

# PARENT HANDBOOK



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# Welcome to North Shore Montessori School

Dear Montessori Parents,

On behalf of the faculty, staff and the Board of Trustees, thank you for choosing North Shore Montessori School for your family. Having been an active educational institute for over 40 years, the core founding goal has remained the same- to provide an education to our community that is grounded in the Montessori Philosophy and is supported by an environment enriched by the Arts and Physical Education. The North Shore Montessori student is not only academically challenged in a safe and carefully prepared environment but, more importantly, is encouraged to develop a curiosity of that environment while building independence, self-confidence, and leadership skills. This foundation, built on the teachings of Maria Montessori, leads to motivated, self-directed thinkers who have an appreciation for the environment and a commitment to helping the community around them.

To fulfill our mission to be an exceptional model for Montessori education in our community, we must work together as a community. A strong bond between the home and school is essential for student success. This being said, it is vital that you become as involved as possible in the school community helping your child thrive both in and out of the classroom. I truly feel that by working together we will achieve our common goals and help your child reach their fullest potential.

On behalf of North Shore Montessori School, I would like to welcome you and your family to the North Shore Montessori Family!

Warm Regards,

Meg Sheehan  
Head of School

## **SECTION 1 INTRODUCTION**

### **MISSION STATEMENT**

Enriching students through Montessori education while cultivating a community of confident, respectful, self-directed thinkers.

#### **Guiding Principles**

1. Inspire
  - Providing a whole child-based foundation in academics, socialization, and physical well-being of our students through the Montessori curriculum, music, arts, and movement programs
2. Cultivate
  - Growing and supporting relationships among and between our children, families, school, and the community
3. Model
  - Providing a model for Montessori Education at our school, in our homes, and within our community

### **ABOUT NORTH SHORE MONTESSORI SCHOOL**

#### **School History**

The North Shore Montessori School was founded in 1970 by a group of parents who shared the vision of providing the best education possible for their children. The School was once located in Port Jefferson and was moved to Stony Brook in 1980 in order to gain more space for its growing enrollment. North Shore Montessori School is a non-profit corporation dedicated to providing children with a solid educational foundation based in the core principles of the Montessori Philosophy. North Shore Montessori School has been a Recognized Charter of the State of New York since June 1972 and is affiliated with the Three Village Central School District.

#### **American Montessori Society- Full Member**

North Shore Montessori School continually strives to maintain an exceptional learning environment for all of its students and families. To this end, The School is a Full Member with the American Montessori Society (AMS) and maintains this membership yearly while moving toward Accreditation. Being a Full Member with AMS ensures that we meet standards for a Montessori curriculum that ensures a high level of education from our toddlers through our Kindergarten students. AMS monitors the credentials of our teachers, verifies compliance with state and local regulations, monitors school policies for non-discrimination and open observation, and ensures that each classroom has a full complement of Montessori equipment.

#### **Day Care Licensure**

North Shore Montessori School is a licensed registered daycare center. Licensure was received by our school on September 17, 2014 and is renewed every four years. NYS Licensure # 636717. Notice of licensure is posted in the Main Academic Building Lobby. A copy of Day Care Licensure Regulations, the approved Health Care Plan, Standing Medical Orders, and the Parent Handbook reviewed at the time of enrollment are available in the Main Office.

#### **Non-Profit Corporation**

North Shore Montessori School is a non-profit corporation governed by a volunteer Board of Trustees comprised of current parents, alumni parents, alumni students greater than 18 years of age, and community members. It is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees to develop and maintain a strategic plan for the future

which takes into consideration: procedures and policies, school finances, future growth and physical expansion, development, and evaluation of the Head of School.

### **Non-Discrimination Policy**

The School believes that each individual is entitled to an equal educational opportunity. Students and families will not be discriminated against on the basis of age, race, sex, sexual orientation, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, marital status, disability, religion, pregnancy or any other characteristic protected by law, in any educational decisions, including, but not limited to, enrollment, dismissal, educational preparation and placement except where provided by law. All enrollment and education-related decisions are based solely on the ability of the School to meet the educational, social, and physical needs of the individual children and/ or families in attendance at the School.

### **THE MONTESSORI METHOD**

*“It is true, we cannot make a genius. We can only give each individual the chance to fulfill his potential possibilities to become an independent, secure, and balanced human being.” ~ Montessori*

The physiological foundation of this approach is the premise that education should be a foundation for life. As a community of learners, we believe each child to be unique with amazing potential. To educate the whole child, we must give him the freedom to develop physically, emotionally, intellectually, and spiritually.

Dr. Maria Montessori (1870-1952) is the founder of what is known as The Montessori Method. Schools and teacher preparation programs throughout the world are devoted to continuing and implementing Dr. Maria Montessori’s approach. In her book, *The Absorbent Mind* (1949), Maria Montessori provided clues to the richness of the physiological soil in which her ideas took root. Using her medical and psychological training in human development, and through careful and objective observations of young children’s behaviors when free to pursue their own interests and needs, she concluded:

*... in a supportive environment... the (young) children surprisingly exhibited four characteristics usually associated with older children... the ability to concentrate, the need and enjoyment of meaningful activity or work which led to competence and independence, the ability to evidence self-discipline or self-regulation, sociability, and the desire to be a responsible and contributing member of a community.*

### **MONTESSORI GOALS & OBJECTIVES**

The Montessori environment is designed to assist and guide children to perfect their natural interest in learning, task completion, and in acquiring skills and self-confidence to develop their potential. Our goals include helping students create a social structure amongst themselves through respect and concern for others.

Though the Montessori Method has many important objectives in the development of the child, the value of this education lies in the self-discipline, self-mastery, intrinsic motivation, independence, and lifelong love of learning that each student achieves. In partnership with parents, we are committed to helping each child attain these goals.

### **THE METHOD**

The Montessori Method can be viewed in terms of a dynamic triad with the learner at the center of that triad.

The three components of the triad are:

- \* the learning environment
- \* the teacher
- \* the parents

These three elements are the key components to the success of the child. Learning occurs, most fundamentally, from the learner's interaction with the learning environment. The teacher is both a part of that environment and the dynamic link between it, the learner, and specially designed equipment.

### **The Learner:**

Influenced by each component of the triad, the learner will develop in unique ways and at different rates. The Montessori Method helps the learner by:

- \* encouraging independence and problem-solving skills
- \* creating a joyful learning experience
- \* aiding in order, concentration, and coordination
- \* teaching respect for oneself, other people, and the planet
- \* teaching social responsibility

### **The Learning Environment:**

The learning environment includes all elements of the educational setting.

- \* Scientifically designed didactic materials
- \* The use of "real" materials with proper supervision such as glassware, food prep tools, gardening tools, etc.
- \* Aesthetically pleasing
- \* Atmosphere that encourages social interaction
- \* Schedule that allows for uninterrupted learning time
- \* Identifiable rules for the classroom (Care of Self, Care of Each Other, & Care of the Environment)
- \* Outdoor environment to complement indoor learning environment
- \* Multi- year age span
- \* Commitment to complete a three- year developmental cycle
- \* Individual and group instructional practices
- \* Observational records and progress reports of each child
- \* Regularly scheduled parent conferences (Fall & Spring)

## **THE MONTESSORI TEACHER**

*"In the Children's Houses', the old- time teacher, who wore herself out maintaining discipline of immobility, and who wasted her breath in loud and continual discourse, has disappeared. For this teacher we have substituted the didactic material, which contains within itself the control of errors and which makes auto-education possible to each child. The teacher has thus become a director of the spontaneous work of the children. She is not a passive force, a silent presence."*

### **The Teacher as a Guide**

Montessori called the adult in the classroom a "directress" because she/he directs the child's activity in the environment. She is not to be confused with a "teacher" who teaches every step of every process or directly instructs. The duty of the guide "is not to solve all the difficulties of the child... but on the contrary expressly see to it that each child is kept constantly supplied with difficulties and obstacles suitable to his strength." At North Shore Montessori School we use the common term, teacher, yet see the role of teacher as the directress of the child's education.

The Montessori directress is the vital link between the child and the prepared environment. The directress:

- \* Designs and cares for the furnishings and materials
- \* Matches materials to the child's needs both socially and academically
- \* Places the child's educational/ social needs at the forefront of each interaction

In a Montessori classroom, there is no front of the room and no teacher's desk as a focal point of attention. Stimulation for learning comes from the total environment. The role of the teacher differs considerably from

that of a traditional instructor. The teacher demonstrates the correct use of materials as they are individually chosen by the children. The progress of each child is carefully watched and a detailed record of the work introduced, observed, and mastered is maintained. Each directress has been trained to recognize individual periods of readiness.

