



**2018-2019 Policy and Procedure
Handbook for Parents**

Blooming Grove Montessori 2018-2019 Policy and Procedure Handbook for Parents

This handbook contains information about the philosophy and policies of Blooming Grove Montessori. Reading it thoroughly will give you a better understanding of your child's experiences with us. Blooming Grove Montessori does not discriminate in the admission, retention and dismissal of children on the basis of sex, race, color, class, national or ethnic origin, or the marital status, religious beliefs, sexual preference, political persuasion of parents or disabling conditions. All children will be considered for enrollment based on space available and licensing requirements.

Educational Philosophy

The educational philosophy of Blooming Grove Montessori is rooted in the teachings of Dr. Maria Montessori. She discovered that children possess an active love of learning and an eagerness to explore their environment. By working with a child's natural inclinations towards discovery, a learning environment can be created which will foster independence, self-discipline and motivation. Children attending Blooming Grove Montessori will have opportunities to develop creative, social, intellectual, cognitive, and large and small motor skills, all within a Montessori environment.

Dr. Montessori believed learning is more an individual than a group activity. In a Montessori classroom each child works without being pushed ahead or held back by the needs of the others in the classroom. Cooperation rather than competition is encouraged. In the classroom children interact continuously, choosing to work on their own or with a friend. The older children help the younger ones. The younger ones observe with fascination the work they will soon be able to do. A child goes through stages of development when certain types of knowledge are more easily acquired. Dr. Montessori referred to these as "sensitive periods", a term finding a new life in the recent research on brain development. This research is another validation of Dr. Montessori's work. Moving freely allows children to learn with all their senses. "Nothing can be in the intellect which is not first in the senses." Sensory-motor activities help build the neural connections in the child's growing brain.

Between infancy and 3.5 years, children are especially responsive to order and routine in their environment. They are also very receptive to language. During the latter part of this period they love to repeat exercises, easily learning to carry out complicated tasks. From 3-6 years, children are very aware of written language and numbers. If they are given proper preparation through a concrete, sensorial approach they are often able to learn to read, write and successfully complete mathematical operations.

Blooming Grove Montessori programs are based on these goals:

- Children should discover their inherent love of order.
- Experience the profound concentration they are capable of Enjoy work firmly grounded in reality.
- Expand their independence with the self-confidence found through accomplishment Learn to share and appreciate each other.
- Listen willingly and experience the strength and support of community.
- Find real joy in their work.

One aspect of Montessori Education that's recently come to the forefront is Peace Education. The essentials of education for peace are built into the Montessori curriculum at every level. Perhaps having lived in an era buffeted by wars caused Dr. Montessori to become a tireless worker for peace. She was proposed as a candidate for the Nobel Prize in 1949 and 1950, and 1952. Dr. Montessori's curriculum was designed to help develop a respect for our planet and its inhabitants. By learning to respect and care for themselves and the environment of their classroom, the children are learning to take care of the larger world.

The Montessori classroom is designed with respect for children. Furniture and equipment are sized for them. Classroom materials are designed to encourage the children in their drive for discovery. The materials are arranged in such a way that children can follow the logical transition from one activity to another. A Montessori classroom invites children into an environment carefully designed to stimulate sensory perception, foster readiness for reading and writing and help the child gain self-reliance in learning. The Montessori Method of education has been in practice since 1906 in many parts of the world. Montessori is not a static or closed system of education. It is as much an attitude about education and children as it is a specific method.

Areas of Our Classrooms

Practical Life

The first experiences your child will have at Blooming Grove Montessori will be in the Practical Life area of the classroom. This area is full of activities that your child is already familiar with, such as pouring, sorting, and simple domestic tasks. By offering these activities to new students we are able to ease the transition from home to school, and they begin to take ownership of their house.

Sensorial

Sensorial activities heighten your child's senses of touch, sight, taste, smell and sound, using materials designed according to Dr. Montessori's careful observations of children.

Art and Music

Art supplies are freely available in our classroom. Music sessions include performing, dancing, singing and experimenting while learning about a variety of cultures.

Literacy

Writing often comes before reading in a Montessori classroom with children building up their first words phonetically using letters of the Large Moveable Alphabet, which begins in our Primary Environment. After this, reading is accomplished with great ease.

