the curriculum development of the program. She has been involved in Montessori education for over ten years as an Assistant Teacher and Teacher, Owner of a Montessori School in Mexico. Rocio has her American Montessori Society Teacher Credentials at the Early Childhood.

Inspired by Dr. Maria Montessori's vision of child-centered education, Rocio believes in creating an environment where children are empowered to explore, discover, and learn at their own pace. She is committed to fostering a nurturing and inclusive classroom that supports the holistic development of each child, encouraging independence, creativity, and a lifelong love of learning.

### Accreditation and affiliations

[7 Continents Montessori](#) is a member of the American Montessori Society.

[7 Continents Montessori](#) is licensed by the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC).

To obtain your own copy of EEC Small Group Child care Regulations, you may download them from the EEC web site.

Parents may contact EEC for information regarding [7 Continents Montessori](#) compliance.

History to the local EEC regional office, whose contact information is as follows:

Address: 360 Merrimack Street, Building 9, 3rd Floor,  
Lawrence, MA 01843

Phone Number: 978-681-9684



**AMERICAN MONTESSORI SOCIETY®**  
education that transforms lives



**MASSACHUSETTS**  
**Department of**  
**Early Education and Care**

### Non-discrimination

[7 Continents Montessori](#) has no religious affiliation.

[7 Continents Montessori](#) does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, class, gender, gender identity and/or expression, age, sexual orientation, religion, culture, nationality, or ethnic origin in the administration of its admissions policies, educational programs, hiring practices, financial aid or other school-administered programs.

### Our staff

Each staff person must receive 10 hours of continuing education in child development or special education each year. This requirement is over and above what state licensing regulations require and is crucial in maintaining qualified teachers for the ongoing success of the [7 Continents Montessori](#) program. All teachers must have some level of experience with young children and demonstrate a genuine interest in children. All staff members must have an initial physical, TB test, criminal records check, and a reference inquiry before employment begins.

[7 Continents Montessori](#) strives to surround our students with consistent, well-educated, positive role models who love learning and are passionate educators. All programs are led by a certified Montessori guide who has earned (or is in the process of earning) a credential through the American Montessori Society or the Association for Montessori International. Many of our assistant guides have attended Montessori assistant training as well. Professional development is a priority for all staff. Teachers and administrators regularly attend conferences, workshops, and seminars to both inspire and educate themselves.

### Our funding

[7 Continents Montessori](#) is an independent school. As such, it receives no state or federal education funds. Revenue for the school's operating budget is generated through tuition. [7 Continents Montessori](#) is a non-profit organization.



Admissions and administrative details





## Enrollment and admission procedures for 7 Continents Montessori

At [7 Continents Montessori](#), we are excited to welcome new families to our community. To ensure a smooth and organized enrollment process, we have outlined the steps and requirements for parents interested in enrolling their child.

### Enrollment requirements

To enroll at [7 Continents Montessori](#), children must be between the ages of 2 years and 5 years old at the time of enrollment.

### Admission procedures

1. **Open house or tour:** We host Open House events where prospective parents can tour the school, meet the Lead Montessori Guides, and learn about our educational philosophy and practices. This is an excellent opportunity to ask questions and get a feel for the Montessori environment.
2. **Initial check-in:** After attending an Open House or tour, prospective parents are invited to schedule a virtual or in-person check-in meeting. During this meeting, families can discuss the school's approach and their child's needs with the administration.
3. **Registration form:** If parents decide to proceed with enrollment, they will receive an Enrollment Application. Registration must be returned with a \$100 non-refundable application fee and \$50 for each additional application. These fees are non-refundable but will be applied toward administration.
4. **Classroom visit:** If space is available in the desired program, the family will be contacted to schedule a classroom visit for their child. This visit provides the child an opportunity to experience the Montessori classroom setting with a Montessori Guide from 9:00 am to 11:00 am.
5. **Admission decision:** After the classroom visit and interview, parents will receive one of the following decisions:
  - Acceptance letter
  - Non-acceptance letter
  - Deferment letter (for enrollment in the next academic year)
  - Request for a second classroom visit (if additional observation is needed)

If space is unavailable, your child's registration will be placed on a waiting list and considered in the next enrollment period.

6. **Toilet training status:** Please note that toilet training status is not an eligibility requirement for enrollment at [7 Continents Montessori](#).

## Requirements for enrollment

Upon receiving the acceptance letter, the following steps must be completed to finalize enrollment:

### 1. Enrollment application and fees

- Complete the [7 Continents Montessori](#) Enrollment Application.
- Submit the non-refundable deposit of \$500 to reserve your child's spot that will be applied to your tuition balance.

### 2. Required documents: Upon receipt of the enrollment application and registration fees, parents will receive:

- Enrollment agreement
- Parent handbook via email
- Permission forms (photo, sunscreen, walks, etc.)
- First aid and emergency medical care consent form
- Developmental history and background information
- Health and immunization forms

### 3. Required documents on first day of school: On the first day your child attends school, the office must have the following documents on file:

- Completed enrollment application, including registration form and schedule
- Signed enrollment agreement
- Completed set of enrollment paperwork
- Completed medical action plan (if applicable)
- Health assessment (completed by a licensed physician)
- Immunization records or exemption form (if applicable)

## Important notes

**State compliance:** We are required by Massachusetts state law to maintain complete and accurate records for all enrolled students. A child cannot attend school until all required forms are submitted.

**Form updates:** It is essential for parents/guardians to keep their child's medical and emergency contact information up-to-date. If any information changes during the year, please update the forms promptly through our [Brightwheel app](#).

## Responsibilities of Parents/Guardians

### Parents/guardians must:

- Ensure that all required school forms are complete, current, and submitted in a timely manner.
- Notify the administration of any changes to the child's medical or emergency contact information.
- Respond promptly to requests for missing documentation.

## Responsibilities of administration

### The administration will:

- Notify parents if any forms are missing or need updating.
- Send two notifications if documentation is incomplete or outdated.
- Exclude children from attending school if documents are not provided after these notifications.

## Tuition and payment policies

### 1. Tuition fees

We operate on a 10 Month School year (September through June) as well as provide programming for the School year and Summer break, February break, April break and Winter breaks. If you are interested in a shorter day please contact us.

A statement will be emailed during the last week of each month as a reminder to submit your payment on time. Payments are due within the first five (5) days of each month. A late fee of 5% will be applied to any payments made after this period. Failure to make a payment may result in the termination of your child's participation in our program.

If you choose to pay on a weekly basis, payments are due on the Friday before the start of the upcoming week. Please ensure timely payments to avoid any disruptions in your child's enrollment. If you have any questions or concerns regarding payments, feel free to contact us.

We offer care during holidays and vacations for an additional cost.

### Payment frequency: You may choose to pay tuition:

- Weekly
- 10 monthly payments (August through May)
- Annual payment will receive an extra discount

Regardless of the selected payment period, payment is due at the start of the period.

### 2. Payment methods

- **Check or Zelle or cash:** Payments made by check or cash must be given to the administrator.
- **Online payments:** Online tuition payments can be made through the [Brightwheel app](#).

### 3. Tuition discounts

- **Full school year (10 months):** A [5% discount](#) is available for families who prepay the full school year's tuition by the end of July.

### 4. Late payment fees

- A **5% late fee** will be applied to accounts with recurring late payments. Parents will receive reminders about payment deadlines and the late fee policy in advance.



## 5. Absence policy

**7 Continents Montessori** does not offer tuition refunds or make-up days for absences. This policy applies to all school closures or when a child is absent for any reason, including illness or personal vacations.

## 6. Vacation policy

If a child is absent for more than three weeks, families must pay 60% of the child's tuition to reserve their spot during the absence.

## 7. Late pick-up fee

A late pick-up fee of \$1 per minute will be charged for each minute a child is picked up after the designated pick-up time.

## 8. Delinquent Accounts

- **Payment Requirements:** Tuition and fees must be current by the child's start date in order for the child to attend or return to the program.
- **Delinquent Accounts (30+ Days):** If an account becomes more than 30 days delinquent, parents must make arrangements to bring the account current. If payment is not received or arrangements are not made, the child will not be permitted to attend school until the account is settled.

We appreciate your cooperation in submitting all required forms and documentation. Maintaining complete and accurate records is vital for ensuring the safety and compliance of our school. If you have any questions or need assistance with the enrollment process, please do not hesitate to contact our administration.

We look forward to partnering with you in your child's educational journey at **7 Continents Montessori**!

## Withdrawal and discharge policy at 7 Continents Montessori

At **7 Continents Montessori**, we aim to provide a smooth and respectful transition for students who are withdrawing or being discharged. Our policy outlines the procedures for both voluntary withdrawals and involuntary discharges.

### 1. Voluntary withdrawal

- **Notice requirement:** Parents or guardians wishing to withdraw their child from the program must submit written notice at least two weeks in advance. This helps us prepare for the transition and adjust our planning accordingly.
- **Final documentation:** Upon receiving the withdrawal notice, the school will provide:
  - A final checklist of any outstanding items or fees.
  - A summary of the child's progress during their time at the school.
  - Pertinent records to be shared with the new school or caregiver, if applicable.
- **Refunds:** Any pre-paid fees or deposits will be refunded in accordance with the terms outlined in the Enrollment Agreement. Please refer to the agreement for specific refund details.

### 2. Involuntary discharge

- **Reasons for discharge:** Involuntary discharge may occur due to reasons such as:
  - Repeated behavioral issues that impact the classroom environment.
  - Non-compliance with **7 Continents Montessori** policies.
  - Inability to meet the specific needs of the child, despite reasonable accommodations.
- Before discharging a student, the school will make every effort to address concerns through communication and potential interventions.
- **Notice of Discharge:** Parents or guardians will receive written notice that outlines:
  - The reasons for discharge.
  - The actions taken to resolve the situation prior to discharge.
  - At least two weeks' notice will be provided to allow parents time to make alternative arrangements for their child's care.
- **Final Documentation:** Upon discharge, we will provide:
  - A summary of the child's progress and any relevant records.
  - A review of outstanding fees or items as per the Enrollment Agreement.

