



# Shamrock Montessori Parent Handbook

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# SHAMROCK MONTESSORI

## PARENT HANDBOOK

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# About Us

## Welcome

Welcome to Shamrock Montessori, a place where children thrive in a loving, inclusive, and nurturing Montessori environment. We are delighted to have you join our school family, where we partner with parents in providing a rich learning experience that cultivates each child's independence, confidence, and love for learning.

Our school is built on the foundation of faith, hope, and love, and we believe that every child is a unique and precious individual. We are committed to fostering their intellectual, emotional, physical, and moral growth while providing a high-quality Montessori education.

## Vision

Our vision is to cultivate an environment of academic excellence, character development, and social responsibility, where children develop a love for learning and a strong foundation of integrity and respect for others. We aspire to empower students to reach their full potential, equipping them with skills and values to serve their communities with compassion, integrity, and purpose.

## Mission

Our mission at Shamrock Montessori is to:

- Provide a high-quality Montessori education that nurtures each child's unique potential.
- Foster independence, creativity, and a love for learning in every student.
- Encourage children to develop strong moral character through kindness, respect, and responsibility.
- Partner with families to nurture a supportive and values-driven community.
- Instill a sense of purpose, responsibility, and global awareness in our students.

## Christian Mission

At Shamrock Montessori, our Christian mission is deeply embedded in our educational philosophy and daily practices. We believe that faith and education are intertwined, and we strive to create an environment where



children can grow academically and spiritually. Our Christian mission is expressed through:

- **Teaching Biblical values** such as kindness, honesty, patience, and gratitude in a way that is relatable to children.
- **Creating a Christ-centered learning atmosphere** where children feel safe, loved, and encouraged to explore their faith.
- **Incorporating prayer and worship** into our daily routine, fostering a habit of gratitude and reflection.
- **Celebrating Christian traditions** such as Christmas and Easter with a focus on their deeper spiritual meanings.
- **Encouraging service and compassion**, teaching children the importance of helping others and being a positive force in their community.

While we are a Christian school, we welcome families of all backgrounds and respect the diverse beliefs of our community. Our goal is to provide a nurturing, values-driven education where children learn to embrace faith, love, and kindness as guiding principles in their lives.

## Programs

### **Infant Program (8 weeks – 18 months)**

Our Montessori Infant Program provides a nurturing and stimulating environment where babies feel safe, loved, and encouraged to explore the world around them:

- A calm, prepared environment that encourages natural movement and sensory exploration.
- Responsive caregiving that fosters attachment, trust, and communication.
- Age-appropriate Montessori materials designed to promote fine motor skills, visual tracking, and early cognitive development.
- A peaceful atmosphere where caregivers model gentle guidance and respect.

### **Toddler Program (18 months – 3 years)**

Our Toddler Community provides a space where young learners develop independence, language skills, and social-emotional confidence:

- Practical Life activities that build self-care, responsibility, and grace and courtesy.
- Sensorial exploration that refines perception and cognitive skills.



- Language-rich environment with bilingual and English immersion options to foster comprehensive language development.
- Character development activities that encourage kindness and empathy.

### **Preschool Program (2.5 – 6 years)**

The Montessori Preschool Program follows a three-year cycle, allowing children to progress at their own pace and develop a deep, meaningful understanding of foundational concepts:

- **Practical Life:** Activities such as food preparation, care of self, and care of the environment, fostering responsibility, independence, and fine motor skills.
- **Sensorial Exploration:** Materials designed to refine sensory perception, laying the foundation for logical thinking and problem-solving.
- **Mathematics:** Hands-on materials like the Number Rods, Golden Beads, and Stamp Game guide children from concrete to abstract mathematical concepts.
- **Language Development:** A phonics-based, immersive approach to reading and writing, incorporating storytelling, journaling, and oral language enrichment.
- **Cultural Studies:** Geography, botany, zoology, and science that help children develop an appreciation for the world around them.
- **Christian Character Formation:** Daily discussions, Bible stories, and activities that instill compassion, honesty, and a sense of community.

### **Chinese Bilingual Immersion Program**

Our Chinese Bilingual Immersion Program integrates Montessori philosophy with Chinese language learning, fostering a natural and immersive dual-language experience:

- Bilingual daily routines, allowing children to acquire Mandarin organically.
- Chinese cultural studies, including traditional songs, festivals, and storytelling.
- Montessori materials adapted for Chinese literacy, supporting character recognition and language comprehension.
- Values-based learning that encourages moral and ethical understanding.

### **English Immersion Program**

Our English Immersion Program is designed for families who want their children to develop strong English communication skills while experiencing the Montessori curriculum:



- Daily English-only instruction in all Montessori areas.
- Literature-rich environment with storytelling, phonics, and conversation practice.
- Values-based character education integrated into the daily learning experience.
- Preparation for future academic success through a structured, engaging learning environment.

## Philosophy and Curriculum

Montessori classrooms are beautifully designed to meet the needs of children in a specific age range. In Montessori classroom, children make creative choices in their learning, work in groups and individually to discover and explore the world around and develop their potential. Dr. Montessori observed that children experience sensitive periods, or windows of opportunity, as they grow. As students develop, Montessori teachers match appropriate lessons and materials to these sensitive periods when learning is most naturally absorbed and internalized.

*“We discovered that education is not something which the teacher does, but that it is a natural process which develops spontaneously in the human being.”*

*Maria Montessori*

## **Montessori Curriculum**

### **Practical Life Activities:**

Activities in this area provide real life experiences for children. The purpose and aim of this area is to help the child gain control in the coordination of his movement, and help the child to gain independence and adapt to his society. The practical life exercises are organized in three main areas: care of the person, care of the environment, grace and courtesy.

### **Sensorial Activities:**

Sensorial exercises were designed by Dr. Montessori to cover every quality that can be perceived by the senses such as size, shape, composition, texture, loudness or softness, matching, weight, temperature, etc. which are categorized into eight different groups: Visual, Tactile, Baric, Thermic, Auditory, Olfactory, Gustatory, and Stereognostic. Montessori believed that sensorial experiences began at birth. Through his senses, the child studies his environment. Through his study, the child then begins to understand his environment. The child, to Montessori, is a “sensorial explorer”.

