



CLEVELAND MONTESSORI

Parent Handbook

2025-2026

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- Business Manager dee@clevelandmontessori.org
- Office Manager cheryls@clevelandmontessori.org
- Attendance / Absence attendance@clevelandmontessori.org

Website: School www.clevelandmontessori.org

Social Media School www.facebook.com/clevelandmontessori
*parents/guardians request access to the private Parent Page
Instagram www.instagram.com/cleveland_montessori

School Closings: All announcements of school closing for any reason will be posted on Channels 3, 5, 8 and 19 television broadcasts and websites. School closings are made independent of any other school district and will be listed separately under Cleveland Montessori. An email and/or text will be sent to all families through your Transparent Classroom account and the One Spot school app.

Cleveland Montessori App: One Spot

All families and staff are encouraged to use the school's One Spot app as a more efficient means to access all school related business, including school lunch forms, attendance, website, weekly emails, Transparent Classroom and Blackbaud Tuition. In addition, this app allows staff to communicate quickly with a specific classroom or all families/staff at once in the event of emergencies or important reminders/announcements. Download the Montessori.org app through Google Play or Apple Store and choose "Cleveland Montessori" as your school.

****This handbook is intended to give an overview of the general policies and procedures related to the daily operations of the school. You may request additional information on any school policies or address specific questions about policy with the Executive Director.**

******* The calendar summary for the 2025-26 school year is included with this handbook. Please note: Community Event indicates that all students present on those days will participate. These events may include religious celebrations based on the school's Catholic faith foundation and Good Shepherd curriculum or other culturally based programs. All students present on these days will participate as a whole school community. For students of other faith backgrounds it may be considered a cultural exposure or families may choose to keep students out of school for the event portion of the day.

MISSION STATEMENT

Cleveland Montessori excels in educating the whole child to awaken and inspire innate talents and interests, foster a lifetime love of learning and curiosity, nurture spirituality, and cultivate a commitment to social responsibility guided by authentic Montessori principles.

PURPOSE AND GOALS

Cleveland Montessori is a non-profit 501 (C) (3) school. The school has a charter from the Ohio Department of Education to operate as a private institution for children ages three to fourteen years old (preschool through eighth grade). The school currently offers the full complement of Montessori Primary and Elementary programs (preschool through sixth grades). The classrooms are under the direction of teachers who are trained in programs accredited by the Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education (MACTE).

LICENSE RECORD

The school has received a license to operate from the Ohio Department of Education. This is posted in the school entrance. The school's licensing record including, but not limited to, compliance report forms from the department and evaluation forms from the health, building and fire departments that inspect the school annually are available upon request at the administrative office.

NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY

Cleveland Montessori will not discriminate based upon race, color, gender nor ethnic origin.

Cleveland Montessori recruits and admits students of any race, color, gender, or ethnic origin to all its rights, privileges, programs, and activities. In addition, the school will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational programs and athletics/extracurricular activities. Furthermore, the school is not intended to be an alternative to court or administrative agency ordered, public school district initiated desegregation.

Cleveland Montessori will not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, or ethnic origin in the hiring of its certified or non-certified personnel.

REQUIRED NOTIFICATIONS:

Asbestos Management: The school maintains the Asbestos Inspection & Management Plan in the administrative office. It is available for review upon request by parents, guardians and employees.

Healthcheck: The Ohio Department of Medicaid offers prevention, treatment, and support services for all babies, children and adults younger than age 21. More information is posted on the school bulletin board as well as in the parent resources in Transparent Classroom.

SCHOOL PROGRAMS AND HOURS OF OPERATION

Cleveland Montessori will operate during the usual academic calendar year: August/September to May/June. **All programs operate five days per week, Monday through Friday.**

NOTE: Students in ALL programs must be in the classroom and prepared for work by 8:30 a.m. Car line drop off is from 8:00 to 8:20 a.m. (See page 22 for details.)

MONTESSORI PRIMARY

Preschool morning
(3 & 4 year olds)

8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Preschool Extended Half Day

8:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Primary Full Day

(5 & 6 year olds who are the equivalent of Kindergarten) 8:30 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.

*Preschool age students (3 & 4 year olds) may also be enrolled for the full day. They will have the opportunity to nap or rest during the afternoon.)

NOTE: Students arriving prior to 8:00 a.m. must be enrolled in the Before Care program or wait with a parent. Children may NOT be left unattended at any time. Before Care is available for students at all levels for an additional charge from 7:00 a.m. – 8:00 a.m.

PICK UP TIMES FOR PRIMARY 3 & 4 year olds are either 11:30 a.m., 1:00 p.m. or 3:15 p.m. unless they are enrolled in the After Care programs.

MONTESSORI ELEMENTARY

(1st through 6th grades)

8:30 a.m. – 3:15 p.m.

BEFORE/AFTER CARE FOR ALL LEVELS

Before Care

7:00 a.m. – 8:00 a.m.

After Care

3:15 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

These programs are available as a full-time (5 days a week) or flexible (as needed) option. Children in these programs will engage in supervised after school activities. Full time before or after care will be added to the monthly tuition payment. **The flexible option of Before or Aftercare must be requested by emailing attendance@clevelandmontessori.org at least 24 hours in advance and will be billed through your Blackbaud Tuition account.** There is a limit on the daily enrollment. Providing at least a 24 hour notice will ensure that staffing is appropriate for the student-teacher ratios.

AFTER SCHOOL CLUB PROGRAMS

Participation in additional after school club programs (i.e. Drama, Art or other programs) is at the discretion of the parent/guardian and is separate from the regular after care program. Schedules and available activities will be announced during the school year. Participation fees will be applied. Students enrolled and paying for full time (5 days per week) in the aftercare program **will have the opportunity to participate in the after school club without additional CLUB fees.** Certain clubs may require an additional materials fee as outlined in the after care program offerings from year to year. **These material fees are also applicable to children enrolled in full time after care.** Parents/guardians must sign their child(ren) up to participate if desired.

THE GOOD SHEPHERD PROGRAM

The Good Shepherd Program is a Catholic catechetical program offered by Cleveland Montessori. Within each classroom, a dedicated Atrium space has been prepared for helping the relationship between God and the child to flourish. The Atrium is a place for religious life, for community and worship. The Atrium is a place of work which becomes a conversation with God.

Parents/guardians choose the Good Shepherd option at the time of enrollment. Parents/guardians of children who are five years or older, may also sign up for their child to participate in the children's mass once per month.

*** Please note that the Good Shepherd program offered at Cleveland Montessori is not a substitute for your parish PSR requirements. While our programs will complement your child's participation in any formal PSR program, it will not meet all of the requirements for preparation for sacraments.**

SUPPORT SERVICES

The school's psychologist is generally on the premises at least one day per week. The speech therapist will also be on the premises at least one day per week. Referrals for student evaluations are made at the request of the classroom teacher. Parents/guardians must sign consent before any services will be rendered.

Tutoring is available to students who have been identified through classroom assessments and/or teacher referral as needing support in reading or math. Families needing additional services, beyond the scope of the programs offered at the school, are encouraged to seek support services from their local public school or private resources.

CLASSROOM PLACEMENT AND TRANSITIONS TO DIFFERENT PROGRAMS

The Montessori philosophy is based upon recognizing the unique development of the individual and the tendencies and characteristics of the human at different stages. These stages are termed “planes of development”. The primary and elementary programs are designed to meet specific needs and abilities of the child according to these developmental milestones. Children are usually in the primary rooms for a three or four-year cycle until completion of the primary program. Cleveland Montessori does not divide children by grade level nor does it focus on terms such as “graduation” and “retention” from any one program to the next. The parent/guardian and teacher share observations during conferences with a view to eventual transitions. Children traditionally visit another room before changing programs completely. Transitions occur for children at any time during the school year. Whereby the parent/guardian is a continual partner in the planning and responses to their child’s development, placement of a student in any program is ultimately at the school’s discretion.