Our goal is to handle all withdrawals and discharges with professionalism and compassion, ensuring a smooth and respectful transition for both the child and the family.

### Schedule change policy

- **Notice requirement:** Parents or guardians who wish to change their child's schedule must submit the request in writing with a 90-day notice.
- **Fee for schedule changes:**
  - The first schedule change within the school year is free of charge.
  - Any subsequent schedule changes will incur a \$75 fee per change.

### Financial assistance

We believe that every child should have access to a Montessori education, regardless of socio-economic background. To support this, we offer the following:

- **EEC financial assistance:** We accept funding from the EEC (Early Education and Care) financial assistance program. Please inquire for more details and eligibility.
- **AMS tuition assistance program:** We also have our own tuition assistance program through AMS (American Montessori Society).

Requests for financial aid should be submitted prior to the beginning of the school year to ensure proper processing.

### School hours

The school is generally open from 7:30 am to 5:30 pm on weekdays, except for scheduled early release days. Please refer to the school year calendar for specific dates when the school is closed or has early dismissal.

### Extended care

We offer extended care options to accommodate working families, as follows:

- **Early drop-off:** Available from 7:30 am to 8:30 am daily. Cost: \$15 per day, based on space availability.
- **Extended care:** Available from 2:45/3:00 pm to 5:30 pm daily, with advance notice required for those not enrolled in the extended care program.

**Note:** Availability for additional extended care hours may be limited and is not guaranteed for students not enrolled in the regular extended care program.

This policy ensures that both parents and the school are on the same page regarding withdrawals, discharges, schedule changes, financial assistance, and extended care. We aim to maintain a respectful and cooperative environment for all families at [7 Continents Montessori](#). If you have any questions or need further clarification, please contact the school administration.

### Media policy at 7 Continents Montessori

At [7 Continents Montessori](#), we capture photos and videos throughout the school year for various purposes including our website, slideshows, marketing materials, and social media. Our goal is to share the wonderful experiences and achievements of our students with the wider community. However, we respect your preferences regarding your child's image and ensure that all media usage complies with the following guidelines:

### Photographs and videos

- **Opt-out option:** If you prefer that your child not be photographed or filmed, please contact Rocio Acevedo at [7continentsmontessori@gmail.com](mailto:7continentsmontessori@gmail.com) no later than Tuesday, August 27th. This request must be made annually to ensure that we respect your wishes each school year.
- **Usage of images:** When using your child's image in materials such as photographs or videos, we will only use the child's first name. In cases where two students share the same first name, we may use their first name with the first initial of their last name for identification purposes.
- **Annual renewal:** The opt-out request must be renewed every school year. If no request is made, we will assume permission to use your child's image in related materials.

### Screens and media usage

At [7 Continents Montessori](#), we prioritize age-appropriate and educational experiences. The use of visual media (TV, films, videos, etc.) is guided by the following principles:

- **Developmentally appropriate programming:** Any visual media used will be carefully selected to ensure it is suitable for the developmental stages of the children. We will use media as a special event or to achieve a specific educational goal, not as a regular part of the daily routine.
- **Screen time restrictions:** Screen time, including TV, video, internet, or DVD viewing, will never occur during meal or snack times to promote a healthy eating environment.
- **Director approval:** All videos or media content must receive prior approval from the director. All screen time used will be directly related to educational programming and will align with the curriculum and developmental objectives of our center.

We are committed to ensuring a respectful and balanced use of media in our classroom environment, with a focus on fostering creativity, curiosity, and healthy learning habits. If you have any concerns or questions about our media policy, please feel free to reach out to us at any time.





Parent involvement





### Parent observation and participation

Once the school year is underway and settled, parents are always welcome to observe their child's classroom. We ask the parent to schedule an observation or visit in advance, just to be sure the classroom does not have atypical programming taking place at the same time.

### Parent/Guide communication

Strong parent/guide communication is a key component of a vibrant and happy school community. Guides can be reached through [Brightwheel](#), a phone call to the main office with a request for a return phone call, or by filling out a communication form and passing it to a guide or assistant. During Back to School night, the Montessori guide will also share the best way to get in touch when needed.

Please note our Guides are not required or expected to communicate or work outside of their school hours; this includes evenings, weekends, and school breaks.

### Building our community

Back to school is a time to get to know your child's guide, learn about special events, daily schedules, and classroom projects, build your community, and ask all your questions. We strongly suggest that parents/guardians (or at least one parent/guardian from each family) attend. This is a parents-only event and childcare is not available.

### Parent/Guide conferences

Conferences for all parents and guides are conducted in November for all students. Your child's guide will discuss your child's use of time and materials, cognitive development, how they respond to the environment, and how they are developing social relationships. This is also a wonderful time for both parent/guardian and guide to ask questions and share ideas. Children should not attend these conferences.

The primary program will receive a progress report before the November conference and again in May to summarize the school year.

New families will have a short conference with the child's guide in September/October. This will not be accompanied by a written progress report and is meant to be a check-in on the child's first six weeks in school.

### Policy regarding parents hiring 7 Continents Montessori staff

[7 Continents Montessori](#) prohibits our staff from working independently for current parents of [7 Continents Montessori](#) as babysitters, nannies, or otherwise.





Attendance: transition, arrivals and dismissals



## Transition plans

There are several transitions during your child's first day, e.g. recess, lunch, etc. Our goal is to make these as smooth as possible for the children. A guide lets children know what is going to happen next, and then accompany them in their transition. You will learn about class transitions during our short conference in September/October and your child's guide will keep you informed of any changes or individual variations.

Children who transition between programs always have a classroom guide who accompanies them to the next program and children are given a verbal alert before the transition occurs. This provides strong communication between staff and each child.

Parents of children who finish the school year will be asked to complete an exit survey if their child is not returning to [7 Continents Montessori](#) the following school year. Classroom discussions regarding the child's departure from a program are done at the parent's discretion per the parent's wishes.

## Attendance/Absences

If your child is going to be absent, please call the school at [407-969-1897](tel:407-969-1897) prior to the start of the day's class session. It is helpful to know why the child is absent, particularly in the case of certain contagious illness (chicken pox, strep throat, etc.), as we may need to notify other families of the situation.

## Absences, sick days & vacations

Children need to be present on a regular basis to learn from our program. As participants of the EEC programs, it requires attendance records so we must record attendance.

- Please notify your child's teacher if you know that your child will be out of school ahead of time for an appointment or vacation.
- If your child is sick, please notify us as soon as you can. You can send all notifications to your child's teacher via messaging within the [Brightwheel app](#).

- If your child has been absent two days in a row for unknown reasons, a staff member will touch base with you to check in and ensure the child is well and when to expect their return.

## Arrivals

Parents are responsible for transporting their children to and from school. [7 Continents Montessori](#) does not provide transportation for students. Furthermore, field trips organized by the school are always "walking trips" for our students and parents, so that cars, buses, etc are not utilized.

Punctuality is important in our school environment. Students should arrive promptly between the arrival window (8:15-8:30 am) daily to promote socialization and ensure a stress-free transition while allowing ample time for work activities. It is especially important for children who are experiencing separation anxiety to come to the classroom early as this can provide a smoother transition.

All arrivals will be done at the main entrance door only. Staff will be greeting you and your child.

Late arrivals are incredibly disruptive to your child's learning, and it also interrupts the learning happening in the classroom. We ask for your commitment to on-time arrival out of respect for the community and to help ensure a smooth and successful work cycle. Any arrivals after 8:45 am will need a doctor's note unless previously arranged with the Head of School.

## Dismissals

Please pick your child up promptly at his or her dismissal time. Our days are scheduled tightly, and staff often have an immediate obligation to other children following a dismissal time. If you must pick your child up before a regularly scheduled dismissal time, please notify the school in advance by calling ahead or sending in a written note for that day.

## 12:15/12:30 pm dismissal

Parents are asked to arrive at 12:15/12:30 pm to pick up their children. Please park your car and a staff member will bring your child to the main door entrance.

## 2:45/3:00 pm dismissal

Parents are asked to arrive at 2:45/3:00 pm to pick up their children. Please park your car and a staff member will bring your child to the main door entrance.

## Emergency closings and delays

We know that our families are depending on us to care for their children. Many of us are also working parents and know the stress caused by school cancellations. [7 Continents Montessori](#) follows the Wakefield Public School calendar. So it will be easier for you to know when school will be closed.

Here are factors that go into our decision-making process for closures, delays, and early releases:

- Teacher professional development
- National Weather Service information: We also consider official statements from the National Weather Service regarding weather conditions and snowfall amounts and timing, especially when they issue winter storm warnings.

Emergency closing information will be available by 6:15 am from the following sources:

1. Via [Brightwheel](#) Urgent Alert. It is vitally important that you follow the steps to complete your [Brightwheel](#) account preferences to ensure receipt of a text/phone call in the event of a closure or emergency.
2. Posting on Boston 25 News, [boston25news.com/weather](http://boston25news.com/weather)



### Parking and carpool

To ensure our children's safety, it is of utmost importance that we practice safety and courtesy while in the parking lot. Please watch out for others, drive slowly, and hold children's hands. If you are entering the building, please DO NOT hold the door open for others. The person behind you may not be a parent.

### Change in pickup person

The safety of our students is our top priority. Please notify your child's teacher if someone other than you will be picking up your child. [7 Continents Montessori](#) staff will only release your child to the parents and guardians or the other adults you authorized on the student's Enrollment Application or within the [Brightwheel app](#). If you need to authorize a new pickup person, please send the request via email. For your child's safety, any time a person we do not recognize comes to pick up your child, we will ask for a government-issued photo ID.