Characteristics of a Montessori Teacher:

- \* A perceiver of the child's needs
- \* A preparer of the environment
- \* A programmer with the materials and lessons
- \* A protector of the child's right to learn
- \* A provider of superb example- a living model for the child to observe

The teacher must be prepared internally (spiritually) and externally (methodologically). The teacher should have increased knowledge of his/ her own self and needs. The teacher must be able to acknowledge his/ her own weaknesses and work to educate oneself to continuously improve. To keep alive a child's enthusiasm for learning, the teacher needs to be flexible and have an open mind. The teacher must be a growing person. Training in Montessori methods is essential. The teacher has the "spirit" of a scientist (patience in observing children). The teacher has the knowledge of child development and an understanding of the child's needs.

Since the role of a Montessori teacher is somewhat different from that of a conventional classroom, the teacher will be moving among the children, working with them in a one-on-one relationship, often on the floor observing as the child works. The teacher is constantly alert to the direction in which the child has indicated they wish to go, and she actively seeks ways to help the child accomplish their goals.

### **Role in the Classroom**

The teacher must be in a state of health (emotionally and physically) that will allow her/ him to properly care for students. This includes having the strength and flexibility to lift an average child of this age if necessary for the child's safety or well-being, to be able to work with a child on the floor or at a child-size table, and to physically assist a child in the restroom or on the playground. In compliance with ADA requirements (see Disability Accommodation Policy), The School will consider reasonable accommodations for candidates or employees in these (and all) positions.

In addition to preparing and maintaining the environment, careful consideration also needs to be given to the appearance and behavior of the adult. All staff who interact with the learners are also part of the environment. Staff appearance, behavior, attitude, and mood can have an impact on what happens in the environment. EVERY adult in the environment is responsible for considerate and respectful behavior towards their colleagues as a model of grace and courtesy for the children.

## **PROGRAMS**

### **Curriculum**

At The School, we take great pride in the educational foundation that is built through our curriculum. The School has aligned our curriculum with the Core Curriculum Standards in order to allow for successful transition beyond the Kindergarten year. State testing is not conducted at The School. Children are assessed individually by the teacher through observation and informal assessments in order to determine their individual strengths and weaknesses. Students at The School are educated in the areas of practical life, sensorial skills, language, geography, science, math, and technology. In addition to the high quality Montessori curriculum provided at The School, students receive targeted education in Music, Art, Creative Movement (physical education), and Foreign Language determined by the number of days in attendance at The School.



### Stepping Stones

- \* 2, 3 or 5 days per week
- \* Half Day: 8:45 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. / Full Day 8:45 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.
- \* For children 18 to 36 months
- \* Student to Teacher Ratio – 5:1
- \* Maximum number of students is 12

### Flexible Children's House

- \* 2, 3, or 5 days per week
- \* Half Day: 8:45 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. / Full Day: 8:45 a.m. to 2:45 p.m.
- \* For children who are 3, 4, & 5 years old (minimum age 3 by Dec. 1<sup>st</sup>)
- \* Student to Teacher Ratio – 8:1
- \* Maximum number of Students is 21
- \* **Children are expected to be toilet trained**

### Children's House

- \* 5 days per week
- \* Half Day: 8:45 a.m. to 11:45 a.m. / Full Day: 8:45 a.m. to 2:45 p.m.
- \* For children who are 3, 4, & 5 years old (minimum age 3 by Dec. 1<sup>st</sup>)
- \* Kindergarten: 8:45 a.m. to 2:45 p.m. (Must turn 5 years old by Dec. 1<sup>st</sup>)
- \* Student to Teacher Ratio – 8:1
- \* Maximum number of Students is 21
- \* **Children are expected to be toilet trained**

## **SPECIAL AREA PROGRAMS**

### Creative Movement

This program is offered to all children enrolled in our school. It is The School's belief that the development of the body is as important as the development of the mind. In order to build an efficient, well-functioning body/mind, great emphasis is put on daily participation in structured, as well as creative movement activities. The curriculum is a comprehensive program of movement and physical education, including activities such as gymnastics, yoga, running, jumping rope, dance, aerobic exercise, and drama. Our Kindergarten students have the additional curriculum component of Roller Skating and performing for our community at our annual Creative Movement Show. This program promotes physically healthy, creative, confident youngsters and aligns with our first guiding principle to *Inspire the Whole Child*.

### Library Program

A preschool and elementary library has been established for the use of faculty, students, and parents at North Shore Montessori School. The students in the Children's House programs attend library once a week for either book selection, research, read-aloud, and/ or a language lesson. Afternoons are dedicated to library research for our Kindergarten students.

Our library offers our parents a small lending library filled with books and magazines related to topics pertaining to your child's development. Resources are available which provide insight on the Montessori Philosophy as well as the home school connection.

### Computers

There is one computer in every Children's House classroom. This tool is utilized to supplement the Montessori curriculum in the areas of research and language development. Wifi is available throughout the building and the password may be obtained in the Main Office. A Montessori parent portal, piloted in the fall of 2016, will continue with a phased roll-out to additional classrooms in the near future.

## **Art**

In addition to the art that is readily available in every environment, The School offers a formalized Art program for the Children's House Preschoolers and Kindergartners. This program teaches basic art principles, appropriate age/stage instruction, utilizes a vast array of multi-media materials, fosters creativity, and exposes children to the Masters such as Van Gogh, Pollack, and Monet. Each year, the students' masterpieces are displayed at our annual Arts Festival held in the Spring.

## **Music**

Our Montessori music program encourages students to dance and sing, promoting rhythm, pitch and language development. Playing percussion instruments develops fine motor skills as well as a sense of rhythm and playing together within a group. Many styles of music are experienced. The Kindergarten students have the added component of instrumental instruction by being a member of the NSMS Ukulele Band.

## **Foreign Language- Italian**

Age appropriate instruction in Italian is provided to Kindergarten students as well as preschool children enrolled in the Full Day Children's House program. This program utilizes an immersion model to help children quickly and easily acclimate to a second or third language.

## **Instrumental Music**

Keyboard and recorder lessons are offered as an enrichment program for interested Kindergarten students and preschool students who are four years of age by September 1<sup>st</sup>. Lessons for Kindergarten children are given during the afternoon portion of their day. Lessons for preschool students are given in the afternoons as time allows with priority for enrollment given to Kindergarten students.

## **EXTENDED DAY PROGRAMS**

### **Early Care (18 months – 36 months)**

The Toddler Early Care program is open to all Stepping Stones students ages 18 to 36 months. Annual pre-registration is required for all students utilizing the Early Care program. Registration forms can be obtained in the Main Office.

#### **Days/ Hours**

- \* Early Care operates on all school days and follows The School calendar.
- \* Students may register to arrive as early as 7:30 a.m. and are escorted to their classroom at 8:45 a.m.
- \* In the case of inclement weather, it is the parents' responsibility to follow The School snow closing and delay procedures.

#### **Drop-off Procedure:**

- \* Early Care students enter through the side entrance of the Main Academic Building.
- \* The Toddler Early Care Program is located in Room # 1
- \* Upon drop off, all parents/ guardians are required to sign their child into the Early Care Program.

### **Early Birds (3- 6 Years Old and fully toilet trained)**

The Early Birds program is open to all Children's House Students ages 3 -6 years old. Annual pre-registration is required for all students utilizing the Early Birds program. Registration forms can be obtained in the Main Office.

#### **Days/ Hours**

- \* Early Birds operates on all school days and follows The School calendar.

- \* Students may register to arrive as early as 7:30 a.m. and are escorted to their classroom at 8:45 a.m.
- \* In the case of inclement weather, it is the parents' responsibility to follow The School snow closing and delay procedures.

### **Drop-off Procedure:**

- \* Early Birds students enter through the side entrance of the Main Academic Building.
- \* The Early Birds Program is located in Room # 6
- \* Upon drop off, all parents/ guardians are required to sign their child into the Early Birds Program.

### **Extended Day Registration/ Billing**

- \* Registration is on-going and is available on a first come first served basis.
- \* Families wishing to enroll in this program after September 1<sup>st</sup> must contact the main office to ensure space is available.
- \* Once a child is enrolled in an Extended Day Program, changes from one scheduling option to another must be made 30 days prior to the start date for the change.
- \* This program is billed on the 1<sup>st</sup> of every month through FACTS.
- \* Monthly rates are based on a full school year and no adjustments are made for school closings either planned or unplanned, nor are adjustments made for days a child is absent due to illness or otherwise.

