



Parent Handbook

305 Avenue E SW
Winter Haven, FL 33880
863.268.8208

Mission Statement: We desire to provide a high quality educational experience to the children and families of Winter Haven and the surrounding communities. We seek to minister to the whole person assisting with physical, social, mental and spiritual development. We strive for excellence in academics, spiritual training, physical activities, music and arts. We desire to minister to persons of all races and economic status.

Winter Haven Montessori is an independently owned, non-denominational facility with an environment created to fulfill the potential in each child through the philosophy and principals developed by Dr. Maria Montessori. We know you have many choices when it comes to the education of your child. So, we invite you to explore the benefits of the Montessori Method as well as the investment in your child's future.

Winter Haven Montessori: Goals

- To Develop a positive attitude towards school
- To help each child develop self confidence
- To assist each child in building a habitat of concentration
- To foster lasting curiosity
- To develop habits of initiative and persistence
- To develop socially acceptable behavior
- To develop a sense of high self-esteem
- To develop sensory motor skills

Registration and Tuition Fees

Registration fees and Material fees are payable upon registration and are non-refundable. These fees serve to insure your child's placement, in addition to covering the costs of processing the application for admission, supplies and educational materials.

Open Registration

Open registration is offered at Winter Haven Montessori, and paid annually to reserve your child's space in our school for the upcoming year. Upon registration, a classroom space will be reserved for your child. Should it become necessary to remove your child for any reason, including the summer months, prior to the beginning of the fall program, your space will be forfeited and filled from our waiting list. Should you require a change later to our half-day Education program only, you may do so only if a half-day space is available. Your reserved full-day space will be filled from our waiting list.

Payment of Fees:

Tuition is paid monthly. Tuition is due on the first school day of each month. If your fees are not paid in full by the 1st of the month, a \$10.00 late fee will be added for each day thereafter. If tuition is not paid by the 5th of the month or you have not made arrangements with office staff, your child will not be allowed to return until a full payment has been made. Classroom space cannot be held or reserved without proper payment. Winter Haven Montessori reserves the right to increase tuition due to unforeseen increases in expenses.

ALL TUITION IS NON-REFUNDABLE

A \$35.00 Returned Check Charge will be required for any returned check. This will be due in addition to any late charges resulting from the returned check. Should this happen more than twice, all payments must be made in cash.

All payments are non-refundable

Withdraw:

No portion of your monthly paid or outstanding tuition will be refunded or cancelled in the event of absence, withdraw or dismissal from school. Should it become necessary to withdraw your child, for any reason, a two week written notice must be given to the school office. This enables the office to notify parents on our waiting list that may be interested in filling your child's reserved classroom space. Prepaid tuition is non-refundable. We reserve the right to dismiss any student, should it be deemed necessary, at the sole discretion of the School Director.

Disenrollment:

1. After all attempts of working with your child in the classroom, if it is in the best interest of the child/school to remove the child, a one week notice will be given.
2. If a child is continually causing harm to him/herself or others, the child will be disenrolled immediately if the behavior does not improve.
3. If a parent/ child continually causing a disruption the child will be disenrolled immediately.

Late Pick up policy Fees:

Your child must be picked up no later than 5:30pm

After that an additional fee of \$1.00 per minute is added for late pickup after the scheduled program hours. This fee is payable immediately to the school. After the 2nd time of being late you will then be asked to pick your child up earlier than our closing hours.

Winter Haven Montessori

Requirements

Arrival:

Parents/Guardians must sign children in on the assigned binder at the front desk each morning and must accompany each child to his/her classroom. We cannot take responsibility for any child whom an adult has not accompanied to his or her classroom. We recommend that your child's attendance be consistent, this will help with the adjustment process.

Parent Conduct:

When you enter Winter Haven Montessori you can expect to be greeted and assisted by friendly and helpful people. Likewise, we expect parents to be equally friendly and pleasant when visiting Winter Haven Montessori. We want the children's environment to be peaceful, joyful and free of stress.

In the event that a parent would ever threaten or be harmful to any Winter Haven Montessori child, staff member or the Winter Haven Montessori environment, it would be grounds for immediate termination for that family from Winter Haven Montessori and its programs.

