

FAYETTEVILLE MONTESSORI SCHOOL est 1974

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

Fayetteville Montessori School
2358 Green Acres Road
Fayetteville, Arkansas 72703
479-443-7812
Montessori.fms@gmail.com

OFFICE COPY

NAME: _____

DATE RECEIVED: _____

I HEREBY ACKNOWLEDGE MY RECEIPT OF THE FAYETTEVILLE MONTESSORI SCHOOL EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK. I UNDERSTAND THAT I AM REQUIRED TO READ AND ABIDE BY THE POLICIES SET FORTH IN THIS HANDBOOK AND THAT ANY NONCOMPLIANCE WITH POLICIES WILL RESULT IN DISCIPLINARY ACTION.

Signature

*Denotes DHS requirement

FAYETTEVILLE MONTESSORI SCHOOL est 1974

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

REVISED August 2021

Fayetteville Montessori School
2358 Green Acres Road
Fayetteville, Arkansas 72703
479-443-7812
Montessori.fms@gmail.com

Fayetteville Montessori School (the "School") may change, amend, add to or delete any policies of this handbook at any time. Employees will be notified of any policy changes, updates, and other important information regarding this handbook in writing by the administration. It is your responsibility to read this handbook and remain aware of any changes and to keep your copy of the handbook updated.

This handbook is the property of the School. It is confidential and its contents are not to be reproduced or made available to anyone outside of the School. This handbook is provided to you so that you will understand the terms of your employment. You and the School have an employment at will relationship. Either you or the School may terminate your employment at any time, with or without reason or notice.

This handbook is not an implied contract.

Table of Contents

Getting Started	5
Employee Pay/Benefits	5
On the Job Policies	7
Classroom Policies	10
Staff Ethical Requirements	11
Discipline Policy	13
Direct Responsibilities to the Children	14
Inclement Weather	19

***Denotes a DHS requirement**

Getting Started

Employment Requirements

- Arkansas Child Maltreatment Check
- Criminal Record Check
- FBI Background Check and Finger Prints
- DHS and Montessori Orientation (to be administered upon hire)
- W-4 for tax purposes
- I-9
- Emergency Contact Form- updated semi-annually
- Photo of yourself
- Proof of High School Education
- Yearly in-service training hours

In-service and educational hours policy

All employees shall obtain at least 20 hours of in-service training which shall be geared toward the age group they spend the majority of their time with. **There is an 8-hour orientation course that is required for all new employees to complete before work can begin.** These 20 required hours must be completed by the final day of the calendar year.

Visit the Professional Development Registry website at www.pdregistry.arkansas.gov to sign up for trainings. You will receive a certificate from trainings. Please provide the office a copy of your training certificate or a copy of your training transcript.

Employee Pay/Benefits

Payroll Information

Payroll is done on a bi-weekly basis. Pay periods run from Sunday to the 2nd Saturday, with payday being every other Friday. The School requires automatic payroll deposits. To begin automatic payroll deposits, you must complete a form no later than your first day of work. **You should carefully monitor your payroll deposit statements after the service begins.**

Pay Deductions

Federal income tax, state income taxes, Medicare and Social Security payments are withdrawn from your paycheck based on the information provided on your W-4. **It is your responsibility to check if the information on your paycheck is correct.** Notify the office immediately if you have a change of address or any other change that may affect payroll. If healthcare and childcare apply to employee, those deductions are also taken from paychecks.

Vacation and Sick Time Off

The School's vacation plan is designed to provide you with a paid time off benefit that can be used for vacation, personal time, or observance of religious holidays. Sick time off is designed to provide paid time off for personal illness or injury.

Vacation and sick time is available to employees once it has been accrued. The amount of sick time and vacation time employees are entitled to and when such time accrues is set forth below.

Unused vacation time in the amount of one year's time of accrual may be carried over to the next fiscal year. If at the end of the year, the employee has more than two years of accrued vacation, the time in excess of two year's accrual will be forfeited. Unused sick time may not be carried over to the next year. All unused vacation time and unused sick time is forfeited upon termination of employment.