Similarly, the school may require a student’s hours be shortened according to their developmental readiness. Children may not be ready to stay for full-day hours.

Students must be present for at least 85% of the school year in order for it to be considered a complete year of education. Excessive absences may result in spending an additional year in the child’s current program (primary or elementary) to ensure readiness for the next level. An Attendance Improvement Plan will be created for students who are chronically absent or tardy.

ALL-SCHOOL COMMUNITY EVENTS: Throughout the year there are events which are designed to foster community spirit. As such, we expect the participation of all students who are in attendance on those days. They include school assemblies, Thanksgiving Feast, Advent Sharing (Holiday Program), Liturgy of the Light and the Holy Thursday Celebration and year-end Field Day. Religious exemptions are honored and absences excused.

REGISTRATION & TUITION

NECESSARY DOCUMENTS

All children must have a current Medical Statement and immunization record on file. This MUST be signed by their physician prior to attending their first day of school. Medical Statement and the Vision & Hearing Screening forms will be issued to each family prior to the beginning of the subsequent school year. We recommend that you request this of your physician at the time of their routine physical exam. **Students who have a medical form that is more than two weeks expired will not be permitted to be in attendance until the form is updated.** All forms will be distributed through Transparent Classroom or email.

The following documents must be in a child's file before the first day of school:

1. Child's Medical Statement & Immunization Record – current within the calendar year. (This is a REQUIREMENT of the Department of Education.) A signed waiver must be on file if the family is choosing to not immunize or is not up to date on immunizations.
2. Vision & Hearing Screening form for Kindergarten and fourth grade aged children.
3. Copy of your child's official birth certificate
4. Emergency Transportation Authorization, including BOTH parent's information
5. Pick - Up and Release form
6. Parental Consent Form
7. Technology Agreement as requested
8. Other documentation as requested
9. Custody paperwork/ information if the child doesn't live full time with both parents.

TUITION AND FEE PAYMENTS

Registration (the method of payment arranged for the years' tuition) takes place before the first day of school by choosing one of the following payment options:

1. ANNUAL PAYMENT: The entire tuition amount can be paid on or before June 10th (or your child's first day of school if starting later).
2. SEMI-ANNUAL PAYMENTS: The first half of the tuition is due by June 10 and the second half is due by December 10th of each year.
3. MONTHLY PAYMENTS: Monthly payments (10 or 12 months) can be paid on or before May through April or July through April. **All tuition payments for the year will be complete before April 25th.**

****The school contracts with Blackbaud Tuition for making automatic tuition payments. ALL families must have an active Blackbaud Tuition account. Credit card, check or cash payments will be accepted on a limited basis with the approval of the administration.**

Any requests for a change in tuition payment plan or program must be made in writing to the office and approved by the Business Manager.

PROGRAM FEES

Program fees are fees that are required for all school age students (K-6) and are separate from tuition. These fees cover activities like field trips, going outs, class trips, physical education, technology and other extra curricular activities or equipment used to enhance the Montessori curriculum. Program Fee payments are due through Blackbaud Tuition combined with any tuition due.

LATE PAYMENTS

A late fee of \$55.00 will be automatically added to tuition for any late payments. All fees incurred through Blackbaud Tuition are payable directly to them. Family accounts cannot be considered paid in full if any fees remain outstanding. **TO AVOID LATE FEES, CONTACT THE BUSINESS OFFICE AT LEAST 7 DAYS IN ADVANCE OF THE DUE DATE OR CONTACT BLACKBAUD AT LEAST 3 DAYS IN ADVANCE OF THE DUE DATE TO MAKE ANY CHANGES TO THE PAYMENT. ALL LATE FEES ACCRUED ARE THE SOLE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PARENT/GUARDIAN. Any account that falls in arrears of more than 21 days will result in the child being refused entry until payment is made current.** A child who is absent from school (due to non-payment of tuition) for more than thirty (30) calendar days may lose their place in the school.

REBATES

The operations of the school are supported by the tuition received for each child. No rebate will be issued in the event of a withdrawal or dismissal of a child at any time during the year (after the first six weeks trial period). **Tuition contracts will be enforced during any on-line or alternative instructional periods due to public health concerns or other government mandates.**

WITHDRAWAL POLICIES

If for any reason a family leaves the school, a withdrawal form or letter of withdrawal must be signed by the student's parent or guardian and maintained in the child's file. Annual tuition commitments are the responsibility of the family regardless of the conditions of withdrawal. The Board or Executive Director may waive the remaining tuition due at their discretion.

RECORDS REQUESTS AND TRANSCRIPTS

Children's school records can only be sent to another school once the office receives an official request accompanied by the parent or guardian's signature of consent and required \$10.00 per child per school administrative fee. Once an official request is received, please allow the office ten business days to process your records request. All financial obligations to the school must be satisfied before any records for any student are released. Graduating 6th grade students are permitted up to three records requests for middle school. If additional records are requested the \$10.00 fee will apply.

Records being transferred to another school are kept confidential. Progress Reports, Attendance Records, Medical Records, Students' Cumulative Profiles, Teacher's Recommendations, and any Academic or Psychological testing information, etc. will be sent as requested. Please note that due to the confidential nature of this information, parents/guardians will not be given copies of documentation sent to another school.

ENROLLMENT CONTRACT

Families are invited to re-enroll for the subsequent fall by or before mid-January and are offered an enrollment contract at that time. A deadline for contract commitments to be signed will be indicated on the invitation letter. Failure to return the enrollment contract with the necessary registration fee by the deadline may result in the loss of your child's space in the program. The contract is a legally binding commitment to a full year's tuition and should not be signed if the family has any doubts about returning. The full tuition amount will be payable to the school if a child does not return to the school but for whom there is a signed contract on file. **Please note**

that financial obligations must be current in order to re-enroll for the following year. Attendance at all required Orientation and Transition Meetings is necessary to complete the enrollment process each year.

COMMUNICATIONS

PARENT/GUARDIAN ROSTER

A roster of names, telephone numbers and e-mail addresses of parents, custodians or guardians of children attending the school are available via Transparent Classroom. Parents/guardians shall be notified that the rosters shall not include the name or telephone number of any parent, custodian or guardian who requests, in writing, that the administrator not include his / her name or telephone number. This statement is on the Consent form that is completed by the parent/guardian prior to the child's first day at school. **Parents/Guardians are responsible for informing the school immediately if there is a change in any of the family's contact information.**

OBSERVATIONS

Parents/Guardians are required to observe in their child's classroom at least twice per year. The first month of school is a transition period for children so we allow them time to settle into the routines and procedures of their environment before posting the sign up sheets for formal observations. This is usually done once in October and again in March. **Parents/Guardians are encouraged to observe as often as schedules permit.**

While Cleveland Montessori has an "Open Door" policy for parents/guardians to visit the school or their child at any time, we respectfully request that parents/guardians call to schedule observations in advance where possible (unless there is an emergency or great need). This avoids over scheduling too many adults in the room at one time and is a courtesy to the guides.

CONFERENCES

Parents/Guardians are **required** to attend a minimum of two teacher conferences a year. These are done *after* a classroom observation. This collaboration supports student success and is an important component of the home-school partnership. Conference days have been set aside on the school calendar to meet these requirements. **Parents/Guardians are encouraged to schedule additional conferences at any time during the year.** Unless there is an emergency, this is done after the guide's time with children. Please allow a two day turnaround time for responses unless you indicate that your need is more urgent.

