

# Operational Policies Parent Handbook



**Cantera**  
Montessori School  
of Silicon Valley

Children First, Always



## Operational Policies - Parent Handbook

### **Handbook Guidelines**

*The Parent Handbook is a guide to the policies and procedures for MSOSV. From time-to-time changes, updates and additions will be made. Families will be given a 30-day notice for any changes that affect their enrollment agreement. A signed acknowledgment of the current year handbook is kept in each enrolled child's file.*

*An overview of the Parent Handbook policies and procedures is presented to parents at the annual Back-to-School Night each Fall.*

### **Mission**

The mission of the Montessori School of Silicon Valley is to develop the "whole child" by providing an enriched environment in which children can grow to fulfill their individual potential. Activities in the Montessori classroom promote social skills, emotional growth, and physical cognitive preparation as well as artistic and academic excellence.

### **Core Values: CARING**

#### ***Community***

All individuals – child, parent, staff – who join our incredibly diverse school community are treated with respect as individuals. Each is expected to take responsibility for their personal contribution to the group's collective success.

#### ***Accountability***

At the core of accountability is reliability and personal responsibility. We value the ability of our staff and organization to honor our commitments and take ownership in results.

#### ***Respect***

Respect requires consideration and helpfulness as well as the ability to effectively listen, communicate, tolerate, and treat others as they would like to be treated.

#### ***Integrity***

Direct and honest, we make every effort to do the right thing every time. Our community exists to serve children. The integrity of our decisions is based on our motto: "Children First, Always."

#### ***Nurture***

Our goal is to inspire and nurture the human spirit, one child at a time. We speak and act from the heart with true love to the child.

#### ***Growth***

We help each other thrive. We boldly invest in each other's growth. We focus on creating real value for the world, every day and in everything we do.

### **Montessori Philosophy**

The goals of the Montessori Philosophy of education include cultivating each child's natural desire to learn; acquiring and mastering skills; learning responsibility and cooperation; fostering strong, positive feelings about oneself and others. Montessori education focuses on developing a child's creativity, problem solving, social and time- management skills within a classroom community.

We embrace Maria Montessori's beliefs that all children are born with the inherent ability to achieve their full potential; are active participants in their learning; benefit greatly from strong, integrated academic & enrichment programs and that the teacher is the dynamic link in this process.



## The Whole Child

By utilizing a thoughtfully designed environment, the Montessori method focuses on the development of the whole child – cognitive preparation; social skills; physical coordination & emotional growth. Rather than enduring group lessons led by an adult, the Montessori approach in the classroom centers on respected individual choice of work & research in an environment that encourages uninterrupted concentration.

Our motto “Children first, always.” inspires us to provide a rich educational experience for the whole child. We strive to design our classrooms around the needs of the children to stimulate growth and to provide a warm and accepting environment in which the child feels secure, respected, and loved.

Children who have had the benefit of a Montessori environment are freer at a later age to devote themselves more exclusively to the development of their intellectual faculties. The method by which children are taught in the Montessori environment involves the use of many materials with which the children may work individually and independently. At every step of their learning, the teaching materials are designed to test their understanding and correct their own errors without the need for adult interference.

## Our Staff

The MSOSV administrative staff is led by the Owner/Founder and supported by an Executive Team spanning the disciplines of Teacher Education, Program Coordination, Human Resources, Marketing and Operations.

School staff includes a Head of School, Assistant Head of School, Lead Guides, Assistants and Aides (including part time and extracurricular resources). Leads Guides are formally trained in the Montessori Philosophy and Pedagogy from a MACTE accredited institution.

All staff members including all floaters, extracurricular staff must pass a criminal background history check and FBI fingerprints as required by the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHS) and hold a current CPR and First Aid certification.

Additionally, all teaching staff must complete 30 hours of continuing education each year. Included in the training hours are training in awareness, prevention, and action steps in the case of suspected child abuse and neglect.



## Contents

Handbook Guidelines .....	1
Mission .....	1
Core Values: CARING .....	1
Montessori Philosophy .....	1
The Whole Child .....	2
Our Staff .....	2
1. Hours, days, months of operation - Annual schedule published. ....	5
2. Procedures for the release of children .....	6
3. Illness and Exclusion Criteria .....	7
4. Dispensing Medicine – IMS Plan.....	8
5. Food Restrictions .....	9
6. Procedures for handling medical emergencies .....	10
7. Discipline Guidance .....	11
8. Suspension and expulsion of children/parents/guardian .....	11
9. Infant Safe Sleep Policy .....	13
10. Meals and Food Service .....	14
11. Finances .....	16
12. Immunization & Information on Vaccine Preventable Diseases for Employees and Children .....	18
13. Hearing and Vision Screening .....	18
14. Enrollment Procedures.....	18
15. Transportation.....	20
16. Water Activities .....	20
17. Fieldtrips .....	20
18. Animals .....	20
19. Indoor/outdoor activity - benefits of and length of time .....	20
20. Sunscreen & Insect Repellent.....	21
21. Parent's Access to Head of School to Discuss Concerns About Policies and Procedures .....	21
22. Parent's Access to Head of School to Discuss Concerns About Center Operations.....	22
23. Parent's Access to Child Care Center's Most Recent Licensing Report and Minimum Standards .....	22
24. Child Abuse or Neglect .....	23
25. Emergency Preparedness Plan .....	23
26. Breastfeeding.....	24
27. Preventing and Responding to Abuse & Neglect of Children - Employee Training.....	24



28. Preventing and Responding to Abuse & Neglect of Children - Parent Training .....	24
29. Procedures to get assistance and to report abuse/neglect .....	25
30. Daily Health Checks .....	25
31. Vaccine-preventable Diseases for Employees .....	25
32. Children with Special Needs .....	25
33. Weather - what to expect .....	26
34. Sunscreen .....	27
35. Pest Control .....	27
36. Position on Corporal Punishment .....	27
37. Children will NOT be withheld from outside play, food .....	27
38. Special Occasion, Birthday and Holidays .....	28
39. Classroom Observations - Parents .....	30
40. Gang-Free Zone .....	31
41. Screen Time .....	31
42. Items to leave at home .....	31
43. Parent Communication .....	31
44. Separated or Divorced Families .....	33
45. Montessori Materials .....	33
46. Clothing choices .....	33
47. Items to leave at home .....	33
48. Toys .....	33
49. Lost or damaged items .....	34
50. Classroom Parents .....	34
51. Classroom Volunteers and Special Presentations .....	34
52. Extra-Curricular Programs .....	34
53. Social Media .....	35
54. Suggestions and policy discussions .....	35
55. Summary of Parents Rights .....	35



## 1. Hours, days, months of operation - Annual schedule published.

Enrollment in the Montessori School of Silicon Valley is based on a year-round commitment. Our academic year runs from September through August. The year includes a School Year Curriculum from September thru June and then a Summer Curriculum in July and August.

All programs operate Monday thru Friday with the exception the dates the school is closed for holidays and staff development days. Below is an example of a typical Annual Holiday and Vacation Calendar includes:

Month	Holiday / Vacation	Month	Holiday / Vacation
August/September	Staff Development Day/Labor Day (partial week)	February	President's Day (partial week)
November	Veteran's Day Staff Development Day / Thanksgiving	March or April	Spring Break (entire week)
December	Winter Break, Christmas thru New Year's	May	Memorial Day
January	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day	July	Independence Day Staff Development Days

Regular school hours are 7am to 6pm.

The academic school day begins at 8:00 am. Please have your child arrive at school no later than 8:15 am. All children need to be signed in daily using individually assigned log-in code, assigned only to authorized persons. MSOSV encourages your child's independence. Please allow your child to carry their own belongings as this encourages independence. Our morning work cycle begins at 8:30, please arrive no later than 8:15 am. Your child will often miss activities if they arrive later.

### Absences

Daily attendance is vital for your child's development. If your child must be away from school, for whatever reason, please call or email the Head of School to report the absence. School Calendars An annual calendar is provided to parents showing the schools holidays and closures including Winter Break and Spring Break. Since all operation costs such as salary, insurance, and so forth continue during these times, the school does not reduce tuition because of planned or unplanned absences. See classroom schedule.

### Personal Relationships with Staff

It is common for families of the school to request babysitting services from individuals from our teaching staff. Although we understand families desire to utilize a trusted, respected, reliable, known person in this manner. We must request that enrolled families in the school do not use any of our school staff in this capacity. This policy is not unique to this school. If you were to think about your own business or businesses you deal with in the community, you will understand the principles of client/professional relationships. Our schools are no less a professional entity than other businesses and to maintain that professionalism, policies are necessary and essential. Please note: if the school management learns that this policy has been violated, either the violating staff member may be dismissed, and/or the violating parent will be asked to leave the school.



## 2. Procedures for the release of children

The only people authorized to pick up a child from school are the child's parents or guardians. If another person is to pick up a child, that person must be added to the Authorized Pick-up List in the child's file.

**Adding someone to the Authorized Pick-up List:** the person's first and last name, phone number and relationship to the child. When this person arrives the first time to pick up the child, they must bring a valid driver's license or state issued photo ID showing their full name. The school will take a photocopy of the ID and place it in the child's file.