## **Mathematics:**

Learning mathematical concepts in a Montessori classroom begins concretely and progresses towards the abstract. They are developed from simple to complex. Process is taught first and facts come later. Order, coordination, concentration, and independence are experienced by the child using these materials. The math activities are designed into five groups as follows:

- Introduces sets of one through ten which prepares the child for counting and teaches the value of quantity.
- Involves the decimal system using the golden bead material. The child will become familiar with the names of the decimal categories: units, tens, hundreds, and thousands.
- Deals with the operations using golden bead material. The concept and process of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division.
- Consists of linear counting. Quantity is presented using the teen and ten beads followed by symbol and association. The bead chains also introduce the child to skip counting such as five, ten, fifteen, twenty, etc.
- Contains activities such as strip boards, snake game, and memorization of facts. Fractions are also a part of this group.

## **Language:**

The Montessori classroom is designed in such a way that all activities gear themselves naturally toward the development of the skills required for oral and written language and reading. Language development is also encouraged in the classroom because of the freedom of conversation to the children. In the Montessori environment, vocabulary develops by using specific words for objects in the classroom. At approximately 4.5 years, the children begin to put phonetic sounds together to read short words, and by 5 years of age the amaze their parents with their love of writing and reading.

## **Science:**

Science is all around us. Young children interact with the natural world everywhere they go. They learn how to observe patiently, analyze, and work at each problem. They learn about living/non-living and plant/animal. They learn the “parts” of animals from the insect to the mammal with our hands-on materials. They explore their world through dissection of a flower, apple, or arrange brings excitement into the classroom. Our hands-on science materials are the joy of learning for children.

## **Geography:**

The Montessori Geography curriculum is twofold: physical and cultural geography. Physical geography discusses the formation of the universe, the creation of the earth, and all its physical properties. Cultural geography is the study of human society and culture. The two together show the child that we are all members of the human race who must co-exist peacefully in order to survive.



**History:**

Teaching history in a Montessori classroom helping children understand the passage of time. They learn the concepts of time measurement with timing devices for 1 minute, 2 minutes, to 1 hour. They also learn the clock, days of week, months of year, calendar, and personal timeline with our materials. The information in regards to history is given orally and informally during some of the geography exercises such as the flag stories of the country, fossils, and etc.

**Art:**

In the Montessori context, the child of the first plane is not taught art as a subject. As in all the areas of the classroom, we offer the sensorial explorer the materials for his own personal experience. From these materials and exercises, the child will have different sensorial stimulations with various points of focus. From these, the child can learn the art of his own culture, compare it to the art of other cultures, and can be provided with the materials to create his own art.

**Music:**

All human groups have music. It is a path of culture in any society. Music is also a means of communication and self-expression. It can be therefore seen as another form of language. The child needs to have music to absorb and instruments with which to make music. He needs the opportunity to express himself spontaneously. As a base for the child's musical experiences, we want to provide him with the elements with which to make music. The elements are pulse (or rhythm), pitch (or tone), dynamic, timbre, and form.

**Physical Education:**

We know the relationship between movement and the brain. Maria Montessori said: "Movement, or physical activity, is thus an essential factor in intellectual growth, which depends upon the impressions received from outside. Through movement we come in contact with external reality, and it is through these contacts that we eventually acquire even abstract ideas."

Children want to move – they need to move -- while they are learning. Shamrock Montessori provides environments for movement, both purposeful and playful. From gross motor work in the classroom to running on the playground to music with movement, children can engage in physical activity throughout their day, promoting emotional growth and intellectual growth.

## Montessori Kindergarten Curriculum

Montessori education has three-year cycle. The first year children are the beginners. They not only get lessons from teachers, but also learn from the older ones by observing and listening to their work. With the help of the older ones, younger children usually learn quickly and enthusiastically. The second year children are more independent and comfortable in the classroom. They learn how to interact with both older ones and younger ones, while developing their knowledge and skills in all different areas. The third year children have the unique opportunity to be role models and community leaders and experience the full benefit of Montessori education. Their knowledge is reinforced

and their skills are strengthened by practicing and sharing with the younger ones. Please read over our “kindergarten curriculum” carefully and you will see the advanced learning that is possible for the 5-year-old child!

❖ **PRACTICAL LIFE**

**Grace and Courtesy**

**Creative sewing** (Embroidery)

**Carpentry** (Sawing wood)

❖ **SENSORIAL**

**Visual perception and reading** (Matching picture and reading cards)

**Forming an 18-tablet color wheel and labelling, then drawing and coloring**

**Discrimination of metric size, geometric objects and names** (pink tower, broad stairs, long rods, color tablets, knob cylinders, geometric cabinet)

**Recognition of solid shapes and names** (Geometric solids with labels)

Perception of three-dimensional shapes/areas with their algebraic foundation (Binomial and Trinomial cubes)

**Recognition of plane geometrical figures and their equivalences/labels**

(Constructor triangles, plus names)

**Composing and writing music, notation and singing to tone** (Bells, with labels)

❖ **MATH**

**Unit family combinations to make 10** (Numerical rods, combination of 10)

**Adding in 4 digits** (Addition: one, two, three and four places)

**Exchanging** (Dynamic addition and changing)

**Forming quantities to 19 with beads and matching to numeral** (Teen boards, with problems)

**Forming quantities to 99 with beads and matching to numeral** (Ten boards, with problems)

**Counting 100 chain by 10's, with numerals** (Chain of 100, with markers)

**Counting 1,000 chain by 10's and 100's, with numerals** (Chain of 1,000, with markers)

**Counting chains by 5's, 6's, 7's, 8's and 9's with bead bars and numerals** (Skip counting)

**Squaring with chains and squares of 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 with numerals** (Square of numbers)

**Cubing with chains and cubes of 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 with numerals** (Cube of numbers)