Sick Accrual

Only full-time employees are entitled to sick time. The amount of sick time is the same for all full-time employees (32 hours or more per week): three days. Sick time is earned ratably during the year (one-quarter day each month). Sick time may be taken after it has been accrued. Written, advance administrative approval is required should the employee find themselves in a position of needing to accrue a negative balance of sick time.

Vacation accrual

Only full-time employees are entitled to vacation time. A full-time employee for PTO accrual purposes is defined as working 32 hours a week or more. The amount of vacation to which you are entitled depends on your length of service as of your anniversary date. You accrue vacation at the rate of one week a year (5 days). Upon completion of one year of service, you accrue vacation at the rate of two weeks a year (10 days). Upon completion of 10 years of service, you accrue vacation at the rate of three weeks a year (15 days). Vacation is accrued ratably during the year. Vacation may be taken after it has been accrued.

Holidays

The School observes paid holidays throughout the year, depending on the academic calendar. Holidays are paid at the employee's regular straight time rate. Holiday observance is announced in advance. To be eligible for holiday pay, you must be a full-time employee (working 32 hours or more weekly) who has a minimum of six (6) months of full-time service. In order to receive holiday pay, you must work your scheduled shift both the day before the holiday and the day after the holiday. If an employee does not work his or her scheduled shift both before and after the holiday, then the employee will not receive holiday pay.

Inclement Weather

In the event of inclement weather, the School may be forced to close. Attached to the end of this document is our Inclement Weather Policy. If roads are too hazardous as to safely allow sufficient staff to reach work, we will close the school and staff will be notified as early as possible. If the School remains open but roads are too hazardous for you to reach work safely, please notify administration as soon as possible.

Once the decision to close or delay opening has been reached, administration will contact lead teachers. It is then the lead's responsibility to contact the staff of their room and notify parents. Parents are also notified via Facebook, Brightwheel and local news. All staff are required to subscribe to Remind.

Insurance

Major medical insurance is available to all full-time employees. Coverage begins on the first day of the month following 30 days after the hire date. A waiver must be signed for those declining health insurance. A full-time employee is defined as an individual who works 32 or more hours per work week.

All medical, dental, prescription, and vision plans are outlined in insurance packets handed out during orientation. Short-term and Long-term disability plans are available to all full-time employees. New employees will receive all enrollment information by a Human Resources at orientation. If you have further questions, contact your Human Resources Coordinator.

Worker's Compensation Insurance: All employees are covered under a Worker's Compensation Insurance policy at the School's expense for job-related accidents. The School should be notified **within 24 hours of accidents** of any nature, whether or not a claim will be made under the provision of the policy.

On The Job/Policies

Parking

Parking is permitted in **designated FMS parking spots only**. Any employee who does not park in the designated parking spaces will subject to a verbal warning

on the first occurrence and will be asked to move their vehicle. Repeated occurrences of parking in non-designated areas will subject the employee to termination.

Dress Code

Professional appearance is required for all personnel. **You represent the School, yourself and are always an example to your children. If you want respect in your job you must always think about your appearance.**

- Holes and rips are not acceptable
- Hats need to be worn outdoors only. Wide headbands worn across the forehead are not allowed.
- Athletic wear shorts must be finger tip length or 3” above the knee.
- None of the following may show: underwear, bra straps, cleavage, derriere
- Proper undergarments shall be worn, no straps or underwear should be seen, especially when you bend over.
- Major tattoos must be covered
- Facial piercings are dangerous and not appropriate with children. Please remove while at the school.
- If we are going to see your feet, trim your nails and keep your feet clean
- Shoes must be worn at all times
- No short shorts or skirts
- No strapless shirts or spaghetti straps on shirts or dresses without an undershirt
- No clothing with offensive/sexual images, advertisements, foul language, beer, drugs or cigarettes
- Personal cleanliness and the wearing of deodorant is a must and your clothes must be clean and well-kempt

If your clothing is deemed inappropriate by the administration you will be asked to change into the covering clothing we provide for you. Repeated occurrences of wearing clothing that violates the School's dress code set forth above will subject the employee to termination.