### Inclement weather days

In case of inclement weather, [7 Continents Montessori](#) will close as determined by [local institution, such as public school system].

- If [local institutions] are CLOSED, [7 Continents Montessori](#) WILL BE CLOSED.
- If [local institutions] are opening on a 2-hour delay, [7 Continents Montessori](#) WILL OPEN AT a 2-hour delay.
- If [local institutions] are opening on a 3-hour delay, [7 Continents Montessori](#) WILL OPEN AT a 3-hour delay.







A day in the Montessori environment



## Snacks

**7 Continents Montessori** does not provide snacks. Parents need to provide an individually packaged, nutritious snack labeled with the child's name. Students who attend extended care will need two snacks, both individually wrapped and labeled with their name. For snacks that are not individually wrapped, please package them either in a reusable snack bag or a disposable baggie, such as a Ziplock baggie or wax paper baggie.

Please ensure your child can open any containers their food is packed in.

Please do not hesitate to send extra snacks for your child. They are busy and hungry during the day, and it is always better to have extra food available.

## Lunch

All children should bring a packed, trash-free lunch to school. Please provide an insulated lunch bag or cloth bag. We recommend reusable containers or thermos. The child must be able to open their lunch container to minimize assistance from the teacher. Prepackaged food in single-serving containers is often difficult for children to open, and since it can't be resealed, often results in wasted food. The school can refrigerate or heat lunch for students.

Please provide the items listed below in your child's lunch:

- A well-balanced nutritious meal
- Thermos for foods meant to be eaten warm
- Ice pack to keep meats and dairy products cold
- A drink if desired (**7 Continents Montessori** provides water to accompany lunches and snacks)
- A napkin
- Utensils
- Placemats

Some ideas for a healthy lunch:

- **Protein:** Tuna fish, hard-boiled eggs, slices of meat, chicken, nuts (NO peanuts or peanut butter!), beans, tofu, yogurt, cottage cheese, other cheeses, etc
- **Fruits and Vegetables:** Carrots, celery, lettuce, cucumbers, apples, bananas, oranges, grapes, green, orange, and red peppers
- **Grains:** Whole wheat bread, rice crackers, whole wheat crackers
- **Dairy:** Milk, cheeses, yogurt

Please do not send the items listed below in your child's lunch:

- Juice boxes (they are high in sugar)
- Gogurts (they are high in sugar)
- Candy and other sweet foods (they make it difficult for the children to rest or work afterward)
- Items with caffeine (all chocolate contains caffeine)

We suggest that the children be included in the lunch-making process at home as they are more apt to eat the food they bring if they have helped to choose or make it. All unfinished food and beverages will be repacked and sent home with your child. This allows you to gauge your child's appetite and adjust the size of portions according to his/her consumption.

## Peanut free school

**7 Continents Montessori** is a PEANUT FREE SCHOOL.

We have a few children in our classrooms with a life-threatening allergy to peanuts. Please **DO NOT SEND ANY PEANUTS, PEANUT BUTTER, or PEANUT INGREDIENTS** into the classroom for lunch. Your cooperation in carefully reading all ingredient labels is greatly appreciated. Even trace amounts of peanuts may create an unsafe situation.

Some parents replace peanut butter with almond butter, sunflower butter or cashew butter.

## What to wear

One of the qualities fostered in a Montessori classroom is independence. Sending students in easily manageable clothing such as elastic waist pants or shorts, and slip over shirts or dresses will help develop confidence in their own abilities. Please make sure all jackets and sweaters have easy, working, full zippers. For all students, clothing and footwear must be appropriate for active and creative play. Children will paint, play, and get dirty!

Please make sure clothing can endure our busy days.

Footwear needs to have both a closed front and some type of back, allowing children the freedom to climb and play safely. We also recommend a closed toe to protect feet from the cement. Please do not send children in shoes with significantly high heels. Sneakers are always a good choice.

The family will need to provide their children with two complete changes of labeled clothing that are kept in or near their cubby in a separate container. **Please include:** two shirts, two pairs of underwear, two pairs of pants or shorts, socks, and a pair of indoor shoes with a rubber sole to remain at school such as slippers, with both a closed front and some type of back.

Please make sure all items that come to school are labeled with indelible markers. Even children who no longer have bathroom "accidents" may encounter water, paint spills, or puddles.

When a child has an accident, an adult will be available to help the child to clean their body with wipes and put on clean clothes.

### Rest time for students

Please send a sleeping mat nap with your child's name. Your child may also include a stuffed animal for rest time, which will need to remain in the nap bag. Please mark each item clearly with your child's name. Plush comfort items or pacifiers can be sent in for naptime but will stay at school with the nap linens and will be sent home every Friday (or the last day of your child's weekly schedule) to be laundered.

The school provides individual sleeping mats for each child.

While we will provide the rest opportunities after lunch, please note that we will not force your child to sleep, nor will we force them to stay awake.

The Department of Early Education and Care mandates that each child under the age of five be provided with the opportunity to rest each day.

### Show and tell from home

We appreciate children's desire to share personal treasures and experiences with their classmates. We ask that parents help their children exercise tasteful choices in what they bring to [7 Continents Montessori](#).

Here are some guidelines:

- Natural specimens (rocks, shells, flowers, nests, etc.)
- Item which connects to an important story the child can relate from his personal life
- Interesting books, especially those depicting a real-life situation. Just one at a time please.
- Items from other cultures
- Something the child has made
- A photo or a newspaper article which has particularly interested him/her

During our group times, children enjoy hearing about trips or other experiences of their classmates. You might discuss with your child any interesting experiences, which could be shared with the group.

When your children bring objects to share, it is also helpful if you can discuss the object with your child so that they will be able to share some information with their classmates about the object, such as where it is from, how they got it, what it's for, etc. It is important that your child is familiar with the object they bring in.

Sharing is not usually an everyday occurrence; be prepared for the object to spend a few days here. In some cases, the guide may ask your child to bring it again.

**Please note:** We ask that toys, cosmetics, stickers, jewelry, notebooks, pencils, and the like be used at home and not brought to school. We find these types of items can distract children from the special environment of the classroom and can cause stress if they are lost or damaged. These items also cause arguments and feelings of possessiveness.

### Learning support

When families and/or guides have concerns regarding a student's academic performance, physical development, or social and emotional well-being, the Head of School, and the child's teachers, will meet to discuss issues and strategies with an open and proactive approach. Together the head of school, teachers and the parents identify the student's strengths and needs in detail, and put structures and strategies in place to help students reach their highest potential.

The following guidelines are followed, step by step, until results are achieved. **The teacher will inform the parents of each step of the process.**

1. The teacher observes the student to discuss issues and strategies with the Director.
  - a. The classroom Lead and Assistant guides put strategies in place to see if improvements can be made within the classroom over a two week period to assist the child. These can include problem solving with students, changes in room layout, more or less direction, and additional activities to meet student Interests.
  - b. Observations are kept to track success and areas that may need adjustment.
  - c. The guide will meet with parents to discuss all of the above.
2. If more support is needed after a two week period, the Director will have a follow-up observation and meeting with the guide to create and implement an Action Plan.
  - a. The action plan is shared with the parents and will include information about follow-up evaluations and additional services recommended, if necessary.
3. The Action Plan is followed continuously. If further diagnostic evaluations or services are recommended, the guide will meet with outside services and providers (REACH, the Collaborative, etc) as needed to ensure the child's needs are met. Regular parent communication regarding the Action Plan and the child's progress continues.



Conflict resolution





Guidance and expectations are clear and consistent in the Montessori classroom. Our guidance is based on an understanding of the developmental history and individual needs of each child. The goal is to maximize the growth and development of each child, protect individuals within the group, and maintain a calm classroom atmosphere that is conducive to learning.

In the event of conflict, our highest priority is to respect and nurture a child's self-esteem. Holding a child's sense of self in high regard at all times, we then set out safety and security standards. The guide is the peacemaker – always working to understand and validate the child's feelings and to restore order. The core social message of a Montessori classroom is based on being respectful: "Your body, feelings, and things are important, and need to be taken care of." "It is important to take care of your friends' bodies, feelings, and things."

### Ground rules

The classroom's established ground rules are based on the Montessori concept of freedom within limits. This gives children the opportunity to make work choices that interest them. With this freedom of movement and choice comes the responsibility of taking care of the environment, themselves, and each other.

Our three basic rules are:

- Be safe
- Be gentle
- Be kind

### Disregarding ground rules

When a child disregards one of the classroom ground rules, positive language will be used, and one or more of the following steps will be taken:

- The child will be gently reminded of the ground rules of the classroom and the reasons for following them.
- The child will be redirected to an appropriate activity ("come with me, I've got something special, I want to show you..."). This distraction method works very well with our young children.

If the behavior continues after a message has been given, the child may be asked to "take a break" from his/her activity or move away from a particular child(ren).

The child may be given a logical consequence such as "you will lose the privilege of using the bead box if you throw beads." The child remains in the classroom and may decide to sit and observe until his privilege is reinstated. This break is designed to change his/her focus and break the behavior cycle.

In the event of a tantrum, when a child is physically out of control and lashing out, he/she may need to be removed from the class to prevent potential injury to other children. The child will be accompanied by an adult at all times.

Sometimes we find what works best is to change the environment – a calming walk outside in nature or sitting outside offers a soothing opportunity for a private discussion of the incident or action.

Humor often works wonders and is one of the most important ingredients in a guide's bag of tricks.

### Example of a conflict resolution

Most disputes over space, materials, or social disagreements are resolved by guides helping children according to the model/methods that we provide training in.