ORIENTATION

A school-wide orientation meeting is held prior to the first day of school each year. At least one parent/guardian is required to attend orientation. Parents/Guardians who are unable to attend the scheduled orientation meeting must make arrangements with the Director for a make-up session **prior to the child's first day of attendance, which may include the option to view the recorded orientation session (60-90 minutes).**

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

A variety of family engagement opportunities are scheduled throughout the year. These may include workshops presented by staff, guest speakers, and discussion groups. Parent/guardian attendance at these events counts toward hours the family's required 20 service hours.

SPECIAL CONCERNS

For questions regarding:

Policies, Building and Concerns	Executive Director
Regarding Staff	
Admissions/Enrollment	Director of Admissions/Executive Director
Child's progress	Montessori Guide
Classroom activities	Montessori Guide
Academic Records	Business Manager/Student Services Coordinator
Tuition, Fees & Payments	Business Manager
Volunteer opportunities	Montessori Guide or Office Manager

Always approach the Executive Director with concerns that you feel have not been adequately addressed through your initial course of communication.

METHODS OF COMMUNICATION

If you need to get a message to the guide and they have begun to direct children by the time you arrive you may:

1. In an emergency, wait quietly by the door until an adult is available to come to you, otherwise...
2. Send a note in the communication folder or email the guide/admin staff directly.
3. Leave a message with the office manager. Guides will check messages during breaks or after school.
4. We ask that you be respectful of the guide's personal time/evening hours. Guides will return emails and calls within 24 hours of receipt.

Bulletin Board/Lobby - Please check for special announcements on the main bulletin board at the school, including community events and resources.

Cleveland Montessori App - All families and staff are encouraged to use the school's One Spot app as a more efficient means to access all school related business, including school lunch forms, attendance, website, weekly emails, Transparent Classroom and Blackbaud Tuition. In addition, this app allows staff to communicate quickly with a specific classroom or all families/staff at once in the event of emergencies or important reminders/announcements. Download the Montessori.org app through Google Play or Apple Store and choose "Cleveland Montessori" as your school.

Communication folders will be sent home daily and may contain student work and any notifications from the guide or school. **It is expected that the folder will be emptied at home and returned the next school day.**

Newsletters/Letters may be published periodically by the school, guide and/or classroom and posted to Transparent Classroom, the website or emailed. A hard copy of these communications will also be sent in the communication folders.

Emails: All parents/guardians who have a current email on file at the school will receive a weekly communication with reminders for upcoming events and items requiring attention. Parents/guardians who do not have internet access or prefer to receive hard copies of these communications should inform the office and copies will be placed in your child's folder at school.

****All students (K-6th) will be assigned a school network email for communications and access to Google Classroom for student assignments as needed, assessments and other on-line learning platforms as may be used periodically.**

Guides and Staff will communicate with families via email as is appropriate. As email communication can not fully relate one's tone and intent, please use it sparingly. Any need for formal communication between guides and parent/guardian should ideally be done in a phone call or in person.

Phone calls/Text Children may not receive phone calls or texts at school (on cell phones or Gizmo/Smart watch devices). If you need to communicate with your child during the school day, call the main school phone number. Staff may not receive calls or texts while they are in session with children unless there is an emergency. They will check their mail boxes at the end of their school day and return calls when children are dismissed.

Students may not carry cell phones (or watches that connect to the internet) during the school day. Students who need to have phones/devices for after school communications will turn their device in to the classroom staff upon arrival and can retrieve it when dismissed at the end of their program hours.

***Children are encouraged to wear analog watches to learn to tell time.**

Calls regarding car pool changes, after school programs, and messages to other families cannot be handled by the office. Please use the roster to contact other parents/guardians directly. **Play dates and after school plans should be made in advance and communicated to the school as needed for any pick-up changes for your child.**

UNLIMITED ACCESS TO THE SCHOOL

Either biological parent, any custodian or guardian (barring court documents stating otherwise) of a child enrolled in the school is permitted unlimited access to the school during its hours of operation for the purposes of contacting their children, evaluating the care provided by the school or evaluating the premises. With the exception of regular arrival or dismissal times, upon entering the building the parent, custodian or guardian shall sign in at the reception desk and obtain a visitor badge. Any adult may be required to leave the premises for inappropriate or disruptive behavior.

MEALS AND SNACKS:

We request that any food being sent to school for your child be nutritionally appropriate. As a general rule foods containing sugar or high fructose corn syrup within the first three ingredients should not be brought to school. The school will supply 2% or whole milk and water for students at lunch. Students requiring a milk alternative may bring a container to leave at school for consumption during lunch if desired. **No other beverages may be brought to school.**

Food Allergies: Parents/Guardians must notify the school of any dietary restrictions or food allergies prior to the first day of school. **Students diagnosed with severe food allergies must have an “Action Plan” on file indicating steps to follow in a medical emergency. If use of an Epi-pen or inhaler is prescribed, the child must also have the medication form on file for proper administration.**

BREAKFAST

Children who arrive early for the Before Care program may bring a **healthy** packed / boxed breakfast with them to be eaten at school. **Breakfast must be finished and cleaned up before 8:00 am.** Two food group items should be included in this breakfast (i.e. whole grain cereal and fruit). Milk is provided for cereal. Students may leave a box of nutritionally appropriate cereal at the school if they attend before care regularly. Any items left at the school should be clearly labeled with the child's name. *All students arriving after 8:00 a.m. should have eaten a nutritious breakfast before leaving home.*

SNACK FOR ELEMENTARY STUDENTS

It is expected that students will arrive at school having had a nutritious breakfast and ready to begin the work cycle. A regular daily snack is not anticipated in the elementary work cycle. However, the Elementary community may participate in communal snack preparation activities periodically. The elementary guides will designate the system and opportunities for snacking according to the structure and needs of their classroom.

SNACK FOR THE PRIMARY STUDENTS and AFTER CARE PROGRAMS

Families are asked to contribute to the nutritional experience of snacks by signing up to bring snacks for one or two weeks per year. Children enjoy sharing the food that they have helped shop for and /or prepare. Each primary class will prepare a menu for the year of specific snack items that will be served. The menu may list the same type of snack for a several week period, so that the children have opportunities to practice food preparation skills that have been introduced. Parents/guardians will be given an opportunity to sign up for snacks during the Orientation or through an on-line sign-up format. Aftercare snacks will be provided by the school.

LUNCH

Lunch is an integral part of the Montessori experience that provides opportunities to practice social skills and Grace and Courtesy lessons. The children set the table and eat with real glass and silverware in a family style setting. Children are encouraged to eat what has been brought to school for lunch. They will be permitted a reasonable amount of time to finish their meal. However, unfinished food will be returned to the lunch box (where practical) so that the child may eat it later or, failing this, the parent/guardian will see what the child did not eat.

- We encourage parents/guardians to include the child in the making of his/her lunch each day. Healthy nutritional guidelines are expected to be followed for student lunches. An ideal lunch would contain food choices from each of the food groups to provide nourishment for the remaining portion of the day.
- **No beverages** may be packed in a child's lunch. Milk and water are provided by the school.
- **Candy, cakes, sweets, chocolate, potato chips, fruit snacks, sugary cereals or other non nutritional foods are not permitted as they tend to ruin the child's appetite or interest in the nutritious choices they may have. Add an extra fruit as a dessert if the child's appetite is not satisfied with the other choices. Unacceptable foods may be removed by the adult and will be sent back home at the end of the day. This includes; Jello/Pudding, Nutella, etc. (A good rule of thumb is to check the ingredients and avoid foods with sugar, gelatin or high fructose corn syrup as one of the first three ingredients.)**
- We can not neglect your child's nutrition under the excuse that he/she is a "picky eater". If your child falls into this category, talk with your child's guide to plan specific strategies that promote better eating habits.
- Facilities for heating up lunches are not available in most classrooms. If you wish to send hot food, you must use a thermos.
- Use of a thermal lunch box and ice pack is necessary to keep your child's food from spoiling during the morning. Plastic or paper bags will not properly protect food and should not be used. Food items should be placed in reusable containers whenever possible to promote environmental awareness and assist with packing appropriate child-sized portions. As part of the grace and courtesy of sharing a meal, children are expected to use proper dishware and utensils to eat.
- **Composting and Recycling** - The school does participate in composting and recycling programs. Students and families will be encouraged to support these endeavors as a community.