Clocking In/Out Policy

Employees are expected to adhere to their clock-in/-out schedule. Employees are allowed to clock in 5 minutes before and 5 minutes after their scheduled times. Unauthorized clocking in earlier or clocking out later than scheduled is not allowed. **If assistants are needed earlier or later for special classroom projects, have this extra time approved by administration.** Let the office know

about under or over staffing. No one should leave earlier than their scheduled time without notifying the office, as help may be needed elsewhere. Also, if you know you will be late for your shift, please notify the office so we can make sure your room is covered until you arrive. **Clocking other employees in or out or clocking in or out on the ADP app will result in termination.**

Break Time Policy

Each full-time employee (working 32 hours or more per week) is **required to take the scheduled break we have given you**. If you are taking a break you **must clock out first**. You may not get overtime by not taking a break.

Overtime Policy

Overtime will only be paid if approved by the administration. You are expected to clock in and out at your regularly scheduled time for your scheduled shift. On occasion you may be asked to work hours that are other than your regularly scheduled time and you will be paid accordingly. Salaried employees are expected to work 40 hours per week. Any pay period (two weeks) in which a salaried employee does not reach 80 hours will result in vacation or sick time used.

Attendance Policy

Teachers/Staff attendance is critical. Personal business, non-emergency medical appointments, etc. must be approved in advance, where possible, and should be scheduled as close to the end of your shift. Staff will not be excused for an entire day for normal doctor's appointments without prior approval from the office. A doctor's note will be required for the absence to be considered "excused."

Excessive Absences

Teacher attendance is regularly monitored. Three unapproved or unexcused absences or any combination thereof per semester will result in an attendance review and is grounds for termination. During the attendance review, it may be determined that you will be required to bring in a doctor's note for any absence during a probationary period of 90 days. If any unexcused absences occur during this period the employee is subject to being placed on the sub list or terminated.

Scheduled Absence Procedure

To schedule an absence, you must fill out a sub request form **2 weeks** prior to the dates you are requesting. You must have the lead teacher of the classroom

sign the form before turning it back into the office. Please note, **no two employees from the same classroom may be off for the same day.** Even if you have spoken with another staff about subbing for you, your request **must be first approved by the office.** After you submit your request, **do not assume that your request has been approved or that your shift is covered.** You may wait for the office to confirm approval of absence, or check in no more than 3 days before your scheduled absence. If you do not show up for your shift, it will be counted as an unexcused absence. After 3 people have been approved to have off on any given day, any additional requests for time off on this day must work it out with their room as a sub will not be guaranteed. The plan must then be submitted to the office for approval. If you are a salaried employee, then you must use accrued Vacation time or Sick time when you are absent from work. If a salaried employee is absent from work and does not have any accrued Vacation time or Sick time, then any such absence will be treated as leave without pay.

No time-off requests will be approved during the first 4 weeks of the school year

Call-In Protocol

The following steps must be taken if you are ill and unable to come in to work:

-notify the lead in your room as soon as possible **by personal phone call.**

-Immediately after notifying the lead, you must then call the staffing phone at 479-409-0146 so a sub can be found. If you are the lead and you are calling in, notify your staff by personal phone call first with lesson plans, schedules, etc. and then notify the staffing phone. The office is open at **7:00 AM**, not before. **You may not call-in to the early room teacher!**

Do not text, email, or leave voicemails for calling-in.

The following disciplinary actions will take place if you fail to adhere to the policy:

After 1st incident: You will receive a verbal warning.

After 2nd incident: You will receive a written notice in your employee file.

After 3rd incident: You will receive a two-day suspension without pay.

Any additional incidents will be evaluated on a case-to-case basis and employees may be placed on the sub list or terminated.

Substitutes

As a substitute, it is important that you check your messages often and return calls to the school in a timely manner. If you miss a call or message, you are required to contact the office by the end of the day. After the 3rd instance that you fail to contact the office within the business day, you will be removed from the sub list. If you accept a job you are expected to work for the time and date you accepted. If you call out for an already accepted job 3 or more times you will be automatically terminated.

Staff Meetings Policy

All employees are required to attend mandatory full staff trainings and meetings. Attendance will be taken at each meeting. If you are not able to attend you must have your absence approved by the administration at least one week before the meeting. An unexcused absence from a staff meeting will result in a write-up and you will be charged the amount of sick time you missed. Lead and sectional meetings are considered required staff meetings.

