LITTLE CORNER HOUSE
Montessori Nursery

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

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Please take time to familiarise yourself with these policies and procedures. The Montessori educational philosophy works from the principal of freedom within boundaries. The following policies and procedures are the boundaries within which we as a school community are free to safely operate in.

ADMISSION POLICY

The provisions of this admission policy are subject to applicants meeting the requirements of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa and all applicable legislation, including the stipulations of the South African Schools Act 84 of 1996, of Gauteng and the Western Province School Education Law.

- Class numbers will be determined in conjunction with the Montessori Philosophy and the Department of Health.
- Although the Montessori ethos is one of inclusion regardless of the child's learning capabilities, the school reserves the right of refusal of enrolment of a child with learning or physical disabilities, should it be deemed that it would not be in the child's best interest to be enrolled, or that the enrolment of such child might be to the detriment of current learners.
- Preference will be given to siblings, except where it is not in the best interest of the child.
- Preference will be given to children from Montessori schools.

UNIFORM AND PHYSICAL APPEARANCE POLICY

- Pre-school children can wear any comfortable clothes that allows freedom of movement. Children will become wet and dirty from time to time, so please ensure that clothes are appropriate for this. Also, a full change of clothes and something warm are to be sent with every Pre-school child daily.
- We request that you to refrain from dressing your child in clothes that advertise fictional/imaginary characters (eg: Spiderman, Superman etc). Montessori believes in grounding the child in reality and these form in the realm of fantasy.

ABSENTEEISM AND PUNCTUALITY POLICY

- Parents must inform the school by 8:15 if their child will not attend school that day. Should children be away during term on planned absences, the class directress must be informed as soon as plans are finalised.
- School grounds open at 7:30.
- Pre-school children should attempt to be on the premises by no later than 8:20. Classes start at 8:30 promptly.
- It is very disruptive to the workflow and possibly upsetting for the children, when learners arrive late. If you arrive late, please drop your child off as quietly and unobtrusively as possible.
- Pick-up for Pre-School children are from 12:30 – 13:00. Should your child be picked up after 13:00, you will be charged the relevant aftercare fee.

AFTERCARE AND HOLIDAY CARE POLICY

- The school provides aftercare from 13:30 to 17:00 at an additional charge.
- There is also a holiday care program during all school holidays. The Victoria Avenue and Albert Street Nurserys have different schedules, so please enquire.
- Holiday care is also an additional charge, should you wish to make use of it.

SUN PROTECTION POLICY

Sun protection must be applied at home, before school. All children must bring a labelled sun hat, and a labelled bottle of sunscreen to school.

HEALTHY FOOD POLICY

- We encourage children to make healthy food choices.
- We ask that parents assist us in only packing healthy foods and snacks for your child to eat at school. Read labels carefully; many 'healthy' items are loaded with sugar, artificial colourants and flavourings, that can all have a negative effect on your child's ability to concentrate at school.

PLAYGROUND AND ACTIVITIES POLICY

- Children are free to play on the playground and invent their own games and entertainment.
- However, the staff of the school has the right to terminate any activity (or game) detrimental to any child(ren) involved.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR POLICY

- There are several optional extra-curricular activities presented at school by external service providers.
- Pre-school children may choose which activities they wish to participate in, and any costs involved will be for the parents own account.
- A list of available activities is on *Transparent Classroom*.

DISCIPLINE POLICY AND PROCEDURES

- By focusing on the positive, the very best nature of a child is nurtured.
- 'Grace and Courtesy' lessons allow the children the space to practice positive interaction, with the little ones, for example: how to say ***excuse me***, how to say ***no*** with grace, and many other helpful life skills.
- A child who is focused on their work will become absorbed in their activities and self-discipline will naturally follow. Any anti-social behaviour is redirected in a positive direction as far as possible and if necessary, a consequence to the anti-social behaviour is given.
- Parents will be notified of repeated incidents of anti-social behaviour. If necessary, an action plan will be discussed and implemented. The consequences are agreed with in terms of the policy.
- Redirecting the child's attention, *'glueing'* to an adult, separation from a peer/group of peers and separation with a directed task are the main disciplinary action in the class.