HEALTH POLICIES

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES / ABSENCE

Children should not be brought to school on any days when these symptoms are present: a rash, a fever (100.0 or above), discharge from eyes and/or ears, serious cough, diarrhea or vomiting. **Please keep children home for an additional 24 hours after these symptoms disappear.** Staff will not admit a child into the classroom if these symptoms are present upon arrival. Children who become ill during the school day will be isolated from the class under the supervision of support personnel. Parents/guardians will be notified to pick up their child and the child will be made comfortable in a quiet space or on a cot as appropriate. Parents/guardians will be reminded upon pick up that the child may not return to school until 24 hours symptom free.

Children who appear to be under the weather but are not showing specific symptoms will be monitored and isolated if necessary. Parents/Guardians will be notified of the child's signs upon pick up to continue to be monitored at home. At least one person on the Emergency contact information should be easily accessible during the school day for emergencies.

Notification must be sent to school, via the Attendance Email, to report a student absence for any reason, indicating date(s) of absence, reason for absence and parent signature. The email will serve as the required written notification from the parent/guardian. A student who is absent for 3 or more consecutive days must also have a physician's authorization to return to school.

Parents/Guardians must notify the school if your child has been exposed to or diagnosed with any communicable disease, including COVID-19. The child must stay home for the period of time prescribed by the physician or the local health department. Notices will be posted for all families that a communicable disease is present in the building.

The following precautions will be taken for children suspected of having a communicable disease:

A child with any of the following signs or symptoms of illness will be immediately isolated and discharged to his parent/guardian:

- Diarrhea (more than one abnormally loose stool within a 24 hour period);
- Severe coughing, causing the child to become red/blue in the face or make a whooping sound;
- Difficult or rapid breathing;
- Yellowish skin or eyes;
- Conjunctivitis;
- Temperature of 100.0 degrees Fahrenheit or higher taken by the axillary method when in combination with other signs of illness;
- Untreated infected skin patches;
- Unusually dark urine and/or grey or white stool; or
- Stiff neck;
- Evidence of lice, scabies, or other parasitic infestations.

Decisions regarding whether the child should be discharged immediately or at some other time during the day shall be determined by the director with the parent/guardian. The child, while isolated, will be carefully watched for symptoms listed above as well as the following:

- Unusual spots or rashes;
- Elevated temperature
- Sore throat or difficulty swallowing;
- Vomiting.

LICE POLICY

The school has a “Lice Free” policy. This means that if live lice are present on a child’s head, parents/guardians will be notified and will need to arrange pick up from school immediately. Parents/guardians will be expected to provide the appropriate treatment for removal of the lice prior to the student returning to school. The student will need to be checked for presence of lice prior to entry to the classroom. The life cycle of the louse will result in the presence of the eggs (nits) for up to 10 days before they hatch. Therefore, follow up treatment and removal of nits is necessary within seven days of the initial treatment to avoid re-infestation from occurring. While we know that lice do not carry harmful disease, they are a nuisance causing itching and irritation of the scalp for most children. If properly treated, this can be quickly eradicated.

MEDICATION POLICY

The school requires a written request (signed and dated) from the parent/guardian and a physician’s prescription (when applicable) in order to administer medication to any student. The prescription must indicate the exact dosage, the number of dosages and the route of administration.

This includes but is not limited to: aspirin, vitamins, modified diets, fluoride supplements, cough medicine/cough drops and other prescription and non-prescription medications.

NOTE: All medication must be in its original package with proper instructions attached. No medicine will be issued to a child unless it is in the manufacturer’s or pharmacy’s packaging and the parent / guardian has filled out, signed and dated the “Administration of Medication Authorization” form that is available from the office and on Transparent Classroom. ****All medications (prescription or over-the-counter) must be given to the staff. Students are not permitted to keep any medications on their person with the exception of epi-pens or inhalers under the direction and written guidance of their physician.**

Students diagnosed with severe allergies or medical conditions must have an “Action Plan” on file indicating steps to follow in a medical emergency. If use of an Epi-pen or inhaler is prescribed, the child must also have the medication form on file for proper administration.

HAND SANITIZER: In the absence of soap and running water, hand sanitizer will be available to students (i.e. on the playground, field trips) as needed.

EMERGENCIES

The school has a medical and dental emergency plan as well as fire and weather alert procedures posted by the telephone in each classroom. A staff person trained in first aid is present with children at all times. In case of accidents or an emergency the following steps will be taken:

1. First aid will be administered.
2. The child’s parent(s) / guardian(s) will be contacted.
3. The child’s emergency transportation authorization form will be checked. **It is the responsibility of each parent to keep ETA up-to-date with current telephone numbers.**
4. If the Emergency Transportation Authorization permits and it is necessary, the child will be transported to the appropriate hospital.

EMERGENCY TRANSPORTATION

In the event of a medical emergency, 911 will be called and your child will be transported, **with prior written permission on file (Emergency Transportation Authorization)** to the nearest hospital or emergency facility.

Please be aware that in cases of extreme or life threatening emergency, if there is no permission to transport on file and if proper custodial guardian(s) cannot be reached, local police authorities will be contacted and the child will be placed in police custody so that emergency services can proceed.

CRISIS INTERVENTION PLAN

The school has developed a crisis intervention and response plan in the event of an extreme emergency. A copy of the full plan is available in the office for review and will be posted to the Home Page resources in Transparent Classroom.

SAFETY & SECURITY POLICIES

1. A parent/guardian must escort their child into the building if arriving at any time other than active carline drop-off. Attendance is taken in the first part of the morning. Other than during carline pick-up, children are dismissed only when the parent/guardian or designated pick-up person has signed them out at the reception desk. All pick-up persons must be listed on the child's Pick Up List. Staff may request to see identification from individuals with whom they are not familiar. Additional persons may be designated as authorized to pick up throughout the year. Parents/Guardians may add names to the Pick Up List or send a written note authorizing a person not on the list to pick up on a certain occasion.
2. All staff have immediate access to a working telephone within the building. Each classroom also has a two way radio that is used when classrooms leave the building or for emergency announcements.
3. All outside doors to the building will be locked at all times. To gain access to the building parents/guardians and visitors must use the buzzer at the main entrance (125th Street). When acknowledged by a member of the staff, you will be asked to identify yourself and the doors will be activated for you. Children have been instructed to refrain from opening the doors for anyone. Staff only will be responsible for allowing access to the building. Use of any doors designated for emergency only is strictly prohibited.
4. There will be a monthly fire drill at varying times each month. A fire and weather emergency alert plan and lockdown drill plan which explains the action to be taken, evacuation routes and staff responsibilities in case of fire emergency and weather alerts is posted in each classroom.
5. The safety plan for field trips:
 - a. A first aid box is available on all field trips.
 - b. A person trained in first aid is available on all trips.
 - c. Each child shall have identification containing the school name, address and telephone number attached to him/herself. (Preschool only)

- d. Written permission slips are taken on each field trip.
 - e. Emergency Transportation forms will be taken on each trip as will the health record of any child who has allergies, handicapping conditions or health conditions that require special procedures or precautions during the course of the routine trip.
6. Incident reports are filled out for any child who is hurt (minor or major injury) at the school or on a field trip. This report is completed in Transparent Classroom and made available to the parent/guardian within 24 hours of the incident if the injury was not serious. If the child has been hurt seriously, the parent/guardian is contacted immediately and an incident report is given to the parent/guardian without delay.
 7. The use of aerosols shall be prohibited when children are in attendance at the school.
 8. Staff members are mandated to notify the local public children services agency when there is any suspicion that a child has been abused or neglected.