Classroom Policies

Cell Phone Policy

Every class room is now equipped with a phone for communication with parents, fellow teachers, and staff. **Using your personal cell phone while in the classroom is a DHS violation** and is unprofessional in the eyes of visiting and touring parents. Random cell phone checks will be made to ensure the school phones are used for business purposes only.

There is **NO** reason for any staff member to use a personal phone while on the clock. Use of an employee's personal cell phone while on the clock is a violation of School policy and is grounds for termination. Exceptions can be made beforehand with approval from a Director for emergency cases (i.e. You have an ill family member and may be expecting an emergency call or text).

The following disciplinary actions will take place if you are observed using a personal cell phone:

After 1st incident: You will receive a verbal warning.

After 2nd incident: You will receive a written notice in your employee file.

After 3rd incident: You will receive a two-day suspension without pay.

Any additional incidents will be evaluated on a case-to-case basis and your employment could be terminated. Please understand this is an important issue and we wish to uphold the highest level of professionalism and trust with our parents and children.

Computer Policy

The computers may be used by teachers for work-related emails and newsletters. Personal business should be conducted on computers at home to allow more teachers access to the computers. There should never be a personal computer used by a staff member in the presence of children.

Television and Music Policy

DHS prohibits the use of televisions for children aged two or younger. Only a television/iPad may be used with older children to show reality-based, academic programs for unit studies. The program must be approved by a Director. Any music played in a classroom but be played at a low volume. Music should be conducive to nap time or peaceful listening.

Heat/Air conditioning

During the winter, the heat should be kept at 68°F (turned to 64* at night). A cool environment keeps the children more able to fight illness and keeps them more alert. During the summer, the air should be on 74°F (turned to 78* at night). Please keep your classroom doors closed to help keep the comfortable air from being sucked out. Administration may change the temperature of the heat/air.

Supply Policy

If you should need supplies for your classroom, please seek approval from your lead teacher. Teachers should not come to the front office during the school day for supplies. Preparations should be made at closing time for the needs of the next school day for items such as gloves, wipes, and Kleenex etc.

Plastic or rubber gloves should not be used to serve food. Instead, staff should wash their hands thoroughly before serving. Wipes are only to be used by Infant/Toddler and Early Primary teachers during diaper changes. **No other class should use wipes. Teachers are responsible for wipes flushed down toilets and may be charged for plumbing repairs caused by wipes, paper towels, or other non-flushable objects.**

*Denotes DHS requirement

If you are in need of additional supplies, reimbursements from the office may be obtained. **Supplies must be preapproved by the front office prior to purchase.** Teacher may fill out a reimbursement request form and submit to the sectional Director for approval. Purchases made without prior approval will not be reimbursed. When you purchase supplies, they **must be checked in** at the front with your receipt and approved reimbursement request or you will not be reimbursed.

Staff Food and Drink Policy

Foods and drinks that are not available to the children shall not be consumed by staff in the children's presence*. This policy is directly from the Department of Human Services Child Care Licensing requirements. Drinks may be consumed in an opaque, tight-sealing container. Hot drinks must be in a heat-insulated container. **Coffee or drinks purchased at shops in paper cups and plastic lids must be transferred to the approved containers before entering the classroom.** Chewing gum is strictly prohibited.

Personal Belongings/Medication Policy

Any medications taken by a staff member should be kept in a secure and locked location out of the reach of children*. Each classroom has a designated cabinet or drawer to lock bags/purses away and items must be kept locked away while an employee is working. Medications needed to be taken throughout the day may be taken as long as the medication is returned to the locked cabinet after use.

Handouts Policy

Each employee must sign that they have received and read informational handouts by the administration. These handouts should then be kept in the classroom binders.

Staff Ethical Requirements

These ethical requirements are mandatory for all staff working at the Fayetteville Montessori School. Failure to adhere to these ethical requirements, or any violation of these ethical requirements, will result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

*Denotes DHS requirement

CONFIDENTIALITY—confidential information includes personal information about the School's children and families, organizational problems, and individual faculty matters. All records, files, conversations and conferences related to the School, the School's children, families, staff or administration are strictly confidential. Discussing or divulging confidential information is strictly prohibited. Legal action may be taken if this policy is breached.