If a change of plans, on any given day does not allow you or a designated person to pick up, and you need to send someone who is not on the authorized list, you must notify the office with: your signed permission, the name and photo ID of the person who will pick up. This can be sent by email to the school administration.

In case of emergencies or illness, parents and guardians will be notified immediately to come pick up their child. If the school is unable to reach the parents or guardian, those listed as Emergency Contacts will be called.

**Children picked up early for the day:** In the event of unforeseen circumstances, family matters or weather emergencies, please let your child's guide or the Head of School know you will be picking your child up early. Please call ahead so we can plan and prepare your child for an early departure.

### Drop-off and pick up Expectations – Parking Lot Safety

**Safety and Security Front Entrance** - Please use the code given to you to enter the building. If there is someone waiting to enter or following you in and you do not recognize them as a parent already enrolled in the school, please ask them to use the "Doorbell Camera Button" and we will let them in. It is very important that we know when unauthorized people are in our school.

**Authorized Person**- Upon enrollment, parents will receive the "Emergency Identification" documents. On this form parents can authorize additional relatives or family friends who are authorized to pick up their child from school. Only those authorized on this form will be able to pick up after verifying their identity with the Head of School or Lead Staff. Proper photo identification includes Government issued ID or Driver's License, passport, etc. When necessary, parents will also be called to confirm pick up.

### Parking Safety

***Please keep your child with you always while in the parking lot. Please hold their hand and do not allow them to run through the parking lot at any time. It is not safe!!***

### Sign-in and Sign-out Requirements

Parents are required by law to bring their children into the center, to sign them in upon arrival, and to again come into the center to sign them out prior to departure. A 4-digit code is assigned to all individuals authorized to take children from the facility. This code acts as an authorized signature and is kept with your child's file.

The 4-digit code is just like your signature. You are not allowed to let others use your code or let your child sign themselves in or out at any time. You must sign-in upon entering the school to drop off your child. The same for pick-up as well. If you sign your child out before entering the classroom to pick up your child and you stay later than your contracted hours, you will be charged the late pick-up fee.

Through the 1CORE Parent App parents also have the option of using a touchless QR code which ties your phone to your 4-digit code for sign in/out purposes. The school will have the QR code posted near the entrance of the school. Your Head of School can provide you with more detail on using this method.

You must sign your child in at the entrance of the school as well, if you arrive before your contracted hours, you must wait to enter the classroom, or you will be charged extra attendance.



## IN THE SCHOOL

It is your responsibility to keep your child with you before you leave your child with his/her guide as well as when you pick up at the end of school. You are not allowed to let your child be in the school unsupervised at any time. Please help the children respect our rules by walking through the school and hallway, keep feet and bodies on the floor, not up on tables and chairs.

### **Late Pick Up**

If your child is picked up after the contracted hours, a charge of \$20.00 per quarter hour will be assessed. If you are late three times in one month, the late pick-up fee is tripled (\$60.00 per quarter hour). If you are late more than three times in one month, your admission may be reviewed by the administration.

Closing Staff stay with late children. They will try to reach the late parent via telephone. If a parent cannot be reached within 30 minutes, the Head of School is to be called. If the Head of School cannot be reached, the Executive Director is to be called.

Closing staff are NEVER to drive children ANYWHERE. They are to stay in the facility until an authorized person arrives to pick up the child. Closing staff may not leave the child in the facility prior to an authorized person arrives to pick up. Only if another staff member or manager arrives to relieve them, they may leave prior to the child being picked up. If the parent or guardian cannot be reached, all associated phone numbers must be attempted to reach an authorized person who may pick up the child.

It is the parent's responsibility to ensure the center has all the correct phone numbers to reach in case of late pick up or emergency.

### **3. Illness and Exclusion Criteria**

A child must be well to attend school. Should he/she become ill during the day, the parent will be notified immediately. Arrangements must be made to pick up the child from school within one hour.

- A parent will be called to pick up their child if their child has a temperature of
- 100.1 or higher, diarrhea or vomiting three times within one hour, and any other symptoms that can be contagious or a health risk to the children and staff.
- If a child is unable to participate in regular activities, the parent will be called or pick up.

Please contact the school to inform us when your child will be absent for any reason. The children will form a community at the school. Both children and staff will miss your child and worry about them when they are absent.

When children are not feeling well, they are not able to learn, spend time with friends or enjoy themselves. Sick children are likely to make other children and faculty sick as well. Although we have an area provided for children that get sick, our school is not the best environment when your little ones aren't feeling well.

***Please do not send sick children to school and be prepared to pick them up promptly when you are called when they are ill.***



You may not bring your children to school if your child had any of the following within the 24 hours prior to the beginning of the school day. You will be asked to acknowledge the absence of a fever when you sign in your child daily.

- Fever reading of 100.1 degrees or higher.
- Fever reducing medicine.
- A runny nose with green nasal mucous.
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Pink eye with secretions – MUST SHOW evidence of 4 doses of medication administered.
- Rash: Any skin irritation we cannot identify
- Impetigo or hand Foot Mouth Disease: Red or white pimples which become small vesicles surrounded by a reddened area. When blisters break, the surface is raw and weeping. Look for signs in neck creases, groin, underarms, face, hands, feet, or diaper line.
- Head Lice: Live contagious insects or their nits (egg sacs) that infest hair. Children will not be readmitted without being free of live lice and nits.
- Unknown Illness: Any condition without obvious symptoms other than unusual paleness, irritability, tiredness, or lack of interest.
- Contagious Disease or condition: Any contagious condition including but not limited to: Measles, Chicken Pox, Mumps, Roseola, Strep Throat infection, Head Lice, etc...

Children may be brought to school if they have a mild cold or allergy, an allergic rash, diaper rash, prickly heat, a loose bowel movement, dietary or medication diarrhea, as long as they can cope successfully with the program and do not require care that results in a greater need than caregivers can provide without compromising the safety, health, welfare and supervision of the other children. Please alert staff to anything out of the ordinary that your child is experiencing.

If for whatever reason. Diagnosed or undiagnosed, your child is unable to cope with a program and is showing signs of illness, lethargic, cannot stay awake outside of naptime, is inconsolable or does not feel well enough to participate in the everyday activities of the classroom, you will be called to pick them up so they can see a doctor and/or get better at home.

For most illnesses, a child may return to school once they have been symptom free for a full 24 hours. MSOSV reserves the right to exercise its exclusion policy if it is in the best interest of the group even if there is a physician's note stating that the child can return to care.

If a child has or is suspected of having a communicable condition, not only will notify the parent/guardian immediately, but we will also report it to the HHS and the Texas Department of State Health Services (TDSHS), if listed as a Notifiable condition by TDSHS. The child will be excluded from attendance until the readmission criteria for that condition (listed in the Texas Administrative Code) is met.

## 4. Dispensing Medicine – IMS Plan

### **Medications**

Our priority at MSOSV is the safety and well-being of the children. Therefore, we have guidelines we wish to share with you prior to accepting any medication, prescription and/or over-the counter, for your child, as well as forms that will need to be completed by both you and your child's physician.

As a courtesy and to assist parents who are unable to come to our school to dispense medication to their child themselves, our staff will administer needed prescription medication as prescribed by his/her physician, provided MSOSV has received the required documents as noted on the Medication & Required Paperwork Checklist. This requirement applies to over-the-counter medications as well for the students in our Nido community.



All prescription and over-the-counter medication is kept in our school offices or in the classroom cabinet, out of reach of children.

Prescription medication must be in the appropriately labeled prescription container with an unaltered label listing the child's name, physician's name, medication name, dosage, and expiration date. Over-the-counter medication must be in its original container with the child's name written on the packaging, and it must contain the dosage information and expiration date (if applicable). Nido only.

Medication & Required Paperwork Checklist (Medication & Required Paperwork Must Be Renewed Each School Year) All Medications, Prescription and Over the Counter, Must Be Accompanied By: MSOSV Prescription and Over-the-Counter Medication Consent & Instruction Record that is completed in full and signed by the parent/guardian. A Physician's Official statement on physician's letterhead or an Action Plan detailing all the following (Note: Food allergies are required to have an Action Plan):

- Name of the medication (prescription or over the counter). Physicians must indicate whether the prescription or over-the-counter medication may or may not be in generic form and, if so, the name of the generic medication.
- Medical reasons for the medication (i.e., allergic to nuts, severe skin eczema, etc.).
- Possible side effects.

Method, amount and approximate time schedule the medication is to be taken during the school day. If physician's instructions indicate "as needed" for the dispensing schedule, we require written instructions as to what symptoms to look for prior to administering the prescription or over-the-counter medication, the minimum hours between dosages, and the maximum number of doses to be given while the child is at school.

If medication is to be kept in the child's classroom, a notation to this effect is required by the physician.

Statement must include the physician's name (printed), address and phone number. Inhalers & Nebulizers Also Require: Inhaler or Nebulizer Physician's Instructions must be submitted or physician's instructions on his/her letterhead that include all the information listed on the Inhaler or Nebulizer Physician's Instructions form, including whether the prescribed medication can be in generic form or not, and if so, the generic name of the medication.