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Definition: "The use of strength or power to frighten or hurt weaker people."
https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com

- Preschool children are still learning to socialise and develop their senses. In the course of play children may get hurt. Due to frustration around inability to communicate children might bite, smack, kick etc. When the above does not improve age-appropriately, parents will be advised to seek professional intervention.
- However, if pain, emotional abuse, name calling, foul language, threatening, teasing, mocking, racial slurs and hate speech are used intentionally to manipulate behaviour in others, or are maliciously inflicted, this constitutes bullying; as does the following:
- Intentionally inflicting physical pain or mental/emotional trauma of any form.
- Taking, using or damaging any article belonging to another without permission.
- Making/forcing another to do something against his/her will.
- Any other physical action which may diminish the dignity of another.

Bullying will be dealt with:

- As far as possible, bullying behaviour should be identified and addressed pro-actively.
- If a bullying incident is reported, all parties involved will be guided through the Montessori Peace Education process by a directress or assistant.
- Should the directress deem it necessary, parents of all parties will be contacted.
- Close observation will be continued and documented to determine whether further action is needed.
- If bullying behaviour continues, a parental interview arranged, and behaviour modification will be outlined. This could include professional counselling with regular report backs. A positive improvement in behaviour will be required if the child is to remain in the school.
- If the behaviour does not improve, the child will be suspended, and possible dismissal may occur.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND INCLUSIVE PRACTICE POLICY

- As part of the Montessori Cosmic education, religious festivals and traditions from across the globe are explored and discussed from a cultural point of view.
- We welcome children and families from all different cultural, socio-economical and racial backgrounds.
- Our resources and practices include non-sexist materials which value the achievements of woman as well as men.
- All children are encouraged to join extra-mural, school activities and events, should they wish to do so.
- Children with different needs and abilities are welcomed to our school, if we are able to cater for their needs, and subject to our Admissions Policy.
- We aim to create a happy, safe and rich environment in which all children can prosper and thrive.

HEALTH POLICY

- Upon enrolment, any medical condition a child suffers from must be disclosed. If a child is diagnosed with a long term or chronic illness, the school must also be informed as soon as possible.
- The school must be provided with sufficient information about the illness in order for staff to be able to properly assist the child in any way needed. Should a staff member be required to administer any medication to a child, the Medication Consent and Indemnity form must be completed and signed by the parents.
- It is the parent's responsibility to keep the school updated on any changes regarding the child's health.
- The above includes mental health issues.
- An unwell child must be kept at home.

IMMUNISATION POLICY

The school requires a copy of every child's immunisation record, to be handed in with the enrolment form.

CHILD PROTECTION POLICY

Keeping our children safe and from harm is our highest priority. If any form of abuse or neglect is suspected, the school will take action immediately. The detailed school policy on Child Protection and steps that will be taken will be published on our website *www.littlecornerhouse.co.za*

FIRST AID AND ILLNESS PREVENTION POLICY

- Children and members of staff are requested to wash their hands often, but specifically after a visit to the bathroom as well as before and after a meal, so as to stop germs from spreading.
- Children are taught to cough in the nook of their arm or inside their shirt, so as to contain germs.
- Sharing of water bottles, cups, and clothes are discouraged.
- Each class is equipped with a first aid kit.
- There is always a First Aid trained staff member on duty.
- Staff members will administer First Aid in the event of a minor injury, or while waiting for an ambulance in a major incident.
- All injuries will be reported to the parents.
- Parents are to train staff members on the use of any specific First Aid device, such as an *EpiPen*, if your child has a severe illness that requires such assistance.
- Sharing of hats, shoes and hair accessories are not allowed.