SOCIAL MEDIA/PERSONAL CELL PHONES---photos of children and classrooms are to be posted on **the School's social media accounts only and only by our Social Media person, not on personal accounts!** Staff must be sure to be aware of any children in the classroom whose parents did not approve the photographing of their child. Personal information such as parent phone numbers, email addresses, and child photos must be stored on the **classroom cell phones only**. Personal cell phones **must not** be used to keep in contact with parents.

RESPECT FOR THE CHILD—respecting the child includes a positive, optimistic attitude about children, a cooperative spirit, a nurturing of independence, recognition of unique individuality, trust in the child's work, finding the right activities, and listening to and observing in order to follow the child. One should avoid pride and anger, touching the child unless invited, speaking ill of the child, sarcasm, teasing, and over-reacting to misbehavior, and implied reward and punishment. When making presentations, the child's interest level should be considered so that the teacher stops before the child tires. Phrasing of instructions should be direct and to the point. When communicating with the child, come down to child's height.

PREPARATION OF THE ENVIRONMENT—preparing the environment includes developing a complete Montessori program, caring for the environment including animals, plants, and Montessori materials, and initiating change in order to provide new stimulation.

PARENT EDUCATION—parent education includes the dissemination of Montessori principles, recognition of parents and primary educators, accessibility for information regarding individual children, and communication about general classroom activities.

GOOD STAFF RELATIONS—good staff relations includes working cooperatively, remaining non-judgmental of staff, exerting trust, maximizing communication through staff meetings, celebrating through holiday events, program support, and school-wide projects. Malicious comments, gossip, and other harmful behaviors should be ignored and suppressed. Participation in malicious comments, gossip, or rumor spreading about other staff members is strictly prohibited.

PROFESSIONAL IMPROVEMENT—professional improvement includes participation in Montessori workshops as well as keeping abreast of current educational developments. The School's in-service and education policy is set forth above.

PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT—professional conduct includes keeping private affairs outside of the workplace, maintaining agreements at all levels regarding performance of duties, and meeting the needs of individual children and staff (to include, but not limited to: sending children home clean and protecting them from the weather)

It is within the discretion of the Head of School and/or sectional Directors to determine violation of any of the above policies.

Smoking, Drugs, Alcohol, and Firearms

This is a non-smoking campus; smoking shall not be done on this campus. If you choose to smoke during your break, please leave the campus to do so. Keep in mind that when parents see you smoking, it is not a good image for the School. Keep in mind, too, that parents and other staff members can smell the smoke on your body, clothing and hair. Please make an effort to smoke in a very well-ventilated area so that the smoke dissipates from you.

This is a drug free and alcohol-free campus*. No use of drugs or alcohol will be permitted. If you are under the influence of drugs or alcohol, you will not be allowed to work and will be terminated immediately. Employees using or under the influence drugs or alcohol on campus will have their employment terminated immediately. The School reserves the right to engage in random drug testing of employees.

Firearms are never permitted on the Fayetteville Montessori campus*.

Discipline Policy

Grounds for Disciplinary Action

Employees may be disciplined, demoted, suspended or terminated for violating any of the policies set forth in this Handbook or any future policy issued by the School. Poor performance and misconduct are also grounds for discipline or termination. It is within the discretion of the Head of School and/or sectional Directors to determine violation of these policies.

The following actions are unacceptable and considered grounds for disciplinary action. This list is not comprehensive; rather, it is meant merely as an example

*Denotes DHS requirement

of the types of conduct that the School does not tolerate. These actions include, but are not limited to:

- Personal conduct, which prejudices the reputation, effectiveness, or quality of the School, or a School program or service;
- Conviction of a serious crime relating to honesty, moral turpitude or harming children;
- Acting repeatedly in a manner which tends to lower the discipline or morale within the School, or that adversely affects the School's responsibility to render prompt, courteous, effective and efficient service;
- Inability or unwillingness to perform assigned duties and/or responsibilities;
- Willful refusal to take direction or reasonable assignments;
- Gross or continued neglect of duty, or negligence in the performance of duty;
- Excessive or unapproved absence or tardiness;
- Striking or abusing a child;
- Harassment or discrimination;
- Willful destruction of school property or that of another person;
- Fighting on the job;
- Sleeping on the job;
- Stealing
- Undermining the Director, administration or the School;
- The employee's irascibility turns off parents;
- The employee negatively impacts staff morale;
- A teacher has lost interest in the job and can no longer teach;
- A teacher cannot discipline the children;
- A teacher cannot follow through on goals with the children; and
- Unsatisfactory work performance.