Mathematics

In our Primary Environment, by handling of number rods, counting out beads, counting spindles into boxes and arranging colored counters in patterns, children gain a physical impression of size and quantity long before they begin to manipulate numbers. This provides a solid foundation for the abstract.

Library Spaces

Our library spaces feature new titles and old favorites. In addition to story books, we offer a rotating selection of nonfiction books. These reflect other areas of the classroom, including: science, nature, the arts, cultural subjects and more.

Cultural Subjects

Your child will be introduced to botany, geography, history, science and the many cultures of the world as they handle and examine artifacts from around the world – a Japanese fan, chopsticks, a Ecuadorian textiles, or a drum from Cyprus.

Outdoor Classroom

Montessori believed strongly that children should be in touch with the substance of their world. Activities in the Outdoor Classroom allow children to develop gross motor skills as they climb trees, garden, and scrub during the warmer months, and shovel, climb and build in the snow during winter. The children also learn about the natural world as they observe nature including our orchards, prairies, wooded areas, flower gardens, and visiting birds, insects and small animals.

Our Staff

Head of School

Rebecca Katzenmeyer,

Miss Beckie has been the Head of School of Toad Hill Montessori since 2005, and opened Blooming Grove Montessori in 2015. Miss Beckie received her Montessori Certification in 2004 from the Montessori Center International of London, a training center founded by Dr. Montessori herself. (For information on the Training Center please visit <http://www.montessori.ac.uk> .) This training is in addition to Graduate coursework in Early Childhood Education at the Colorado University of Denver, and Undergraduate work at Beloit College.

The Head of School is responsible for overseeing all Blooming Grove Montessori Staff, Classroom Assistants, children, classroom operations, communication with parents, and all administrative duties in accordance with all Blooming Grove Montessori policies and procedures, the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families, and the City of Madison. She works closely with these agencies and the Montessori Child Care Providers, Classroom Assistants and Volunteers. She also serves on the Board of Directors for the Wisconsin Montessori Association.

Office Manager

Amberlee Ohlsen-Sherven

Amber joined Blooming Grove Montessori as the Office Manager in June of 2018. She brings with her many years of Executive Administrative work and over a decade in the medical field. She is a Holistic Health Practitioner and Nutritionist. Amber is currently finishing her B.S. in Integrative Health Sciences and will be working Monday through Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 1:15 p.m. Amber will be responsible for the majority of communications from administration, and is the primary contact for accounting, invoicing, social media, community relations and advertising.

Lead Montessori Staff

Jody Czaja, Brittany Groteleuchen, and Lenni Jenkyns,

The Montessori staff guide the children through presentations of materials, answering questions and serving as resources in the classroom. They help children progress from one activity to the next while monitoring their development. The Montessori staff supervise children participating in classroom activities, carefully prepare the environment, and work closely with the Head of School and Classroom Assistants to carry out daily activities. The Montessori staff are trained to assist each child, allowing choices among activities and ability levels. There is freedom with limits in the Montessori classroom. Children are allowed to work freely as long as they do not disturb others.

Assistant Teachers to the Lead

Sarah Wright, Angelica Lozano, Genevieve Parmentier, and Cassie Patterson

Classroom Assistants support the Lead Montessori staff and the Head of School by assisting children with snacks, meals, stories, outdoor play time, rest, Early Arrival and Extended Day programming, and cleaning and classroom maintenance.

Additional Emergency Volunteers and Substitutes

Parents may serve as Emergency Volunteers and Substitutes, and are selected on the basis of their awareness of children and the principles of child development. All Emergency Volunteers must complete training and orientation.

General Information

Blooming Grove Montessori was opened to serve the East Madison community with a Montessori program dedicated to providing high quality Educare for children from 3 months to 6 years of age. The program is staffed with a qualified Head of School, Montessori Teachers, and Assistants who have been hired for their specific abilities and skills. The center's license, a book of WI regulations, "Your Guide to Licensed Child Care," and any notices of rule violations are posted in the south entry way.

Programs

Blooming Grove Montessori programs are year-round and are divided into the School Year from September through mid-June and Summer Program from mid-June through August. The maximum licensed capacity is currently 60 children for care between the hours of 7:15 am and 5:00 pm. Please refer to the Application available at www.bloominggrovemontessori for current tuition rates.