**Counting in sets of 10's to 100** (hundred board)

**Finding all possible combinations of quantities to equal 10** (Bead stairs, combinations of 10)

**Putting two quantities together to get a sum, up to 18** (Addition strip board, problems and chars)

**Making an addition chart up to 5 digits** (Dot game)

**Subtracting (taking away) bead quantity from larger quantity** (Negative snake game)

**Subtracting quantities from a larger one, up through 18** (Subtraction strip board)

**Adding the same quantity 2 to 9 times** (Multiplication board, with problems)

**Building a multiplication problem with beads** (Multiplication with bead bars)

**Dividing a quantity (100's and 1,000's) among several children** (Division with decimal system)

**Dividing a given quantity, up through 81, among skittles** (Division board, with problems)

**Identifying 3-dimensional fractions, from 1 whole to "a whole in 5 parts"** (Fraction skittles, whole to five)

**Finding equivalences among plane fractions, from 1 whole to "a whole in 10 parts"** (Fraction insets, with paper)

**Finding equivalent denominators and adding them** (Fraction addition)

#### ❖ WRITING

**Practicing writing, both manuscript and cursive, with lightness of touch** (Metal inset designs, movable alphabets and writing cards)

**Cursive writing with ink**

**Writing name within lines** (Free-hand name on prepared paper)

**Using loose letters and inventive spelling to create letters and stories** (Friendly letter and creative writing)

#### ❖ LANGUAGE

**Labeling objects in the environment** (Environment matching cards with tracing paper)

**Making simple phonetic words with loose letters** (Moveable alphabet with spelling strips)

**Reading and acting out phonetic commands** (Phonetic command cards)

**Sorting phonogram objects, matching to sandpaper phonogram cards and writing words** (Phonogram buckets and sandpaper cards)

**Reading and matching phonograms words** (Phonogram puzzle boxes)

**Reading and matching phonograms to pictures** (Phonogram work pages, reading booklets and picture boxes)

**Making a tree or house of families of words** (Phonograms) (House and tree of words)

**Learning commonly-used non-patterned words, simple and difficult** (Puzzle words)

**Reading sentences and matching to pictures** (Picture sentence boxes)

**Reading definitions and matching to pictures** (Definitions)

**Fitting loose words together to make a sentence** (Puzzle sentences)

**Reading difficult commands and acting them out** (Command cards, second level)

**Matching and sorting special kinds of words** (Synonyms, antonyms, and homonyms)

**Placing objects into alphabetical order**

**Sorting words into like groups** (Words having associations)

**Sorting singular and plural objects and matching with words**

**Reading books from phonetic through phonogram** (Reading books)

**Making phrases with grammar objects** (Grammar boxes)

**Identifying parts of speech with symbol stickers**

#### ❖ GEOGRAPHY

**Sorting land, air and water objects** (Three forms of matter) **Making land shapes from clay** (Land forms, all 10)

**Cutting opposite land shapes from paper** (Making paper land shapes)

**Sorting continents into hemispheres**

**Forming continents or countries from clay** (Making clay maps of countries)

**Tracing and making country and continent maps** (Map making)

**Free-form drawing and coloring of flags of nations** (Flag making)

**Matching objects with continent or country** (Using artifact boxes of countries)

**Researching facts about countries** (Fact folders of countries)

**Identifying national anthems of world countries**

#### ❖ HISTORY

**Sorting timing devices for 1, 2, 3 minutes and one hour with labels**

**Making a paper clock with quarters** (Traditional clock making)

**Making a clock booklet** (Clock booklets)

**Making a timeline of “my day”** (My day)

**Participating in making a class diary**

**Matching days of week to timeline** (Days of week, with writing)

**Making calendar of the month** (Calendar making)

**Sorting and matching pictures with age of person** (Personal time lines)

**Digging in sand for fossils and naming them** (Archeological “dig”)

**Laying out earth’s time line**

**Matching and sorting picture cards and labels for the needs of humans**

**throughout history** (Food, shelter, clothing, transportation, defense, art, music and religion)

**Reading about a composer, and playing his music**

**Sorting still-life, landscape and portrait art**

**Sorting styles of art**

#### ❖ SCIENCE

**Sorting magnetic/non-magnetic objects**

**Matching sedimentary, igneous and metamorphic rocks, with labels** (Rocks, three types)

- Sorting inorganic/organic objects**
- Sorting living-non-living objects**
- Making a parts-of-plant booklet**
- Dissecting a flower and naming parts**
- Making a parts-of-animals booklets**
- Matching plant picture cards to labels** (Matching cards)
- Making a booklet of kinds of plants, leaves, flowers**
- Matching skeleton parts cards with labels** (Skeleton matching cards)
- Sorting animals with or without backbones** (Fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds, mammals)
- Sorting animals into family groups** (Male/female/baby sorting)
- Sorting objects showing life cycles for frog and butterfly, with labels**
- Making a volcano**
- Laying out planet replicas in their order** (System of planets)
- Making constellations with lights**

❖ **ART**

- Leaf pressings and rubbings**
- Melt art**
- Crayoned textiles**
- Crayon engraving**
- Mono printing**
- Sculptures**
- Block printing**
- Paper-mache**
- Clay modeling**
- Charcoal drawing**
- Stitchery**

**Note: By the end of the kindergarten year, students have developed confidence, responsibility, and a deep love for learning, equipping them to transition smoothly into elementary-level academics with a strong academic and moral foundation.**

## Mixed Ages

The **Montessori philosophy** embraces mixed-age classrooms as a way to foster leadership, peer learning, and social responsibility. At Shamrock Montessori, children are grouped into multi-age communities, allowing for:



- **Peer Mentorship:** Older children naturally take on leadership roles, modeling responsibility and academic skills for younger classmates.
- **Individualized Learning Paths:** Every child progresses at their own pace, engaging with materials appropriate to their developmental stage.
- **Community and Cooperation:** Mixed-age environments promote collaboration, respect, and a sense of belonging as children learn from and support one another.
- **Confidence Building:** As children master skills, they reinforce their own learning by teaching and assisting others, strengthening comprehension and social skills.