These steps are:

- **APPROACH CALMLY:** stop any hurtful actions or language. (Place yourself between children, on their level. Use a calm voice and gentle touch.)
- **ACKNOWLEDGE FEELINGS.** ("You look really upset.")
- **GATHER INFORMATION.** ("What's the problem?")
- **RESTATE the problem.** ("So the problem is...")
- **ASK FOR IDEAS FOR SOLUTIONS** and choose one together. "What can we do to solve the problem?")
- **GIVE FOLLOW-UP SUPPORT** as needed. ("You solved this problem")

### Mediation/Peace time

In case of a child repeatedly disregards the rules, one or more of the following may be implemented as deemed appropriate to the situation by the guide.

A **PEACE TIME** between guide and child will be arranged. This mediation is designed to teach children how to work out their own problems. The child may be told "your next work or activity is to come and talk to me (the guide). This is important and we need to talk about this **FIRST** before you can choose another activity or join your friends again. Then when the child appears to be ready to listen and willing to talk the issue out, the guide will gather the other child(ren) involved. The problem will then be discussed and possible solutions will be agreed upon.

Some possible creative conflict resolution methods we use are:

- Reflective listening
- "Smoothing over" small rifts
- Storytelling
- Role-playing and role reversal

Our staff is also trained to use creative conflict resolutions. This method is based on building empathy by bringing the children eye to eye and teaching the child to recognize the needs of others. By "reading" their body language we can guide them in developing empathy for other children. The children are encouraged to come up with solutions that work for them both.



## Accident/Incident reports

### When do we use an incident report?

Incident reports are used at [7 Continents Montessori](#) to document certain situations and behaviors. It is important to have clear lines of communication between staff and families about things that occur during the school day. In general, the following situations require a written report:

- A non-accidental act that damages or destroys materials
- A non-accidental act that results in harm of another, or in the need for first aid of any kind
- An act of excessive disrespect

When an incident occurs, families of all children involved in the incident must be notified with either an accident or incident form.

### Cause for incident report

- **1st incident:** an incident report is written and shared with parent/guardian at dismissal
- **2nd incident:** an incident report is written, a phone call home is made, and the report is shared with parent/guardian at dismissal
- **3rd incident:** an incident report is written, a phone call home is made, the report is shared with parent/guardian at dismissal, and a mandatory parent/teacher conference is scheduled

### Biting

Biting is a normal part of child development. Young children bite for various reasons, such as teething or exploring a new toy or object with their mouth. Biting can also be a way for toddlers to get attention or express how they're feeling. Frustration, anger, and fear are strong emotions, and toddlers lack the language skills to deal with them. If they can't find the words they need quickly enough or can't articulate how they're feeling, they may resort to biting.

Biting tends to occur most often between 12-24 months of age. Biting past the age of two and a half to three is less common. For repeated biting instances with preschoolers, we may request a parent/teacher conference.

The purpose of the parent-teacher conference is to discuss what may be causing the child to be upset, frustrated, confused, or afraid and therefore lead to biting. Additionally, we would develop a joint plan of action following our behavior guidance procedures listed in this handbook. If your child bites or is bitten, you and the family of the other child involved will receive an Incident/Accident Report that keeps the identity of both children confidential.

### Parameters and follow-up

The following considerations will be discussed at all parent-teacher conferences:

#### Guiding questions:

- What is happening at school or in the home, in regards to behaviors?
- What is currently being done at school to tend to the behaviors?
- What can be done to plan for follow-up and support for the child?

#### Parameters:

- Partnership established between guardians and school representatives.
- The head of school will be informed of Incident Reports.
- If an agreement to follow-up steps cannot be reached during the parent-teacher conference, the Head of School will become involved in the process.

#### Possible follow-up steps:

- The Head of School may become involved in the process.
- The child may be sent home as per the direction of [7 Continents Montessori](#) staff.
- Recommendation for follow-through for internal services and/or external evaluation.
- Formal observations and action planning to be guided by the head of school.
- Schedule of regular parent-teacher communication is established

Once a parent-teacher conference has been conducted and an action plan put in place, the child will be observed for 30 days for behavioral improvements. If no improvement is seen, further meetings will be held regarding what future planning will best suit the student's needs.

### Guidance procedures

[7 Continents Montessori](#) does not condone or tolerate the use of physical punishment of any kind on [7 Continents Montessori](#) property. This policy restricts parents and staff from using physical punishment on their children while on [7 Continents Montessori](#) property. Also, [7 Continents Montessori](#) will not tolerate psychological abuse, coercion, threats, derogatory remarks, withholding, or threatening to withhold food as a form of discipline.

### Reinforcing at home

When a child's behavior disrupts the classroom community on an ongoing basis, classmates may begin to voice reluctance to come to school. If one child begins to adversely affect the actions of other children in this way, we will take steps to protect the collective good of the class.

A PEACE TIME will be arranged between the guide and the child. We talk a lot about how the school came to be and how [7 Continents Montessori](#) is a fun and peaceful place for children to come, learn and play. With the child's assistance, the guide will write down, in language easily understood by the child, that EVERYONE must follow our rules or it would NOT be a fun, safe place.

Then all parties would talk about the behavior we all agreed was appropriate of him/her while at school. This process primarily focuses on one specific positive behavior we seek. It gets the child to focus on one positive action. This is how we inform the parents of the rule being broken and obtain the parents' support in reinforcing this rule at home. The parent should let the child overhear them tell the guide that they all understand and agree that this is an important rule to practice.

### Collaboration and support

Our commitment is to work collaboratively with parents when children have significant behavioral issues or needs we cannot meet. We will provide conferences between the parent and guide to discuss the needs of the child, and options to help avoid suspension or termination, including seeking outside guidance. The Head of School may also attend these conferences.

During these conferences, [7 Continents Montessori](#) will often offer an Individual Plan to outline the modifications and structures the school can offer to support the child in the classroom and school setting. The Individual plan will also list support systems the parents need to utilize at home to support the child's continued growth and development. The Individual plan is a living document, and we ask for collaboration from parents on developing and utilizing it to support the child.

### Seeking outside guidance

When a particularly challenging or difficult situation presents itself to our professional staff, we may ask the parent(s) to seek outside assistance to aid us in best meeting the child's needs. We offer referrals to parents for the child's evaluation and for diagnostic and therapeutic services. [7 Continents Montessori](#) and the head of school also will bring in specialists to train staff and provide consultations when appropriate.

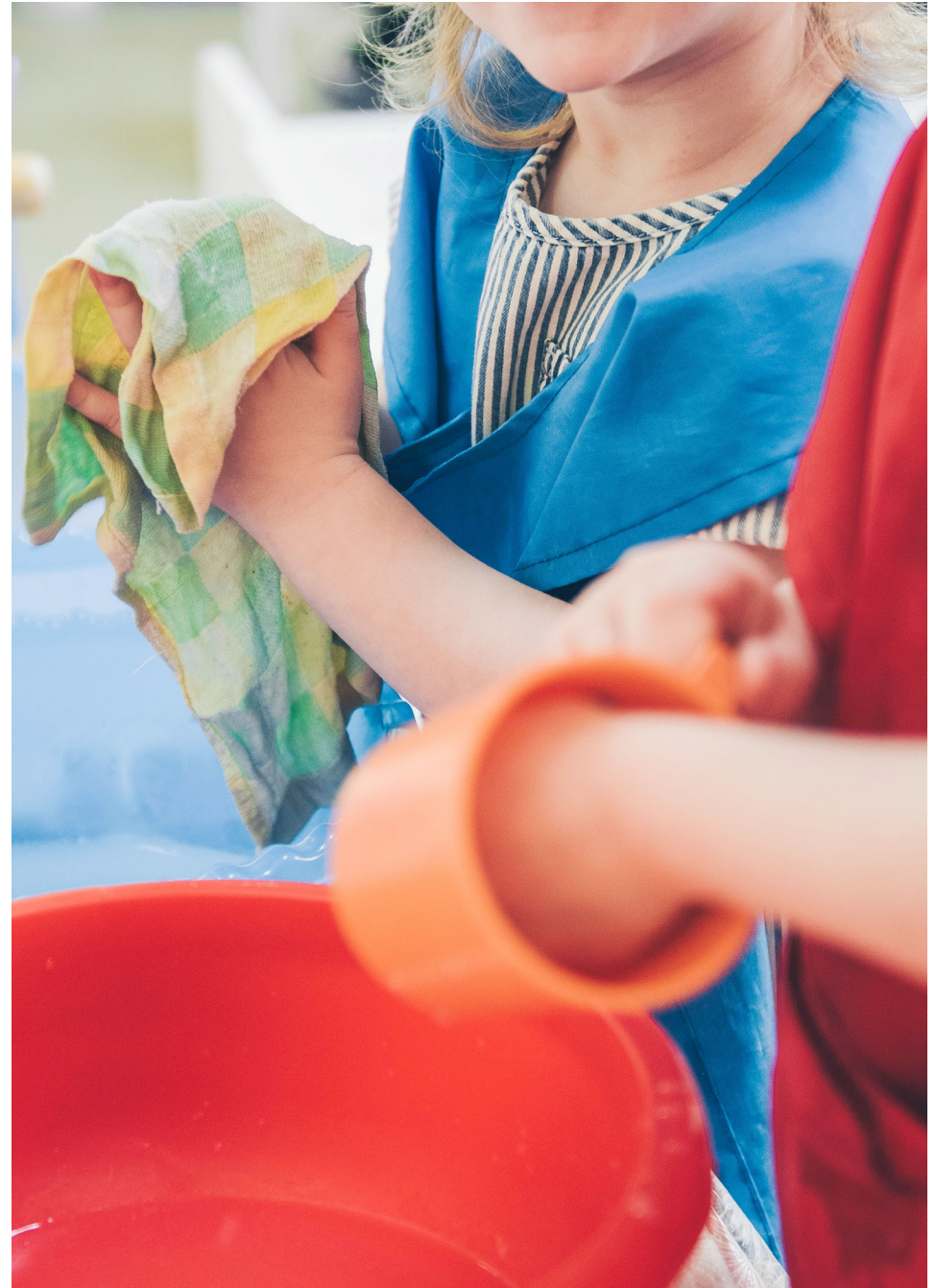
### Dismissal procedures

If, after meeting with the child's parents and considering outside guidance when necessary, the needs of the child have exceeded what the staff at [7 Continents Montessori](#) is able to offer, we will then recommend that the family seek a different program for their child. If it is within our expertise to do so, [7 Continents Montessori](#) will try to assist the family by making a recommendation on the type of program that would best suit the child's needs. [7 Continents Montessori](#) reserves the right to terminate the enrollment contract if the Montessori Method is not the right fit for the student.