A completed Nebulizer Care/Consent Verification for each MSOSV team member who will assist with dispensing the medication. If submitting medication for asthma, a completed and signed (by parent and physician) Asthma Action Plan is highly recommended.

## 5. Food Restrictions

If your child has an allergy that has been diagnosed, we are required by Childcare Licensing to have the signed Physician's Allergy Action Plan.

Children with an allergy that requires an immediate dosage of epinephrine, or any other lifesaving medication will not be allowed into care without a signed Physician's Allergy Action Plan and all the medication listed on the plan is kept in the classroom's IMS backpack.



## Allergies – Nut Safe Policy

To promote a safe environment for all students and staff, MSOSV has a “Nut Safe” policy. This is a strategy to educate parents and staff about reducing the risk of exposure to life threatening foods, such as nuts. It is important to note that the safety of children with severe reactions requires cooperation of the entire community.

- All snacks provided by MSOSV will be free of peanuts/nuts.
- Children can bring in their own lunch, food containing nuts.
- The staff will have children with nut allergies sit separate from children who have lunch containing nuts.
- We do not allow food sharing unless it is a special occasion, holiday parties, birthdays etc. Staff will check the ingredient list.
- Any baked items brought in for celebrations should be nut-free and must be store-brought with ingredient label intact.

If in the event, there is a child in a classroom with a nut allergy so severe that will be affected even if not sitting at same table still causes a reaction, the parents of that classroom will be asked to NOT send food containing nuts in their child’s lunch.

If your child has a restricted diet that prohibits them from participating in our regular daily snack, you are welcome to bring the following:

A serving of fruit, crackers, or yogurt, or apple sauce.

Please send the snack to school in a plastic baggie, with your child’s name written on the baggie with a sharpie marker. Please leave the snack(s) with the Classroom Guide. We will be sure to offer the snack to your child during our regular snack hours. Since we do not have refrigeration available, please only send fruit that is to stay cold for the morning snack time. Otherwise send crackers for the afternoon snack.

The snack must be signed in each day. If you do not sign in your snack, we will assume that it is ok for your child to have the snack that is offered by the school that day.

The signed Physician’s Allergy Action Plan has a photo of each child with details about their individual allergies that will be posted in every classroom. MSOSV staff members are provided with training on how to identify and treat potential allergic reactions. It is our shared responsibility to ensure a healthy environment for every child. Please update your emergency plan as soon as any changes occur.

**Food Allergies:** If submitting medication for a food allergy, a completed and signed (by parent and physician) Food Allergy Action Plan is required in place of a Physician’s.

**Official Statement.** All Allergies: Parents are to list all allergies on their child’s Consent for Medical Treatment form and update them as often as is applicable during the school year.

## 6. Procedures for handling medical emergencies

All emergency situations will be handled on an individual basis. Each family will be immediately notified, and appropriate measures will be taken up to and including the calling of 911.

In some instances, your child's doctor and/or dentist may be contacted for emergency. Please update your child's physician, dentist, and insurance information as well as emergency contact numbers whenever a change occurs.



## First Aid

First Aid supplies are kept in all classrooms and on the playground. All staff members are trained in Infant-Child CPR and Emergency First Aid. If a minor accident occurs, the staff will provide basic first aid for your child. In these cases, the attending staff member will fill out an "Ouch Report" and parents will receive a copy of the report.

If there is a more serious event or more extensive treatment is required, the Head of School or qualified representative will make all decisions about the care of the child and fill out an Incident Report. In these cases, as applicable, parents and guardians will be notified immediately to come pick up the child. We will also call an ambulance or the paramedics if the need arises.

If a child requires professional medical attention, you will be asked to sign the Incident Report and a copy of the report will be filed with The Texas Health and Human Services Commission. If your child requires medical attention after hours due to an event that occurred at school, we request that you notify us as soon as possible so we can file the report in a timely manner.

## 7. Discipline Guidance

Positive reinforcement is the main form of discipline in our program. Positive behavior is acknowledged, thereby creating a positive way of thinking for each child. Children are given the freedom to make their own choices to follow the ground rules in the classrooms. When children are not following the rules, they are asked to make a better choice when they are ready to. Limits, both inside and out of the classroom, are clearly established and when necessary, redirection will be initiated. If negative behavior continues, a parent conference may be requested.

MSOSV will not use corporal punishment for any reason. In general, rules are made by the staff and children. Discipline is designed to promote the development of self-direction, self-control, and socially acceptable behavior. This is accomplished through consistency, firmness, fairness and follow-through.

## 8. Suspension and expulsion of children/parents/guardian

The following behaviors are **NOT** acceptable by children and/or parent or guardian:

- Excessive disruption to the program.
- Endangering the health or safety of children or staff.
- Continuous refusal to follow acceptable rules of behavior.
- Leaving the premises without permission (children only).

If a problem should occur, the guides or staff members first consider that certain types of misbehavior are to be expected at certain ages. This is part of each child's development. Therefore, age-appropriate demands are placed on each child's behavior. In handling a specific discipline problem, the situation is independently evaluated.

The guide or staff member may choose to redirect a child to a more acceptable activity or may simply remind the child of a classroom rule.

In other instances, it may be necessary to stop the child's activity and focus on the child and her/his actions. The guide will try to help the child reach a solution, pointing out why his/her actions are a problem.

At times, a child may lose control of a situation erupting in anger or frustration. If this occurs, the guide or staff member may take the child aside and allow her/him to work out the anger or frustration before problem solving with the child.



If a child's or parent/guardian's behavior is considered dangerous or disruptive to other children and staff, immediate action will be taken. A parent-teacher conference will be scheduled. During the conference, the lead guide/Head of School will discuss the situation with the parent(s)/guardian and recommend a course of action. Resources outside of the school may be suggested.

If the parent(s)/guardian are not willing to cooperate with the school to resolve the problem, the child may be discharged from the program until such a time that he or she can control his or her behavior and participate in the program in a healthy and safe manner.

Prior to this action, the school will provide an outside resource list and make recommendations to the family.

Families who fail to meet financial obligations regarding payment of tuition or other fees, child health requirements, or who repeatedly violate school policy may also be asked to withdraw from the program.

**\*MSOSV has the right to ask the parents to pick up any child who has the above unacceptable behavior or is a danger to themselves or others.**

MSOSV is required to share the following legal information regarding discipline:

**Texas Administrative Code, Title 40, Chapters 746 & 747, Subchapter L, Discipline and Guidance:**

Discipline must be:

- Individualized and consistent for each child.
- Appropriate to the child's level of understanding; and
- Directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-control.

A caregiver may only use positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourage self-esteem, self-control, and self-direction, which include at least the following:

- Using praise and encouragement of good behavior instead of focusing only upon unacceptable behavior.
- Reminding a child of behavior expectation daily by using clear, positive statements.
- Redirecting behavior using positive statements; and
- Using brief supervised separation or time out from the group, when appropriate for the child's age and development, which is limited to no more than one minute per year of the child's age.

There must be no harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of any child. The following types of discipline and guidance are prohibited:

- Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment.
- Punishment associated with food, naps, or toileting.
- Withholding: outside play, food, special projects or activities.
- Pinching, shaking, or biting a child.
- Hitting a child with a hand or an instrument.
- Putting anything in or on a child's mouth.
- Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling at a child.
- Subjecting a child to harsh, abusive, or profane language.
- Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom, or closet with the door closed; and
- Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time of the child's age.



## 9. Infant Safe Sleep Policy

The purpose of the Safe Sleep Policy is to maintain a safe sleep environment that reduces the risk of sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) and sudden unexpected infant deaths (SUIDS) in children less than one year of age.

California & Texas law requires all licensed childcare facilities that provide care for children less than one year of age to implement and maintain a written safe sleep policy in accordance with the most recent safe sleep recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP).

California & Texas childcare licensing rules require licensed childcare facilities to provide parent(s) and/or guardians(s) who have infants in care be provided with a copy of the facility's safe sleep policy.

Sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) is the sudden death of an infant less than one year of age that cannot be explained after a thorough investigation has been conducted, including a complete autopsy, an examination of the death scene, and a review of the clinical history.

Sudden unexpected infant death syndrome (SUIDS) is the sudden and unexpected death of an infant less than one year of age in which the manner and cause of death are not immediately obvious prior to investigation. Causes of sudden unexpected infant death include, but are not limited to, metabolic disorders, hypothermia or hyperthermia, neglect or homicide, poisoning, and accidental suffocation.

MSOSV is committed to providing safe sleep environments for infants that help lower the chances of SIDS.

Our goal is to take proactive steps to reduce the risk of SIDS in childcare and to work with parents to keep infants safer while they sleep. To do so, this facility will practice a safe sleep policy.

### Napping/Rest-time

All rest linens and rest mats are provided by the school. All napping equipment is washed and sanitized weekly or as needed. The school is responsible for washing and sanitizing all rest equipment.

Rest time is daily from 12:30 to 2:30. The staff will sit with the children quietly to help them rest. If a child begins to stay awake throughout the rest period, they will be allowed to get up and choose work or other quiet activities in the classroom. When children reach a point where they do not lay down for rest any longer, they help clean up from lunch and continue with the Montessori work period or other quiet activities planned by the staff.