This list exhibits the types of actions or events that are subject to disciplinary action. It is not intended to indicate every act that could lead to disciplinary action. The School reserves the right to determine the severity and extent of any disciplinary action based on the circumstances of each case.

Procedures

Disciplinary action is any one of a number of options used to correct unacceptable behavior or actions. Discipline may take the form of oral warnings, written warnings, probation, suspension, demotion, and discharge in no particular order. The course of action will be determined by the School at its sole discretion as it deems appropriate.

Termination

Employment with the School is on an at-will basis and may be terminated voluntarily or involuntarily at any time.

Direct responsibilities to the children

NO CHILD IS TO BE LEFT UNSUPERVISED AT ANY TIME. FAILURE TO ADHERE TO THIS IS GROUNDS FOR IMMEDIATE DISMISSAL.

INCIDENTS/ACCIDENTS

Incidents or accidents involving children must be reported to administration by filling out an incident/accident report and obtaining the appropriate signatures before the end of the day. If a child is leaving our care to obtain medical treatment, you must speak to administration immediately. These are to be completed in full and copied by the end of the day of the incident. One copy goes home with the child, one copy is placed in the child's file by administration, and the original form remains with the classroom.

If a child is injured, he/she is never to be left alone. One adult must stay with the child while another seeks help. The person in charge is to be immediately notified. He or she will begin procedures to notify parents and seek appropriate medical attention. If a child comes to school with a bump or bruise that happened at home, fill out an incident report and bring to the attention of administration. If a child is hurt or upset the staff should comfort the child right away. Picking up a child to comfort them is perfectly fine. If a child seeks medical attention as a result of an injury that occurred at school, your sectional Director should be notified immediately.

Illness

If a child becomes ill at school, that child should be separated from the other children but must remain under adult supervision at all times. The administration and the child's parents must then be notified immediately. Please refer to the DHS handbook for a complete list of illnesses that must be reported to DHS immediately. An Illness Report must be filled out and submitted to the office.

Bodily Fluids Policy

Hepatitis A and B are common viruses that have been reported in a childcare environment. Hepatitis A is most commonly transmitted to other from fecal contamination of food. Thorough hand washing after using the toilet is a **requirement** for all adults and children (even infants) by the Department of Human Services. Hepatitis B is present in the blood of infected persons. It is

*Denotes DHS requirement

highly infectious. People can carry this in their blood streams and infect others a long time before experiencing any symptoms. There have not been many documented cases of any of these illnesses resulting from a childcare setting. Prevent the transmission of these diseases by thorough hand washing and using disposable gloves before touching any bodily fluids (blood, urine, vomit, feces, phlegm, etc.). Properly dispose of the gloves after you have finished.

Cleaning Tables

Tables need to be cleaned before and after lunch and at the end of the day. Only use the disinfectant spray provided by the school to clean the tables. One to two squirts is more than enough to clean the tables.

Warm/Cold Weather Musts

Each child must wear their own sun block, provided by the parents. Allergic reactions may result if you do not adhere to this policy. Every child must use sun block at this school. Children may not apply their own sun block or sun screen. Our children should wear hats and protective clothing when they are outside. This is not a choice. The children must have their coats and hats on and they must be buttoned or zipped when it is cold outside. If they choose not to keep them on, they cannot be outside. The children's water containers need to be on the yards so the children can be hydrated at all times. Have activities for the children that are in the shade, take the children inside if they are pink faced. Children's bodies cannot cool as well as ours. Children are to be cleaned up before they are sent home.

The Playground

Afternoon workers need to be sure they are consistent in having the children follow the same rules for the playground that the teachers use during the rest of the day.