### Contract cancellation policy

Because [7 Continents Montessori](#) believes that a positive and constructive working relationship between the school and a student's parent/guardian is essential, the school reserves the right to terminate the enrollment contract if the school reasonably concludes that the actions of a parent or guardian make such a positive and constructive relationship impossible, or otherwise interfere with the school's ability to accomplish its mission.

If a student withdraws on or after June 1, 2024, the undersigned parties on the enrollment contract is/are responsible for 100% of tuition and deposit as liquidated damages. No portion of tuition and fees, paid or outstanding, will be refunded or canceled, even in the event of absence, early withdrawal, or early dismissal. Please see your enrollment contract.





Health and safety



## Illness and health policy

### When to keep a child home

For the protection of all our children, your child should be kept AT HOME if they show ANY of the following symptoms:

- A temperature of 100 degrees or more
- Discharging eyes or ears
- Diarrhea or vomiting
- Nausea
- Fatigue that makes them unable to participate in the day
- Headache
- New loss of smell/taste
- A bad cold (w/colored discharge)
- An unexpected rash
- Coughing
- Sore throat
- Any other signs of illness

Children must be free of the symptoms listed above for a full day (without medication) in order to come back to school.

Children who are sent home from school with any of these symptoms must be kept home from school the following day. For example, if your child is sent home on a Wednesday at 12pm with a fever, your child must stay home the following Thursday for the entire day (you may not bring them back to school at 12pm) If your child becomes ill during school, we will contact you immediately.

A child who may be contagious will be temporarily isolated until parents can be reached. If you do not pick up your child within 30 minutes, we will begin to call the Emergency Contacts you have on file. We will keep them as comfortable as possible until the parent arrives.

It is important that we have on file the health history and emergency information form with a listing of persons to contact in case of a health emergency and a phone number where a parent or guardian can be reached.

### Dispensing of medication

The dispensing of medication by school personnel is prohibited except as provided below:

Staff may administer topical, non-prescription medications once a parent has submitted a signed medication authorization form. These do not require a medical signature.

If a student needs medication, which has been prescribed by a doctor, or over the counter pain medications, the following procedure will be used. Written instruction signed by the parent AND the physician should include:

1. The name of the medication
2. The dosage and time of administration
3. The doctor's name

\*If the medication is an epipen or inhaler, the school requires an action plan and a medication consent form.

Medicine must be sent in its original container with the prescription label by the parent and given to Rocio Acevedo, Head of School, who will then provide it for the guide. The classroom guide and the school office has forms available for this purpose. Since it is so easy to forget a refrigerated medication at the day's end, we suggest having the pharmacist divide the medication into two appropriate portions so one may be left at school. If more than one day's dosage is to be given, please be specific on dates the medication is to be given.

Medication will be kept in a supervised area, refrigerated if necessary, and always administered under the supervision of a guide. Any child who needs life saving medication should have an individual health plan on file at the school. With the written permission of the child's health care practitioner, parents will train staff in the implementation of the child's health care plan.

Only staff members who have been trained according to EEC guidelines on medication administration may administer medication. Furthermore, staff will be evaluated annually prior to the start of the new school year to determine that they are still following EEC guidelines.

### Communicable diseases

If a child has been exposed to a contagious disease, [7 Continents Montessori](#) must be notified. We specifically need to know when a child will return to school after a communicable disease according to the following schedule:

- **Chicken Pox:** One week to ten days after the appearance of blisters AND after ALL blisters have scabbed over
- **Streptococcal Infection (aka "Strep Throat"):** 24 hours after medication has started (must continue medication for 10 days)
- **Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye):** 24 hours after medication begins and no visible drainage from eye or with written physician permission
- **Impetigo:** 24 hours after oral medication begins or 48 hours after ointment medication begins
- **Head lice:** Morning after first treatment

### Immunizations

[7 Continents Montessori](#) requires families to submit a current immunization record (within the last year) and the Massachusetts school health record for each child. These documents can be requested from your child's medical provider and must be submitted with registration paperwork before a child can start at [7 Continents Montessori](#).

All public and private schools in the state of Massachusetts are required to report vaccination information for all students aged 2 and older to the state.

Additionally, EEC requires that we collect and report the lead testing of all 2, 3, and 4 year olds.

The state of Massachusetts requires staff at [7 Continents Montessori](#) to prove MMR immunization or immunity.



### Fire drills

Fire drills will take place on a monthly basis during the school year. Most fire drills are in the morning, but a few will take place in the afternoon.

For the first several months, guides will prepare the children for the drill and let them know that the alarm will be going off. After January, the drills will not be announced to children unless a child is particularly terrified. NOTE: THERE WILL BE NO TIME TO PUT ON CHILDREN'S COATS, SHOES, OR BOOTS SO PLEASE SEND SLIPPERS WITH SOLES AS YOUR CHILD'S INDOOR SHOES.

### Emergency evacuation plan

Emergency Evacuation Plans are posted at all exits. During an emergency evacuation, the Montessori guide or classroom assistant will be responsible for taking the attendance book and for leading the children out of the building. Administrative staff will assist in the evacuation and check rooms to ensure no one has been left behind. A staff member will make a visual inspection of the classroom and bathrooms before exiting the building. All classrooms, once evacuated, will meet in a designated evacuation gathering area and wait for the go-ahead by the Head of School or the designated staff member before entering the building.

During all evacuations, staff will carry the emergency backpack, which includes a first-aid kit, and emergency contact numbers, medical treatment forms, and special medications needed by children. A staff member will have a cell phone to allow for calls to local authorities to determine whether to evacuate or seek shelter in the event of a natural disaster. Calls will also be made to parents via a staff member's cell phone.

Children are always counted before exiting the building, upon arrival at the designated area, and upon returning to the building. Attendance is taken when arriving at the designated "safe area" outside to ensure that individual children are present.

The school maintains a daily attendance list that is current. Staff members are responsible for signing children in and out of the school by arrival and departure times. The attendance list will be kept in a designated spot and be readily accessible in case of an emergency evacuation.

The Montessori guide will be responsible for taking the attendance book and accounting for all of the children in the class once they are safely out of the building.

Emergency evacuation drills are conducted every month at different times of the program day as determined by the Head of School. Children and staff should practice using different evacuation routes so that they will be familiar with them.

The Head of School will maintain documentation of the date, time, and effectiveness of each drill in the fire drill log. This documentation will be maintained for five years.

In event of a fire, natural disaster, or other situations, requiring evacuation of the area, emergency vehicles will take the Greenwood School. [7 Continents Montessori](#) is included in the Town of Wakefield telephone and email bulletin regarding town disasters and/or unsafe conditions.

### Emergency plan for missing child

Attendance is taken every morning and counts of children are consistently made throughout the day. If a child were discovered to be missing, the guide would immediately alert the other guides and the administration. Bathrooms and closets and all nooks and crannies would be checked, followed by looking outdoors for the child. Administrative staff would call the parent and 911. Once the child is found, the Department of Early Education and Care would be alerted about the Situation.

### Mandated reports

We, as caregivers at [7 Continents Montessori](#), are required by law to report any suspected child abuse, physical or sexual, to the Department of Children and Families.





Special events





### **Birthdays/Ceremonies**

We have a very special birthday walk for children celebrating birthdays. The school will provide a birthday fruit cocktail during the birthday walk as a special celebration to the child.

It is a Montessori tradition for children to present their class with a book of pictures of themselves since the child was born until his actual new birthday, as a part of their birthday celebration. This act enables children to share some of their favorite things to do while they are that age and learn the value and pleasure of giving rather than receiving and is harmonious with the school's "spirit of giving" theme. After that each child gives a kind loving word as a presents for the child.

Parents wishing to participate in this tradition can inscribe the book with the child's name, birth date, and the number of birthdays the child is celebrating. For parents' convenience you may ask the classroom guide if there is a book that the class would particularly enjoy. Most parents purchase their child's favorite book. This old favorite at storytime will hold the most meaning for you and your child's special day. Participation, of course, is voluntary.

### **School events and holiday celebrations**

We celebrate holidays from a cultural perspective rather than a traditional or religious one. We strive to avoid the over-commercialization of most holidays and consciously focus on instilling in the children have a sense of the true meaning of a celebration – that of sharing and loving. Seasonal events include our harvest festival, the spring celebration, and the end of school celebration.

### **Field trips and school events**

For all field trips we will all meet at the field trip location (dropoff & pickup).

For school events, the children will enjoy local walks around the neighborhood, including a visit to the fire department that is conveniently located across the street. Parents will be notified of trip details in advance of each excursion via email.