VISITOR POLICY

All visitors, including parents/guardians, to the building must sign in at the reception desk. A visitor pass will be issued at the time of arrival. The pass must be visible throughout the visit and returned to the desk upon departure to sign out. Staff will question any visitors to the building who do not have a visitor's badge displayed.

SWIMMING AND WATER SAFETY (when applicable)

Written permission from the parent/guardian of the child must be obtained before the child shall be permitted to swim or otherwise participate in water play activities in bodies of water of two or more feet in depth. The written permission shall be signed and dated and shall include the following:

1. The child's name.
2. A statement indicating whether the child is a swimmer or a non-swimmer.
3. That the parent or guardian grants permission for the child to participate in water activities.

Swimming pools, wading pools and other bodies of water two or more feet in depth shall be fenced or otherwise made inaccessible to the children when adult supervision is not available.

Staff members shall always accompany and supervise children at swimming sites including but not limited to, public or private swimming pools, lakes or rivers. Swimming sites removed from the center shall be approved and supervised by local authorities. Activities in bodies of water two or more feet in depth shall be supervised by persons who are currently certified as lifeguards or water safety instructors by the "American Red Cross" or an equivalent water safety program.

The school shall provide enough staff members to meet the requirements of rules 5101:2-12-23 and -34 of the Ohio Administrative Code at all times during swimming and water play activities.

PARENTAL PARTICIPATION

SERVICE REQUIREMENTS

Families are required to commit twenty (20) hours of service during the school year. Sign-up sheets are posted during orientation or through the use of on-line sign up programs. Parents are encouraged to contribute at least six (6) of these hours to the Annual Fundraising efforts (i.e. Meatball Crawl). The school encourages parents/guardians to volunteer in any capacity that your schedule permits throughout the school year as well. **The Cleveland Montessori policy regarding background checks requires that any parent who desires to volunteer for tasks that involve direct access to the students (chaperones, playground monitor, club coordinator) is required to submit to a background check.** Parents/guardians who have been fingerprinted will need to submit a new background check every five years and sign a non-conviction statement annually. Individuals who will be driving students in their vehicle must submit a copy of their driver's license and proof of insurance to the office each year.

A record of family service hours is maintained in the main entrance of the school. **Parents/guardians are responsible for recording their own hours and will be instructed on the systems in place to do so.** Attendance at family engagement sessions is recorded by the office personnel. Service hours are totaled for each family and recorded on the Year-end Summary Report for each child. **Unfulfilled service hours will be charged to the family account in May at a rate of \$50 per hour, and the family may not be eligible for any school-awarded scholarship for subsequent years.**

PARENT AMBASSADOR GROUP (PAG)

The mission of the Parent Ambassador Group is to provide a partnership between families and staff who meet and work in support of Cleveland Montessori. The success of the school community relies upon parents/guardians as active volunteers and organizers.

Objectives:

- To ensure that families and staff can develop relationships that will grow through working together toward providing the child an attractive and enriching social, physical and spiritual environment.
- To maintain the quality and existing program design of the school, within the Montessori structure, through an actively participating community of parents and staff.

The function of the Parent Ambassador Group (P.A.G):

All parents and staff are members of the P.A.G. The P.A.G. is not a governing body nor does it determine the programming design of the Montessori structure. Partnerships of parents and staff work on sub-committees to address the following areas: Fundraising, Community Building, and Social Events. General meetings will be held throughout the year. Additional sub-committee meetings may be scheduled as determined by committee chairpersons.

ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY

PUNCTUAL ARRIVAL

Regular attendance and punctuality at school is essential if continuity in the educational process is to take place. School begins at 8:30 a.m. All children may arrive as early as 8:00 a.m. but must be in their classrooms before 8:30 a.m. to maximize opportunities for learning. (Car line drop off is from 8:00-8:20.) After 8:20 the child **MUST** be walked into the building by an adult (whether in the Alta House or Murray Hill building). Tardiness and irregular attendance create a disruption to the class as well as limit your child's opportunities to develop social and academic skills. Missing even a quarter-hour of school a day, deprives a child of a day's work each month. **** Children dropped off prior to 8:00 a.m. must be enrolled in the before care program. Any student unattended in the hallways will be escorted to the before care room and parent/guardian will be charged the daily rate for before care.**

Parents/Guardians of chronically-tardy children (who arrive after 8:30 a.m. more than three days in a month) will be required to meet with Administration regarding the disruption. A letter stating specific conditions for improved punctuality and stating the risk of losing their child's place in the school, may be issued by the Executive Director to families whose children are repeatedly late.

ABSENCES AND TARDINESS:

Please schedule family trips or vacations to coincide with the school vacation schedule.

Parents/guardians must report a child's absence by 8:30 a.m. Notification must be given via email to attendance@clevelandmontessori.org. Chronic tardiness is a disruption to the learning community and unfair to your child who is missing a vitally important part of the day. Every effort to be consistently on time is expected. **Students arriving after 10:00 a.m. have missed half of the morning work cycle and will be marked absent ½ day.** If a student arrives late or is to be picked up early for a scheduled appointment, parents/guardians must notify the staff in advance AND sign the child in or out at the reception desk. ***Upon return to school whether the same or next day, students must bring documentation from the medical office for re-entry to the classroom.***

Students arriving after 8:30 a.m. for any reason are required to check in at the reception desk **(with the adult responsible for drop off)** to sign in. Students will receive a tardy slip from the office manager which allows them to enter the classroom. A note from the medical office **MUST** accompany any child who is arriving late due to an appointment.

Written notification must be received by the school for a student absence for any reason, indicating date(s) of absence, reason for absence and parent/guardian signature. An email message will satisfy this requirement. A student who is absent for 3 or more consecutive days due to illness must also have a physician's authorization to return to school. An explanation from a physician may also be necessary for prolonged or repeated absences from school to ensure a space is retained for your child. Repeated absences (3 or more days per month or 15% of the days in any portion of the school term) without this documentation are unexcused and may result in loss of your child's space in the classroom.

Students must be present for at least 85% of the school year in order to be considered a complete year of education. Excessive absences (over 25 days in a year) or tardiness may result in spending an additional year in the child's current program (primary or elementary) or may require summer tutoring to ensure readiness. An Attendance Improvement Plan will be created for a student who is chronically absent or tardy. The school will report students with excessive absences and truancy to the authorities as required by law.

Drop-Off and Pick-Up Procedures

BEFORE CARE will be available from 7:00-8:00 a.m. If students are dropped off during this time, an adult must accompany your child to the before care environment. Families must sign up for before care in advance (24 hours prior notice for drop-in) and fees will be charged to Blackbaud.

REGULAR DROP-OFF will begin at 8:00 a.m. Car line will form along 125th Street from Mayfield Road to the Parking Lot. Staff members (and possibly volunteers) will be outside to assist children to get from cars into the building safely between 8:00 and 8:20 a.m. Cars will then continue onto Mayfield Road or may turn left onto Fairview Court to Murray Hill.

Parents who need to do business at the office, are attending a conference/meeting or have any reason to visit the classrooms must park in the lot (not in car-line) and walk their child into the building.