Before School Program with Early Arrival

7:15-8:00

Families who need to begin their day early may enroll in the Early Arrival Program for an additional fee. Children enrolled arrive between *7:15 and 7:30*.

Montessori Daily Activities for Infants (3-15 months)

8:15 am -3:00 pm

Infants arrive between 8:15 and 8:30 am and begin their day inside based on their individual needs, interests, and abilities. All milk, bottles, and baby foods needed for the day are provided by the family. Infants are fed, changed and take naps as each individual infant requires. All infants must be picked up 3:00 pm unless enrolled in the Extended Day program.

Montessori Daily Activities for Toddlers (15-30 months)

8:00 am - 3:00 pm

Toddlers arrive between 8:00 and 8:30 am and begin their day by choosing activities on their own, based on their interests, abilities, with guidance from the Montessori Directress. Morning snacks are available and are provided by Blooming Grove Montessori. Outside time is scheduled as weather permits, and a lunch from home is enjoyed between 11:15 and 12:15 followed by rest, then afternoon snack provided by Blooming Grove Montessori. Children in the Toddler room are expected to pour and drink from a cup, so we ask that bottles be saved for home use. Children must be picked up by 3:00 pm unless enrolled in the Extended Day program.

Montessori Daily Activities for Primary & Elementary Students (2 1/2 to 6 years)

7:50-8:10 am to 12:30 or 3:15 pm

Preschool and Kindergarten students arrive between 7:50-8:10 am and begin their day outside. Once all children have arrived children are welcome to continue to participate in outdoor activities or may choose to be inside choosing activities on their own, based on their interests, abilities, and lessons previously given by the Montessori Directress. Children bring a lunch from home and eat together between 11:00 am and 12 noon, followed by departure or a rest period. All primary students must be picked up 3:00 pm unless enrolled in the Extended Day program.

Extended Day

3:15-5:00 pm

Families who need children to stay after 3:15 pm may enroll in the Extended Day Program. Children enrolled are picked up between 4:15 and 5:00 pm.

Arrival

Please write in your child's arrival time on the attendance log in the entryway. The attendance will be checked by staff, and a phone call, text or e-mail is required if your child will not be attending for any reason. Please call, text or e-mail at least 30 minutes before your child's scheduled start time. Children in the Primary (2 1/2 to 6 years) and Elementary Space are expected to arrive between 7:50 am and 8:10 am. Toddler Program (18 month-3 years) are expected to arrive between 8:00 and 8:30, unless enrolled in the Early Arrival Program. Children in the Nido Program (3 month- 2 years) are expected to arrive between 8:00 and 8:30 am, unless enrolled in the Early Arrival Program. Children enrolled in Early Arrival may arrive between 7:15 and 8:00 am for an additional fee. If a child who is scheduled to arrive does not arrive within 15 minutes of the specified arrival time, and we have not been notified in advance of the child's absence, staff will attempt to contact the parent or guardian to determine the child's whereabouts.

Dismissal and Lateness

Dismissal are from 12:15-12:30, 3:00-3:15, and sign-out and pick-up are expected to be complete by 12:30 or 3:15. All children who stay past 3:15 must be enrolled in our Extended Stay Program and must signed out and picked up by 5:00 pm.

If for any reason you wish to pick up your child earlier or must pick up later, please call the school so the staff is advised of the unusual circumstances. Children are often distressed by the late pickups. Please make every effort to be prompt. Please let a staff person know that you are leaving with your child. There is a late pick up fee of \$10.00 for every 15 minutes *or portion thereof* that your child is at Blooming Grove Montessori after scheduled pickup time. If your child's name is highlighted, you are late and will be charged accordingly.

Parents may authorize others to pick up their children in writing on their enrollment forms and emergency cards, by a written notice left on the Attendance Clipboard, a text or phone call to 608- 658-9121, or an email to info@bloominggrovemontessori.com. You must include the name of the person who will pick up your child, the time the child will be picked up and a number where the person can be reached. They must bring a picture I.D. that will be checked by a staff member.

Law enforcement will be contacted if anyone attempts to pick up a child while appearing to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or if a child is not picked up and no emergency contact person can be reached.