Policies and procedures





## Weather policy for 7 Continents Montessori

At [7 Continents Montessori](#), the safety and well-being of our students and staff are of the utmost importance, particularly in adverse weather conditions. Below is an outline of our weather policy, developed to comply with Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (EEC) regulations:

### 1. Severe weather alerts

We monitor local weather reports and official alerts to ensure timely decision-making regarding closures, delays, or other schedule changes due to severe weather (such as snowstorms, heavy rainfall, extreme heat, or cold).

Decisions about closures or delays will be made based on guidance from local emergency management and weather authorities.

### 2. Closure notifications

In the event of a weather-related closure or delay, parents will be notified by 6:00 am through multiple channels:

- Phone calls to the primary emergency contact
- Emails to the parent/guardian on file
- Updates on our website and social media pages

Additionally, notifications will include information about the anticipated duration of the closure or delay. If you do not receive a notification, please contact the school directly.

### 3. Early dismissal

If severe weather conditions develop during the day, we may implement an early dismissal to ensure the safety of all students and staff. Parents will be contacted immediately by phone, email, and our website/social media platforms, and must arrange for prompt pick-up. We ask that parents respond quickly to ensure no child is left behind. Staff will remain on-site until all children are safely picked up.

### 4. Emergency procedures

We have clear emergency procedures for weather-related incidents, including tornado warnings, snowstorms, flooding, and extreme heat or cold. These procedures are reviewed and practiced regularly. Our staff are trained in how to respond quickly and appropriately to such emergencies, ensuring the safety of every child. Our evacuation procedures include safe shelter protocols, adequate supervision, and timely communication with emergency services if needed.

### 5. Communication with parents

Parents and guardians are encouraged to stay informed about potential weather disruptions by checking for updates regularly. Our policy is to provide timely notifications of closures, delays, or early dismissals, and we commit to updating parents at least once every hour during significant weather events. For any questions or concerns, please contact us directly at [407-969-1897](tel:407-969-1897) or visit our website at [7continentsmontessori.com](http://7continentsmontessori.com).

## Outdoor play policy

[7 Continents Montessori](#) uses Mapleway Playground at 20 Maple Way, Wakefield, MA 01880 for outdoor adventures. The following policies and procedures are in place to ensure the safety of children while they are outside.

### General outdoor safety tips for child care:

1. **Supervision:** Never leave children alone outside. Continuous adult supervision is required at all times.
2. **Street safety:**
  - Teach children not to play near the street.
  - Instruct children to ask for help if toys roll into the street or driveway.
3. **Area inspection:**
  - Regularly inspect the outdoor play area for hazards such as trash, sharp branches, tools, lawn equipment, or animal feces.
  - Remove any dangers immediately to maintain a safe environment

## Changing diaper procedure

At **7 Continents Montessori**, we approach diapering as an opportunity for fostering independence, respect, and self-care. Diaper changes are handled with the utmost sensitivity to the child's needs, ensuring that each child's privacy and comfort are respected while encouraging the development of self-reliance and responsibility.

The Montessori method emphasizes helping children develop awareness of their own bodies and learning routines that promote their growing independence. Diapering, although a caregiving task, is a chance for children to practice autonomy, self-expression, and cooperation.

### Procedure for changing diapers

#### 1. Preparation of the changing area:

- **Environment check:** Ensure that the changing area is clean, organized, and quiet, providing a calm and nurturing atmosphere. All necessary supplies (diapers, wipes, diaper cream, gloves, etc.) should be within arm's reach to avoid leaving the child unattended.
- **Respectful approach:** Approach the child calmly and make eye contact. Speak gently to the child, explaining what will happen next. In Montessori, we respect the child's autonomy, so we encourage children to participate in the process when they are ready (e.g., helping to lift their legs or undo their pants).

#### 2. Guidance for the child:

- **Provide a choice (when appropriate):** For older toddlers, offer small choices to encourage their independence. For example, "Would you like to choose which diaper to wear today?" or "Would you like to help me get the wipes?"

- **Explain what is happening:** For younger children, narrate the process in simple, clear language. "I'm going to help you change your diaper now so you can feel comfortable."
- **Respect the child's privacy:** Diapering is a personal experience, and privacy should be maintained as much as possible. Always protect the child's dignity by ensuring they are comfortable and secure during the process.

#### 3. Changing the diaper:

- **Gentle touch:** Gently lift the child's legs to remove the dirty diaper. Use a soft and reassuring voice as you complete each step.
- **Clean with care:** Use warm, damp wipes to gently clean the child. For older children who are ready, encourage them to participate in wiping, fostering independence. If the child has sensitive skin, use baby-safe wipes and, if necessary, apply diaper cream.
- **Change quickly and efficiently:** Ensure that the diaper change is performed quickly and efficiently, minimizing any discomfort or distress.
- **Secure the new diaper:** Once the child is cleaned, place the new diaper on securely. If the child is ready, encourage them to help with lifting their legs or pulling the diaper up slightly.

#### 4. Encouraging independence:

- **Model self-care:** As part of the Montessori approach, we encourage children to learn about personal care routines, including adjusting clothing after a diaper change. If the child is at the stage where they are developing independence, invite them to pull up their pants or hand you wipes when they're ready.
- **Practice patience:** Allow the child time to try to participate, even if they may not be fully capable. Montessori encourages giving children the opportunity to try and learn at their own pace, offering support when needed.

#### 5. Sanitation and hygiene:

- **Dispose of diapers properly:** After the change, dispose of the dirty diaper, wipes, and gloves (if used) in a designated, tightly closed waste bin to maintain a sanitary environment.
- **Clean and disinfect:** Clean the changing area thoroughly after each use. Disinfect the changing table with appropriate cleaner as per EEC requirements. Ensure that the area is safe and sanitized for the next use.
- **Hand washing:** The child should wash their hands after a diaper change, with support as needed. Teachers should also wash their hands thoroughly after each diaper change to maintain hygiene standards.

#### 6. Monitor the child's comfort:

- **After the diaper change:** Check in with the child to ensure they are comfortable and ready to return to their activities. You may also offer a few moments of connection, such as giving the child a brief cuddle or simply acknowledging their feelings.
- **Ensure the child's emotional well-being:** Always be gentle, calm, and respectful throughout the process. If the child seems distressed or upset, acknowledge their feelings and provide comfort.

#### 7. Documenting:

- **Accurate record-keeping:** A diaper change log will be kept for each child to track diaper changes, including the time of change, whether the child had a bowel movement, and any issues related to the change (e.g., redness or irritation).
- **Communication with families:** In case of any skin irritation, unusual patterns of bowel movements, or any other concerns, communicate promptly with the child's family to ensure a collaborative approach to the child's care.



### Montessori principles in diapering:

- **Respect for the child's autonomy:** The child's comfort and dignity are of utmost importance. As children grow and develop, they are encouraged to participate in the process in ways that are appropriate for their age, such as lifting their legs, helping with clothing, or expressing their needs.
- **Independence and confidence:** Diapering can be a time to support the child's growing independence. For example, the child may be encouraged to use the potty when ready and guided to practice self-care (e.g., using the toilet or dressing independently).
- **Care for the environment:** In a Montessori classroom, children are taught to care for the environment, which includes maintaining cleanliness and respecting shared spaces. This mindset can extend to personal care routines, such as keeping the changing area tidy and practicing good hygiene.
- **Consistent routine:** Diapering is part of a consistent routine that promotes security and trust. A calm, predictable process helps the child feel safe and respected.

### EEC compliance:

This diapering procedure follows EEC (Early Education and Care) standards for hygiene, safety, and child privacy. Teachers will ensure proper hand hygiene, diapering techniques, and documentation practices to comply with EEC regulations.

## Potty training procedure at 7 Continents Montessori

At [7 Continents Montessori](#), we believe potty training (or "toilet learning") is a natural process that happens at different times for every child. Our approach is flexible and supportive, and we believe in following the child's readiness cues.

### Stages of potty training

#### 1. Stage 1: Interested in the potty

- **Signs:** The child shows interest by pointing to the potty, saying potty words, or feeling uncomfortable in their diaper. This stage is a great time to start reading potty-related books to build awareness.

#### 2. Stage 2: Toilet trained with adult support

- **Signs:** The child can use the toilet, but the adult assists by taking them to the bathroom on a regular schedule. The child may need help with pants, sitting down, and wiping. Accidents are common in this stage.

#### 3. Stage 3: Potty training

- **Signs:** The child can independently use the toilet and express the need to go. Accidents are rare but may still happen.

### Signs of readiness

- **Verbal signs:** The child can communicate when they need to go, or tells you when they are wet.
- **Physical signs:** The child stays dry for extended periods, can pull up/down pants, and has regular bowel movements.
- **Psychological signs:** The child expresses a desire to wear underwear, can initiate going to the bathroom, and can complete the necessary steps (pee, wipe, flush, wash hands).

### Potty training process at home and school

#### At home:

- **Step 1: Notify the teacher:** Let your child's teacher know when you plan to start potty training.
- **Step 2: Use underwear:** For a successful start, keep your child in underwear for a few consecutive days so they can feel the difference from a diaper and learn to stay dry.
- **Step 3: Consistent bathroom visits:** Take your child to the bathroom every 2 hours, and celebrate each successful trip with positive reinforcement.
- **Step 4: Books and stories:** Read potty training books to support the learning process.
- **Step 5: Patience:** Consistency is key, and remember that accidents will happen—this is part of the process.

#### At school:

- **Successful weekend:** If your child has a successful potty-training weekend at home (three or fewer accidents, excited about the process), inform the teacher.
- **Extra clothing:** Always bring extra clothes, including underwear, for potential accidents.
- **Teacher support:** Teachers will take the child to the bathroom every 1.5-2 hours, and will keep notes on progress to share with parents.