### Toileting

Pre-Primary ages 18 months - 36 months

Children in the Pre-Primary program will be introduced to the toilet from day one. Through children are encouraged toward independence in this area, they are never forced or coerced to use the toilet. Children still in diapers will be changed regularly and introduced to the process of using the toilet, including hand washing. A separate personal cubby will be provided for children still in diapers to store diapers. Wipes are provided by the school and are Kirkland Signature Baby Wipes. These wipes feature Aloe & Chamomile, are Hypoallergenic and there is no chlorine, alcohol, dyes, parabens, or phthalates.

If you prefer to bring your own wipes – See Allergy Instructions

Your child's guide will meet with you to discuss the transition to underwear. We will ask that your child remain in diapers until wearing underwear. Please do not send your child to school in Pull-ups.

Once your child transitions to underwear, please do not be discouraged, accidents are expected, and your child might change clothes many times during the day. Wet clothes will be sent home in a plastic bag each day.



Please replace the clothing the following day. While in this toilet learning process, please be sure your child always has 4-5 sets of clothing. Also, please be mindful of the time of year and weather for appropriate clothing.

Primary and Kindergarten ages 3 years – 6 years

Students must be fully independent with toileting and no longer wearing diapers during the day or at naptime. This also includes your child being able to properly wipe by themselves.

While the guides expect a certain level of mastery in toileting in the Primary Community and aim to support the child's continued independence with toileting, the guide will assess the needs of younger children or children still in the early stages of toileting and provide support as needed and as they are able during the toileting process. Because the occasional "accident" is still expected to happen, please provide two changes of clothes. Please be sure to label all belongings. If your child's guide has concerns or questions related to toileting, please trust they will speak with you in a timely manner. Similarly, we encourage you to speak directly with your child's guide to relay any specific concerns or questions you may have related to the toileting process.

## 10. Meals and Food Service

In keeping with MSOSV mission to develop the "whole child", proper nutrition is very important. We ask that families send their children to school every day with a nutritious lunch that will not spoil without refrigeration. At least one ice pack is recommended to be included in the lunchbox to keep food fresh. We also ask that you consider sending organic, whole foods when possible. Please avoid foods with high fructose corn syrup, added hormones or over-processed foods.

### Lunch

You may choose to pack and send lunch with your child. Or you may enroll in the Hot Lunch Program. MSOSV contracts with an outside vendor who brings hot, healthy lunch to school each day. See "hot lunch menu and pricing".

Children eat lunch with their classmates and guides. The guides utilize the opportunity to model appropriate table manners and etiquette in addition to discussing good nutrition and health practices.

Children have the choice to bring home lunch or purchase a hot lunch from the catering company.

For Home Lunch –the children set the table with linens, plates, bowls, napkins, utensils and a cup. Water is served with lunch if a drink is not provided from home.

For Hot Lunch – Milk is served with Hot Lunch.

If Home Lunch is to be heated, the food must be ready to microwave. We do not COOK food, we only heat food. Heated food should never be in an unsafe microwave container. Once your child graduates from the Nido environment, there is NO refrigerator available for children's lunch. It is recommended that the parent pack an insulated ice pack in the lunch box.

Children are never to share lunch with each other. Guides do not share their lunch with children. Apart from the Nido community, children are not to be spoon fed. The staff may assist a child to use the spoon or fork, but not do it for them. Children are never force fed. Food is never to be withheld. Taking food away from a child is never to be used as punishment of any sort.



We will prepare and eat lunch together as a group. We encourage the children to be as independent as possible in the preparation of their lunch. Please avoid heavily processed food and difficult to open containers. They will have the option of drinking milk or water with their lunch. Deserts should be small and considered as part of the overall part of lunch not as bribery to "finish" their lunch.

### **Packing your child's lunch**

Little children have little tummies! Most parents worry their child will be hungry and send far too much food. Although too many choices are often overwhelming for a child, having no choices at all may be frustrating. Even though it was your child's favorite food yesterday, it may be something they just "don't like" today. We recommend small quantities of approximately three different healthy foods. You know your child's eating habits the best! We make every effort to encourage your child to send home uneaten food so that you can see what your child eats.

### **Snacks and Lunch**

**Infant Meals & Milk** - All food, snacks, milk, formula is provided by the parent and is brought to school and taken home every day. Parents are to label all food and milk with date and name.

### **Breastfeeding**

MSOSV is a breastfeeding-friendly school and nursing mother as welcome to use the office or any other place on campus where they feel comfortable breastfeeding their child.

### **Pre-Primary and Primary Meals:**

The school serves Organic multigrain cereal (Multigrain Cheerios) or the equivalent with organic 2% milk. This snack is served daily between the hours of 7:00- 8:30 am. Please do not send your child to school with breakfast/snack from home. If you miss this snack time, please allow your child to finish their food before coming to school.

MSOSV provides morning and afternoon snack. All snacks meet or exceed state food requirements. We have a variety of snack options which include but are not limited to, Multigrain crackers, organic pita chips, and veggie sticks. The school also serves fresh fruit daily both in the morning and in the afternoon. We try to buy organic seasonal fruit. Some of the fruit we serve includes strawberries, apples, oranges, bananas, watermelon, and cantaloupe.

The school has a list of the ingredients found in our snacks. Please let us know if you would like a copy. We never serve any snack that includes nuts of any kind.

The Monthly Snack Calendar may be found on the Parent Board in each classroom. Please note, if snack is substituted, the Snack Calendar is updated for parent reference.

Children may have seconds for each snack offered.

### **Nido and Pre-Primary Snack**

Nido and Pre-Primary snack is offered 3 times per day. Snack is served in a group style – the children eat snack together at the same time.

### **Primary/Kindergarten Snack**

Snack is offered during the morning work period and again in the afternoon work period. Snack is open for 1 to 2 hours at a time. Children visit the snack table when ready to eat snack. Children may re-visit the snack table to have "seconds".



## Water

Water is available and accessible to the children in every classroom as well as outside throughout the entire school day. Please do not send your child to school with additional water bottles. (water bottles may be packed with lunch, however, drinking water is available all day to the children, the children can use lunch water bottle only during lunch).

## 11. Finances

### Payments

For account information, contact our MSOSV Operations Director in our main office if you have any questions or problems regarding the payment of tuition, please inform us promptly. Please email [billing@msosv.com](mailto:billing@msosv.com) (can add generic email that forwards?)

MSOSV is dependent on tuition income for its operating capital. Timely tuition payments ensure the school's ability to meet expenses.

Tuition is due on the 1st of the month. It is payable by cash, check, or TAP/ACH (Tuition Auto Pay). Parents have 24/7 access their account including billing statements via 1CORE. Please note that MSOSV does not proactively send bills or statements.

**Check**-- Pay by "Check". Place check in tuition box located at the school.

**TAP**-- Tuition Auto Pay via ACH. Parents are provided TAP enrollment instructions at the time of enrollment. All monthly charges are processed through our TAP program on the 1st of every month. There are no additional fees to use this service.

**Cash**-- See Head of School for cash payments.

An account statement is made available on the 1CoreParent Portal by the 10th of each month. The school tax id and mailing address are included in the monthly statement for tax purposes. The monthly statement serves as a receipt and is accessible to parents on a self-serve basis. No other receipts will be written.

### Included in Tuition

- Montessori Program Curriculum and Instruction
- Afternoon Studio Enrichment
- Before School Snack (served daily 7am to 8:30am)
- Morning and Afternoon Snack

### Registration Fee

\$200 due at time of enrollment. This fee is per child and non-refundable. If a child withdraws for an extended period, a re-registration fee of \$200 is assessed to return.

### Annual Re-Enrollment Fee

\$300 due during the Annual Re-Enrollment Campaign. Registration at the school is on an "School Year" basis (Sept 1st thru August 31st). Your child will not be guaranteed a reservation for the following school year unless you enter into a new tuition agreement and pay all applicable fees. Re-Enrollment fees are payable during the annual Fall Re-enrollment Campaign that takes place in early February to hold space in school for the following school year. If this fee is not paid by the end of the Re-Enrollment Period, the space will be made available to another pre-qualified family. The Re-Enrollment Fee is non-refundable and is assessed per child/student. Please note: MSOSV families have priority for enrollment. Outside enrollment opens at the conclusion of the Fall Re-Enrollment Campaign. Space is limited.



## Annual Materials Fee

\$300 due September 1st or at time of enrollment. The Annual Materials Fee is non-refundable. The Materials Fee covers the cost of projects, Studio Enrichment Programs activities and consumable materials such as food preparation, cultural celebrations & studies as well as art supplies in the classroom. For mid-year enrollments (between February and April) the Annual Materials fee will be \$150.

## Kindergarten Fieldtrip Fee

\$125 due on September 1st or at time of Enrollment. This fee is folded into the Kinder pre-payment option. Please contact your Head of School to learn more.

## Other Fees

**Late Pick Up:** If child is picked up after contracted hours, a fee of \$20.00 per quarter hour is charged. If you are late three times in one calendar month, the late pick-up fee is tripled. If late more than three times in one month, admission may be reviewed by the school administration.