By experiencing a dynamic, age-diverse learning environment, children develop strong interpersonal relationships, patience, and a deeper sense of responsibility and independence.

## Staff

Our staff is the heart of our Shamrock Montessori community. Each educator is dedicated to providing an authentic Montessori education within a Christian-centered environment. Our team consists of:

- **Certified Montessori Teachers:** All lead guides are Montessori-trained and passionate about the philosophy of child-led learning.
- **Faith-Guided Educators:** Teachers integrate Christian values into the daily curriculum, fostering character development alongside academic growth.
- **Lifelong Learners:** Our staff engages in ongoing professional development to continually enhance their teaching practices.
- **Supportive and Nurturing Individuals:** Educators create a warm, respectful, and engaging environment where children feel safe, valued, and encouraged to explore.

We are proud to have a team that is committed to guiding each child's journey of intellectual and spiritual discovery, ensuring that all students receive an education grounded in faith, knowledge, and independence.



# Admissions

## Steps to Enroll

To begin your journey at Shamrock Montessori, simply schedule an appointment for a tour to meet our staff and explore our classroom environment. Tours are conducted daily, offering families the opportunity to experience our Montessori setting firsthand.

At Shamrock Montessori, we offer both 10-month and 12-month enrollment options to accommodate different family needs:

- 10-month enrollment runs from September through June of the following year.
- 12-month enrollment runs from July through June of the following year. Students enrolled in the 12-month program receive 10 days of vacation tuition credit, which can be applied toward school break childcare, and are also exempt from the summer camp registration fee.

Enrollment is open year-round on a first-come, first-served basis, with priority given to siblings of currently enrolled students. Upon enrollment, you will receive a Student Enrollment Packet with important documents. To ensure a smooth start, please submit all required forms by your child's first day of school:

- Enrollment form
- Individual health plan, if needed, including emergency allergy response form
- Medication authorization form
- Completed Washington State Immunization Form
- Child's history to know about your child
- Photo Consent form
- Parent Handbook Signed page
- Items listed in the First School Day Supplies List

### **Student Immunization Records [Required for ALL NEW AND RETURNING CHILDREN]**

As of August 1, 2020, revised Department of Health rules require medically verified immunization records for school and childcare entry. Please ensure your child's medically verified immunization records are submitted by your child's first day of school.

### **Immunization Exemptions:**

Washington State Law allows parents or guardians to exempt their child from the school or childcare immunization requirements. Exemptions may be claimed for personal/philosophical, religious or medical reasons. Measles, mumps, and rubella may not be exempted for personal/philosophical reasons. To request an exemption, a completed Certificate of Exemption must be submitted to the school.



## Tuition and Fees

### **Registration Fee**

A non-refundable registration fee of \$350 per school year is due upon registration. This fee covers office registration procedures, classroom supplies, insurance, and building/playground maintenance.

### **Enrollment Fee**

Your child's enrollment is considered complete once the enrollment contract is signed and the enrollment fee has been paid. The enrollment fee is the first payment made for a student's enrollment and is non-refundable. This fee includes the registration fee, first month's tuition, and an additional month's deposit. Failure to pay the enrollment fee by the due date will result in cancellation of enrollment.

### **Tuition Discounts**

- 3% discount for semiannual tuition payment.
- 5% discount for annual tuition payment.
- 5% sibling discount, applied to the lower tuition when siblings enroll together.
- 10% discount for Active-Duty Military families.  
(Discounts cannot be combined; the highest applicable discount will be applied.)

### **Payment Policies**

- All tuition and fees are processed through Brightwheel.
- Tuition payments are due by the 20th of the previous month and must be made through our Brightwheel online payment system. A \$35 late fee will be charged for overdue payments.
- Tuition is charged on a full-month basis and is not prorated based on attendance or withdrawal date.

## Withdraw

A 30-day written notice is required for withdrawal, accepted via signed letter or email.

All families remain bound by the tuition liability clause in the enrollment contract, regardless of the withdrawal notice. Full tuition is required for the month in which the child's last day falls, and enrollment deposit will be non-refundable.



# Daily Schedule and Operation

## Daily Schedule and Hours of Operation

It's essential for children to be dropped-off and picked-up on time.

Parents or another person who authorized by the parent to take the child to or from school, shall sign in the child on arrival and sign out at dismissal daily, using a full, legal signature.

A sample of preschool daily schedule as below:

<b>Morning</b>	8:45 am - 9:00 am	<b>Morning Drop-off</b> Teacher greeting children at the door. Children settle down and wash hands.
	9:00am - 9:30 am	<b>Morning circle time with special theme and group activities;</b> Class discussions; Birthday celebration in Montessori way.
	9:30am - 11:00 am	<b>Morning Montessori working time: free choice lessons with Montessori materials; individual or small group presentations; snack.</b>
	11:00am - 11:10am	<b>Second circle time with special theme and group activities; singing; reading; games; etc.</b>
	11:10am - 12:00 pm	<b>Outdoor play.</b>
	12:00pm - 12:30 pm	<b>Lunch time</b>
<b>12:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. Nap time.</b>		
<b>Afternoon</b>	2:30pm - 2:40 pm	<b>Wake up. Children roll up their sleeping mat, wash hands and take snack.</b>
	2:40pm - 3:00pm	<b>Afternoon snack time.</b>
	3:00pm - 3:30pm	<b>Afternoon circle time with special theme and group activities;</b> Class discussions; Birthday celebration in Montessori way.
	3:30pm - 5:00 pm	<b>After care</b>
	5:00pm - 5:30 pm	<b>Extended after care with limited space</b>

(ps. Feel free to check our Toddler Schedule on school website: [Toddler Schedule | Bellevue | Shamrock Montessori \(shamrockmh.com\)](#))

**A \$2 per minute late fee will be charged for any child picked up after the scheduled pick-up time.**



## Holidays & Closures

Shamrock Montessori closely follows the Bellevue School District's holiday and break schedule. Additionally, we observe one in-service day per month to support teacher training and school operations.