### **Emergency Early Care (Notice Required)**

- \* The School can appreciate that emergencies out of the control of our families may arise. Therefore, should a family have an unexpected need for Early Care, please call 631-689-8273 by 2:00 pm the day prior to ensure that staffing is available. In the event that this emergency service is utilized, usage is billed at a rate of \$20 per day regardless of the length of stay.

### **Creative Arts (3- 6 Years Old and toilet trained)**

#### **Who can attend?**

- \* Preschool & Alumni students ages 3 – 6 years old
- \* Children enrolled in our 2- or 3-day preschool programs may attend Creative Arts **any day** of the week regardless of his/her class schedule from 12:00 pm to 5:30 pm or any part thereof.
- \* Non-enrolled siblings ages 3 – 6 years old
  - o Parents **MUST** complete a non-enrolled student application, an emergency contact card, and medical form.
  - o School Age Siblings attending Creative Arts must be off from their individual academic program and free from contagious illness.

#### **What should my child bring to Creative Arts?**

- \* Those students attending during the 12:00 pm to 1:00 pm lunch/ recess hour must bring a packed lunch from home and/ or be signed up for Pizza Lunch.
- \* All children must bring a name labeled crib sheet in their backpack for the napping cots.
- \* Please leave pillows, blankets, and stuffed toys/ animals at home

#### **Days/ Hours**

- \* Creative Arts follows The School calendar
- \* Students may arrive as early as 12:00 p.m. and may remain as late as 5:30 p.m.
- \* In the case of inclement weather, it is the parents' responsibility to follow The School snow closing and delay procedures.

## **Pre- Registration**

- \* Pre-Registration forms are emailed monthly.
- \* Pre - registration by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the previous month is encouraged for this program to ensure adequate supervision & space in the program for your child; billed at a discounted Creative Arts rate

## **Post- Registration**

- \* Post – registration is available after the 15<sup>th</sup> of the previous month provided adequate space and supervision is available; billed at the regular Creative Arts rate
- \* When registering after the 15<sup>th</sup> of the previous month, complete the **POST- Registration** form which may be obtained in the main office

## **Day of/ Last Minute Registration**

- \* Day of/ Last Minute Registration is available on the day Creative Arts is needed provided adequate space and supervision is available; billed at the regular Creative Arts rate
- \* To utilize Creative Arts on the day of service needed, **requests must be made via telephone call** to the main office as early as possible
- \* Teaching staff are **not permitted to accept verbal requests** to register a child for Creative Arts. All notes **MUST** be sent to the office immediately for consideration.

## **Billing**

- \* Creative Arts is billed monthly through FACTS during the first week of the month following the services rendered.
- \* There are no make-up or transfer days.
- \* If your child is sick from school on a selected day, there will be no charge.
- \* If you pick up your child at the regularly scheduled dismissal on a selected day, there will be a cancellation fee of \$20 for non-attendance at the Creative Arts program.
- \* Late pickups are billed at a rate of \$25/ 15 min late.
  - o Late pickup is highly discouraged as we lease the building and are not permitted to extend our day past 5:30 pm.

## **After Care (18 months- 36 months)**

### **Who can attend?**

- \* Stepping Stones students ages 18 to 36 months
- \* Children enrolled in our 2- or 3-day programs may attend After Care any day of the week regardless of his/her class schedule from 3:30 pm to 5:30 pm or any part thereof.

### **Days/ Hours**

- \* Toddler After Care will follow The School calendar
- \* Students may arrive as early as 3:30 p.m. and may remain as late as 5:30 p.m.
- \* In the case of inclement weather, it is the parents' responsibility to follow The School snow closing and delay procedures.

## **Registration**

### **Pre- Registration**

- \* Pre-Registration forms are emailed monthly.
- \* Pre - registration by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the previous month is encouraged for this program to ensure adequate supervision & space in the program for your child; billed at a discounted After Care rate

## Post- Registration

- \* Post – registration is available after the 15<sup>th</sup> of the previous month provided adequate space and supervision is available; billed at the regular After Care rate
- \* When registering after the 15<sup>th</sup> of the previous month, complete the **POST- Registration** form which may be obtained in the main office

## Day of/ Last Minute Registration

- \* Day of/ Last Minute Registration is available on the day Toddler After Care is needed provided adequate space and supervision is available; billed at the regular After Care rate
- \* To utilize Toddler After Care on the day of service needed, **requests must be made via telephone call** to the main office as early as possible
- \* Teaching staff are **not permitted to accept verbal requests** to register a child for After Care. All notes **MUST** be sent to the office immediately for consideration.

## Billing

- \* After Care is billed monthly through FACTS during the first week of the month following the services rendered.
- \* There are no make-up or transfer days.
- \* If your child is sick from school on a selected day, there will be no charge.
- \* If you pick up your child at the regularly scheduled dismissal on a selected day, there will be a cancellation fee of \$20 for non-attendance at the After Care program.
- \* Late pickups are billed at a rate of \$25/ 15 min late.
  - Late pickup is highly discouraged as we lease the building and are not permitted to extend our day past 5:30 pm.

## ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS

After-school enrichment programs, which have included Baking, Soccer Shots, Yoga, Drama, and Gym Programs, are offered throughout the school year for an additional fee determined by the individual program. Programs are geared to specific age groups and interests. Information regarding these programs is sent via email throughout the year.

PLEASE NOTE: Children who are absent from school due to illness on their program day **are not permitted** to attend after-school programs on the day of the absence.

## SECTION 2 GENERAL INFORMATION

### ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL PROCEDURE

#### Rules of the Road at NSMS

For the safety of our children and families:

- \* The Parking Lot is a ONE-WAY Entrance and Exit.
- \* There is a 5 mph speed limit in our parking lot.
- \* Pedestrians **always** have the right of way.
- \* Do not park in spaces labeled Reserved Parking or Op-Shop Parking.
- \* Do not park in Handicap Spaces unless you have the appropriate Handicap License plate or tag.
- \* Do not leave your child unattended in your vehicle.

- \* When your car is parked, kindly turn off the engine.
- \* It is illegal to pass a bus when the lights are on and the STOP sign is out.
- \* For your safety and the safety of our children, do not pass vehicles in the car line.

## **ARRIVAL- Main Academic Building**

### **Walkers/ Bicyclists**

For our families who enjoy walking or bicycling to school, please take caution when walking through the parking lot as there will be vehicles entering at the same time. Bicycles may be parked on the grassy areas near the Main Building. All children who are Walkers/ Bicyclists must be walked into the School by their parent/ guardian.

### **Accompanying Children into the Building**

If you prefer to accompany your child into the building, please park either on Christian Avenue or in the available spaces by the Church Op Shop, NOT in the spaces clearly marked for use by the Op Shop, and walk across the cemetery walkway and into the building. Please DO NOT PARK in the spaces marked "RESERVED PARKING" on the side of Sullivan House. They are for the church personnel only.

### **Car Line Arrival**

Morning arrival begins promptly at 8:45 a.m. Follow the road in single file as directed for your program below. Please enter the parking lot only when a staff member waves you forward. When dropping off your child, place your car sign in the left front window, stay in your vehicle, place the car in "park", and wait for an assistant to open the door and remove your child from the car. The assistants will take your child out of the car and into the building. Assistants will also bring your child's snack from the car to the classroom on his/her snack day.

\*\*For safety reasons, all children are expected to remain in their car seats until a staff member approaches the vehicle.

### **Late Arrivals/Signing In**

In the event that your child arrives after 9:00 a.m., you must walk your child into the building. Any child arriving after 9:00 a.m. is considered late and must be signed in to the building upon arrival using the "Sign In/Sign Out" book located outside the Office. Students who arrive after 9:00 a.m. are escorted to the classroom by a staff member so they can join their class quickly and quietly as class has already started for the day. To minimize distractions to the classroom environment, parent(s) of child(ren) arriving after 9:00 am are not permitted to walk their child(ren) directly to the classroom.

## **DISMISSAL- Main Academic Building**

### **Early Pick-Ups/Signing Out**

If you are planning on picking your child up early from school, a written note to the teacher via backpack letting the teacher know the time in which you plan to arrive will help ensure your child is prepared when you arrive. Once you arrive, you will sign your child out in the white binder labeled "Sign In/ Sign Out" located outside the Office and an office staff member will retrieve your child and bring your child to you in the lobby.

### **HALF DAY DISMISSAL begins promptly at 11:45 a.m.**

Follow the same procedure as morning drop-off.