Establish a “Departing Routine” with your child so that they are able to quickly exit your car during drop off. (blow a kiss, high five or some other special gesture or message that can be done without the driver getting out of the car)

Phase-in: During the phase-in period for new students, parents can park to escort your child to the classroom and have the opportunity to attend the parent coffees and meet other parents. New preschool students should arrive at 8:45 a.m. to allow all other students to settle and be prepared to receive the new children.

Walkers: If your elementary aged child will be walking to school (because you live in the neighborhood) please inform the staff so that they can be watchful of those students’ arrival and departure.

REGULAR PICK-UP AT 11:30 or 1:00 P.M. – Parents may park on the street in the car-line area, but must walk in to pick-up your child at the end of the designated program hours.

REGULAR PICK-UP AT 3:15 P.M. - The pick-up line will form in the same manner as the drop-off line in the morning. Every family will be provided with two Name Cards for your vehicles – to display child’s last name in your windshield. (If more than two regular drivers will be picking up your child, additional Name Cards can be requested from the office.) Cars may line up on 125th Street beginning at 3:10 p.m. Drivers may remain in their cars and staff will begin putting children in cars as students are ready. **By law, children under the age of 4 years and until they weigh at least 40 pounds must be in a car seat. Children between 4-8 years must be in a booster seat until they are 4’9” tall. Parents are required to ensure that any person picking up your child has the required safety equipment.**

Any pick up person who does not have a Name Card for the student will need to park and check in at the office to ensure they are on the pick-up list. It is recommended that Name Cards be left in each vehicle to ensure you always have it.

Please do not block the parking lot access when waiting in the car line. Drivers are welcome to pull into the parking lot to reduce the back-up on the street.

Irregular Pick up times: Parents/guardians who are picking up a child for any reason at an irregular time (appointments, illness, etc.) must park and sign your child out at the reception desk. The classroom will be notified to get your child ready for pick up (via intercom or radio).

After Care Dismissal – Parents picking up after 3:30 must park and enter the building to retrieve and **sign your child out** from after care.

LATE POLICY/FEES

If a parent / guardian or designated person to pick up the child is delayed, they should call the school (216-421-0700) to inform staff and the child about what time they expect to arrive. This does not release them from paying applicable late pick-up fees.

Students, not enrolled in after care, **who have not been picked up by 3:30 p.m.** will wait with staff until a parent can be reached. Staff will begin calling the listed emergency contacts within 10 minutes of the scheduled pick up times if no call has been received from the parent.

Late fees for students who should be picked up by 11:30 a.m., 1:00 p.m., 3:30 p.m. or 6:00 p.m. will be assessed a fee of \$5.00 per each 10 minute interval. The pick-up person must sign the late payment slip indicating the time of arrival. Late fees incurred will automatically be added to the family's Blackbaud Account to be paid with the next monthly payment due.

Staff may not drive a child home without a signed consent and release from liability form by the parent. The school will not assume responsibility for a staff member removing a child from the premises for the purpose of taking that child to any destination not authorized by the school by way of a signed field trip permission slip. Further, any staff member found taking a child or children from the school premises without the expressed written permission of the school and parent/guardian by way of a field trip permission slip or an Emergency Transportation slip will be written up and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken.

If none of the emergency contacts can be reached or result in none of the authorized persons being able to come pick up the child, it may be necessary to ask the local police to come to the school and take the child into custody until a parent or legal guardian can be found.

RELEASE OF A CHILD TO ANOTHER ADULT

The school will only release a child to his/her parent, legal guardian or expressly named persons on the "Pick Up and Release Form," Emergency Medical or school personnel as designated by the parent/guardian on the "Emergency Transportation Authorization". Persons listed on the "Pick Up and Release Form" must be eighteen years of age or older to be permitted to sign students out of school. Unless the school has received a copy of an official court document to state otherwise, the school will release children to either biological parent as listed on the application or birth certificate.

THINGS BROUGHT TO SCHOOL

Students must be able to carry their own belongings to and from the classroom. Therefore, it is essential that they **bring ONLY what is necessary for the school day** (i.e. backpack with lunch box/ water bottle). Students will provide their own backpack or bag to carry that conforms to any guidelines provided by the classroom guide. Each child will have a “Communications Folder” as well. Parents/guardians are asked to check this folder for information being sent home and return it the following school day, emptied of any student work and with any items to be returned to the school.

Students may not bring items such as toys, candy, make-up or jewelry or items that cause a distraction to your child or other children’s work or concentration to school. In the event that a child manages to slip such items unknown to the parent/guardian into the school, the guide may explain to the child that he/she will keep it safe until the end of the day when it will be returned to the parent/guardian. Books, cultural artifacts, family photographs, objects of interest from nature/the earth, etc. can be shared at school. These items should be handed to the guide and he/she will decide if the item is appropriate and how and when it can be shared. Whereas these items will be enjoyed and respected, the school can not be responsible for loss or accidents that cause damage to them.

OUTDOOR POLICY

Children who are at school for more than the three hour morning work cycle, will have gross motor experiences every day (indoor or outdoors), **weather permitting and as deemed appropriate by the staff.** *Even on days that the temperature falls below 20 degrees, children may still go outdoors for a brief walk in order to get some fresh air at the discretion of the classroom staff.* Please send suitable clothing for the weather (coat, hats, gloves, scarves, snow pants), including proper footwear (boots). If your child is unable to participate in this due to a medical condition, please bring a statement to that effect from his/her physician but the general rule of thumb is that if the child is well enough to come to school, they are well enough to play outside.

Sunscreen: Parents are asked to apply sunscreen to your child prior to arriving at school. If your child will need to re-apply sunscreen during the school day, it must be given to the staff in its original container, labeled and a medication administration form must be completed. Students will be able to apply their own sunscreen prior to going outside with assistance from the adults or another child. Sunscreen may not be kept in cubbies.

BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays are celebrated with simple traditions that vary in each classroom. Parents/guardians are welcome to come join the children for the celebration and/or share a special snack food on that day. Please check with the guide if you are unsure of suitable nutritional treats. **We ask that the more elaborate parties and iced cakes etc. are offered at home.**

GLOBAL AND SEASONAL CELEBRATIONS

An essential component of the Montessori approach is to offer truthful, realistic stories and to promote understanding and harmony by giving accurate portrayals of life with our brothers and sisters on the planet. The attention is given to life promoting holidays. One example is singing Christmas carols during the Christmas season. Children of non-Christian cultures are invited to share celebrations central to their culture also. Parents are invited to contact their child's guide to plan a sharing of aspects of their own specific culture.

HOLIDAYS AND CELEBRATIONS

In keeping with the Montessori philosophy and the developmental needs of the Primary (2 ½ - 6 year old) children, the focus is on the "here and now" of the child's work and the internal processes involved. The three hour uninterrupted work cycle for individual work is one of the essential elements of the Montessori approach. The simple and uncluttered environment allows the sensorial impressions of the material and some aesthetically pleasing prints or artifacts to be fully absorbed by the child without distraction. Short stories, presentations with cultural folders or holiday related artifacts may be shared with the children at group time. Spontaneous drama, expressive language work, story telling, puppetry and some family occasions where families join the children in Holiday song are more likely in the Montessori environment. Elementary level children will experience drama and other opportunities for performance and public speaking. Some of these experiences are performed in-house for the younger children, or for the residents at local senior programs or, on occasion, the parent community may be invited to a performance. Public speaking opportunities such as reading at Mass will also be available for those who participate.

Generally, the school will discourage participation in the commercialism of the holidays during our in-school celebrations. Rather students may look at the history or cultural relevance of various traditions that surround the holidays throughout the year. Holiday socials or community parties (i.e. Halloween or Valentine's Day) are planned by committees and held outside of school hours.