Parent concerns will be addressed privately with the Director and or asst. Director.

Beginning of School:

We ask that parents exercise patience during the first few weeks of school. There are many new faces and personalities, and some temporary adjustment problems may arise. This is quite normal and generally will pass as your child becomes accustomed to new surroundings, teachers and classmates. Listed below are a few pointers that are helpful during this transition period:

1. Going to school for the first time excites some children, but frightens others. Explain to your child what to expect a few weeks before school begins...**BE PATIENT AND TRY TO GENERATE ENTHUSIASM ABOUT THEIR NEW SCHOOL!**
2. Do not make the start of school a daily topic. Do not let older children at home tease the younger children about school.
3. If you have an occasion where your child will not be going directly home after class, make sure he or she understands the arrangement beforehand.
4. Good-byes are best said at home or in the car on the way to school. Remember your child looks to you for strength, so your attitude and approach are especially important in the development of your child's healthy attitude towards school.

Proper Dress:

We ask that all children wear clothes that are comfortable and washable. Our curriculum involves an outdoor program, so proper shoes and attire are required (no open shoes or flip-flops are permitted). While we attempt to protect their clothes during arts & crafts and play periods, children sometimes have accidents. After all, "kids will be kids"! Please label your child's sweaters, jackets, hats, etc.

Each parent must provide for their child a change of clothes or two for Winter Haven Montessori to use if required. If your child uses these clothes, please wash them and return them to school the following day. These will need to be updated and changed throughout the seasons. Wear Uniforms.

Toys:

Children may not bring toys to school, as this causes problems. Special toys may be lost or broken. Appropriate toys of special interest, coinciding with the weekly or monthly curriculum themes, may be brought during these days.

Visitation to the School:

We have an "Open-Door Policy". Parents are welcome to visit and observe in the classroom at anytime. We ask such visits be limited to twenty minutes and that parents remain as inconspicuous as possible to avoid disrupting the children or the teachers. All parents and/or visitors must sign in at our office prior to going to the classroom. We ask you to save any questions until you return to the office. This will help limit class interruptions.

Parent Volunteers:

Parent volunteers are those parents who become involved in the school life of their children by offering their time, services and resources to benefit the school and its students. Parent volunteers are used in many ways to supplement and enrich our school programs. They help with field trips, in the classrooms during special events, and share their professional backgrounds or their heritage with our students, etc. Please let your teacher and/or the Director know how you can help throughout the school year. WE APPRECIATE YOUR HELP!

Lunches:

We understand that many children are not ready to eat so early in the morning. We will be happy to allow children to eat breakfast at school, if you provide your child's breakfast and arrive before 8:00 AM. If your child arrives after 8:00 AM please make sure your child is fed at home.

A morning and afternoon snack will be provided for your child.

Parents must provide lunch for their child:

1. Please pack a SPILL PROOF CUP to drink of and the necessary utensils to eat their meal.
2. Please send in food that does not need to be warmed or refrigerated as often as possible. You can purchase mini-coolers and lunchbox sized ice packs to keep your child's food fresh.
3. Make sure you send a container that your child can eat from.
4. All drinks (juice, milk, NO Soda please) prepared in SPILL PROOF cups must be labeled.
Juice boxes, milk cartons or bottled water are preferred. Many of these are specifically made for children's lunches.
5. Please avoid canned foods and drinks.

Snacks:

If you would like to bring in snacks for special events, please contact your child's teacher prior to bringing the snack into school.

Rest Periods:

There will be a quiet time in the school each afternoon for all children. Depending on their age, children are expected to rest quietly on mats or engage in quiet activities. This allows those who need to sleep the opportunity to do so.

Parent Programs:

Each class enjoys preparing a special program for their parents and family members. Your child's teacher will let you know of the specific dates and times. This gives you the opportunity to review teaching materials and to meet our teachers and other parents from your child's class. Additional programs will be scheduled throughout the year.

Parent-Teacher Conversations:

Parents and teachers need to communicate! Please feel free to drop a note at the office requesting a call back.