Necessary Forms

Upon acceptance into the program you will be given a set of forms that are required by the State of Wisconsin to be kept on file. Your child will not be allowed to attend programs until all necessary forms are completed, included, but not limited to:

- **Health Report and Immunization Record Form**

A signed Health Report is due within 90 days of acceptance to any program. All Health Reports must be current within 6 months for children under 2 years of age and within 2 years for children ages 2 and older. A complete Immunization record is due within 30 days of acceptance to any program, and must be updated as new immunizations are administered. These can generally be obtained directly from your pediatrician.

- **Child Care Enrollment Form**
- **Health History**
- **Intake For Children Under 2 Years**
- **Authorization to Administer Medication**

These forms must be on file on or before your child's first day of attendance.

Fees

All fees and tuition rates are listed on the Blooming Grove Montessori Application Form.

Application Fee

- There is one time, non-refundable, \$100 Application Fee, which is due along with the completed application.

Material Fees

There annual, non-refundable School Year and Summer Material Fees. Material Fees are due along with first tuition payments of each term, typically September and June.

School Year Tuition and Agreements

Regular School Year tuition is calculated as part of a September to mid-June academic year and accounts for all school closings including, In-Service days, Winter Vacation, Spring Break and all Holidays and School Closings comparable with local area school districts. Fees are prorated into 9.5 monthly payments from September through June, as outlined in our School Year Contracts. School Year Tuition is prepaid and due by the 1st of every month. A 3% discount will be offered for School Year tuition paid in full a year in advance.

Summer Tuition and Agreements

Summer tuition is calculated based on a weekly enrollment schedule to allow maximum flexibility for families and summer staffing. Tuition is totaled for the entire summer and fees are prorated into 3 payment due throughout the summer from June through August, as outlined in our Summer Program Contracts. Summer Tuition is prepaid on the dates indicated on Summer Contracts.

Late Payment / Returned Check Fees

Payments received more than 5 days after the expected date will be assessed a late fee of \$25. The late fee increases to \$50 if tuition is not paid within 15 days of the expected payment date. Payments more than 30 days in arrears may include withholding of service. Any parent submitting a tuition check returned by the bank for any reason, including insufficient funds (bounced check) shall be charged a fee of \$35 per check that does not clear.

No additional late fee shall be applied; assuming proper payment is made promptly within 5 days' notice. If your family is having difficulty making a payment by the due date, please contact the Administrative Assistant to set up an alternate payment plan. Tuition is not refunded for absences (illness or family vacations) or for unscheduled closings of school (i.e. snow days.)

School Policies

Enrollment

Children may be enrolled at Blooming Grove Montessori as openings arise. Preference is given to siblings of children who have attended or are attending, Full Time Students, and to children of optimal enrollment age.

Probation/Termination

For all children there is a six-week probationary period. We have this policy to ensure we can adequately serve the needs of all the children. During this time, we look to identify children who are experiencing problems in the program. In the case of a child whose needs appear to not be met, we seek to make changes. Areas considered: The physical environment, interactions with adults and children, appropriate learning materials to fit the child's perceived needs, schedule of the day and additional resources (information, training or materials) for the staff. As we consider these changes, a parent/staff conference is arranged.

If this process extends beyond, or arises after the original six-week probation period a parent/staff conference will be held. If it is determined the program does not meet the needs of the child, the probation period may be extended or a final day of enrollment will be determined with every effort made to give the parents time (up to 30 days) to find an alternative arrangement. A child may be withdrawn from the school for reasons such as, but not limited to:

Termination of Contract by Blooming Grove Montessori

When, in the opinion of the Head of School and staff, the needs of the center dictate that a child be dismissed, the center reserves the right of dismissal. Dismissal will occur only after written notice has been provided to the parent.

- The center reserves the right for dismissal for failure to promptly pay tuition.
- The center reserves the right of dismissal for failure to submit required health and enrollment information.
- The center reserves the right of dismissal for failure to follow center policies and inappropriate behavior.
- The center reserves the right of dismissal for chronic lateness, that is defined as; failure to drop-off or pick-up within the designated arrival and departure times and more than three episodes of lateness in any one-month period. This constitutes grounds to ask a family to withdraw from the program.