Limited childcare services are available during school breaks on a first-come, first-served basis.

The school calendar can be accessed on our website, and in your child's classroom.

## Absences

As stated in the tuition agreement, tuition is based on reserving a child's space in advance, regardless of attendance. No credit or refund is given for absences due to illness or vacation.

Please inform the teacher and office in advance of any extended absence. Failure to return to school or fulfill the tuition agreement may result in loss of enrollment.

## Napping

We believe in the importance of naps for a child's well-being on these busy days at school. Children under four years old are expected to nap. These children are asked to bring a small pillow and blanket with their name on them and take home to be laundered every Friday.

## English/Chinese Sharing Day

We will have our Sharing Show-N-Tell day each week. Your child is welcome to bring in ONE item on this day. The child will show at circle time and tell all of his/her friends about it. Suggest items are:

- ❖ Objects, artifacts, or books relating to Unit Study or Sound of the week.
- ❖ Objects of special interest or importance to the child, such as postcard from relative, gift from grandparents, art work done at home, souvenir from vacation, and etc.)

**But no toys any other day outside of Show-N-Tell day.**



# Summer Camp

Shamrock Montessori follows an academic year from September through the last day of school in June. July and August are designated as Shamrock's summer sessions.

Our summer camp features a variety of themed programs designed to encourage children to express, explore, and create while actively learning. Each day includes a mix of indoor and outdoor activities, along with on-site visits that provide enriching learning experiences.

## Safety and Healthy

### Drop Off and Pick Up

A teacher will be ready to greet your child from 8:45-9:00 am. Your child will prepare him/herself to start the school day. It's very important that your child arrives at school no later than 5 minutes after the start of class so that he/she does not miss our circle activities and other important events. We understand that separation can be a very stressful time for children as well as parents. Please have a set schedule with your child: one hug and one kiss, which will help your child to achieve a successful separation.

Class ends and dismissal at 3:30 p.m. Children are expected to be picked up from school on time. Late pick-ups are disruptive to our afternoon programs, often create anxiety in the child who is picked up late and create unsafe student/teacher ratios. We will charge \$2 per minute you are late.

### Visitation Policy

All visitors are required to sign in in the classroom visitor logbook, recording the date and time of arrival, purpose for visit, and sign out with a time of departure. The Montessori classroom is a very special place. The environment has been carefully designed to meet the developmental needs of children. A very delicate balance occurs between the child, teacher, and the environment as they work together to support growth and learning. The presence of visitors moving freely through the room can be distracting and at times confusing for the children. It can interfere with the atmosphere of independence and concentration in the classroom.

We ask that all visitors respect the children and the classroom. The teacher will



guide visitors into appropriate areas to sit and observe. Visitors should remain seated and restrain from engaging in conversation or activity with the children. In the case of parents, student teachers, and volunteers, the teachers will direct visitors to appropriate activities within the classroom where they can become involved such as sharing a special skill or cultural information during circle time, listening to children read, or directing a special project.

## Supervision of Children

A child will never be left unsupervised. Efforts will be made to familiarize children and parents with potential substitute teachers, volunteers, and student teachers. Should an emergency arise where the teacher may need to leave the classroom an approved substitute will be called in to supervise the children. In the event of a planned, short-term, non-recurring absence of the teacher (i.e. doctor's appointment, teacher training, personal day) parents will be notified in advance and an approved substitute will be arranged.

## Emergency and Accidents

Through appropriate supervision, most accidents can be safely avoided. Our staff is appropriately trained in CPR, First Aid, Communicable Disease Recognition, and Child Abuse and Neglect Recognition. If an emergency does occur, the procedure is as follows:

- A staff member with first aid training responds to the child's immediate needs.
- Another staff member calls 911, and the parents, if it is in the best interest of the child.
- If transportation is needed, the child's individual emergency instructions listed on the *Child Enrollment and Health Information* form on file will be consulted. Emergency personnel, staff, or parents may transport the child. A staff member will stay with the child if a parent is not present.

Accidents will be reported to the parent by the Accident/Incident Report Form. Minor accidents will be treated with first aid, which will be described on the Accident/Incident Report Form.

**If your child has unique health needs (i.e. has food allergies, asthma, sensitivity to bee stings, etc.), please provide us with details of required treatment.** Parents will be asked to complete a *Medical and Physical Care Plan* form so proper care and prevention can be provided.

## Fire Drills and Earthquake Procedures

We conduct monthly fire drills and quarterly disaster drills, including earthquake drills. Additionally, we hold a lockdown drill once per year.



A drill schedule is available upon request. Staff receive ongoing training to ensure preparedness for emergency situations.

Preparedness: Shamrock Montessori maintains a three-day emergency supply of food, water, and first aid equipment for each student and staff member. A one-time \$30 Disaster Supplies Fee is required upon enrollment for new students only to help cover the cost of these emergency supplies.

Our building undergoes regular safety inspections to assess its preparedness for a potential earthquake. Any identified concerns are promptly addressed and resolved to ensure a safe environment for students and staff.

Crisis/disaster plan: A full disaster plan is enclosed. Evacuation plans are posted in the classrooms.

## School Closing, Delayed Openings

Shamrock Montessori may close for a full day, delay opening, or dismiss students early if current or forecasted weather conditions pose a risk to the safety of our students, staff, and families. Additionally, if the building loses power or water, we are required to remain closed until services are restored. Parents are expected to pick up their children promptly if contacted about a school closure.

We carefully evaluate each situation before making closure decisions. While we consider local conditions, Shamrock does not strictly follow the Bellevue School District's closure or delay schedule. Since our families and staff commute from various locations, we take into account surrounding conditions and the latest weather forecasts.

In the event of inclement weather, Shamrock will make closure or delay announcements as early as possible. If a decision is not communicated the night before, an early morning assessment will determine the best course of action.