### **FULL DAY CHILDREN'S HOUSE DISMISSAL begins promptly at 2:45 p.m.**

Follow the same procedure as the half day dismissal. Any child not picked up at dismissal by 3 p.m. will be brought to the Creative Arts after care program. Creative Arts charges will be incurred.

**Walk up Dismissal**

Parents who prefer to not use the car line are asked to wait outside the primary entrance (for classes dismissing from the lobby) or the secondary entrance (for classes dismissing from the academic hallway). A staff member will bring your child outside to you.

**Car Line Dismissal**

Dismissal of Children's House students begins promptly at 11:45 a.m. or 2:45 pm depending on program. Please enter the parking lot only when a staff member waves you forward. When picking up your child, place your car sign in the left front window, place the car in "park", exit the driver's seat when your child is called for and wait for a teacher to bring your child to you. It is the parent's or caregiver's responsibility to fasten the child into his/ her car seat. All children must be fastened into their seat prior to driving away from the car line. Follow the road in single file as directed for your program below.

**When exiting the property**, exit only out of the rear exit as NSMS has a one way in/ one way out parking lot. You will exit onto Blinker Light Road.

**Late Pick-ups**

Any child not picked up at dismissal by 12 p.m. for Half Day, 3:00 pm for Children's House Full Day and 3:30 pm for Stepping Stones will be brought to Creative Arts/Toddler After Care and/ or the Nurse's Office and a parent will be called. After Care charges will be incurred.

**Pick Up by a Non- parent/ Guardian**

Parents must provide written permission for another individual to pick up their child either at or before normal dismissal time. No child will be dismissed to another person without written parental consent. The designated person for pickup will be required to present picture identification upon request. Office staff will bring the child from his/her classroom/ program to the designated person.

**Staying for Creative Arts/ Enrichment Program**

Children remaining for Creative Arts must be pre-registered. In the event that your child has not been pre-registered, you must stop in or call the office to confirm availability for your child to stay on a given day. Pre-registration is required for all Enrichment programs.

**SULLIVAN HOUSE & KINDERGARTEN ARRIVAL/ DISMISSAL****Sullivan House Arrivals****ARRIVAL begins promptly at 8:45 a.m.**

Enter the premises via the driveway between the Sullivan House and the Church. Park one car behind the other along the right side of the driveway. Walk your child to the top of the steps and the teacher will greet you and welcome your child inside.

**Exiting the Arrival Car Line**

Exit to the right of the school building merging with vehicles from the main car line.

**Have a Child in Another Program?**

If you have a child in another program, use the main car line for arrival. An Assistant teacher will bring your child to the Sullivan House. OR you may use the main car line first and then park and walk your toddler over to the Sullivan House.

**Sullivan House Dismissal**

Follow the same procedure as morning drop-off.

### **Have a Child in Another Program?**

If you have a child in another program, pick up your Stepping Stones student first by entering between the Sullivan House and the Church. Then merge with the main car line to pick up your other child.

### **FULL DAY STEPPING STONES DISMISSAL is at 3:30 p.m.**

Enter the premises via the driveway between the Sullivan House and the Church. Park in the main lot and ring the “Creative Arts” bell. A staff member will let you into the building. Please proceed to Room 1 to pick up your child.

## **KINDERGARTEN**

### **ARRIVAL by Bus**

Kindergarten students who arrive by bus will be met by the Bus Coordinator and permitted to enter the academic wing at 8:40 a.m. [Please note: Students who are transported to and from NSMS via bus will participate in three emergency bus evacuation drills each year.]

### **ARRIVAL by Car Line begins at 8:45 a.m.**

See ARRIVAL for Children’s House above.

### **DISMISSAL by Bus begins promptly at 2:45 p.m.**

Kindergarten students are dismissed from the secondary entrance (academic hallway) at 2:45 p.m. All kindergartners who are transported by bus are dismissed first.

### **DISMISSAL by Car Line begins promptly at 2:45 p.m.**

See DISMISSAL for Children’s House above.

Parents who prefer to not use the bus/ car line are asked to wait outside the secondary entrance (academic hallway). A staff member will bring your child outside to you.

### **Canceling the Bus**

If picking up a Kindergarten student who normally rides the bus, it is the responsibility of the parent to call the office **before** 2:30 p.m. to ensure the student is not placed onto the bus. It is also the responsibility of the parent to notify the bus driver and/or bus company if bus transportation is not needed.

### **Buses and Play dates**

To ensure that our Kindergarten students are placed on the correct buses each day, we do not permit students to take an alternate bus to a friend’s house.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Consistent attendance at school is an integral part of successful learning in the Montessori environment. The child’s Teacher and the Nurse should be notified, in advance, if the family will be out of town during the school year and/or if a child will be kept out of school for any reason.

### **Notification of Absence**

Parents are responsible for notifying the School Nurse at 631-689-8273 (select Option 5) of a child’s absence. There is voicemail service if the Nurse is unavailable. Please indicate the reason for your child’s absence when calling. This is beneficial in tracking illness in the school and minimizing the spread of “germs”.



## Absence Notes

Absence notes are required when a child returns to school, as New York State requires attendance records for all children of Kindergarten age and older.

## Absence Requirements for contagious illness

Any child who is absent due to a **contagious** illness such as but not limited to pink eye, chicken pox, strep throat, etc., **must** have a note from a **physician** prior to returning to school.

## NSMS' Attendance Policy for Kindergartners is as follows:

- \* A phone call to the Health Office describing the nature and reason for an absence **is required** for **all** absences.
- \* A **written note** describing the reason for the absence and signed by the parent is **required** when the student returns to school. All notes become part of the student's medical record at North Shore Montessori School.
- \* All children arriving after 9:00 a.m. will be marked tardy.
- \* A child who is absent for **5 consecutive days must** have a note from a physician prior to returning to school.
- \* After the 5<sup>th</sup> cumulative absence, a letter will be sent home explaining the school's attendance policy.
- \* After the 10<sup>th</sup> cumulative absence, a meeting between the parents and the child's teacher is required.
- \* After the 15<sup>th</sup> cumulative absence, a meeting between the parents, the Head of School and the child's teacher is required.
- \* After the 20<sup>th</sup> cumulative absence, the School requires documentation from a physician explaining the reason for excessive absences. Additionally, the situation will be brought to the attention of the Board of Trustees.
- \* Excessive absences disrupt the learning of the child and decrease the School's ability to meet the educational requirements of the curriculum.

## Emergency Contact Cards

Emergency Contact Cards must be completed and returned on or before the first day of school. Emergency Contact people appointed by the parent/ guardian will be asked to show photo identification prior to releasing the child. All parents will be notified prior to releasing a child to an emergency contact unless the parent provides the school with a note indicating otherwise on the day the child is to be picked up.

## **CELEBRATIONS/ SNACK**

### Snack

NSMS dedicates itself to educating its children on making healthy, sound nutritional food choices during the school day. Parents at our school are required to provide snack for the whole class on their child's snack day. This will be discussed at Open House by your teacher.

The list below outlines the snack items approved for snack at the School  
(Please select two on your snack day):

Breakfast Items (mini bagels, muffins, low sugar cereal with milk, etc.)

Sliced fresh fruit

Vegetables Sliced with dip

Whole Grain Crackers/ Rice Cakes

Hummus

Guacamole

Yogurt (Low Sugar such as Yo Baby)

Cheeses (cream cheese, string, cheddar, etc.)

\*Water is the ONLY beverage option

**Snacks must follow these key rules:**

- Cakes/ desserts are only permitted for Birthdays/ Celebrations
  - Any decorations must be edible
- Candy is not permitted
- High fructose corn syrup or enriched bleached flour should not be in the first few ingredients
- NO Trans Fats
- Must be in the original packaging and/ or homemade items must have an ingredients list

**Allergies**

It is the School's priority to maintain the health and well-being of all of our students at NSMS. Therefore, if any food allergies are present in your child's class, parents will be asked not to bring that food item. Parents of children with life-threatening food allergies who require an EPI Pen must provide snack every day for their child. This can be accomplished by maintaining a lunchbox with non-perishable snacks that the child may choose from daily during snack time. A designated "safe" eating area will be provided for students with allergies and will be carefully monitored by a teacher/ lunch assistant. On days when there will be a Birthday Celebration it is encouraged that the parents of children with allergies send in a special snack or treat for their child.

**Birthday/ Snack**

Children enjoy sharing their birthday celebration with their friends at school. Each classroom celebrates Birthdays in a special way for each child. The celebration policies for your classroom will be discussed at Parent Orientation. All summer birthdays are acknowledged and celebrated within the classroom as per the Teacher.