Termination of Contract by Parent

Parents must provide written notice of intent to withdraw a child at least one month in advance of last date of attendance. Parents are financially obligated for 30 days from the date written notice is provided, whether or not the child continues to attend.

Termination of Contract – Mutual Agreement

The child's enrollment will be terminated when the center and the parents mutually agree that placement is inappropriate. Parents are responsible for any outstanding balance they may have prior to the agreed upon termination.

Parents will be responsible for tuition only up to the final day of enrollment. Any disagreement between the school and parents over the termination of a child's enrollment prior to the end of the contracted time can be appealed in writing to the Head of School.

Grievance Procedure

If a parent has a grievance, the following steps should be taken:

1. Speak to the party involved (another parent or guardian, or staff member.) Resolve the problem if possible.
2. Speak to the Head of School and ask for assistance to solve the problem.
3. If the parent feels the grievance constitutes a violation of licensing rules, then, as a final resort – call the State of Wisconsin, Department of Children and Families.

Abuse/Neglect Policy

All Blooming Grove Montessori Child Care Providers are required by State Law to immediately report suspected or known cases of child abuse or neglect. In accordance with this requirement, any staff person of Blooming Grove Montessori with suspicion or knowledge of abuse or neglect of a student shall take responsibility to see that it is reported to law enforcement of Dane County, Child Protective Services. If a parent has a suspicion of abuse or neglect on the part of any staff member, the concern should be brought to the attention of the Head of School; if, following such discussion and investigation, the parent continues to believe this is occurring, then the parent should report the concerns to Dane County's Child Protective Services office.

SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome)

All staff working in the Infant and Toddler classroom are required to have training in reducing the risk of SIDS. To reduce the risk of SIDS we implement the following standards:

Children under one year of age:

Children will be placed to sleep on their backs in a crib unless the child's physician authorizes another position. No sheepskins, pillows, fluffy blankets, or bumper pads will be used in cribs.

Children between 12 months and two years of age:

Floor beds include a tight-fitting mattress and all mattress coverings fit snugly over the mattress. Light blankets may be provided by the family and will be tucked tightly under the mattress and shall be kept away from the child's mouth and nose.

Health Policy

Health Precautions

A child's hands shall be washed with soap and warm running water before and after snack, after toileting or diapering, and after wiping bodily secretions with a disposable tissue. All staff shall wash their hands with soap and warm running water before handling food, and after assisting toileting and after wiping bodily secretions from a child with a disposable tissue.

Bodily secretions such as runny noses, eye drainage and coughed-up matter shall be wiped with a disposable tissue, used once and placed in a plastic-lined container. Whomever does the wiping shall wash his or her hands immediately. Bodily secretions on surfaces shall be washed with soap and water and disinfected with a bleach solution of one tablespoon bleach to one quart of water, made fresh daily. Hands shall be washed immediately. Single use disposable gloves shall be worn if there is contact with blood or blood containing body fluids or tissue discharge. Hands shall be washed with soap and water after removal of gloves and the gloves will be discarded in plastic bags.

- For spills of vomitus, urine, feces, blood or other body fluids, center staff shall clean and disinfect the floors, walls, bathrooms, tabletops, and equipment.
- Wet or soiled clothing and diapers shall be changed promptly from an available supply of clean clothing. Soiled clothing will be kept in a plastic bag, and sent home for laundering.
- All staff is required to be in good health when reporting for work, and to have annual health exams.
- If your child has special health needs all staff will be provided with any necessary to provide the best care possible.

Ill Child Procedure

Children with a sore throat, inflammation or discharge of the eyes, fever greater than 100 degrees, lice, ringworm, rash, vomiting, diarrhea or other illness or condition having the potential to affect the health of other persons shall be isolated and the parent called and the child must be picked up with one hour. The emergency contact person will be called if the parent cannot be reached. The ill child will be provided with a light blanket or asked to sit in a chair isolated from other children

Children are required to be absent for 24 hours after their last vomiting, diarrhea or fever. **Children must be fever free, without fever-reducing medication, for a full 24 hours before they can be readmitted to school.** Prescription medications must be administered a full 24 hours before the child can return to the center or longer, depending on the directions of your doctor. In the case of head lice, the child must be “nit free” before returning to the center.