Please note that no refunds or make-up days are provided for weather-related or emergency closures.

## Illness

Shamrock Montessori must exempt children and staff from attendance if the following symptoms occur:

- ❖ Vomiting (two or more times within 24 hours).



- ❖ Diarrhea (three or more watery stools or one bloody stool within 24 hours).
- ❖ A fever of 100° Fahrenheit or higher needs to be fever free for 24 hours before returning.
- ❖ Rash/lice or nits: rash especially with fever or itching.
- ❖ Eye Infection: thick mucus or pus draining from the eye.
- ❖ Sore throat: sore throat with fever or swollen glands.

Please keep your child home from school if they show any of the symptoms above.

## Administration of Medication

All medications must be in the original container and accompanied by a completed form, available in each classroom. The information on the form includes:

- Child's first and last name
- Name of the medication
- Reason for giving the medication
- Amount of medication to give
- Start and stop dates
- Expected side effects
- How to store medications.

All other medications must be accompanied by a consent form from the child's health care provider. Medications will be stored according to the package directions with the child's name in a container that is inaccessible to children. Consent from the child's health care provider is required to administer medication beyond the recommended dosage. Unused medications will be returned to the parents or properly disposed of.

## Food Allergies

It is the responsibility of the parents to alert the school of any food allergies that their child may have. Children's allergies will be posted in the location where food is prepared. Parents should provide or suggest an alternative to foods that their child is allergic to. Written directions from the child's health care provider must be presented for children who require nutritional supplements or are on a medically modified diet.

## Positive Discipline

*Dr. Montessori said:" We are respectful and courteous in our dealing with children, we treat them as we should like to be treated ourselves. We should*



*have mastered a great educational principle and be setting an example of good education."*

In our system, we obviously have a different concept of discipline. The discipline we are looking for is active. We do not believe that one is disciplined only when he is artificially made as silent as a mute and as motionless as a paralytic. Such a one is not disciplined but annihilated. We claim that an individual is disciplined when he is the master of himself and when he can, as a consequence, control himself when he must follow a rule of life. Montessori has a unique approach to discipline in that the children are helped to develop self-discipline through their own engagement. This is in contrast to traditional schools, where discipline is applied externally, resulting in a reliance on external control.

## School Field Trips and Outings

Field trips are a valuable extension of the classroom experience, providing children with unique opportunities for hands-on learning beyond the school environment. They also serve as a meaningful way for parents and the school to connect and engage.

Shamrock Montessori carefully selects farms, botanical gardens, zoos, museums, and other venues that align with our field trip themes to create enriching educational experiences. Field trips are typically scheduled on early dismissal days, allowing for a well-paced and engaging experience for young children.

**For safety reasons, parent accompaniment is required.**

Additionally, walking field trips to nearby parks or through the neighborhood take place throughout the school year and are greatly enjoyed by the children.

To foster a sense of community, Shamrock Montessori will also organize optional meetups at various locations where families can gather outside of school hours. These outings will occur on weekends and are completely optional. Please note that Shamrock Montessori is not responsible for any loss, damage, or injury that may occur during these field trips and weekend outings.

## Child Abuse Reporting

Shamrock Montessori is required by law to immediately report any suspicious occurrences of physical, sexual, or emotional child abuse, child neglect, or child exploitation by telephone to Child Protective Services or local law enforcement.

## Nutrition

### Meals and Late Snacks

Morning Snack	9:30-11:00 a.m.	provided by school for all children, free choice throughout the day
Lunch	12:00-12:30 p.m.	provided by school
PM Snack	2:30-3:00 p.m.	provided by school for all children, free choice throughout the day

Shamrock Montessori's hot lunch will be provided by **Food for Thought Catering Services**: [Food for Thought Catering Services](#) Their mission is to bring nutritious food to the children, in the most sustainable way possible. Their monthly menu will be available for you to check out on the website: [Menu — Food for Thought Catering Services](#)

Lunch is a special time for the children to socialize. At school the children will learn about table manners and setting up their table independently before meal. We will kindly ask parents' help to bring in a placemat, a plate, a bowl, a cup and a set of utensils which are packed in a wet bag to school daily (Classroom teacher will send out a purchase link for you to prepare before the first school day).

Snacks will be prepared from nutritious foods from at least two food groups. Snacks that are provided by families **must be nut-free**.

### Birthday Treats

Children's birthday may be celebrated on the actual birth date or closest school day to it. If you wish to bring food, please bring a nutritious snack such as vegetables, fruit salads. Beverages, ice cream, sticky candy and icing are not recommended. Please send all supplies (napkins, plates, juice, etc.) in the original packing. All items need to be store bought.

To cultivate a spirit of generosity on birthdays, we encourage children to contribute a gift to the classroom, such as a beautiful book, rock, or artifact. Instead of distributing goodie bags, we aim to foster a culture of shared experiences over material rewards.

For the birthday ceremony, please write one statement that exemplifies each year of the child's life and bring in a photograph of each year, this personal





sharing will be celebrated at group time. Parents of the child are welcome to attend.

## Communication

### Observations

Observation is an important teaching tool in a Montessori classroom and is the most beneficial way for parents to understand their child's day. Scheduling a classroom observation prior to a conference with your child's teacher will provide insight to the parents, therefore leading to a more meaningful conference. To make an appointment for an observation please contact the school office.

### Website and Internet Information

At Shamrock Montessori, we value open and effective communication between the school and our families. We provide multiple channels to keep parents informed and engaged. Our official website and social media platforms serve as key communication tools for sharing school updates, classroom activities, and educational philosophies. Follow us to stay connected with the latest news and events:

- **Website:** [www.shamrockmh.com](http://www.shamrockmh.com)
- **Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/shamrockmh/>
- **Instagram:** <https://www.instagram.com/shamrockmontessori/>
- **Xiaohongshu (Little Red Book):** [Shamrock Montessori - 小红书](#)

### Email Communication

We use email as our primary method for sending important announcements, monthly lesson plans, and school-wide updates. Please ensure that your contact information is up to date to receive timely notifications.