### Guidelines for potty training at school:

- **Clothing:** Avoid overalls, belts, or clothes that are difficult to remove quickly.
- **Extra clothes:** Always send extra clothes and shoes to school, as accidents can happen.
- **Communication:** Inform the teacher if your child has a preference for how they want to use the toilet (sitting or standing).
- **Soiled clothes:** Parents are responsible for taking home and cleaning any soiled clothing.

## Nap/Rest time policy for 7 Continents Montessori

### Purpose:

At 7 Continents Montessori, we recognize that rest and sleep are essential for the development, health, and well-being of young children. Napping and rest times are an important part of our daily routine, providing children with the opportunity to recharge and process new information. Our policy is designed to respect the individual needs of each child while ensuring compliance with Massachusetts Early Education and Care (EEC) regulations.

### Policy overview:

The nap/rest period in our Montessori environment is designed to promote a calm, peaceful atmosphere that aligns with Montessori principles. It is a time for children to rest their bodies and minds, supporting their physical and emotional development. We aim to provide a restful, individualized experience for every child while respecting their natural rhythms and needs.

### Rest time guidelines:

#### 1. Rest time schedule:

- Rest time is scheduled each afternoon to accommodate the natural rhythms of young children, typically after lunch.
- The duration of rest time will vary based on the child's individual needs, but children are provided with a quiet, calm environment for approximately 1.5 to 2 hours of rest. This may vary based on age and individual preference.
- Children who do not sleep during rest time are encouraged to rest quietly on their mats with soft activities such as reading, listening to soft music, or engaging in quiet reflection.

#### 2. Individualized approach:

- In keeping with Montessori principles, we honor each child's unique needs. While some children may sleep soundly, others may simply need a quieter space to rest or relax. We do not force children to sleep but encourage them to remain quiet and calm if they choose not to sleep.
- Children who are ready for a nap are gently encouraged to settle on their individual rest mats or beds. Children who do not need sleep are provided with a quiet space where they can engage in soft activities or simply rest.

#### 3. Rest environment:

- The classroom will be transformed into a calm, serene environment conducive to sleep and rest. Soft lighting, quiet music, and a soothing atmosphere will be provided.
- Rest mats, cots, or beds will be spaced at least 3 feet apart to ensure each child has personal space, and to comply with EEC health and safety regulations.
- Mats or cots are sanitized regularly and equipped with clean sheets or blankets. Children are encouraged to bring their own comfort items, such as a small blanket or soft toy, to enhance their sense of security.

#### 4. Staff supervision:

- During rest time, staff members will be present to supervise and support the children as needed. Teachers will move through the room gently, providing comfort to any child who is having difficulty settling down, while also offering gentle reminders about maintaining a quiet, peaceful environment.
- Teachers will monitor children to ensure that everyone is resting safely and comfortably, checking in periodically to ensure that children are physically comfortable and emotionally secure.

#### 5. Health and safety:

- Children will not be forced to sleep but will be given the opportunity to rest in a manner that suits their needs.
- The program will follow EEC health and safety guidelines by ensuring that children have access to fresh air and that the space is well-ventilated during nap time.
- Children will be monitored to ensure that no child is left unsupervised during rest periods.

#### 6. Rest time for infants and toddlers:

- Infants and toddlers will be provided with an individual crib or mat for rest. They will be monitored closely during rest periods to ensure their safety.
- For infants, we will follow the safe sleep guidelines as recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), ensuring infants sleep on their backs on a firm mattress with no loose bedding, pillows, or soft toys.
- Teachers will follow any specific parental guidelines related to rest or sleep, such as preferred sleeping arrangements, routines, or any special comfort items.



## Nap/Rest time procedure:

### 1. Preparation for rest:

- Teachers will provide quiet, calming activities before rest time to help children transition smoothly into the nap period. This might include reading stories, singing soft songs, or engaging in calming breathing exercises.
- Teachers will remind children to use the bathroom before nap time, and help children get comfortable on their mats or cots with blankets or other comfort items.

### 2. During rest time:

- Teachers will create a peaceful atmosphere, maintaining a quiet environment. Soft music may be played, and the lighting will be dimmed to help create a soothing environment.
- Staff will monitor children to ensure they are comfortable, safe, and resting well.
- If a child wakes early or has difficulty falling asleep, teachers will provide support through calm, comforting words, and engage the child in quiet activities or discussions.

### 3. Waking up:

- Children will be gently woken after the designated rest period, ideally around 2 hours after the start of nap time.
- Waking will be done gradually, with soft encouragement and comforting words. Children will be given time to fully wake up and transition from the rest period back to group activities.
- Children who remain sleeping past the scheduled end of nap time will be allowed to wake naturally, with the understanding that we will respect their need for extra rest.

## Parent communication:

### 1. Sleep concerns:

- If a child has difficulty settling down for rest or consistently resists nap time, parents will be informed, and strategies will be discussed to support the child's needs.
- Teachers will document each child's behavior during rest time and communicate any notable patterns or changes in rest habits with parents regularly.

### 2. Individual rest needs:

- Parents are encouraged to communicate their child's individual rest or sleep needs, including preferred nap times, comfort items, or special routines, to ensure consistency between home and school.
- If a child has a specific medical or developmental need related to rest, the child's family and the teacher will work together to ensure the best approach for the child's well-being.

## Conclusion:

At [7 Continents Montessori](#), we provide a restful, calm, and nurturing environment that supports children's natural sleep patterns while respecting their individual needs and preferences. By honoring each child's rhythms and providing a peaceful space for rest, we help foster an environment where children can recharge and engage more fully in their learning. Our Nap/Rest Policy ensures that all children receive the appropriate rest for their development, in line with both Montessori principles and Massachusetts EEC regulations.

## Designated adult emergency back-up policy

### Purpose:

At [7 Continents Montessori](#), we are committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of all children in our care, especially when infants and toddlers are present. In accordance with Massachusetts EEC regulations and Montessori principles, we prioritize maintaining appropriate adult-child ratios at all times. In situations where a caregiver needs to step away temporarily (e.g., for bathroom use or emergencies), we ensure that adequate supervision is in place by hiring a qualified back-up adult.

### Policy overview:

This policy ensures that when infants and toddlers are present in the classroom, there will always be more than one qualified adult to maintain the required adult-child ratio. If there is only one primary caregiver in the room, we will hire an additional staff member to provide support during brief absences of the primary caregiver, ensuring continuous supervision and safety for all children.

### Procedure:

#### 1. Hiring a designated back-up staff member:

- When infants and toddlers are present, [7 Continents Montessori](#) will hire an additional qualified adult (e.g., assistant teacher or substitute) for a couple of hours each day to ensure that a qualified adult is always available to supervise the children.
- The back-up adult will step in when the primary caregiver needs to leave the classroom for a brief period, such as to use the bathroom, attend to personal needs, or handle emergencies.
- The additional staff member will be trained in Montessori principles, emergency procedures, and child supervision and care, to ensure continuity in the classroom environment.

#### 2. Preemptive planning and communication:

- The additional staff member will be scheduled and informed of the classroom's daily routine, as well as any specific needs of the children in care (e.g., special considerations for toddlers, sleep schedules, etc.).
- Communication will be clear between the classroom staff, including regular updates and coordination to ensure smooth transitions when the primary caregiver steps away.

#### 3. Maintaining appropriate supervision:

- At no point will a child be left unsupervised. When the primary caregiver needs to step away, the back-up adult will maintain active supervision of all children.
- The back-up adult will ensure the safety of the children, provide emotional support, and engage them in appropriate activities while the primary caregiver is momentarily absent.

#### 4. Record-keeping:

- If the primary caregiver leaves the classroom, the absence will be documented in the classroom log, including the time of departure, reason, and the name of the back-up adult who assumed responsibility for supervision.
- Parents will be informed of the brief absence and the back-up adult's role in ensuring the safety of their child.

#### 5. Emergency or special situations:

- If a situation arises that requires more adult involvement (e.g., a child in distress or a medical emergency), the back-up adult will take appropriate action and communicate with the administration or director to ensure that additional support is available if necessary.
- If the absence is expected to be longer than anticipated (e.g., for a medical emergency), the director or administrative staff will step in to support the back-up adult.

#### 6. Compliance with EEC regulations:

- The hiring of an additional staff member will ensure that we meet EEC adult-child ratio requirements, even during brief absences of the primary caregiver.
- If there are infants or toddlers in the classroom, [7 Continents Montessori](#) will always comply with the required ratio of 1 adult for every 3 infants or toddlers, as outlined by EEC.
- The addition of a back-up adult will ensure the classroom meets these regulations and provides a safe, supportive, and nurturing environment for all children.

#### 7. Parent communication:

- Parents will be notified of the policy to hire an additional adult back-up during times when infants and toddlers are present.
- Regular updates on the children's care, including any adjustments to staffing or scheduling, will be communicated to parents via email, classroom app, or face-to-face discussions as appropriate.

## Conclusion:

The Designated Adult Emergency Back-Up Policy at [7 Continents Montessori](#) is designed to ensure that all children, especially infants and toddlers, are always supervised in a safe, nurturing environment. By hiring an additional adult when necessary, we maintain the required adult-child ratio, ensure compliance with EEC regulations, and provide a responsive and supportive environment for children's needs.

This policy not only reflects our commitment to safety but also honors Montessori principles by providing continuous, individualized attention to each child, even in situations where brief absences may occur.



## Fire drill policy at 7 Continents Montessori:

At 7 Continents Montessori, the safety of our children and staff is our highest priority. Regular fire drills are essential in ensuring that everyone knows the proper procedures to follow in the event of an emergency. The following guidelines are in place to ensure efficient and safe evacuation during fire drills.

### Frequency of fire drills

- Fire drills will be conducted randomly once or twice a month, as required by state regulations.
- The drills will take place at random times throughout the day to ensure all staff and children are prepared for an emergency.