All celebrations taking place outside the classroom, but requiring backpack distribution of invitations, must include an invitation for each child in the class. Invitations will not be distributed unless there is one for every child.

***Birthday Snack***

On birthdays, NSMS allows cakes/ desserts or healthy snacks. Please refrain from sending in whole birthday cakes or sheet cakes. If a child is allergic to cupcake ingredients, the parent of that child is asked to provide a special cupcake/snack for all parties for their own child.

**“Goodie Bags,” party favors, and gifts of any kind are NOT permitted due to allergies and choking hazards.**

**Holidays**

NSMS does not celebrate any one holiday which implies religious affiliation. We do, however, acknowledge and discuss those celebrations which take place at home, to share our diversity with our classmates. During the holiday seasons, we learn as a group about the various holidays together. We do celebrate holidays such as Halloween, Thanksgiving, and Valentine's Day as a School.

## **LUNCH**

### **Lunch Program**

Children who are remaining for Full Day or Creative Arts Programs, must bring lunch Monday through Friday, with an option to purchase pizza on Fridays.

NSMS offers Pizza Friday each week. The pizza is ordered from a local pizzeria and arrives in time for lunch. Order forms will be emailed home monthly with the Creative Arts sign-up sheet.

Lunches from home should be self-sufficient. We are not permitted to microwave or heat up lunches brought from home due to various cooking times and temperatures. If you choose to send your child to school with a “hot lunch” from home, please be sure to pack it in a thermos to keep it warm.

### **Last-Minute Lunches**

*Last-minute lunches* are available for purchase in an emergency. There are three choices for last minute lunches which include Cheerios with Milk, cheese with crackers, or yogurt. The students will also receive fruit and a choice of milk, chocolate milk, or water (based on availability). Please call the Main Office as early in the morning as possible to make arrangements.

## **CLOTHING/ LOST & FOUND**

### **Dress Code**

NSMS respects the uniqueness of every child. Students’ appearance and attire is the responsibility of the parents. Children should wear simple clothes, which can be managed by the children themselves and are appropriate for indoor and outdoor activities. Children’s clothing should not require the Teacher’s assistance when they use the bathroom facilities. Clothes that are “dress clothes” should not be worn to school as we do get “messy” at Montessori. Soft-sole shoes and tennis shoes are preferred to ensure safety during indoor and outdoor activities and are required for gym. Winter boots will be removed during class and gym times and regular shoes worn. **LABEL** all clothing.

Each child in Stepping Stones through Kindergarten needs to have a complete change of clothing (pants, shorts, shirt, underwear, socks) in the school in case of accidents or spills. Parents are to provide clothes in a plastic bag labeled with the child’s name to be stored in the child’s classroom. Items should be seasonally appropriate for warm/cool weather.

### **Lost & Found**

Any clothing or belongings found in the school will be placed in the lost and found box outside the nurse’s office for one month. On the last day of each month, lost and found items become the property of The School and will be donated to a local church and/ or shelter. Please contact the office immediately if an item is suspected to have been lost or left at school.

## **DISCIPLINARY POLICY**

The Montessori Methodology fosters the concept of freedom within limits which allows children to develop to their full potential while developing inner discipline. Inner discipline is its own reward, as it gives the child the opportunity for greater freedom within his/her community. In our classrooms, there is a strong emphasis placed upon developing the ability to concentrate and develop respect for others and the environment. The children and teachers discuss, review, and practice our classroom rules at the beginning of each year.

You can help your child at home by emphasizing these same expectations, explaining that they are the ground rules that allow us all to live peacefully and safely together, and consistently enforcing these and any other expectations that you have at home.

- Be nice to others. (So we can all feel safe inside and outside of school)
- Use quiet voices inside the school. (So we can have a thinking place)
- Be careful with classroom materials. (So we can all enjoy them)
- Use walking feet inside the school. (So we can be safe)
- Stop, Look, and Listen when someone is talking to you or you hear the bell ring for your attention.

At North Shore Montessori School, we are committed to a concept of discipline which defines the adult's role as providing education which will help the child develop inner controls. It is our policy to immediately stop behavior which is threatening either emotionally or physically to the well-being of others.

Beyond that, it is our philosophy that the child needs clear limits and guidance in how to behave responsibly. Staff does not use physical punishment, emotional or physical threats, or physical restraint to control a child's behavior. Physical restraint may be necessary if the child becomes a threat to the safety of others or to the safety of him/herself. Staff has been trained in the appropriate use of restraint in these instances.

If a child is temporarily unable to control their movements or behaviors, our practice is to have the child sit in a peaceful area of the classroom to refocus and redirect the child's attention. This is done with the support of an adult through quiet music, reading, yoga etc. This allows the child to recognize the need to regain control prior to interacting with others. A child may re-enter class activities when he or she is relaxed and ready to calmly and safely rejoin the class.

Occasionally, a child who is repeating inappropriate behaviors will need to accompany a teacher while the teacher moves through the classroom. This will allow the child to be supervised closely as he or she practices being independent in his or her interactions with classmates.

In rare circumstances, a child's behavior at school may be such that the teacher, Head of School, and parents must meet to develop a plan to help the student develop stronger behavioral controls. This requires cooperation by all participants in order to foster the best chance for success. The child's continued enrollment may be made contingent upon the carrying out of the plan and the eventual resolution of the problem.

When a child needs more than the occasional reminder to be able to function in a productive and appropriate way at school,

1. Staff will consult and counsel parents regarding problems encountered by the child in the group setting and the staff's efforts to resolve the difficulty with the child.
2. Staff may recommend specific parent actions, including the behavior plan mentioned above, and may recommend family counseling and/or consultation with the child's physician. If the parents do not secure the necessary testing or therapy on the child's behalf, the Head of School, may find it necessary to withdraw the child from the school. Teachers will accept recommendations and evaluations made to the school by outside specialists and consider the information when planning the child's program. The Head of School will, if difficulty is not resolved through steps 1 and 2, proceed with 3 below.
3. The Head of School will place the child's enrollment on probationary status for specified period of time, depending upon urgency of the problem. Behaviors which must be eliminated within the time period of probation will be listed along with recommended remedial steps and an action plan. The child will be included in this agreement if it is developmentally appropriate.
4. The child's enrollment will be terminated at the end of the probationary period if the behaviors have not been rectified with specific strategies implemented.

These rules are intended to promote safety, respect, and fair treatment amongst the individual students, the class as a whole, and the school community. Rules promote the internalization of pro-social behaviors and values such as self-control, consideration for others, and a sense of responsibility for oneself and the welfare of others.

## **ACADEMIC INTERVENTION**

Every child is unique and learns at his/her own developmental pace. However, there are times that this pace is not in alignment with the natural development of children. In these circumstances, any and all concerns will be addressed by the teacher with the parents and a plan for classroom intervention will be discussed. The focus of these interventions will be on connecting home and school work environments to ensure academic success. Strategies specific to the learning needs of that child will be implemented.

In the event that these strategies are not helping the child to progress and/ or all classroom interventions have been exhausted, the teacher will communicate the concerns with the Head of School. The Head of School will observe the student within 3 days from the time of notification. Once the observation has occurred, the Head of School and the Teacher will meet with the parents and a plan for academic success will be recommended and discussed. Often this plan will include a suggestion for outside evaluation or referral to the local school district for evaluation.

## **DONATIONS**

### **Library**

The school has always encouraged donations of new or gently used books to the school library. Please speak with the Head of School before making a donation.

### **Monetary**

Should you feel compelled to make a monetary donation to North Shore Montessori School in order to enrich and further the education provided at our school, please speak with the Head of School. All donations are tax deductible to the extent permitted by law. Your personal tax advisor should be consulted.

### **Alumni Fund**

There are three plaques (Gold, Silver, and Bronze) within The School's foyer. These plaques represent various endowments received from North Shore Montessori School's families, who wanted to provide additional funds upon their departure to help the school grow and to leave a lasting memory with NSMS.

Alumni Fund donations are tax-deductible to the extent allowable by law. These donations cannot be utilized to satisfy Parent Participation hours. The various endowments are:

Bronze Cube Club	\$100
Silver Stair Club	\$250
Gold Tower Club	\$500

## **INCLEMENT WEATHER**

### **Emergency School Closings**

It is a top priority of NSMS to keep our families informed when there is the potential for or the need to close the school due to an emergency. The Head of School and Board of Trustees President will make all decisions regarding the safety of staff and students in times of emergencies due to inclement weather, hurricanes, fire, gas leaks, flooding, etc. Generally, if the Three Village School District closes, there is a great possibility that we will close or experience a delayed opening.