Christmas carols and hymns are sung in the general group-time in all classrooms regardless of participation in the Good Shepherd program. These are the songs & hymns that may be sung as a whole school for Advent Sharing or for the Liturgy of the Light celebration at Easter time.

THE HOME CULTURE OF EACH CHILD SHALL BE RESPECTED

The art, cooking, stories or facts of a particular religious holiday will be available as a more individualized activity that can be chosen from a shelf by the child. The cultural and religious home environment of all children shall be acknowledged in this manner. Fabrics, cultural media and artifacts are carefully selected, integrated and rotated throughout the prepared environments to reflect the peoples of different parts of the world. Families are invited and encouraged to visit and tell a story, parable or facts about their particular culture at pre-arranged times. This embraces the diversity and individuality of each child and fosters a strong self-esteem.

DRESS CODE

In general, school clothing should allow for independence, concentration, movement, balance, and respect for others. All children must be able to move freely through the classroom while remaining properly covered.

We ask you to consider only clothing that will not distract the child from purposeful, productive or peaceful play. The clothes we wear often determine how we perceive ourselves and how we interact with others. Shirts and dresses that have large color illustrations of various characters may feel like costume clothes to the child. They will often change their typical behavior to act out the character in whose costume they are dressed. *Clothing or footwear that rings, beeps, lights-up or that illustrates commercial characters or messages may distract your child as well as others. These may not be worn to school at any level. The wearing of tattoos, nail polish, fake nails or make-up is strongly discouraged. Parents/guardians will be notified if any article of clothing or accessory becomes a distraction and needs to be removed or changed.*

Girls wearing light dresses or skirts need bike shorts, or similar underclothes to support modesty, so that they may play freely and participate in all activities (including sitting on the floor). Any child wearing a tank top must have a wide strap (collar bone to shoulder) or wear a t-shirt underneath. All types of tops and shirts must completely cover the child's torso. Similarly, all pants must fit properly on the child's waist or be held up with a belt.

Footwear: All footwear should fit properly, be rubber-soled and allow the child to have free and controlled movement indoors and outdoors. They must stay on the foot correctly and should allow balance and independent movement. **Tennis shoes and closed-toed athletic sandals free of lights and sounds are the ONLY acceptable footwear.** Appropriate indoor shoes must be left at school as children must change into indoor shoes when arriving each morning. Heavy boots should be worn outside only.

If we notice a child's footwear or clothing is not appropriate for their age, needs, or work, we will respectfully ask the child to change that item with something from their stored extra clothing. We will also let you know which item caused the obstacle to independence, movement or respect for others.

Primary (2 ½ to 6+ year olds)

The focus for the primary (3 – 6 year old child) is to be dressed for independence. This includes clothing that allows freedom to get a little dirty and that does not interfere with concentration, control of movement, balance and respect for others. You can help your child in his or her growth towards independence by providing clothing that the child can manage by him or herself. Whenever possible, choose clothing with simple fastenings and boots that are sufficiently large for winter socks.

Elementary (6+ to 12 year olds) dress for “work”.

The focus for the elementary students is that they are dressed for work, yet their clothes allow for movement, floor work, playground and gym activities and also respect for others. Clothes should appropriately fit and cover their changing bodies associated with this age group. For example, belts should be worn if pants fit loosely on the trunk of the body and are prone to slip below the waist. Also, shorts are acceptable if they fit correctly and extend parallel to the bottom of the fingertips.

If your elementary child is dressed in clothing that precludes their ability to work or adhere to the dress code guidelines, they will be asked to change. The work of the students can also be messy and spills/accidents still happen at this age level. Therefore, each child must have a *complete* change of clothing at school that meets dress code standards.

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DISCIPLINE PHILOSOPHY

DISCIPLINE THROUGH WORK:

The Montessori philosophy is based on the principle that the child will develop greater self-direction through work with activities that are meaningful and responsive to his / her needs in an environment with clearly defined limits.

THE MONTESSORI GUIDE:

The teacher serves as a guide and observes the child's individual needs for re-direction by presenting an appropriate activity and/or by protecting a child's independence and concentration as needed. The Guide ensures that the order of the room, the respect for each other and the respect for each other's work is maintained so that a child can freely act upon his inner directives in a positive and productive manner. The success that the child receives from this "work" initiates new confidence to pursue new and more creative tasks.

THE WILL:

The Montessori approach and the didactic (self-correcting) materials will aid in the "development of the will". This affects a positive attitude toward mistakes and a confidence to pursue new challenges in addition to an inner peace that allows a feeling of goodness toward others and their environment to come forth.

FREEDOM:

The steps in any procedure to self-correct, explore or to perform an activity successfully are presented in a positive, sequential manner to the child. They may practice with these individual skills until they demonstrate sufficient confidence before being free to pursue the total activity with greater independence from adult guidance. The child's own ability to respond to the limits of the community enables them to gain greater individual freedom and choice.

DISCIPLINE APPROACH

In the instance of a child who destroys (through bad conduct or verbal abuse), the educational work of the institution (property or persons) or who endangers/harms themselves or others, the following steps will be taken:

- a) Guidance/removal from the location/situation to a space where no further damage can be incurred (if applicable); Often redirecting the child to purposeful activity is sufficient; if not
- b) A statement of the action observed will be made for the child (this is done in an individualized and respectful manner).
- c) The child will be offered a calm-down time (no more than fifteen minutes or until the child tells the guide that he/she is ready to “try again”). The child will never be left unsupervised and where possible the child will be encouraged to observe the activities of the classroom, with a view to finding an interesting and positive activity and thus *desiring* to participate within the environment again.
- d) The adult will redirect the child to purposeful and safe activity with reassuring encouragement.
- e) If the unsafe or harmful behavior is repeated or becomes a pattern, a conference will be requested between the guide and parent / guardian to develop an Individual Accommodation Plan, which may include, but not be limited to classroom strategies, home strategies and/or a plan for child to be picked up if they are putting themselves or others at risk. **
- f) Any subsequent repeated behaviors will be documented and shared with the parent/guardian so that the plan can be reviewed and adjusted as needed.
- g) If the goals of the Individual Accommodation Plan are not met, or the approaches of the Montessori staff and the prepared environments do not sufficiently enable the child to function within the school in a successful manner, the school will endeavor to assist the family in seeking a different program that may more effectively meet the needs of their child. (Cleveland Montessori will make reasonable effort, but does not guarantee that they will find an alternative program for the child).

** An Individual Accommodation Plan has goals and specific strategies for the child and the adults. It is designed to educate and/or provide a structure and so prevent the occurrence of disruptive, disrespectful or dangerous behavior and to enable the child to function harmoniously and to experience personal success within the Montessori prepared environment. An Individual Accommodation Plan may involve reducing the hours of the program for the child and/or initiation of further psychological evaluation.

Student Personal Phone Usage - Use of cell phones during school day: Cell phone usage is not permitted in the classroom during the school day. Students who carry a cell phone to school will be required to turn the phone in to staff upon arrival and it will be returned at departure.

Information and Technology Usage: Elementary students must submit the Information Technology and Laptop Contract bearing both student and parent/guardian signatures. The contract ensures that students abide by the stipulations set forth in the contract regarding responsible use of laptops and internet privileges. Generally, student technology use during the school day is quite limited.

CODE OF CONDUCT

The Montessori philosophy is based on the principle that the child will develop greater self-direction through work with activities that are meaningful and responsive to his / her needs in an environment with clearly defined limits.