CHILD RELEASE POLICY

- Should an unknown/irregular person arrive at school to pick up your child, we will require written consent (letter, email, *WhatsApp*) to release your child.
- Should you require a person to pick up your child, that is not on your authorised list, we require that you inform us beforehand of the person's name and telephone number.
- If a custody or court order exists, the school is to be forwarded a copy thereof, to be placed in the child's file at school. Without such a document on file, the school cannot deny access to any parent. Parents are to keep the school up to date on any changes in arrangement, to avoid any unnecessary misunderstanding or distress to the child.

EMERGENCY PLANS AND EVACUATION PROCEDURES

Emergency plans will be adhered to in terms of the instructions posted in each classroom. These plans include fire emergency, hostage situations and explosives scares (bomb and gunshot). All staff members are familiar with the school's fire drill procedure. These fire drills are held regularly to ensure that the children have a good understanding of the procedure. Each classroom is fitted with a hand-held fire extinguisher.

FIELD TRIPS AND TRANSPORT POLICY

- Class outings are organised in accordance with the children's topic of study at any given time.
- Depending on the nature of the outing, parental involvement is sometimes required.
- An indemnity signed by a parent or guardian is required for each outing which requires transport, either bus or private. If the signed indemnity is not received on the day of the outing, the child will remain behind at school.

POLICY ON ASSESSMENTS AND RECORD KEEPING

The children's emotional, physical, social and academic progress is continually assessed through their behaviour, attitude, work progress and social interactions. All directresses keep an observation book where they make notes on all aspects of the child's progress. The purpose of the observations are:

- To give detail in the reports which are completed at the end of each term.
- To document unusual or on-going difficult behaviour – emotionally, socially, physically or academic. If the directress observes unusual or on-going difficult behaviour, she will request a meeting with the parents. The purpose of the meeting is to better understand the reasons for the child's observed behaviour and parents are requested to attend the meeting as soon as possible. Following the meeting, the child's behaviour will be observed for two weeks, following which a short written report will be provided to the parent with any necessary further recommendation. Further recommendations may require external specialist intervention or assessments and parents are requested to make all necessary arrangements to ensure this happens. The school does not accept responsibility if a parent does not follow the recommendation for external assessment by the directress or head directress.
- Assessment tools are used by the Directress to assess the child's progress on an on-going basis and to Better understand gaps in a child's knowledge or understanding.
- Introduce the child to different methods of assessment.
- All personal information will be kept confidential.
- All the children's progression through the Montessori Curriculum will be recorded on Transparent Classroom (online system). Parents have access to their child's profile **only**.

DEBTORS AND PAYMENTS POLICY

Before acceptance into Eden Montessori a credit check may be done.
All fees including Deposit, Registration Fees and Tuition Fees are due and payable in advance. Fees are due regardless of whether your child is at school due to your own holidays. Holliday and aftercare fees are payable in arrears. The methods and dates of payment are:

- Annually by the 1st of January, or
- Termly by 1 January, 5 April, 5 July and 5 October, or
- Monthly debit order or EFT for 12 months (January to December), by the 1st of every month.
- Direct deposits via internet banking into the school account.
- Invoices and statements will be sent every month. However, in the event that no invoice was processed or received, the parent is still responsible for payment of the learner's tuition fees for that month.
- Any accounts that have not been settled by dates mentioned above will be subject to a late payment penalty fee per day.

In light of suspension, parent(s)/guardian(s) acknowledge that the inability of the learner to attend school, or the absence of the learner from school, does not relieve the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the obligation to pay school fees.

Unpaid accounts may be handed over to attorneys for collection.

The school reserves the right to authorise blacklisting of parents by the attorneys.

ACCEPTANCE OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Please ensure that you have read through, understand and accept the Parents Handbook and Policies and Procedures. This document form part of the Parents Agreement, and by signing the Parents Agreement, you agree to abide and adhere to all herein.

Any changes to this document will be communicated to all parents.

This Parents 'Handbook' and Policies and Procedure Guidelines may be amended and updated as and when required. A copy will be placed on the website for parents on an annual basis to ensure they are kept abreast of any changes.