**Late Payment** – Tuition due by the 4th of the month. \$10 Late Fee assessed if paid after.

**Returned Checks or Returned ACH:** \$25.00 each

**School Diapers** - \$2.00 per diaper

**Missed Sign in and out Signatures** \$2.00 per missing signature (note: if computer system is down, paper sign in/out forms will be made available to parents)

**Missing documents required by state licensing:** \$5.00 per day

## Outside Services

Extra-Curricular Classes – See Schedule for specific program and fees

Catered Lunch Program – See schedule for available menus and fees

## Discounts and Credits

**Sibling Discount**- The discount policy for multiple children of one family is 10% off the highest single tuition if all children are attending full time.

**Friends & Family Referral Credit**- Qualify for a \$150 credit by referring friends, family, or co- workers. The referral credit is applied to your tuition after your referral has been enrolled at any of our MSOSV campus locations for 90 days. Referral credits are eligible year-round. Referring family name must appear on the child application at the point of enrollment to qualify for this credit.

## Withdraw Policy

Parents may withdraw their children by notifying the Head of School in writing at least 30 days prior to the date of withdrawal. Under no circumstance will this requirement be waived. All fees must be paid up to the 30 days on the day the notice is given. Please request a “30-day Notice of Withdrawal” from your Head of School.

## Long Term Absence

30-day notice is still required. If you wish to return to school after the long-term absence, and do not wish to pay tuition while absent, you may risk losing your space. Once your child has their last day, the Head of School is required to fill the open space in the school. If, when you return there is a space open in the school, you may re-register with \$200 registration fee.

## Extra Attendance

If enrolled in a part time space in the school and wish to occasionally attend school outside of contracted hours, please speak with the Head of School, if space is available a prorated tuition fee will be calculated.



## 12. Immunization & Information on Vaccine Preventable Diseases for Employees and Children

MSOSV is required by HHS to keep a copy of each enrolled child's immunization records on file and a health statement from your child's doctor signed and dated with the last year. You can review the Recommended Childhood Immunization Schedule via The Department of Health and Human Services – Centers for Disease control and Prevention website at: <http://www.immunizetexas.com>

### Immunization Waivers

Admission Form 2935 must be completed in its entirety and return to the school before the child's 1<sup>st</sup> day of enrollment. This form is kept on file in the Head of School's office.

A list of the vaccinations required by the State of Texas is located at this link at:

<https://www.dshs.texas.gov/immunize/school/pdf/6-15-2020-2021-MinReq-Child-Care--PreK-final.pdf>

Texas law allows (a) physicians to write medical exemption statements which clearly state a medical reason exists that the person cannot receive specific vaccines, and (b) parents/guardians to choose an exemption from immunization requirements for reasons of conscience, including a religious belief. The law does not allow parents/guardians to elect an exemption simply because of inconvenience (for example, a record is lost or incomplete and it is too much trouble to go to a physician or clinic to correct the problem). Schools should maintain an up-to-date list of students with exemptions, so they may be excluded in times of emergency or epidemic declared by the commissioner of public health. Instructions for requesting the official exemption affidavit that must be signed by parents/guardians choosing the exemption for reasons of conscience, including a religious belief, can be found at [www.dshs.texas.gov/immunize/school/exemptions.aspx](http://www.dshs.texas.gov/immunize/school/exemptions.aspx). The original Exemption Affidavit must be completed and submitted to the school. For children claiming medical exemptions, a written statement by the child's medical doctor (M.D.) must be submitted to the school. Unless it is written in the statement that a lifelong condition exists, the exemption statement is valid for only one year from the date signed by the physician.

Admission to a school is not allowed until records are produced showing that (1) the child has been immunized in accordance with the rules; (2) the child has an exemption affidavit from immunization requirements on file with the school in accordance with the rules; or (3) the child is entitled to provisional enrollment.

## 13. Hearing and Vision Screening

We are required by HHS to keep a copy of each enrolled child's annual hearing and vision results for children ages four and up by September 1<sup>st</sup>.

## 14. Enrollment Procedures

**Enrollment occurs annually from February through April for the following school year.** Families are welcome to apply for Admission at any time during the year to become Pre-Qualified and offered the next available start date, or desired start date.

As space becomes available, we prioritize enrollment in the following order:

- Currently enrolled students
- Siblings of currently enrolled students
- Students from one of our sister schools
- Applicants who have been pre-qualified and accepted

Children with specialized needs, siblings or otherwise, are furthermore considered according to the ability of our staff to meet those needs and our need to maintain a balance of children with specialized needs in each classroom.

When a family has been accepted for enrollment, the enrollment instructions and forms are provided.



## Admissions Requirements

All registration, medical forms and payments must be completed before child starts school, as a condition of enrollment. Terms of Enrollment MSOSV reserves the right to ask a parent to withdraw their child for reason of non-compliance with any of our policies. This includes but is not limited to policies regarding safety, health and welfare of any persons connected with our operation, any of our financial policies regarding tuition and any actions endangering the ability of the school to function. Services may be terminated at any time.

## School Records

To register your child/children, parents must submit the following documents prior to or on the first day of school:

- Admission Information – Form 2935
- Consent for Medical Treatment
- Physician's Notice & Current Immunizations
- Admissions Application
- Emergency Contact Information
- Emergency Information
- Immunization Records
- Admissions Agreement
- Parent Handbook Receipt
- First Day Checklist

*It is important that your personal contact information is accurate and up to date. Please notify Administration if any of your contact information changes.*

All of the above are provided to parents by the school, in soft copy (via the 1CORE family portal) and have all been formatted to support electronic signatures to help parents stay organized.

All persons having access to children's records may not discuss or disclose personal information regarding the children or their families. In the presence of school officials, children's records are available to parents and to persons authorized by parents in writing. Your child's entire school record is available to you for review and comment. Please make your request in writing to the Head of the School. You may use the school's office or the main office to examine your child's file. These files must remain in the school. Children's files are kept until the child's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.

## Change in Policy Notification

If there is any change in school policies or tuition, 30-day notice will be given.

Parents should expect an annual tuition increase each year.

## Attendance Expectations

All programs are scheduled for five days a week. Regular attendance is of the utmost importance for the individual child and the classroom communities. Absenteeism - although sometimes inevitable - is expected to occur only for valid reasons, such as illness or family emergency, and will have no bearing on tuition and fees. If your child is excessively absent, the Head of School may schedule a meeting with you to discuss attendance and determine next steps for your child to have a successful experience at MSOSV.

If you know your child is going to be absent on a scheduled school day, for any reason, please inform your child's guide in advance. If you need to keep your child at home on a scheduled school day, but do not learn of it until that morning, please call the office and let us know the reason for the absence, particularly if your child is sick, and we will relay the message to your child's guide. **Please do not email your child's guide the same day your child is absent as the guide may not see the message until the end of the day.** Please call the office with all same day notices of illness and/or absence. If your child is not in attendance by 9:30 am, you will receive a courtesy Health Check phone call from the office.



From time to time, the school may offer a part-time schedule. Part-time schedules are 5 days per week, half day in the am or pm. 8:00 to 12:00 or 2:00 to 6:00. Please check with your campus to see if part time is available.

#### **Force Majeure:**

MSOSV duties and obligations laid out in your Admissions Agreement shall be suspended immediately without notice during all periods that MSOSV is closed because of force majeure events including, but not limited to, any fire, natural disaster, hurricane, war, governmental action, act of terrorism, epidemic, pandemic, civil unrest, or any other even beyond MSOSV's control.

If such event occurs, MSOSV's duties and obligations in your Admissions Agreement will be postponed until such time as MSOSV, in the sole direction of the administration, may safely reopen. ***If MSOSV cannot reopen due to an event under this clause, MSOSV is under no obligation to refund any portion of the tuition paid.***

In the event of such a closing, depending on the length of the required closure, MSOSV will implement virtual programs for ages 3 and up. The details of the virtual program will be published at the time of the event.

#### **15. Transportation**

**Transportation** of children to and from school is the responsibility of the parents/guardians.

However, if a fieldtrip requires driving, volunteer parents who provide the required insurance documents and paperwork will only be allowed to drive the children. Parents will be notified of all trips off campus and permission slips will be required. Alternate care will be provided on campus for all students who do not attend such activities. Parents are encouraged to volunteer for field trips. The school will maintain at least a 1:3 ratio for all field trips.

Proof of minimum auto insurance is required prior to transporting any children on a field trip.

#### **16. Water Activities**

Occasionally the children will engage in water play that includes such things as sprinklers, rainwater, and water tables. The children will also be responsible for watering their gardens with watering cans. If we plan any robust water activities such as swimming, each parent/guardian will be notified well in advance and asked to sign and return the Permission Slip that will be placed in your child's file.

#### **17. Fieldtrips**

Only the 3rd year students participate in fieldtrips that occur outside of the school. MSOSV plans many cultural activities, inviting professionals and activities to the school for participation of all the children. Most field trips offered by MSOSV will be within walking distance.

#### **18. Animals**

Animals such as caterpillars, hamsters, butterflies, different types of lizards, tortoises, and fish are part of the Montessori environment. Children will learn about the natural world through observation and care of these animals. We will ensure that our staff and children practice proper hygiene and hand washing after handling or coming into contact with an animal and items used by an animal, such as water bowls, food handlers and aquariums.