In the event that school must CLOSE or DELAY before the school day begins, families should check our school's Facebook page and/or the school website, [www.northshoremontessori.com](http://www.northshoremontessori.com), for up to date information regarding the school day and any additional program announcements specific to that day. In addition, all CLOSINGS or DELAYS will be aired on WALK AM 1370, WALK FM 97.5, WBLI FM 106.1, WBAB 102.3, CHANNEL 12 NEWS, and [www.news12.com](http://www.news12.com) (click on "School Closings") for all snow or emergency closings shortly after 6 a.m. Additionally, the school's voice mail message will be revised to indicate school is closed (631-689-8273).

In the event that NSMS must DELAY the start of the school day, there will be no Early Care programs and all academic programs will start at the designated time as per our Facebook page, website, voicemail, and the aired broadcasts of the aforementioned local radio and news stations. Please note, that regardless of the delayed start time, all programs will end at their regularly scheduled dismissal time. (For example, the Stepping Stones program is regularly scheduled from 8:45 am - 11:45 am. If there were a two hour delay, the start time would be 10:45 am and the dismissal time would remain at 11:45 a.m.)

### **Make Up Day Policy**

In the event that NSMS is closed on a regular school day for weather or any other emergency, both the staff and the students will make up days in accordance with the School Calendar. If the amount of days exceeds that listed on the schedule, additional make-up days will be determined by the Board of Trustees and the Head of School.

### **Force Majeure**

The School reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to suspend its duties and obligations, under this contract or otherwise, immediately without notice, during periods that the School is affected by force majeure events. This includes, but is not limited to, any fire, flood, act of God, war, governmental action, act of terrorism, epidemic, pandemic, natural disaster, or any other event that is beyond The School's control. If such an event occurs, The School's duties and obligations in the Enrollment/Financial Agreement signed upon enrollment will be postponed until such time as The School, in its sole discretion, may safely reopen or resume normal operations.

## **SCHOOL PICTURES**

School pictures are taken in the fall, on a date designated by the Head of School. All children are photographed, as these photographs are also used for the NSMS Yearbook. A make-up date is scheduled for students absent on picture day or new to the school. Announcements and order forms are sent to parents via backpack.

In addition to school pictures, there are times in which pictures are taken for in-school videos, advertisement of the school, or in recognition of an event occurring at the school. Please be sure to complete the picture authorization portion of your child's enrollment application so that we know your individual preferences with regards to your child's pictures. A child's full name is never attached to a picture.

In the event that the photo authorization section on the enrollment application has not been completed for your child, it will be assumed that your child may be photographed while in attendance at North Shore Montessori and that those pictures may be used both In House and Outside of The School.

## **PLAYGROUND**

Outdoor play will occur daily for all students during recess and during individual classroom time except during extreme weather or unless otherwise ordered by the Head of School. Children should be dressed accordingly for outside play in any type of weather.

## **VISITORS**

**The safety and well-being of our children is of paramount importance. Anyone visiting the school must enter through the main entrance and address one of the staff members in the office.** After 9:00 a.m., visitors must sign-in at the front office window and secure a visitor's pass before proceeding to any classroom or common area of the building. The visitor's pass must be worn during the entire visit. Visitors will be asked to sign out at the end of their visit.

We do have a secured Open Door Policy at NSMS. Any Parent wishing to observe a classroom is welcome to do so at any time. However, to limit the distraction to the other students and ensure that the students will be present (not at specials) during the observation time, these observations are to be arranged in advance with the Office and Lead Teacher. Observations should be limited to no more than one half hour session. School personnel are responsible for questioning the presence of anyone in the school whose purpose is unknown or suspect.

Any child not participating in the school's program is not allowed on the premises without a parent or guardian to supervise.

Prospective parents observing in classrooms are encouraged to bring children when prearranged with the Head of School.

## **ALUMNI VISITS**

### **Accompanied by a Parent**

Alumni children may visit the school with prior permission from the Head of School and the classroom teacher for a period of up to thirty minutes with a parent present. Permission for this visit must be granted *no later than the previous school day.*

### **Family Pets/ Animal Visits**

While North Shore Montessori School loves when our families' furry friends visit the School, we kindly ask that animals not be brought into the school for the safety of our students and families. While we would like to trust that your furry friends are well socialized and there is no risk for an "accident" to occur, The School cannot take this risk with our students.

In the event that a family would like to or must bring a Licensed Service animal into The School for either a disability or a program that would benefit the education of our students, written permission must be obtained from the Head of School prior to the visit. In addition, the animal must have proof of licensure and an up to date copy of vaccinations must remain on file in the office.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

### **Fire Drills**

NSMS is required to perform monthly fire drills for all months that students are in the building during various hours of operation. The first Fire Drill will occur within the first non- phase in week of school. The Head of School may give advance warning of the first two fire drills to ensure that the children and teachers are adequately prepared. Subsequently, prior warning of fire drills will not be provided in order to allow students to simulate what would happen in the case of a true emergency. At least one fire drill will require the use of an alternate exit route (such as a classroom emergency exit window) to allow our staff and students to practice for this real possibility.

### **Lock Down Drill - "Quiet Drill"**

NSMS will perform two Lock Down drills per year in order to allow our staff and students to practice what to do in the event that the school must lock out any potentially dangerous intruders from the classrooms or student

areas of the building. Given the developmental age of our students, this drill will be called a “Quiet Drill” for students and all appropriate measures will be taken to minimize the fear that could occur with this type of drill.

### **Health Care Plan**

As a requirement of the Office of Children and Family Services, North Shore Montessori School has an approved and executed Health Care Plan which defines the policies and procedures for health, wellness, and safety at our School. This Health Care Plan has been reviewed with you at the time of Admission and is available for review in the Main Office.

### **First Aid**

The need for safe procedures cannot be overemphasized. At NSMS, there is a Full-Time Nurse on staff to ensure that general first aid safety guidelines are followed daily. Should your child become sick or injured during their school day, you will receive notification from the school nurse or appointed staff member in the nurse’s absence. All injuries that occur above the shoulders require immediate notification.

At North Shore Montessori School, it is our goal to have 100% of our staff CPR/First Aide trained as per certificate requirements. This training is provided every other year to our staff during Staff Orientation. In the event that a staff member is hired after the bi-annual training has been completed, that staff member will be trained on the next possible date in which CPR/ First Aide is added to the training schedule.

All staff is trained yearly in the areas of Bloodborne Pathogens and Emergency Medication administration.

For the safety of our visitors at NSMS, an Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) is located in the Main Lobby.

### **Health & Wellness**

NSMS employs a Full-Time School Nurse in order to meet the health and safety needs of our students. In addition, the Nurse is available to offer care for our staff and families in the event of an emergency medical situation. The Nurse maintains all the medical records necessary for the enrollment of students at North Shore Montessori School including, but not limited to, records of immunization, yearly physical forms, and medication and non-medication consent forms.

### **Screening Exams**

#### *Vision & Hearing*

Each year, the School Nurse conducts visual acuity tests and hearing screenings on all Kindergarten students.

### **Sick Policy**

In an effort to keep the NSMS community as healthy as possible, students should not be sent to school, admitted, or re-admitted to school or allowed to remain in school if they exhibit any of the following:

1. Fever of 100.4° F or greater. The child should be free of fever without use of Tylenol or other anti-pyretics for 24 hours before being sent back to school.
2. Children who are unable to blow or clear their nose with noted running nasal mucus, copious in amount, and which is yellow or green in color
3. A cough that is frequent and bothersome may cause the student to be excluded from school.
4. Unexplained rashes or other skin lesions which are open or weeping
5. Diarrhea or vomiting



6. Earaches
7. Inflammatory conditions of the eye including “pink eye”. Students may be readmitted after the condition has cleared or after they have been treated and documentation is received from their physician.
8. Chest pains, shortness of breath, or stomach pains particularly associated with fever
9. A child with a constant runny nose should stay home for the first few days. If the discharge from a cold turns a yellow color, the child will be sent home to have a doctor determine if an infection is present.
10. A child prescribed antibiotics may return to school 24 hours **after** the first dose has been administered.
11. A child with chicken pox may return to school after the pox have scabbed over.
12. The school must be notified as soon as a child is diagnosed with allergies.
13. A child with a splint, cast, or stitches (sutures) may be readmitted to school with a physician’s note. The physician must indicate a diagnosis and a reason for the necessary intervention as well as instructions regarding physical education and playground limitations if needed.
14. Once a diagnosis of any contagious condition or concern, including but not limited to ringworm, lice, conjunctivitis, strep throat, chicken pox, impetigo, influenza, etc. has been established, the Parents are requested to notify the school immediately. A note from the student’s doctor with diagnosis and student’s return date to school must be submitted. Upon receipt of such notification, the **school will distribute a letter to the classmates’ families, stating that their child may have been exposed to a contagious illness in their class.**
15. Any child exhibiting signs and symptoms of a contagious illness must be removed from the class and sent home for the day until seen by a physician. **A doctor’s note is required in order to allow a student to return to school. The doctor’s note needs to confirm or clarify the student’s condition (Example: pink eye, rash, bacterial infectious disease) along with a date to return to school.**