Parent Communication:

A newsletter will be available with announcements for you to view and read. Please take the time to scan the Newsletter regularly to keep informed of our happenings and /or announcements. Weekly lesson plans and monthly plans will be posted for viewing.

Center Evaluations:

Parents will be given the opportunity on an annual basis to evaluate our center, and our programs ability to meet your needs. These are very important to us. Please take the time to fill it in when it is received.

Assessing Your Childs Development:

We will be observing your child throughout the year to assess their development, physically, emotionally, socially, cognitively, creatively, and language skills. Three assessments will be done a year. Two of these conferences will be mandatory. This information will provide the basis for parent-teacher conferences held in September, January, and again in April. Conferences can be held at anytime if either parent or teacher requests one. This information will be available to the ELC, VPK. If there is ever a concern about a child's development we will complete another Ages and Stages, follow up will be completed by the Inclusion specialist with the ELC. We will follow up with any referrals that the ELC makes, and provide community resources as needed. Mrs. Courtney or Mrs. Vega will be able to provide you with many resources.

Enrollment Information:

We must receive specific enrollment information regarding the care of your child. The information may include, but is not limited to, health records, immunization forms (blue card), transportation and emergency information. All information must be current.

Health Requirements & Immunizations:

By state law, all students must have a current Certificate of Immunization showing adequate protection against several diseases. Children who have been vaccinated against these diseases need only obtain an updated, validated certificate. You will also need a current physical form that is updated every 2 years. This information can be obtained from your local Health Department or from a private physician.

We must have a current Certificate of Immunization on file at all times. It is our policy, for the benefit of our overall student enrollment, that no student may start school unless we have an adequate Certificate of Immunization on file. The admission for continued enrollment of any child may be denied when a child has an illness or disability that the school management, in its sole discretion, deems potentially harmful to any other student or staff member. And whose illness or disability is beyond the capacity of the school to properly handle. No child with a communicable disease will be permitted to attend.

Illness:

Should your child become ill or be involved in an accident while he or she is in the care of the school, we will take proper action as deemed necessary. If the school finds it necessary to contact medical attention and care for your child, you as parents will assume full responsibility for payment of such medical services. Parents will be notified immediately at the time of accident/incident. If a parent can not be reached, an EMS will be called. Transportation will only be made by a parent or ambulance.

Parents agree to immediately notify the school office in writing of any changes in telephone numbers, addresses and/or persons authorized to pick up the child, etc. so our files remain current.

Children who become ill may not remain at school, nor will an ill child be admitted. No child with temperature above 100 F will be allowed to remain at school. If a child becomes ill during the day, a parent will be notified to pick up the child immediately. An ill child will be separated from the other children. Children will remain in the office until the parent arrives. Children who have been exposed to or have contracted serious communicable or infectious diseases may not return to school until the disease is no longer contagious. A doctor's certification may be required.

YOU MAY NOT bring a child who has:

- Had a fever within the past 48 hours
- Intestinal disturbance accompanied by diarrhea or vomiting in the past 48 hours
- Any undiagnosed rash (doctors clearance required)
- Sore or discharging eyes or ears, profuse colored nasal discharge (doctors clearance required)
- A communicable disease (doctors clearance required)

Children must be free of abnormal temperatures for a minimum of 48 hours and show no signs of illness when returning to school.

We will notify you if your child is exposed to a communicable or infectious disease while in school. We must be contacted when your child is exposed to communicable or infectious disease outside of school.

Medication:

Winter Haven Montessori does not administer medication of any kind, with the exception of life-saving types, such as an epi-pen. If your child is prescribed an antibiotic, please make sure that it is prescribed in a manner that allows you to administer it at home.

Winter Haven Montessori administration and staff will not administer medication through a Nebulizer machine. If a child needs treatment during school hours, it is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to make arrangements for someone to administer the treatments. The child will need to be removed from the classroom during such treatments.