The parents/guardians who choose Cleveland Montessori do so with the understanding that:

- a) Children will arrive to school daily and on time (**see Attendance and Punctuality policy on page 21**);
- b) Children will arrive clean and be dressed in clothing appropriate for the weather conditions of the day and the nature of the child's daily work at school;
- c) Children and parents/guardians will show respect and deference toward the guide and toward all persons connected with the Montessori School and the education of the child; (Parents/guardians shall not raise their voices toward staff or children anywhere on the school premises or on the playground);
- d) Children, parents/guardians and staff will not act in any way to harm or jeopardize the physical or mental safety of another child, adult or themselves in the school;
- e) Children, parents/guardians and staff will not deliberately (nor by carelessness) damage or destroy the school building, property, materials or equipment;
- f) A parent, guardian or staff person may not spank, shake or use any form of physical discipline with children on the school grounds or during any school related activity;
- g) There will be no cruel, harsh, corporal punishment or any unusual punishments used to discipline a child (by parent/guardian or staff). No child shall be humiliated or subject to threats, verbal abuse or derogatory remarks, shaming or fear by parent, guardian or staff;
- h) A child will never be disciplined for failure to eat, sleep or for toileting accidents. Neither shall food, toilet use, rest or recess be withheld as a discipline measure;
- i) No physical restraints will be used, nor confinement in an enclosed area such as a closet, box or cubicle;
- j) Separation of a preschool aged child, if used, shall be brief in duration, safe and appropriate to the child's age and circumstances and the child shall be in direct sight and hearing of a staff person.
- k) No discipline shall be delegated to any other child or parent/guardian.

A conference may be requested by the guide and / or by the Administration to address concerns relating to the policy prior to the child's return to the classroom.

The school may give specific objectives or conditions to the parents/guardians (and child, when appropriate) in relation to concerns about attendance, punctuality, behavior, education, communication, or the above discipline policies.

Cleveland Montessori reserves the right to discharge a child at their discretion. (Please note the no-refund policy in the enrollment registration agreement.)

Parents will sign an acknowledgement of receipt of the parent handbook on the Consent Form posted in Transparent Classroom. The signed form must be submitted before the first day of school each year.

**2025-2026 Calendar Summary (Final 6/5/2025)**

April 29, 2025	Parent Orientation – Required for all families registered for 2025-26 6:00 p.m.
August 2025	
Friday 1 st	ALL EMERGENCY/REGISTRATION FORMS DUE TO OFFICE. *Assigned through Transparent Classroom
Monday 18 th	Staff Return – schedule t.b.a.
Thursday 21 st	Meet the Community & Ice Cream Social 3:00-5:00 pm
Monday 25 th	Preschool Orientation Visits (Schedule T.B.A.)
Tuesday 26 th	School begins for all students in grades K-6 & returning primary students
Sunday 31 st	<i>Happy Birthday, Maria Montessori!</i>
September 2025	
Monday 1 st	NO SCHOOL – Labor Day
Tues 2 nd - Fri 5 th	New preschool students begin – 8:45-11:00 a.m. – Phase-in schedule
Tues.-Fri. 2 nd - 5 th	<i>Family Engagement / Coffee Hours – 8:45 a.m. daily during phase-in</i>
Sunday 28 th	A Taste in Little Italy / Meatball Crawl FUNDRAISER
Monday 29 th	NO SCHOOL – Staff Development Day / MBC Clean up
October 2025	
Week of 6 th	School Pictures - Tentative (Schedule TBA)
Monday 13 th	NO SCHOOL - Columbus Day Parade / Indigenous Peoples Day
Tuesday 14 th	Required Observations (through October 30)
Tuesday 14 th	<i>Tuesday Talks (Family Engagement) – 8:45 am & 7:00 pm</i>
Thursday 30 th	<i>Halloween Event 6:00-8:00 p.m.</i>
Friday 31 st	NO SCHOOL – Staff Development Day
November 2025	
Week of 3 rd	Parent Conferences
Saturday 8 th	OPEN HOUSE – 10:00-12:00
Tuesday 11 th	<i>Tuesday Talks (Family Engagement) – 8:45 am & 7:00 pm</i>
Week of 17 th	Book Fair
Friday 21 st	<i>Grandparent & Special Persons Day</i> EARLY DISMISSAL – 12:45 p.m. (NO AFTERCARE)
Tuesday 25 th	Thanksgiving Lunch (Community Event *): 3:15 p.m. Dismissal – No Aftercare
Wed 26 th – Fri 28 th	No School – Thanksgiving Break
December 2025	
T.B.A.	Holiday Shopping w/Topsi Turvi - opportunity for students to shop for loved ones
Tuesday 9 th	<i>Tuesday Talks (Family Engagement) – 8:45 am & 7:00 pm</i>
Friday 12 th	Holiday Program (2:00 p.m.) Community Event *
Friday 19 th	EARLY DISMISSAL – 12:45 p.m. (NO AFTERCARE)
Dec. 22 nd -Jan. 2	NO SCHOOL – Christmas Break

January 2026	
Monday 5 th	NO SCHOOL – Staff Development Day
Tuesday 6 th	Students Return
Saturday 10 th	OPEN HOUSE – 10:00-12:00
Thursday 15th	<i>Transition Meetings for students entering Kindergarten & 1st grades *required for parents with students transitioning in the fall.</i>
Friday 16 th	EARLY DISMISSAL – 12:45 p.m. (NO AFTERCARE)
Monday 19 th	NO SCHOOL – MLK, Jr Day
Friday, 23 rd	<i>Annual Community Meeting & Social - 6:00 p.m.</i>
Mon 26 th – Fri 30 th	<i>Spirit Week</i>
Friday 30 th	Enrollment Contracts due for 2026-2027
February 2026	
Tuesday 10th	<i>Tuesday Talks (Family Engagement) – 8:45 am & 7:00 pm</i>
Thursday 12 th	Valentine's Day event 5:00-7:00
Fri 13 th	NO SCHOOL – Staff Development Day
Mon 16 th	NO SCHOOL – President's Day
Tuesday 17 th	Classroom Observations (through March 5 th) – Required twice per year
Mon 23 rd – Fri 27 th	<i>Montessori Education Week</i>
March 2026	
Tuesday 3rd	<i>Tuesday Talks (Family Engagement) – 8:45 am & 7:00 pm</i>
Friday 6 th	EARLY DISMISSAL – 12:45 p.m. (NO AFTERCARE)
Week of 9 th	Teacher Conferences - Required
Friday 27 th	International Day – Schedule TBA
April 2026	
Thursday 2 nd	EARLY DISMISSAL – 12:45 p.m. (NO AFTERCARE)
Fri. 3 rd – Fri. 10 th	Spring Break – NO SCHOOL
Monday 13 th	School resumes
Wednesday 15 th	Liturgy of the Light (Good Shepherd participants) 9:00 a.m.
May 2026	
Fri 1 st - Sat 2 nd	Rummage Sale (Tent.)
Tuesday 12th	<i>Orientation for 2026-27 – Required – 6:00 p.m. in person</i>
Friday 22 nd	EARLY DISMISSAL – 12:45 p.m. (NO AFTERCARE)
Monday 25 th	NO SCHOOL – Memorial Day
Thursday 28 th	Recognition Assembly 10:30 a.m. / 6 th Grade Graduation - 6:00 p.m.
Friday 29 th	Field Day / Last day of school – Picnic 3:15 p.m. dismissal for all students
June 2025	
Friday 5 th	Last Day for Staff
Weeks of 6/15 – 8/3	Summer Camp (8 weeks)

*Community Event indicates that all students present on those days will participate. These events may include religious celebrations based on our Catholic faith foundation and Good Shepherd curriculum or other culturally based programs. All students present on these days will participate as a whole school community. For students of other faith backgrounds, it may be considered a cultural exposure or parents may choose to keep students out of school during the event.