#### **19. Indoor/outdoor activity - benefits of and length of time**

Outdoor time for young children has many benefits. Fresh air in a large space contains fewer germs than indoor space regardless of the temperature. Outdoor play provides a wider variety of opportunities for sensory stimulation through sounds, smells, and textures and is supported by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).



Outdoor play provides for greater freedom and flexibility, fuller expression through loud talk, and a greater range of active movement. Outdoor play also extends opportunities for large muscle development, social-emotional development, and small muscle development by offering variety, challenge, and complexity in ways that are not attainable in a confined indoor space.

Staff encourage children to spend a few minutes in aerobic exercise, such as running, jumping, and riding wheeled toys. Aside from the physical health benefits of increasing the heart rate, studies have shown that boys perform better in science and math after period of aerobic exercise with good hydration (Michael Gurian, *The Minds of Boys*, 2007).

Each age level has an Activity Plan in the classroom. Please ask your child's guide to view the Activity Plan.

### **Clothing**

Please send your child to school in clothing that will help foster independence. Remember that we aim to encourage independence in self-care, so anything that may limit or impede your child's independence is discouraged. It is best to avoid buckles, difficult snaps, or "onesies" that may restrict their movement or cause a distraction.

Your child will also be engaged in messy, hands-on activities, so we suggest that you dress your child for "work." Learning to drink from an open cup beginning at 12 months old, playing with water, digging in the dirt, gardening, playing with rainwater and painting are just a few examples of these types of activities.

We also request that you send an extra set of clothing in case we need to assist your child in a change of clothes. Though each child will have a personal space for items, we ask that you label all your child's clothing and belongings. Soiled clothing will be sent home daily in a plastic bag. Please remember to replace the extra clothing the following day.

### **Shoes**

Flip-flops, or shoes without a secure back, and hard-soled boots are not safe for the playground and are not ideal for freedom of movement. Keep in mind that when selecting footwear that it should not interfere in children's exploration of puddles, mud, etc. Closed-toed shoes are ideal.

## **20. Sunscreen & Insect Repellent**

MSOSV provides and applies Rocky Mountain Sunscreen SPF 50 and insect repellent to the children, when they will be playing outside, during the months of May through September the children do not play outside during peak-sun hours 10:00 am to 2:00 pm.

Parents may apply the sunscreen/repellent at drop off time in the morning. The sunscreen/repellent is available next to the sign in computer. Please follow the instructions for sunscreen/repellent application. Sunscreen/repellent is applied by the staff 30 minutes prior to going outside for afternoon play time, or PE. Parents are required to sign the "Sunscreen/Insect Repellent Authorization" form each school year.

For further information regarding sunscreen and sun exposure, please see our website. You may also visit the Rocky Mountain Sunscreen/repellant website at: [www.rmsunscreen.com](http://www.rmsunscreen.com)

Cantera Montessori has contracted with a certified local pest control service for regular preventative treatments for mosquitoes & other pests. These services are performed outside of school operating hours and are compliant with regulations established by the Texas Department of Agriculture Structural Pest Control Service.

## **21. Parent's Access to Head of School to Discuss Concerns About Policies and Procedures**

Parents are welcome to call the school administrative office to schedule time during school hours to speak with the Head of School regarding any concerns about school policies and procedures.



## 22. Parent's Access to Head of School to Discuss Concerns About Center Operations

Parents are welcome to call the school administrative office to schedule time during school hours to speak with the Head of School regarding any concerns about center operation.

## 23. Parent's Access to Child Care Center's Most Recent Licensing Report and Minimum Standards

We are licensed by the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHS). You may contact the local HHS office at (512)834-3195 or <https://hhs.texas.gov> for questions or more information.

The center's licensing reports can be found on the HHS website or view the posted copy in the Head of School office.

A copy of the HHS Minimum Standards is also available for review in the HoS office.

During inspections, the HHS shall have the authority to interview clients, including children, or any staff, and to inspect and audit client or facility records without prior consent.

Your child's guide may request additional conferences with you if they perceive a special need and/or have a particular concern related to your child's ability to succeed in the learning environment. Our guides are trained to observe and nurture the development of the whole child and are committed to communicating with us in a timely manner if they have questions about anything that may hamper your child's ability to learn. Categories may include issues with speech and/or hearing, motor skills, sensory integration, behavior and/or emotional development.

If we need more information regarding your child's unique learning needs, we will follow a process of inquiry that may include a request to have your child assessed by an outside resource, such as a speech or occupational therapist, a child psychologist or neuropsychologist. In these cases, the parent will be provided with a written report outlining the guide's observations and plan for moving forward.

Ultimately, it is our commitment to you to stay current with you about our observations, and our goal is to work with you in partnership to ensure we are continually providing the highest quality learning experience for your child. Please speak with your child's Lead Guide or our Head of School if you have any questions related to this process at any time.

Similarly, we are available to meet with a parent or guardian who has a concern her or she would like to address. If you would like to schedule any additional conference(s) with your child's guide during the school year. Call or email in advance to schedule a meeting.

Please do not try and have an impromptu conference with your child's guide at drop off or pick-up times. The guides are responsible for all the children during those times and cannot be distracted by a lengthy conversation with a parent.

Please communicate via the 1CORE Parent Portal to schedule a face-to-face meeting. Every effort will be made to accommodate your schedule. Every effort will be made to resolve any concerns a parent might have with MSOSV policies. We appreciate your cooperation.

### Parent Education

Each year we aim to provide workshop offerings on timely and relevant topics present both by field experts as well as our own staff for our parent community.



## 24. Child Abuse or Neglect

Texas State Law requires the staff to report any suspected abuse or neglect of a child to the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services or law enforcement agency. This law is designed to protect the welfare and best interest of all children.

Our employees are considered Mandated Reporters under this Act and are required, by law, to report any suspicion of abuse or neglect to the appropriate authorities. Under this law, Mandated Reporters can be held criminally responsible if they fail to report suspected abuse or neglect. Our employees are not required to investigate the cause of any suspicious marks, behavior or condition before making a report. We take this responsibility very seriously and will make all warranted reports to the appropriate authorities.

Our employees are instructed to report directly to the Texas Abuse Hotline as required by The Texas Family code 261.101; an employee may not delegate the responsibility to make a report and administration may not require an employee to seek approval to file a report or notify administration that the report was made.

Our employees are required to complete annual training in awareness, prevention and action steps in the area of suspected child abuse and neglect. For more information about warning signs, prevention, awareness, community organizations and resources for your family, please visit: <http://dfps.state.tx.us/>.

The toll-free number to file a confidential report is (800)252-5400.

## 25. Emergency Preparedness Plan

### Weather

Occasionally, severe weather causes unexpected school closures or delays. We typically follow the local ISD guidelines for decisions related to school delays and closures due to weather, however we do not provide make-up days in the case of school closures.

MSOSV reserves the right to alter the calendar in order to meet the needs of the school. The school calendar is always available on the school website and a hard copy in the front office.

### Communication during an Emergency

When urgent or emergency message, such as those regarding school closures or delayed starts, need to be conveyed to the entire community, we will send the information via mass email.

We will conduct a test of the mass email system in August, the week before school starts, and in June prior to Summer. You will be notified of the "test" in your weekly note as well as the monthly newsletter. Once the test is complete, we will ask you to respond to the email, confirming receipt. If you do not receive the email, please call the office immediately so that we can double-check that we have the correct information on file. Please note that we can notify both parents at the same time with different email addresses.

### Emergency Essential Packs

MSOSV has purchased Emergency Essential Packs for each classroom. In the event of any emergency, we are prepared. If the children are to be evacuated, there is a designated location the children will be moved to if the school becomes unsafe. Staff are required to stay with the children of the school until parents arrive. We are prepared to care for children for up to three days if necessary.

MSOSV places a high priority on safety. All campuses have locked gates/entrances which have keypads. All keypads have a 4-digit code that is shared with currently enrolled families and staff. The codes are changed annually. Emergency personnel have keys and access to each campus to assist in the event of an emergency.



MSOSV maintains current records on all annual health, fire, and gas inspections. Emergency evacuation plans are posted in each classroom. We also conduct:

- Fire Drills – Monthly, with children
- Severe weather drills – Quarterly with children
- Intruder/Lockdown Drill – Quarterly with staff and children
- Staff Safety Meetings yearly and as needed
- ALL staff members on site are certified in CPR and First Aid

In the unlikely event of an emergency, our staff members always have access to emergency contact information and phones, to communicate with parents, designated emergency contacts and emergency personnel. In the event of a school-wide emergency or evacuation, the staff will follow our evacuation, relocation, and sheltering/lockdown procedures as needed and will continue to care for the children until each child is released to their parent or someone from their Authorized Pick-up List. If this situation were to arise, we would notify immediately via email. Your responsibility as parents and guardians is to keep MSOSV current on your emergency contact information.

The location for evacuation in the event of a fire is detailed on the school evacuation map posted in each classroom.