General Rules:

- dig only in the sandbox
- be respectful of each other and you may not pull or grab each other or other clothing
- climb only on playground equipment
- throw only balls or bean bags
- put all toys away at the end of play
- pick up all trash, tissue, food peelings
- Don't put children on anything, only allow the child to get onto things using their own ability

Keep the following on the ground:

- dirt
- sand
- pea gravel
- rubber chips
- wood chips

Rubber chips or wood chips are not to be carried or used as a weapon.

Sandbox Rules:

- keep sand in sandbox
- shovels and all sand toys are for sand only
- they are not to be carried around
- cover the sandbox at the end of outside time with tarp and boards on corners

Picnic table rules:

- sit on benches only
- no standing or sitting on table top
- keep sand, rubber chips and wood chips off the table

Playground Rules for Staff

Teachers and aides should space themselves strategically around the playground*. There should be an adult at each end of the playground and one in the middle, if able. Sitting together and talking should be saved for after hours. Watching the children and attending to their needs is the most important job. You will be written up if visiting with other workers interferes with the care of the children. Children should be sent home clean and dry. See that their hands and faces have been washed when you come in from outside play. **At the end of the day, see that outside toys and balls have been put away and sandboxes are covered. Pea gravel and rubber chips should be back in the playground as well. Nothing should be left outside.**

Aggressive behavior and biting policy

Young children are at a stage of physical and oral experimentation. Everything is being tested. They are learning to speak, eat table foods, interact with others when they have not mastered these, it can become frustrating. When they become frustrated some children become physically aggressive or bite. We are always watching and attempting to stop and redirect the children. After an attempt or successful bite, we remove the biter from the other children and tell them to have a nice mouth and not to bite; they are told to use their mouths for words and eating. We explain that biting hurts our friends and then show them the mark on the other child. If a child develops a habit of aggressive behavior or biting, we will need to work together to discourage the behavior. Having

*Denotes DHS requirement

consistency in the messages given at school and at home about aggressive behavior and biting can better influence the child.

When aggressive behavior or biting begins, we will set up a meeting with the Head of School and/or sectional Director, teacher, and parents to form a team to problem solve. Montessori is responsible for the safety of all the children in the classroom. If there is still no resolution to the problem, Montessori may ask the parents to remove the child from school.

Montessori School Discipline Philosophy

Meetings scheduled with parents and/or therapists should always have a member of Administration present. Work with Head of School and/or sectional Director before setting up meetings concerning a child's behavior.

When a child's behavior is disruptive, disrespectful, cruel or unsafe to themselves or others, it cannot and will not be tolerated at this school. Each teacher is expected to develop his/her individual way of effectively addressing the usual array of behavioral difficulties which arise in the classroom and elsewhere on the school grounds. As a Montessori teacher, his/her interventions are expected to be formulated based on respect for the child, knowledge and understanding of the developmental needs and characteristics of the child, as well as the needs of the group, and the understanding that appropriate behavior must be carefully taught and modeled. The goal of each intervention is to assist the children to develop self-control and self-discipline. The manner in which each intervention is made is expected to reflect a patient attitude and to consist only of verbal and when appropriate with a younger child, gentle physical assistance.

When a child demonstrates an inability to respond appropriately to ordinary discipline, and/or is otherwise signaling through behavior that he/she has needs that are not being met, the teacher should respond in a proactive way by meeting with the child's parents to discuss concerns. At this point the teacher might also want to consult informally with his/her colleagues or other qualifying persons for input regarding alternative approaches to assisting the child. If these efforts do not lead to an acceptable resolution of the teachers concerns and interventions continue to be ineffective, or in situation when the teacher feels he/she cannot appropriately communicate to the parents within context of usual direct parent contact, the teacher follows the procedures established for eliciting administrative assistance.

Children are punished when: Their behavior is controlled through fear, they behave to avoid penalty imposed by an adult, and the adult stresses what not to do

Children who are punished: Feel humiliated, hide their mistakes, have a poor self-concept, fail to develop inner controls

Children are disciplined when: They see the possible consequences of their actions, alternative behaviors are proposed, they learn to control themselves

Children who are disciplined: Learn to balance their needs with those of others, feel good about themselves, and become increasingly independent.