If the child complains of feeling ill, the staff will watch for other symptoms. The child may continue for the day unless he/she is unable to participate in the daily routine and/or a condition listed in above develops.

The center reserves the right of exclusion when, in the opinion of the Director or staff, the child appears to be ill.

Please notify the school by phone by 8:30 am when a child will be absent. Staff are required, by law, to reach a parent or other contact person if a child who is expected to attend does not arrive. There are no refunds for school days missed due to illness or otherwise.

Communicable Disease

Parents are informed when a child in the center is found to have a specific communicable disease by a notice posted by the entrance to the school. Parents are to inform the center when their child has a communicable disease so that others may be notified. The identity of the infected child will remain confidential. Certain diseases, however, must be reported to the Health Department. A child may be readmitted without a statement from a doctor after having had a communicable disease only if the child has been absent for a period as specified by the Health Department.

Medications

Blooming Grove Montessori encourages parents to administer medications before or after our programs. However, upon special requests, medications may be given if a medication authorization form is filled out and signed by the parent listing specific dates and times during which it is to be given. Medication must be in the original container and labeled with the child’s name, dosage and directions for administration.

All medications are stored on top of shelf of a cupboard in a locked container and are inaccessible to the children. Medication that require refrigeration will be placed in a locked container clearly labeled with the word MEDICINE.

Accidents and Injuries

Minor injuries will be washed with soap and water and covered with a bandage or treated with ice. Injuries will be recorded in the injury log book. Parents will be verbally informed of minor injuries at pick-up time or via text messaging.

In case of a serious injury parents will be consulted, if parents cannot be contacted staff will contact the emergency contact person listed in our records. Should an ambulance be needed, parents will be responsible for any costs.

In the event of an extreme, life-threatening occurrence, with no time to consult parents or files, 911 will be called and the child would be taken to the nearest emergency room. An adult on the list of Emergency Volunteers will be contacted to assist the staff in emergency situations. All Emergency Volunteers must be available within 5 minutes.

Emergency Planning

In the event of fire, children will be evacuated through the nearest safe exit. The attendance form and list of phone numbers for parents and emergency contacts will be taken out to assure that all children are accounted for and all families notified. Children will be assembled at the birdhouse in the center of the parking area.

The fire department will be called by the staff. In case of tornado warning, the children will be taken to the basement for quiet games and reading. Blankets, a portable radio and flashlight with extra batteries for both are kept in the basement at all times. The attendance form and emergency contact information will be brought along.

If we are unable to return to the building after an evacuation, all parents or emergency contacts will be notified and children must be picked up within an hour.

In the event of a lost child, all areas of the property will be checked. If the child cannot be found, the child's parents and/or emergency contact and the police will be immediately notified.

Building Emergencies

If there is a threat to the building or occupants, such as a possible shooter; requiring a lockdown; shades would be drawn, all doors locked; and parents would be notified of the situation as soon as it is safe to do so. If Blooming Grove Montessori losses services, including but not limited to: no heat, no air conditioning, no water, no electricity, plumbing problems, no telephone or other occurrences that may interfere with a child's safety, parents will be contacted immediately, and made aware of the situation, and how and when the issues will be resolved. In accordance with the State of Wisconsin Child Care License, Blooming Grove Montessori may not be less than 67 degrees Fahrenheit, and if inside temperatures exceed 80 degrees Fahrenheit, proper air circulation will be provided.

Child Guidance and Discipline

Children who may be crying, fussing, or distraught will be held and comforted by rocking or lightly rubbing the child's back. Staff will attempt to redirect the child and speak calmly and soothingly to help the child work through the situation. If a child continues to cry, fuss or be distraught for more than 30 minutes, and every effort has been made by staff to comfort the child, parents will be notified and may be asked to pick up the child within 30 minutes.

The development of inner discipline in a child is always the goal with Montessori education. Self-discipline is fostered in many ways. The classroom environment is organized in an orderly, logical manner. Children, typically, choose work that they are capable of doing and are free to use it for as long as they wish without interference from others. This approach alleviates many problems of discipline that might be present in another kind of environment. In addition, the mixed age group allows the younger children to emulate the older children's more mature behavior.