## **Medication/ Non-Medication Administration**

### **Medication**

Administration of any medication (prescription or over-the-counter) during school hours **must be preceded** by the completion of an “Authorization Form” from the parent **and** the child’s doctor. Medication needed for non- life-threatening emergencies will be kept in the nurse’s medication cabinet in the Nurse’s office in a bin labeled with the child’s name. Medications may only be administered by the designated school nurse and/ or a parent/ guardian or appointed family member. Prescription medication is not able to be administered by the school-appointed Nurse after 3 p.m., with the exception of emergency medications such as Epi Pen, Inhalers, and Narcan (See Emergency Medications). When medication is administered, it will be recorded in the Medication Administration Record.

**“Over-the-counter”** topical ointments, lotions, and sprays (non-medication) may be administered by any staff when a completed “Authorization Form” has been accepted by the Nurse. All non-medications will be recorded in the Medication Administration Record when administered.

**Emergency Medications:** Epi-pens and Benadryl will be maintained within the emergency bag located in the classroom of the child who has a documented allergy requiring such medication. Emergency Medications may be administered by any staff member who has been trained in the administration of such medication and is CPR/ First Aide certified. In the event that it is necessary to administer emergency medications, emergency medical services will be called immediately. All emergency medication will be recorded in the Medication Administration Record.

### **Medical Standing Orders**

As a recognized charter school in the Three Village School District, NSMS works in partnership with the Health, Physical Safety, Recreation, and Athletic Office to meet the health and safety needs of our students. As a result of this relationship, North Shore Montessori School is fortunate to have specific guidelines that must be followed from the District Medical Director in the form of Standing Orders for incidents that are considered minor such as an abrasion to life threatening emergencies such as an anaphylactic reaction. These Standing Orders are for instances which necessitate medical intervention by a Registered Nurse and there is no current consent for non-medication or medication administration on file. These orders are reviewed with families at the time of admission and are available for review in the Main Office. In the event that a Registered Nurse must utilize the Standing Orders for the treatment of a student with a medication or non- medication, the parents will be notified and the administration will be recorded in the Medication Administration Record.

## **COMMUNICATION AND PARENT PARTICIPATION**

### **Appointments**

#### **Head of School/ Teachers**

Appointments to see the Head of School\*\* and/ or Teachers may be made at any time throughout the year. For the Head of School, call or come by the office to arrange a time with the Office Manager. To make an appointment with a teacher, you may leave a message in the office, send a note with your child with a number and time when you may be reached, or utilize the teacher’s school email (see website). Teachers will return calls on their breaks or at the end of the day. All emails will be responded to within 24 hours, with the exception of emails that are received after school hours on Friday. Those emails will be responded to no later than end of day the following Monday.

Please be aware that during arrival and dismissal times, teachers and their assistants must provide the students their undivided attention to ensure the safe arrival and dismissal of all children. As a result, if there is a concern you’d like to discuss with your child’s teacher, it is highly recommended that a meeting is scheduled at a mutually agreeable time.

\*\*For questions related to curriculum or classroom social please contact your child’s teacher first.

#### **Nurse**

Call 631-689-8273 ext. 5 or email [nurse@northshoremontessori.com](mailto:nurse@northshoremontessori.com)

#### **General School Related Questions**

For record keeping, lunch program, bus schedules, registration/enrollment, school-wide special events, school policies, and other general administrative questions, call the office at: 631-689-8273 or email [info@northshoremontessori.com](mailto:info@northshoremontessori.com).

### **“Backpack” Mail/ Paperless Initiative**

Each child is requested to bring a full-sized backpack to school every day. This backpack must be able to fit and zipper with a folder inside.

Please place the child’s name on the inside (use indelible ink) of the backpack. The backpack is used to send home your child’s work, as well as other information such as the snack schedules and notices requiring a response. Therefore, be sure to check your child’s backpack every day.

You may also use the backpack to send notes to your teacher, or instructions to the office for dismissal or after care. Please **DATE** your notes to the teachers and be sure to place the note or response form in the folder.

All school-wide “informative notices” from the office will be distributed via e-mail. Please be sure that you have given the office your e-mail address(es).

### **PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Parent teacher conferences are scheduled twice a year in November and May. Please check the school calendar for the exact dates. Conferences will be scheduled by signing up at Parent Orientation and Parent/ Child Night. You may also schedule a conference at any time during the school year by contacting your child’s teacher.

NSMS recognizes that each family unit is diverse and may have different individual needs with regards to conferences especially in the case of divorced or separated parents. Therefore, in this situation, each parent will receive a copy of the child’s progress report should the agreement be as such in the paperwork provided the School. However, in an effort to ensure that the goals and progress of the child are maintained and communicated in a fair and equal manner to both parents, there will be one conference provided per child. Therefore, both parents should arrange a mutually agreeable time to attend the conference regarding their child. In the event that this is not possible due to a court order, it is the custodial parent’s responsibility to notify the teacher so that other arrangements can be made.

### **BOARD MEETINGS**

The North Shore Montessori Board of Trustees is a select group of parent volunteers who serve a two-year term. Potential candidates are reviewed by the Committee on Trustees and a recommendation is put forth to the Board for election of new members. If you have an interest or desire to be a member of the North Shore Montessori Board of Trustees please contact the Head of School.

### **COMMITTEE PARTICIPATION**

Committees are formed to accomplish specific tasks for The School, related to the Financial and Strategic Plan in place. The committee will have a chairperson who runs the meetings and that chairperson will update the Head of School as to the progress of the committee.

Parent Participation hours may be attained through committee work (e.g. One hour on a committee equals one hour of Parent Participation time.) Committee participation is open to all interested individuals (parents, staff, and Board members), who are willing and able to contribute more time and resources to the committee topic. In many cases, participants can utilize personal expertise to come up with the best possible solutions and then present them to the Board for consideration. Through committee work, parents are contributing a vital service to NSMS and, at the same time, actively participating in the process which ultimately creates and/or modifies policies that directly affect the school and its student body.

## **PARENT PARTICIPATION**

As a cooperative organization, NSMS encourages active parent participation in their child's education. Research shows that children do better in school when parents are involved. Parents are expected to donate a set amount of volunteer hours to the school each year. Parent Participation hours are calculated per family, not per individual participant. For example, if Mom, Dad and child help set up for the Halloween Carnival for 3 hours, the total time to be counted toward Parent Participation is 3 hours, not 9 hours. The requirement for Parent Participation is as follows:

20 hours/year	Five-day programs
15 hours/year	Two- or three-day FULL DAY programs
10 hours/year	Two- or three-day HALF DAY programs

Maximum of 20 hours per family per year

Parents may also pay \$15/hour if working or unable to fulfill the hours. You also may receive one hour of parent participation credit for every \$15 worth of supplies/materials/food donated to the school. In June, you will be billed for any remaining hours not fulfilled at the rate of \$15/hour.

Projects eligible for parent participation credit can be found through your teacher, the bulletin board outside the office, or through e-mail notices. Please be sure to record all of your parent participation hours in the Blue Binder on the ledge in front of the office. A parent participation log sheet has been provided in your parent orientation packet. You may keep this activity log at home to help you keep track of your parent participation and submit it to the Office upon completion. Any parent participation hours not entered or submitted prior to the last day of school will be ineligible for credit toward participation.

Parents are our greatest source of advertising and marketing for our school. Therefore, if a family tours our school and registers indicating that they were referred by a specific family at our school, The School will thank the referring family by allowing them to choose between 50% of their Parent Participation Hours having been fulfilled OR 10 FREE Hours in Creative Arts or Toddler After Care. This incentive must be used within the first academic year of enrollment and cannot be carried over to subsequent years. There is no limit to the number of incentives you can receive for helping us spread the word about NSMS.