Discipline Policy:

Physical or verbal abuse is not permitted. The only acceptable forms of discipline are redirection, positive reinforcement, and the occasional use of "time-out". The guidelines we use for children in "time-out" are one minute for each year of their age (i.e., one-year old = one minute, etc.) This will be accompanied by a discussion with the child regarding the unacceptable behavior. If we are still experiencing behavior issues and after parent has been notified 3 times with same and or similar issues that child will be expelled or suspended depending on the severity of the issue.

Custodial parents:

We are committed to protecting all children in our care. If the child does not live with both natural parents, evidence of custody must be presented. A copy of the court ordered custody must be presented. A copy of the court ordered custody decree will be maintained in the child's permanent file.

Authorized Persons:

It is important the registering parent notify the school in writing, of all persons authorized to pick up the child. Anyone picking up your child should be prepared to show proper photo ID, before the child will be released. For

divorced parents, it is important that the registering parent indicate on the enrollment application that they have a legal custody decree. Winter Haven Montessori must have a copy to prevent either parent access to the child. For security purposes we have the doors to and from the center under a locked code. Parents and authorized persons will be issued a code upon registration.

Incident Report:

In the event an incident of any significance occurs at school (social or medical), a written report will be filled out and will need to be signed by the parent. This incident report will contain specifics about what occurred and what actions were taken. It will be completed by the witnessing staff member and will need to be signed by the parent. A copy of the report will be kept on file in the school office.

Inclement Weather:

Safety for the children and staff will be our prime consideration whether or not school will be open. Should the weather be inclement and you are in doubt whether the school will be open, please listen to the local radio or TV station. If local public schools are closed, our school will be closed also.

Emergency Procedures:

Emergency procedure drills (such as fire) are held monthly to acquaint your child and our staff with emergency procedures. This may make quite an impression on your child the first time a drill is held, but your child will soon become accustomed to it and know just what to do. We have an evacuation plan in case of emergency we will relocate to the building directly behind us (parking lot area)

Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect:

By law, the school Director and staff must and will advise all appropriate local and state agencies of any suspected child abuse or neglect of any child attending our school.

Non-Discrimination for Enrollment:

Winter Haven Montessori does not discriminate against race, sex, national origin, religion, or disability concerning enrollment.

Parents As First Teachers:

We respect parents as First Teacher to your child and we will keep you involved in your child's development through daily reports, parent conferences in the Fall and Spring. Observations and assessments will be reviewed with you at that time. At anytime you want to have a parent meeting it can be arranged with the Lead teacher.

Winter Haven Montessori Holiday Calendar:

The school will be closed on the following dates: (subject to change to all major Hoildays)

- Labor Day
- Veteran's Day
- Thanksgiving week
- Christmas to New Years Week
- Good Friday
- Independence Day
- Martin Luther King Jr Day
- President's Day
- New Year's Day
- Memorial Day
- Columbus Day



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Phone: (863) 268-8208

www.WinterHavenMontessori.com

By signing below, I have read, understand and received a copy of the Parent Handbook for Winter Haven Montessori.

Signature

Print Name

Date

Please sign and return to the school office for your child's folder. Thank you!
Winter Haven Montessori



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Expulsion Policy

Child's Name: _____

The State of Florida has instructed us to provide you will the following information:

Occasionally, there are situations that result in expulsion of a child from our program either on a short term or permanent basis. These situations are always unfortunate. We want you to know we will do everything possible to work with you, the parents/guardian, in order to prevent this policy from being enforced. The following are reasons why we may have to expel or suspend a child from our center:

IMMEDIATE CAUSES FOR EXPULSION

- The child is at risk of causing serious injury to other children or himself/herself
- A parent threatens physical or intimidating action toward staff members
- A parent engages in verbal abuse toward staff in front of enrolled children

PARENTAL ACTIONS FOR CHILD'S EXPULSION

- Failure to pay and/or habitual lateness in tuition payments
- Failure to complete required forms including the child's updated immunization records
- Habitual tardiness when picking up your child
- Verbal abuse to staff

CHILD'S ACTIONS FOR EXPULSION

- Ongoing physical or verbal abuse to staff or other children

Parent Signature: _____

Please sign and return to the school office for your child's folder. Thank you!
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