### School App & Brightwheel



For daily updates and urgent notifications, we utilize a school communication app - Brightwheel. Parents will receive login credentials upon enrollment and are encouraged to check messages regularly.

## Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent teacher conferences are regularly scheduled twice a year, in the fall and in the spring. A parent can request a conference with a teacher at any time throughout the year and your teacher may schedule additional conferences if necessary.

## Evaluation of Student Progress

Shamrock Montessori maintains careful notes and documentation on each child in accordance with the traditional Montessori curriculum. Children are never compared to each other or "graded" in a traditional or arbitrary manner. Written narratives are kept for younger children and portfolio samples are kept for older children. Evaluation of progress is based on the individual growth of each child.

## Montessori Education Nights

Three to four times a year we will host Montessori education nights open to the school and larger community. We will discuss different areas of the Montessori philosophy and child development. This is a great opportunity to meet and talk with other parents, ask questions, and learn about what your child does each day in the classroom. These meetings will be announced through our newsletters and website.

## Volunteering at Shamrock Montessori

Volunteering is essential for the school and helps to maintain a beautiful environment and strong community. This can be done in many ways – school beautification, material making, event planning, to name a few. Families will be contacted as volunteer opportunities arrive, either via phone call, email, or through postings in the Weekly Notes. Families are also encouraged to offer any special skills, such as playing an instrument, dancing, cooking, a cultural activity, etc., to bring into the classroom. Before coming into the classroom as a volunteer, we ask that parents and family members either attend a parent education session on being an adult in the Montessori Prepared Environment or speak with the Head of School to receive individual training. We believe that knowing the adult's role in the Prepared Environment will make our volunteers comfortable and bring the most benefit to the children.

## General School Information

### Clothing

All clothing and other belongings, which are brought to school, should be packed in a bag and clearly labeled with your child's name. A supply of clothes for changes should be sent at the beginning of the year and checked regularly to ensure an adequate supply. On rainy days, a raincoat with a hood and an extra pair of shoes and boots would be appropriate. The children work with materials in the classroom that may result in their clothing becoming soiled or wet (water, paint, etc.), sometimes more than once a day. They appreciate the option of changing into clean dry clothes on their own. Since self-sufficiency is encouraged, parents are asked to consider the ease with which their child is able to dress him or herself. For example, overalls may look cute but may be challenging for your child to unhook when they need to use the bathroom. Each child should keep a pair of indoor shoes to wear while at school. This helps keep our environment clean and healthy.

### Outdoors Play

Time outdoors is an important part of a child's day. It provides the fresh air needed to ensure good health and aids in the development of social and gross motor skills. Weather permits the children to go outside every day. In the case of a light sprinkle or drizzle or flurry the children may still go outside for a short time. Ithaca's weather is known to change frequently; therefore, it is important to dress appropriately. If your child is recovering from an illness and still is not able to go outside, you are asked to keep him or her home. The school does not have adequate staff to provide for the care of one or two children while the other children are outdoors.

### Children's Food Preparation Items to Bring

Food prep is a great practical life activity. It follows the child's natural interest to imitate the "real work" that adults perform around them. The child develops independence and fine motor skills as they learn to prepare food. They practice grace and courtesy when they offer the food to share with their friends as well. Flower arranging is one of the child's favorite activities. It adds such lovely warmth to the classroom and provides the children with additional opportunities



for practicing everyday skills such as pouring, cutting, measuring, and estimating. We recommend that parents ask your child two or three times a week, "Would you like to take a slice of bread, or fruit to cut at school today?" Be sure that the food items come in a marked plastic bag, and that the fruit and vegetables are small. A young child can handle a small orange or a small banana easily. Whole wheat provides more firmness for cutting than white bread.

## Toys and Food from Home

To maintain a focused and structured learning environment, we ask that families follow these guidelines regarding toys and food brought from home:

- **Toys & Valuables:** Please do not send toys, stuffed animals, or other valuables with your child unless special arrangements have been made with the classroom teacher for curriculum-related purposes. Shamrock Montessori is not responsible for any loss or damage to items brought from home.
- **Food from Home:** Children are generally expected to eat the meals and snacks provided by the school. However, if your child has a severe dietary restriction, food may be sent from home, but only after prior communication and approval with both the school administration and the classroom teacher.
- **Lunchbox Policy:** Any food brought from home must be packed in a lunchbox and may only be accessed during designated snack or lunch times to ensure safety and hygiene. To prevent food sharing or access to allergens, children are not allowed to eat from their lunchbox outside of these times.
- **Shamrock Montessori is a Nut-Free School!** To ensure the safety of all children, especially those with allergies, Shamrock Montessori maintains a strict nut-free policy. Please do not send any snacks or meal replacements containing nuts, including nut-based milk products.

We appreciate your cooperation in maintaining a safe, organized, and inclusive learning space for all children.

## Termination Policy

At Shamrock Montessori, we strive to create a positive and supportive environment for all children. However, in some cases, a child may have difficulty adapting to the center's setting or following school behavior expectations. If challenges arise, we will schedule a conference with you to discuss concerns and explore possible solutions. We will work closely with you to support your child's adjustment. However, if the disruptive behavior persists and significantly impacts the group, we reserve the right to request withdrawal from the center.

If you choose to voluntarily withdraw your child from Shamrock Montessori, a two-week written notice is required. You will be responsible for tuition payments through the end of the notice period, regardless of attendance.

Failure to comply with school policies and agreements may result in immediate termination of childcare services. In such cases, full payment for the current week will be due at the time of termination.

### Immediate Termination Causes

Shamrock Montessori reserves the right to terminate childcare services immediately for any of the following reasons (including but not limited to):

- Non-compliance with the policies outlined in the Parent Handbook or Childcare Contract.
- Persistent destructive or harmful behavior, despite parental cooperation in addressing the issue.
- Non-payment of tuition, recurring late payments, or unpaid late fees.
- Repeated failure to pick up your child at the scheduled time.
- Absence of five consecutive days without communication.
- The center's inability to meet a child's needs without requiring additional staff.
- Disrespectful behavior toward staff, other families, or the provider's family.
- Bringing a knowingly ill child to the center.
- Significant and unresolved differences in child-rearing approaches between the provider and parent.
- Providing false information, either verbally or in writing.