The goal of discipline is to help children build their own self-control, not to have them behave through adult-imposed control. Any disciplinary technique will be most effective if it is applied in a way that maintains or enhances the child's self-esteem. The best disciplinary method is to encourage children to think of alternative solutions and their possible effects.

Consistent and fair limits help children control their own behavior, if they know what the limits are. Review the expectations for possible sources of difficulties. Are the limits clear? Is the real reason for the rule stated? Are limits appropriate? Do they show understanding of children's needs and abilities? Are the limits truly necessary? Too many rules are confusing and easily forgotten. Some adults have only one basic rule: You may not hurt yourself, others, or things. Hurt can be explained as either physical or feelings. Are children's rights protected? Do they feel assured that if another child grabs their marker that an adult will help them preserve their right to finish using it? Do children feel confident that they will get a turn later? Do you help children interpret each other's feelings? Are children encouraged to verbalize their frustrations, hurts, and disappointments? (Excerpted from an article by Cheri Sterman Miller in *Young Children*, Vol 40 No 1 Nov 84 Page 15-19.)

What to do when a child spits

Stop the child without hurting and announce, I will not let you spit on anybody. If you have to spit, do it in the sink. No scolding is necessary; it probably will not be effective. Tell children firmly where they can spit but that they cannot spit at people.

What to do about hitting, kicking, scratching, attacking, etc.

The adult must state the rules. "I cannot let you hit people. If you have to hit, then bang on the floor (or punching bag, or lump of clay.) I know how you feel, but I cannot let you hurt people, and I cannot let them hurt you."

Words We Say

If the child is:

- *Running inside—we say "use your walking feet"*
- *Yelling inside—we say "use your inside voice"*
- *Kicking a ball inside—we say "we kick balls outside"*
- *Throwing something inside—we say "we throw balls outside"*
- *Climbing on the table or shelf—we say "where do your feet go? On the ground"*

If the child is:

- *Damaging something—we say "it's not ok to damage work; you may put the work away and try again later."*

- *Hitting, pushing or kicking—we say “it is not okay. You may show soft hands and say you’re sorry, you may go play or work somewhere else, or hold my hand”*
- *Continuing to hurt someone—we hold the child’s hands look into his eyes explain that this behavior is unacceptable and that they may sit down for a few minutes*
- *Biting—we say “teeth are for food not for our friends or family.”*
- *Putting things in their mouth—we say “food goes in our mouth, work goes on the table”*
- *Spitting—we say “we spit at home when we brush our teeth”*

Some things we should NEVER do with children

- Never discuss a child's behavior or appearance with another person in their presence or within his/her hearing reach
- Never tease a child
- Never ridicule or in any way humiliate a child
- Never raise your voice in anger or handle a child roughly
- Never frighten a child
- Never deceive a child, this includes making a promise you can't keep
- Never show preference for one child over another
- Don't offer a choice you can't grant
- Never compare children
- Never threaten or bribe children
- Do not deny a child something and then give in because he creates a scene
- **Never move a child to another space as a punishment. The child should remain with their own class at all times.**



Inclement Weather Policy

We all know winter weather is incredibly unpredictable and at times dangerous. We at FMS want to do our best to ensure the safety of our families and staff. In case of inclement weather, FMS will adhere to the following:

-If Fayetteville Public Schools are closed, and the roads are manageable for at, FMS will open at 10 am and close at 5:30 pm.

-If Fayetteville Public Schools are closed, and the administration feels the roads are too dangerous for families and staff, FMS will close for the day.

-If there is significant ice on the roads, FMS will not open at all.

-Either decision will be reached at the earliest possible time, to the best of our ability, in order to ensure that early drop-offs and school openers will have sufficient notice before attempting to drive to work/school.

-Announcements will be made via the FMS Facebook page, via Brightwheel, and via the Remind app. The announcement will also be viewable on the KNWA 40/29 TV station and website.

Inclement weather can happen at any time and can be unpredictable, therefore we may have to be flexible and close school early if weather takes a bad turn during the day. In this case, parents will be notified immediately via phone and above mentioned media channels.