### Fire drill procedures

#### 1. Advance notification to staff

- The director or owner will inform staff at least 24 hours in advance that a fire drill will occur later in the week, allowing sufficient time for preparation.

#### 2. Preparing the students

- Staff will review the alarm sounds, evacuation rules, and procedures with the students before the drill.
- Teachers will emphasize the importance of staying calm and following directions during the drill.

#### 3. Initiating the drill

- The director or owner will sound the alarm to initiate the fire drill.
- Staff and students will immediately begin the evacuation procedure as practiced.

#### 4. Evacuation procedure

- Children will proceed to their designated outside meeting spot (school parking lot).
- If possible, one staff member will ensure that attendance sheets, emergency contact lists, and school-issued cell phones are taken during the evacuation.

#### 5. Attendance and safety check

- Upon reaching the designated meeting area, staff will take attendance using the sign-in/sign-out sheets or the school's communication app.
- If safe, the director or owner will quickly check hiding spaces (e.g., bathrooms, closets) for any children left behind. This check should be done quickly (1-2 minutes) to ensure everyone is evacuated promptly.
- The director or owner will also confirm that no sources of smoke or fire are present during a real emergency.

#### 6. Reviewing attendance

- The director or owner will confirm attendance by reviewing the sign-in sheets or communication app to ensure all students and staff are accounted for.

#### 7. Timing and documentation

- The director or owner will time the evacuation and record the duration of the drill in the fire drill log.
- The log will include the date and time of the drill, the number of students and staff present, and the evacuation time. This data will be reviewed periodically to assess the efficiency of the evacuation and make improvements if necessary.

#### 8. Returning to the building

- The director or owner will confirm with local authorities when it is safe to return to the building.
- Staff will assist younger children or children with special needs in returning to the building.

#### 9. Parent notification

- Parents will be notified that a fire drill occurred on the day it took place. Notifications will be sent via email, phone, or the school's communication app to ensure transparency and keep parents informed.

### Designated fire drill meeting place

- School parking lot

## Other emergency procedures at 7 Continents Montessori

### Fire, natural disaster, or other situation requiring evacuation:

- Teachers will take emergency backpacks (containing supplies such as first aid kits, food, and water) and emergency contact numbers outside with them.
- We will follow the emergency evacuation plans and leave the building immediately.
- Once outside, we will gather at the designated location. The Director will make the necessary phone calls to parents, guardians, and relevant authorities.
- Teachers will conduct an attendance check both during and after the evacuation to ensure all children are accounted for. This may be done using attendance sheets or the school's communication app.

### Power outage or loss of heat:

- If the power outage is expected to last less than two hours, the school will remain open.
- If the outage is expected to last more than two hours and/or room temperatures fall below 65°F, the school will close, and parents will be contacted immediately.
- In case of phone line failure, the school's cellular phone will be used to notify parents. Updates will also be provided via the school's website or social media (if applicable).

### Loss of water:

- If the school experiences a loss of water, and it cannot meet basic needs for toileting, handwashing, or diapering, school will be canceled.
- The director will confirm the water issue and immediately contact parents. Children will be supervised in a safe environment until they are picked up.

### Emergency care of children if confined to the building during a natural disaster:

- The director is responsible for notifying all parents of the emergency and providing regular updates.
- Children will engage in age-appropriate activities until parents arrive to pick them up.
- Extra food and water supplies are stored in the school, and extra clothing for each child is located in bags in their cubbies.
- The director will oversee any first aid needs and ensure that children are safe and comfortable.
- Staff will continue to supervise children until they are picked up by their parents or guardians.



## Your child's daily schedule at 7 Continents Montessori

The sequence of activities listed in the schedule of the day is followed daily, unless there is a special event, such as a field trip or holiday party. The actual timing of each activity may vary slightly based on the needs of the children. The schedule focuses on the morning Montessori 3-hour work cycle and the afternoon Montessori activities.

Throughout the school year, the length of the morning and afternoon activity periods may increase as your child's span of concentration lengthens. Naps are available for all children, with younger children typically taking longer naps than older ones. However, all children are given the opportunity to rest.

### Schedule of the day

#### 7:30 am - 8:30 am

Inside time with art, creative movement, dance, Spanish, music, sports, or yoga.

#### 8:30 am - 9:00 am

**Circle time (15 to 30 minutes):** This group activity includes grace and courtesy lessons, songs, games, stories, or a lesson on something new in the classroom. Occasionally, a peace ceremony will be held. (Includes group activities such as greeting, calendar, weather report, vocabulary development with initial sound cards, artist of the month, etc.)

#### 9:00 am - 12:00 pm

**Morning work cycle:** Children spend time working on individual activities at a table or on a rug on the floor.

- There is something on every shelf for every child. Many activities require a lesson from the teacher before a child can use them. Children select a variety of materials from the Montessori curriculum.
- Other activities, such as puzzles, can be used without a lesson. A child who chooses an activity that is too difficult is offered something more appropriate to their ability.
- Snack time is integrated into the morning cycle and is available whenever a child feels hungry. (Snack is part of the Montessori work period.)

**Clean-up time, playtime, and dismissal:** Children help set the tables for lunch, tidy the classroom, water the plants, and perform other chores.

#### Transition period (12:00 pm - 1:30 pm)

##### 12:00 pm - 12:30 pm

**Play time and dismissal:** Free playtime, watering the garden, and participating in various movement activities and games.

\*Part-day children are dismissed from 12:00 pm to 12:30 pm

##### 12:30 pm - 1:30 pm

**Lunch time:** Children wash their hands, wait until all are seated before beginning, focus on manners and pleasant conversation at the table, and are encouraged to taste everything. After lunch, children help clean the tables and sweep the floor.

#### Afternoon activities and dismissal (1:30 pm - 3:00 pm)

##### Nap Time (1:30 pm):

Children go to the bathroom, gather their blankets (brought from home), and lie down on their assigned mats. We turn off the lights and play soft music to help them fall asleep.

\*Children under 5 years old will rest quietly for 30 minutes, listening to a story, and then join their peers to continue work from the morning cycle.

##### 2:30 pm to 3:00 pm

**Dismissal time and second work cycle:** Children gather for dismissal (singing songs and transitioning to the Extended Care Program). Full-day children are dismissed at 3:00.

#### Extended care program: (3:00 pm - 5:30 pm)

##### 3:00 pm - 3:30 pm

**Snack time:** Bathroom time, followed by the children eating their afternoon snack.

##### 3:30 pm - 5:00 pm

Children enjoy a variety of activities, such as games, crafts, Spanish, yoga, sports, and cooking, throughout the week. Our Montessori teachers and assistants lead these programs, ensuring continuity and consistency for the children in our care.

##### 5:00 pm - 5:30 pm

Getting ready to go home, clean-up time, and bathroom time before dismissal.

## Hours of operation for break programs and prices

The school is open from 7:30 am to 5:30 pm

### Breaks program:

7 Continents Montessori offers the following programs for children during school breaks for families needing additional care outside of the school year:

### Winter break program:

Part time morning	8:30 am to 12:30 pm	\$75 per morning
Full-day	8:30 am to 3:00 pm	\$110 per day
Extended full day	8:30 am to 5:30 pm	\$135 per day
Special 5 day	extended full day rate	\$630 per week
Extended day fee	7:30 am to 8:30 am	\$15 early arrival

### February break program:

Part time morning	8:30 am to 12:30 pm	\$75 per morning
Full-day	8:30 am to 3:00 pm	\$110 per day
Extended full day	8:30 am to 5:30 pm	\$135 per day
Special 5 day,	extended full day rate	\$630 per week
Extended day fee	7:30 am to 8:30 am	\$15 early arrival

### April break program:

Part time morning	8:30 am to 12:30 pm	\$75 per morning
Full-day	8:30 am to 3:00 pm	\$110 per day
Extended full day	8:30 am to 5:30 pm	\$135 per day
Special 5 day,	extended full day rate	\$630 per week
Extended day fee	7:30 am to 8:30 am	\$15 early arrival

### Summer break program

Part time morning	8:30 am to 12:30 pm	\$75 per morning
Full-day	8:30 am to 3:00 pm	\$110 per day
Extended full day	8:30 am to 5:30 pm	\$135 per day
Special 5 day,	extended full day rate	\$630 per week
Extended day fee	7:30 am to 8:30 am	\$15 early arrival

\*calendar with days off, events, holidays and vacations are posted on our website



Dear Parents,

We invite you to visit our 7 Continents Montessori website for an updated calendar of events, holidays, and vacations. This is a great resource to keep track of important dates throughout the school year.

Please be sure to check the calendar regularly as all dates and times are subject to change due to unforeseen circumstances. We strive to keep you informed with the most up-to-date information to ensure a smooth and enjoyable experience for your family.

You can find the calendar on our website at: [7continentsmontessori.com](https://7continentsmontessori.com)

Should you have any questions, feel free to reach out.

Thank you for your continued support and partnership!

Warm regards,

Rocio Acevedo

7 Continents Montessori

407-969-1897

### Acknowledgment of receipt of parent handbook

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

We, the undersigned, the parents or guardians of

\_\_\_\_\_ have received a copy of the 7 Continents Montessori Parent Handbook.

- We understand and agree to abide by the policies and procedures outlined in this handbook. We recognize the importance of supporting a collaborative and respectful environment in the Montessori classroom.
- We acknowledge that the policies and procedures in this handbook may be updated to better meet the needs of the program, and we agree to comply with the most current version.
- We understand that we will be notified of any changes to the handbook in a timely manner and will adjust our practices accordingly.

We look forward to partnering with 7 Continents Montessori to provide a nurturing and enriching experience for our child.

Parent/Guardian signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



963 Main Street, Unit 12C | Wakefield, MA 01880  
407.969.1897 | [7continentsmontessori.com](http://7continentsmontessori.com)