## **Legal Disclaimer**

If legal action is necessary for any reason, Shamrock Montessori will not be responsible for any associated legal or court costs.

# **Expulsion Policy**

At Shamrock Montessori, we are committed to fostering a safe, supportive, and nurturing environment for all children. While we strive to work collaboratively with families to address challenges, there are circumstances in which a child may need to be expelled from our program, either temporarily or permanently. Please know that we will make every reasonable effort to resolve issues before enforcing this policy.

## **Immediate Causes for Expulsion**

A child may be expelled without notice for the following reasons:

- The child poses a serious risk of harm to themselves or others.
- A parent engages in physical threats or intimidating behavior toward staff members.
- A parent verbally abuses staff in front of children.

## **Parental Actions Leading to Expulsion**

A child's enrollment may be terminated if a parent:

- Fails to pay tuition on time or has a pattern of late payments.
- Fails to submit required documentation, including immunization records.
- Repeatedly picks up the child late.
- Engages in verbal abuse toward staff.

## **Child's Actions Leading to Expulsion**

A child may be expelled if they:

- Are unable to adjust to the program after a reasonable period.
- Exhibit uncontrollable tantrums or extreme angry outbursts.
- Engage in ongoing physical or verbal aggression toward staff or peers.



- Repeatedly bite other children.

### **Process Prior to Expulsion**

Before expulsion, the following steps will be taken:

1. The parents will be contacted and notified by writing about the issue.
2. Both the center and the family will work together to implement corrective measures.
3. If the issue persists despite reasonable interventions, the center may determine that continued enrollment is not feasible.

If the child's behavior poses a safety risk, a decision may be made within one to two weeks, depending on the severity of the situation. Should expulsion be necessary, the parent will be given a minimum of one week's notice to secure alternative childcare arrangements.

Our goal is to support every child's success, and we appreciate your cooperation in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment for all.

## **Child Restraint Policy**

At Shamrock Montessori, we are committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for all children. Physical restraint is only used as a last resort when a child's behavior presents an immediate risk to their own safety or the safety of others. All restraint practices must comply with Washington State laws, specifically WAC 110-300-0335, which governs the use of physical restraint in childcare settings.

### **Behavioral Care Plan (BCP) Requirements**

For children with special behavioral or mental health needs who may require specific interventions, a **Behavioral Care Plan (BCP)** must be developed with input from:

- The child's primary care provider and mental health provider
- Parents/guardians
- The center director or family child care provider/teacher
- A child care health consultant
- If necessary, an early childhood mental health consultant



The goal of this plan is to proactively address underlying concerns and reduce or eliminate the need for physical restraint through alternative strategies.

### **Restraint Guidelines**

If restraint is deemed necessary, the following guidelines must be strictly followed:

1. Use of Alternative Strategies First – Staff must exhaust all other behavioral interventions before using restraint. The BCP must clearly document these strategies and specify the conditions under which restraint is permitted.
2. Gentle and Minimal Restraint – Restraint must be limited to gently holding the child to prevent harm.
3. Time-Limited and Developmentally Appropriate – The minimum amount of time necessary should be used, and staff must reassess the situation every few minutes to determine if restraint is still required.
4. Compliance with State Laws – Restraint must strictly adhere to Washington State law (WAC 110-300-0335) and must never:
  - Be used as punishment or discipline.
  - Restrict a child's breathing, cause pain, or result in injury beyond temporary discomfort.
5. Prohibited Restraint Methods – The following methods are strictly prohibited under Washington State law:
  - Ties, straps, blankets, or any mechanical restraints.
  - Car seats or highchairs (except for transportation or feeding).
  - Heavy weights (including an adult sitting on a child).
  - Any form of verbal abuse, intimidation, or humiliation.
6. Designated Trained Staff – Only trained staff members should carry out restraint if necessary, and a trained staff member must always be present when the child is in attendance.

### **Incident Documentation & Parental Notification**

If restraint is used:

- ✓ The incident must be fully documented, including what led to the restraint, the intervention used, and its duration.
- ✓ Parents/guardians must be notified promptly and provided with a written incident report.

### **Additional Behavioral Intervention Strategies**

If a child continues engaging in unsafe behavior despite following **Standard 2.2.0.6**, staff should:



- ✓ Physically remove the child to a less stimulating environment.
- ✓ Use developmentally appropriate removal methods:
  - If the child can walk, staff should hold their hand and guide them away.
  - If the child cannot walk, staff should gently pick up the child and move them to a safe and quiet space.
- ✓ Remain calm and use a reassuring voice when guiding the child.
- ✓ Apply additional behavioral strategies, including:
  - Limiting attention to negative behavior.
  - Using redirection or distraction.
  - Providing an age-appropriate time-out.

If the behavior persists, a parent/guardian meeting must be scheduled to develop a more structured behavioral support plan. This plan may include positive reinforcement strategies, such as a reward system (e.g., sticker charts, praise, and incentives for appropriate behavior).

Our goal is to foster a safe, supportive, and nurturing environment while using restraint only as a last resort in strict compliance with best practices and legal guidelines.



## Parent's Statement of Agreement

I certify that I have read and have had an opportunity to discuss with the administration any questions or concerns about the rules and policies contained in the *Shamrock Montessori Parent Handbook*. I understand that the statements of policy contained in the Handbook are not a contract. In this handbook I understand the policies and procedures as written. I understand the philosophy of Montessori, the Montessori program offered by Shamrock Montessori.

We may also make changes or modifications in our policies if required by our licensing agencies. Shamrock Montessori will inform parents of changes taking place whenever possible in a timely fashion.

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Name (print) \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

***Please make a copy of this agreement and turn it in with your enrollment papers.***