## **FUNDRAISING**

As in most non-profit independent schools, tuition at NSMS only partially covers the cost of educating each child. Our annual fundraising goal is \$20,000. In past years, we have been fortunate to secure matching donors when the fundraising goal is met. Should you wish to help us double our annual goal for the year, please schedule a time to meet or speak with the Head of School by contacting the main office at 631-689-8273. The monies raised from these fundraising efforts are used to enhance the education of our children in a variety of ways. In the past, the School has allocated these monies toward the renovation of the Stepping Stones Playground as well as much needed Montessori Materials for the classrooms. Each year, the targeted purchase(s) for the fundraising goal are named at Parent Orientation.

As a result of the energy and efforts of parents, staff, grandparents and friends, our fundraising efforts bridge that gap and fund staff training, capital improvements, the Library collection, and the operating budget. Examples of school fundraisers are the Halloween Carnival and Spaghetti Dinner. All families are asked to participate in and contribute to The School's fundraisers to make these efforts a success. Other small fundraisers may be presented during the year, such as SchoolStore.com and logo item sales.

At NSMS, we offer a large selection of ways for our families to be involved in the Fundraising efforts of our school. We acknowledge that, at times, the opportunities offered may seem overwhelming. Please know that

while we would love for all of our families to be actively involved in every fundraising opportunity, we know that this is not always possible. We also know that not every fundraiser meets the personal needs of an individual family. So, as we do in our curriculum for our students, NSMS prides itself on offering choices to our families in the way of fundraising as well. As a result, we encourage our families to choose the fundraisers that they most enjoy and support us whole heartedly. Thank you for your support!

### **Marketing/Solicitation**

Please note: the sale or promotion of commercial products on school grounds and/or among children is not permitted. Merchandise sales that benefit other non-profit organizations or distribution of any charity's literature must be presented to the Head of School for approval prior to distribution.

## **ADMINISTRATION**

### **Admissions Process**

Children are considered officially enrolled in September having met these conditions:

1. Every Kindergarten child must meet with the Head of School & Teacher prior to being accepted for enrollment.
2. The child's family has met all financial obligations of the previous academic year.
3. The parents/ guardians have signed and returned all Financial Paperwork for the current year.
4. Security deposits and Non-Refundable deposits have been paid.
5. Birth Certificate and Medical Forms are on file and all immunizations up-to-date.

### **Enrollment Season**

The Enrollment Season begins in January for the subsequent school year. In order to enroll a child for the subsequent school year, the child's family must be current on all accounts at the time of registration.

### **Withdrawals/Refunds**

Notice of withdrawal of a student from The School must be submitted in writing at least **two weeks** prior to the date the withdrawal is to be effective. All financial matters related to withdrawal are adhered to as described in the Enrollment/ Financial Agreement.

### **Tuition**

Payments are due on the first or tenth day of each month through FACTS Tuition Management Company. As a safety measure, cash is not accepted in the NSMS Office. A student may be withdrawn from the school, at the Head of School's discretion, if the family's account is in arrears and not paid in full by the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the second consecutive unpaid month. Additionally, any account may be required to be paid in full by cash or certified check when in arrears, at the Head of School's discretion. All accounts must be current prior to the Graduation/ Moving Up Ceremony in June.

When a family account is in excess of their security deposit, they may not participate in extracurricular activities.

NSMS will accept refundable prepayments of any number of months' tuition.

A late fee in the amount of \$20 will be charged for any account in arrears greater than 30 days.

### **Children's Records**

All children in the school program have an office file. Health records, birth certificates, psychological tests, and report cards are kept in these files. When the child transfers to another school, only health records, attendance, and report cards go forward unless a parent has requested that confidential testing measures also accompany the records. Parents are welcome to see the files at any time in the presence of the Head of School. Parents must update medical

information, including immunization schedules, annually. Emergency contacts and appropriate medical contacts should also be reviewed every six months.

Parent correspondence, written evaluations, and any applicable injury reports will be located in this file. Although parents may review this data on their child upon request, these files are strictly confidential and only accessible to the Head of School, Teacher, and Office Staff.

In cases involving divorced or separated parents, your child's teacher will make every attempt to keep both parents apprised of school information. A separate folder may be kept in the classroom for such purpose. Please make appropriate arrangements with your child's teacher.

It is incumbent upon parents to provide the school with legal documents detailing custody and/or visitation provisions to ensure that the child is released to the appropriate parent or guardian. In the absence of such documents, the child will be released to either parent or designated guardian.

When there is a change in pertinent information of student records (address, telephone number, emergency medical information, etc.), it is the parent's responsibility to notify the school office, in writing, immediately.

### **Class Placement**

The school has no formal or standardized testing for preschoolers to ascertain placement in specific programs. Montessori educators accept preschool children at their present level of development and readiness, and guide them as far as they are developmentally able to go on the continuum of learning. Children must be 18 months of age to attend Stepping Stones; three (3) years old by December 1<sup>st</sup> and toilet trained to attend Children's House; and five (5) years old by December 1<sup>st</sup> to be enrolled in Kindergarten. Parents may observe any class they are considering for a maximum of a half hour for their child in the coming year. An appointment is required through the office.

When determining placement at the time of enrollment, the Head of School works diligently to try to attain a balance of gender, personality, academic ability, and friendships within the classroom environment.

It is our intention to educate every child to their greatest individual potential. We recognize that all children are unique and learn utilizing various learning styles and at various rates. Therefore, any parent whose child has been evaluated either privately or through the school district is encouraged to provide NSMS with the child's Individualized Education Plan so that the child's academic and social goals may be addressed within the classroom environment. Purposeful, goal oriented, and clear communication between parent and teacher will foster success in all of our students.

### **Mandatory Parent Meeting**

Each year in May, the NSMS Board conducts an annual mandatory Parent Meeting whereby the Head of School and Board of Trustees jointly provide the community a year in review and any Constitutional Amendments, which require a ballot process, are subject to a vote of the membership (parents).

\*All members (parents) not in attendance are subject to a \$25.00 fine.

### **Confidentiality Policy**

The NSMS Confidentiality Policy holds the Staff, Board, and Head of School in the strictest confidence, not to use or disclose any information acquired during their tenure regarding the school, its business, past, current, or prospective employees, any student or family, whether enrolled or not, or any third-party information which has been provided to The School with restrictions on its use or further disclosure, except as required in the performance of their duties or as authorized by the Board of Trustees of NSMS in writing.

This policy is an effort to maintain the highest standards possible to safeguard the privacy of all members of the NSMS community (Parents, Children, Staff, and Board) and to ensure the right to accurate information.

Parents are expected to uphold the same level of confidence when seeking information that concerns them or those around them. By following the steps regarding communication outlined in this handbook, we hope to ensure that information received is correct and will be relayed properly.

This Parent Handbook strives to inform parents regarding typical policies and procedures at NSMS. As NSMS continues to grow, the School's Board of Trustees reserves the right to revise, supplement, or rescind any policies or portion of the handbook from time to time, as it deems appropriate and at its discretion. NSMS- as a recognized charter school in the state of New York- must comply with federal, state, and local laws affecting both early childhood, daycare, and education. We ask that all parents kindly understand that, legally and morally, we must abide by the laws and regulations of the greater society in which we live. We appreciate your understanding of our need to be in compliance with the law and thank you for your support in helping NSMS operate effectively in the best interests of our students, stakeholders, and community members at large.

**This Parent Handbook is available for review in the Main Office, along with a copy of OCFS Day Care Regulations, The Health Care Plan, and the Standing Medical Orders.**



## ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT OF PARENT HANDBOOK

The School's Parent Handbook strives to inform parents regarding typical policies and procedures at NSMS. As NSMS continues to grow, The School's Board of Trustees reserves the right to revise, supplement, or rescind any polices or portion of the handbook from time to time, as it deems appropriate and at its discretion.

In addition, as a licensed daycare provider and recognized charter school in the state of New York, The School must comply with federal, state, and local laws affecting early childhood, daycare, and education.

**This Parent Handbook, along with a copy of The OCFS Day Care Regulations, Our Health Care Plan, and the Standing Medical Orders reviewed with you upon your child's admission to The School, are available for review in the Main Office.**

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the Parent Handbook on the date indicated. I acknowledge that receipt of this handbook implies that I have and/ or will read, understand, and abide by The School's policies and procedures in their entirety. Should I have any questions or require clarity regarding the policies and procedures contained in this handbook, The Health Care Plan, or Standing Medical Orders, it is my responsibility to seek that assistance with either the Head of School or The School's Registered Nurse.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Head of School's Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Head of School's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**THIS ACKNOWLEDGMENT FORM SHALL BE MAINTAINED IN THE STUDENT'S FILE.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Teacher/Classroom