It is our belief that discipline handled in a way that respects the dignity and the will of the child and fosters a positive self-concept, has a good chance of becoming internalized by the child. This philosophy suggests that cooperation is preferable to blind obedience because the child has input and the child participates. The child does something because it makes sense, because it is clearly needed and not simply because the Directress has made a request.

We feel that boundaries are an important factor in producing an environment in which the child will feel secure. An environment in which there are no boundaries is frightening for the child.

In accordance with Wisconsin licensing rules and Montessori philosophy, punishment that is humiliating or frightening, such as spanking, verbal or physical abuse, withholding or forcing of food, punishment for lapses in toilet training, or other forms of physical punishment will never be used, even at a parent's request.

Preferred Discipline Techniques

- Redirection – substituting another material or suggesting another activity
- Positive reinforcement and encouragement – such as using specific praise or other intrinsic rewards
- Food will never be used as a reward or punishment
- Modifying the environment to meet the needs of the child
- Explaining consistent, clear rules to the children
- Maintaining realistic, developmentally appropriate expectations of children
- Acting as a role model for acceptable and appropriate actions
- Offering choices when possible and being willing to accept the choice the child makes
- Offering a breather: inviting a child to sit apart from the classroom, either with a directress or alone

Parent Involvement

By actively showing your child that you care about the school, a stronger sense of community and trust is developed. Parents may be involved by contributing to the classroom needs, building and grounds maintenance, fundraising, or social events. Because your input is important to us as educational partners, we ask parents for their opinions and input by inviting parents to attend Parent Advisory Meetings led by a parent who has been a member of the Blooming Grove Montessori or Toad Hill Montessori environment for a minimum of 2 years.

In choosing our programs, you have already affirmed your support for the Montessori educational philosophy. We feel we can do the best job fulfilling your expectations if we have opportunities for sharing what goes on in the classrooms and why. One way of doing this is for parents to try to attend as many of our parent meetings as possible. Regularly scheduled Parent Advisory Meetings occur quarterly. We make every effort to vary these presentations each year while still providing the information parents often request about the programs. Parents who attend regularly have commented that they always discover something new!

Another valued parent contribution to the class would be to volunteer to share a special interest or talent; we always enjoy learning about your own family's customs or special foods, having parents demonstrate science experiments, help with a baking project or crafts, offer to help with some classroom maintenance work, etc. You may be surprised at your own gifts!

Insurance

The premises of Blooming Grove Montessori are insured by the Capitol Indemnity Corporation.

Pets

Blooming Grove Montessori has fish and a rabbit in the classrooms, and chickens in the outdoor classrooms. Parents of currently enrolled children will be notified if other pets become part of the curriculum.

Classroom Observation

Parents and legal guardians are welcome at their child's school at any time. It is especially useful to both parents and staff if you've had a chance to spend some time in the class before fall and spring conferences. When your child is initially adjusting to a new classroom, it is usually less confusing for your child if you wait until he or she is feeling independently comfortable, generally several weeks after the school year begins, before observing. Here are some general guidelines we give any visitors to our program:

- You'll get the most useful information from your visit if you spend time quietly observing from the front entryway
- If a situation arises during your visit in which you are unsure of the appropriate response, please ask a staff person for assistance.
- Only staff are allowed, by our licensing regulations and our policy, to discipline children.

Communications/Conferences

We are constantly working on ways to ensure that we maintain processes for communication between parents and staff, which is crucially important to our partnership. We have the following processes in place to facilitate communication:

Conferences with the Parents, staff, and Head of School can be arranged anytime, as mutually convenient, by request.

Please send a text message to 608-658-9121 or use the communication log near the attendance form to communicate changes or special notes about your child's day, such as a different pick-up time or person, or notes about general well-being. "Did not sleep well last night, so s/he may be tired or grumpy."

In order that they may give their full attention to the children, the staff will not be available, except for messages of great urgency or by special arrangement, to take phone calls or conduct personal conferences, during program hours. Appointments may be arranged only outside of program times. If you wish, you may leave a voicemail or text message and your call will be returned at the earliest possible opportunity.

We really value your concerns and in-depth understanding of your child. It is particularly helpful for us to know about changes in your child's life, or your family's, that may affect how she or he is responding at school, such as inability to sleep, changes in toileting or eating habits, the birth of a sibling, a death, separation or divorce, moving or any other stressful or exciting situation occurring in the home or at school.