### **First Aid**

First Aid supplies are kept in all classrooms and on the playground. All staff members are trained in Infant-Child CPR and Emergency First Aid. If a minor accident occurs, the staff will provide basic first aid for your child. In these cases, the attending staff member will fill out an "Ouch Report" and parents will receive a copy of the report.

If there is a more serious event or more extensive treatment is required, the Head of School or qualified representative will make all decisions about the care of the child and fill out an Incident Report. In these cases, as applicable, parents and guardians will be notified immediately to come pick up the child. We will also call an ambulance or the paramedics if the need arises.

If a child requires professional medical attention, you will be asked to sign the Incident Report and a copy of the report will be filed with The Texas Health and Human Services Commission. If your child requires medical attention after hours due to an event that occurred at school, we request that you notify us as soon as possible so we can file the report in a timely manner.

### **26. Breastfeeding**

MSOSV is a breastfeeding-friendly school and nursing mother as welcome to use the office or any other place on campus where they feel comfortable to breast feed their child.

### **27. Preventing and Responding to Abuse & Neglect of Children - Employee Training**

All staff members including all floaters, extracurricular staff must pass a criminal background history check and FBI fingerprints as required by the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHS) and hold a current CPR and First Aid certification.

Additionally, all teaching staff must complete 30 hours of continuing education each year. All employees are certified with Child Maltreatment Training and SIDS training.

### **28. Preventing and Responding to Abuse & Neglect of Children - Parent Training**

Each year we aim to provide workshop offerings on timely and relevant topics present both by field experts as well as our own staff for our parent community.



## 29. Procedures to get assistance and to report abuse/neglect

For more information about warning signs, prevention, awareness, community organizations and resources for your family, please visit: <http://dfps.state.tx.us/>.

The toll-free number to file a confidential report is (800)252-5400.

## 30. Daily Health Checks

Every day, upon arrival, the classroom staff conducts a basic health check. Health checks include looking for new bumps, bruises, or scrapes, listening for congestion or cough and observing general demeanor. If something is out of character for the child, the guide will share their observations with the Head of School. The child may be sent back home if the health check indicates that the child may not be well enough to attend school.

### Lice and Nit Policy

Please check your child's head once a day for head lice. Small nits are hard to see and can hatch overnight. If your child has head lice, they will not be able to attend school until all the nits are gone. Please out of respect for the other children and families, please DO NOT bring your child to school if you know your child has either lice or nits. We will also be checking heads daily. If we did find lice or nits on your child's head, we will contact you to pick up your child immediately.

## 31. Vaccine-preventable Diseases for Employees

MSOSV employees adhere to all state mandate vaccination requirements meant to protect children from vaccine-preventable diseases. All employees are required to be tested for Tuberculosis and submit a negative test result prior to the start of work. The Center for Disease Control recommendations for PPD (Purified Protein Derivative tuberculosis test) frequency vary according to the type of employee and the exposure potential associated with the activities of the employee.

## 32. Children with Special Needs

MSOSV will not discriminate against any individual on the basis of special needs with regard to the full and equal enjoyment of the services of our programs. Our desire is to work with every child and family so that their child succeeds in our program. We will make reasonable accommodations in our program toward that goal, but we must note that there are some circumstances where we cannot effectively meet the needs of a child.

Partnership begins at time of registration where families communicate with the school their child's special needs and history by meeting with the Head of School and providing appropriate documentation such as doctor's or health professional's written recommendation, assessment/progress reports, and/or IEP or IFSP. Through this process, the Head of School will make a determination of whether or not the child needs one-to-one care and what accommodation can be made. Based on its current funding levels, MSOSV is not able to provide one-to-one staffing. This does not mean that children who require such care are excluded from the program, but only that MSOSV cannot provide additional staff to meet that need. Where providing one-on-one-care would allow the child to reasonably participate in the program, parents would be responsible for providing a professional aide one-to-one care at their expense. If Health Professionals need to provide services such as speech, occupational therapy, or physical therapy on site, we will accommodate with partnering a consistent time and location on campus to conduct the sessions.

Although adaptation is most commonly associated with children with disabilities, toys/materials can and should be adapted when a child needs extra assistance such as adjusting the accessibility to materials, modifying work including more whole body or sensorial learning. It is important to consider that our goal is to make the child successful in the Montessori program by planning with families, modifications to support the child's success in our Montessori environment, encouraging inclusion and participation in all parts of the day.



MSOSV will also not discriminate against any individual because of the known disability or special needs. MSOSV will make reasonable modifications in its policies, practices, or procedures when such modifications are necessary to afford its childcare services and facilities to children with disabilities, unless the modifications would fundamentally alter the supervision, safety, health and welfare of the children, or efficacy of our program.

### **33. Weather - what to expect**

The Head of School (or School Personnel) will check Weather Bug app throughout the day to determine if it is safe for outside play. The Weather Bug app provides the actual current temperature, humidity level, and "what it feels like". In addition to data received from the Weather Bug app, the Head of School (or School Personnel) will refer to the Child Care Weather Watch Wind-Chill Factor & Heat Index Chart based on data received from the National Weather Service. Taking both data resources into account, the best judgement will be used to determine if it is comfortable, uncomfortable, or hazardous/dangerous to be outside. If deemed comfortable, outside play will resume for the full half hour. If found uncomfortable, outside play is reduced to 15 minutes (or less). If hazardous/dangerous, outside play will be replaced with music movement and circle time in the classroom. If School Personnel are unsure, teachers will consult with the Head of School for guidance.

Children of any age benefit from playing outdoors in all except the most extreme weather. Daily outdoor play encourages gross-motor development, provides an environment ripe with opportunities for imagination to blossom, and promotes good health through the exposure to fresh outdoor air.

With a little forethought and appropriate precautionary measures, colder temperatures do not have to prevent outdoor play time, and a winter day outdoors can be a safe, healthy wonderland.

Please provide layers of clothing to maximize comfort both indoors and out. Essential items include jackets, long pants, hats, gloves or mittens, socks and warm shoes or both.

Please remember that we do not catch a cold from being outside on a cold day. This is a longstanding myth. You have to be exposed to a cold virus to catch a cold and this is more probable inside a contained area (such as inside a classroom). Of course, cold fresh air may irritate an existing condition, such as asthma, which could weaken your immunity. This could make your body more receptive to the virus you come in contact with. The cold air alone, however, does not bring on an illness, such as a cold.

For FAQ's about the common cold, see this website: <https://www.webmd.com/cold-and-flu/top-10-questions-cold>

If you think your child is not well enough to participate in the daily outdoor activity, this is a sign that your child should stay home from school. If it is determined that the weather is appropriate for outside play, all children will participate.

Children are kept well hydrated. Water is available all day, indoors and outdoors. Staff encourage children to drink plenty of water.



## Duration of outdoor play

Nido – twice per day, as long as tolerated by infant

Pre-Primary – twice per day 30 minutes each

Primary – twice per day 45 minutes

Kinder – twice per day 45 minutes & once per day 30 minutes

During extreme weather, the children will not go outside. Instead, classroom communities will participate in age-appropriate large motor circle time structured activities such as:

- Games
- Dancing
- Yoga

## 34. Sunscreen

MSOSV provides and applies Rocky Mountain Sunscreen SPF 50 to the children, when they will be playing outside, during the months of May through September the children do not play outside during peak-sun hours 10:00 am to 2:00 pm.

Parents may apply the sunscreen at drop off time in the morning. The sunscreen is available next to the sign in computer. Please follow the instructions for sunscreen application. Sunscreen is applied by the staff 30 minutes prior to going outside for afternoon play time, or PE. Parents are required to sign the "Sunscreen Authorization" form each school year.

For further information regarding sunscreen and sun exposure, please see our website. You may also visit the Rocky Mountain Sunscreen website at: [www.rmsunscreen.com](http://www.rmsunscreen.com)

## 35. Pest Control

State Licensing requires our school campus to be treated every month by a professional pest control service. MSOSV only retains exterminator companies who offer child-friendly and eco-conscious pesticides.

## 36. Position on Corporal Punishment

MSOSV will not use corporal punishment for any reason. In general, rules are made by the staff and children. Discipline is designed to promote the development of self-direction, self-control, and socially acceptable behavior. This is accomplished through consistency, firmness, fairness and follow-through.

## 37. Children will NOT be withheld from outside play, food

There must be no harsh, cruel, or unusual treatment of any child. The following types of discipline and guidance are prohibited:

- Withholding: outside play, food, special projects or activities
- Corporal punishment or threats of corporal punishment
- Punishment associated with food, naps, or toileting
- Pinching, shaking, or biting a child
- Hitting a child with a hand or an instrument
- Putting anything in or on a child's mouth
- Humiliating, ridiculing, rejecting, or yelling at a child
- Subjecting a child to harsh, abusive, or profane language
- Placing a child in a locked or dark room, bathroom, or closet with the door closed; and
- Requiring a child to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods of time of the child's age



## 38. Special Occasion, Birthday and Holidays

Birthdays are a special day in the Montessori Classroom starting as young as 12 months old.

Parents are invited to attend this very special birthday ceremony in the classroom.

### Parent Preparation:

- Birthday Timeline
- Special Snack

Two to three days prior to each child's birthday, the classroom guide will ask the parent to prepare a "Birthday Timeline" for their child.