Confidentiality

Any information that you share with any member of the staff will be held as confidential, unless it is one that may place the enrolled child, a sibling or family member at risk. The staff of Blooming Grove Montessori are all Mandated Reporters and must report any insinuations or threats of harm.

Items Parents Need to Provide

Nido Classroom

Children under 12 months

Please provide all bottles, milk and meals, labeled with your child's name and the date daily. If your child is formula fed, please bring a back-up container of formula to remain the classroom. Two changes of clothing labeled with your child's name, a supply of diapers and wipes to be kept at BGM and replenished as needed, and a crib sheet labeled with your child's name, which we will launder for you.

Toddlers

Toddlers who are toilet training

Please provide a snack and a cold lunch from home daily, a pair of slippers, a small blanket for rest time, to be regularly laundered by staff; 3 sets of clothing including 10 pairs of thick padded underwear (no characters please!), shorts/pants and socks to be kept on site all labeled with your child's name. These items should be easy for your child to put on and take off. No onesies, buckles, snaps, zippers, or buttons please. Clothing should be comfortable with an elastic waist. Clothing items will be replaced continually as they are used. Please label all items your child brings to school.

Children who are toilet trained, under the age of 2

Please provide a snack and cold lunch from home daily, a pair of slippers, and a small blanket for rest time, to be regularly laundered by staff, 2 sets of clothing including 2 pairs underwear (no characters please!), shorts/pants, socks and slippers to be kept on site all labeled with your child's name. These items should be easy for your child to put on and take off. These items will be replaced continually as they are used. Please label items your child brings to school.

Primary Classroom

Children who are toilet trained, over the age of 2

Please provide cold lunch from home daily (snacks will be prepared by children over 2 years old as part of the curriculum,) a pair of slippers and a small blanket for rest time, to be regularly laundered by staff, 2 sets of clothing including 2 pairs underwear (no characters please!), shorts/pants, socks and slippers to be kept on site all labeled with your child's name. These items should be easy for your child to put on and take off. These items will be replaced continually as they are used. Please label items your child brings to school.

No shoes are to be worn in the Infant and Toddler classroom. Bare feet or socks are acceptable. In the primary classroom we require soft, silent slippers for your child to wear. This not only sets a quiet tone to the classroom, but also adds to your child's comfort. Please avoid bulky character slippers. We also ask that your child wear slip on or Velcro shoes that s/he can put on and take off with little or no assistance.

Our goal is for children to be able to participate comfortably in any available activity of their choice. This is easier if their clothes are comfortable and easily laundered. Long pants are recommended for outdoor play. Children who are still working on dressing and toileting skills are greatly helped in this process by wearing clothes that are easy for them to manage independently.

We seriously discourage the wearing of costumes/superhero clothing (even t-shirts) at school. Children often take on the more aggressive persona of the character. And if their character is the “good guy”, then some unwilling child is cast in the opposing role. Even costumes of a non-aggressive nature cause the children to focus on the image of their friend’s outfit, rather than their friend, him/herself. We find that our classrooms are much more peaceful if the child’s true self can shine through. During cold/snowy weather, children will need snow pants, hats, boots (insulated) and mittens.

Please be sure to label ALL your child’s clothing and personal items. This makes the inevitable process of tracking down lost items so much less frustrating

Things from Home to Share in Class

Items brought from home can often cause conflicts between children, or become such a focus of your own child’s attention that he or she has difficulty choosing work or interacting with others. When negative emotions such as jealousy and envy occur, feelings are hurt. Therefore, we ask that all toys and trinkets be left at home. An item or items that inadvertently found their way to school, in spite of your best efforts, need to be placed in the office on the top shelf for safe keeping and can be reclaimed there at the end of the day. If you have special items that can enhance discussions being held in the classroom, such as items from nature or cultural artifacts, please notify the staff before bringing the items to school. Children should leave items in a place designated by the staff until time to show.

Contact Information

Please make sure that all of your contact information is correct and up to date. If phone numbers, emails or addresses have changed, please make sure to update them in the office by emailing, amberlee@bloominggrovemontessori.com , or you’re welcome to leave that information with your child’s teacher.