The Birthday timeline should be "poster size" and include photos for each year of the child's life.

Included on the birthday timeline: a short story for each year. Example: "During Dillon's first year, he traveled to his grandma's house in Arizona. Dillon got to ride on an airplane" and/or "Dillon learned to walk when he was 11 months. Then when Dillon turned 2, he got a baby sister. He was a good helper; he helped to bathe the baby and fold the laundry" etc. Etc.

Bring this poster to school. It will be on display for the day.

### What you can expect during the Birthday Circle Celebration

A candle, representing the sun, is lit in the middle of the room. Labels with each month of the year are laid out in a circle radiating out from the "sun."

The children and teachers (and parents) sit in a wide circle around the sun and months of the year, while the birthday child stands next to the month of his or her birth holding a globe to represent the Earth.

The child then walks around the sun once for each year of his or her life. As the child walks, the teacher talks about what the child was doing when he or she was that age.

At the end the child may extinguish the candle and the class sings "Happy Birthday".

### Special Snack

Families are invited to bring a special snack for the birthday.

Please bring enough for the whole class. Speak with the classroom guide, to determine the amount of special snack to bring.

***All snacks must be store bought. We will not accept any homemade snacks. Please talk to your Head of School if you want to bring any snacks that contain nuts.***

Although we try to maintain a healthy snack environment for the children, we would like to allow you to offer a special treat for the birthday celebration. Some options are:

- Fresh fruit/ vegetables
- Muffins- plain, blueberry, poppy seed, etc. (please do not send any with frosting, nuts or chocolate)
- Jell-O/Applesauce/Plain Yogurt
- Crackers

Please note: Sugary snacks will not be served.



Birthday party invitations may be placed in the parent file as long as there is one invitation for each child in the class. If the entire class will NOT be invited, families are asked to mail the invitations.

If a family would like to:

- Bring a special “Birthday Plant” for the classroom.
- Bring a special book for the library.
- Bring an art project for the children to have fun with

Speak with the lead guide at least one week in advance, she can help with the planning.

Last Day of School Treats – Please check with your child’s guide, if you would like to bring a special snack, please first, check with your child’s guide to be sure there is not already something special planned. For special snack, please adhere to the birthday special snack policy. However, instead of a special snack please consider donating:

- A book to the classroom
- A plant for the classroom
- An art project for the children to enjoy (please arrange ahead of time with Lead Teacher or Head of School)

**Back to School Night**--Back to School Night is designed to help families better understand the school policies and curriculum.

**This event is for parents only; however, childcare is available at no charge to parents. The Teacher Assistants will be with the children and have a special activity and snack with the children.**

- All parents gather with the Head of School and Lead staff to go over general information about the school year, any changes in policies etc.
- This is a good time to ask general questions about the school and program
- The group will break up into classrooms, each Lead Guide is available to answer any questions about the classroom.

*Please note: This is not the time to have a conference with your child's teacher, please be aware that many parents might have questions for the teacher. If you feel you would like to speak to the teacher privately, please email him/her for a conference.*

**Studio Openings**--Every 12 Weeks during the school year between Sept through June See schedule for studio openings and outside enrichment programs.

**Harvest Festival**-- The children parade in their costumes, collect treats and then participate in the festival which includes games, art projects, photos and snacks.

- Parents and Families are invited to attend
- Instructions for what to bring to the event will be posted in your child's classroom
- Children and families are encouraged to dress in costume. Please do not bring a costume that is fearful in nature, contains weapons or promotes violence.
- Costumes should be brought to school on the day of with the child's name written on the costume tag as well as on the bag.



**Thanksgiving Feast**-- The children work together to prepare the feast, then sit together, and have a family style meal. ***This event is for children and staff only, please! We promise to take lots of photos!***

- Parents are asked to bring one item on the list for the feast. This list will be provided early in the month of November
- Children prepare the feast and enjoy it for lunch together
- Please Do NOT send lunch or order school lunch on this day Must be enrolled for this scheduled day/time to participate

**Winter Faire**-- This is a wonderful opportunity to spend time with your child in the classroom. The children will prepare the food and drink. You will find fun winter art activities to add to your collection at home. These are the activities you will cherish for years to come. Parents and family invited.

**Valentine's Day Party**-- The children gather by classroom and exchange cards. They will also participate in an art project as well as cookie decorating. Prior to the Valentine's Day Party, the children will decorate their own bag to have their friends' place cards. ***This event is for children and staff only, please! We promise to take lots of photos!***

- Children bring enough cards for all the children in the class. A small item may be added to the card, like a sticker, pencil or treat. This is optional.
- If child is writing, they should sign the cards, if not, help them sign their name
- DO NOT add anything in the "To:" part of the card. It is easiest for the children to walk around the circle and just place their cards in the bag.
- The children walk around the circle one by one and place a card in each bag. The bag is sent home at the end of the day
- The children will decorate cookies
- The children will participate in a special art project

***\* Must be enrolled for this scheduled day/time to participate***

**Spring Picnic**-- The children prepare a very special snack to share "picnic style" out on the yard. They will enjoy their blooming garden and fun social time together.

### **3rd Year Moving Up Ceremony**

- Special MSOSV traditional Moving Up Ceremony
- Parents and family of the 3rd years are invited to attend
- Refreshments will be served

### **39. Classroom Observations - Parents**

All parents are welcome to observe our classrooms at any time. If you would like to observe a class, we ask that you simply sign in at the office and speak with the Head of School. If you would like a formal in-class observation, we ask that you schedule an appointment in advance to minimize the disruption to the classroom and to make sure that the class will be in the room when you visit.

We encourage you to observe. Seeing the children at work is to experience the Montessori philosophy in action. To make your observation more meaningful: look around the room and notice the amount and diversity of activity; the range of ages; the types of materials; the individual and group activity; and the interaction of the children.

Focus your attention on the teacher and notice the composure, the teacher as observer, and the respect the teacher shows each child. Focus your attention on your child and notice the succession of activities; the concentration on work; enthusiasm and self-satisfaction in each activity; and the child's respect for other children, the materials, and the teachers.



During a formal in-class observation, we request that you adhere to the following guidelines: sit quietly in the observation chairs indicated; try not to make your presence felt; do not initiate conversation; and do not handle the materials. We recommend these guidelines to minimize interference in the children's peaceful environment. Feel free to make notes of items you would like to discuss during your conference with the classroom teacher.

## **Parent Workshops**

***"Adults work to finish a task, but the child works in order to grow, and is working to create the adult, the person that is to be." -Maria Montessori***

Parent workshops are designed for the parents to experience the Montessori Method, hands- on. Learn what each activity and material is used for. You may be surprised to learn what pouring water from a pitcher into a cup is teaching your child: fine-motor control, concentration, self-discipline and building self-esteem and pride. "I can do it!". Workshop topics may include "Montessori in the Home" "Is Montessori Elementary for us?" "School and Family", "Discipline".

## **40. Gang-Free Zone**

As a result of House Bill 2086, which passed during the 81<sup>st</sup> Legislature, Regular Session, Chapter 42 of the Human Resource Code includes section 42.064, effective September 1, 2009. This statute requires that we distribute information about gang-free zones to our families.

### **What are "gang-free zones" and what are their purpose?**

The purpose of gang-free zones is to deter certain types of criminal activity in areas where children gather by enforcing tougher penalties. A gang-free zone exists within a 1000-foot perimeter of the school. Engaging in gang-related criminal activity or organized criminal activity within 1000 feet of our school is in violation of the Texas law and is therefore subject to increased penalty. For more information about what constitutes a gang-free zone, please consult sections 71.028 and 71.029 of the Texas Penal Code.

## **41. Screen Time**

Children at MSOSV do not participate in screen time during school hours at any time.

## **42. Items to leave at home**

We kindly request that children leave toys, purses, money, candy, gum, cosmetics and any blankets or pillows at home. Should your child bring any of the above items to school, they will be stored until the end of the day. Toys resembling guns or weapons will be sent back home immediately. The same rule applies to any clothing items, lunch boxes, other items that depict weapons of any kind.

## **43. Parent Communication**

Parents have multiple communication options available. Parents may call the school or email the Head of School as needed.

MSOSV has partnered with **ChildCareCRM** for communication primarily with families who are in the enrollment process so parents can expect the following in their email from this system:

- Initial communication upon submission of inquiry
- Reminders for tour, child visit & parent/child orientation
- Communication about Open House events



MSOSV has partnered with **1CORE** to provide the majority of the regular communication including student record keeping and financial account management including:

- Enrollment Agreement (Terms & Conditions)
- Emergency Contacts
- Allergies, Special Diets, Medication
- Children/Parent Permission Forms
- QR Code Sign In/Out (touchless)
- Parent/teacher communication
- Lesson tracking and summary
- Communication of classroom events
- Monthly newsletter from Head of School
- Licensing Documents
- Medical Information
- Authorized Pick Up
- Tuition Auto Pay (TAP) Management/Enrollment
- Whole school general announcements
- Weekly update
- First Week summary to newly enrolled families
- Pictures, updated weekly
- Billing record, invoices & tax statements

**Children's File** – Each child has a file in the classroom which holds any work they have completed, are currently working on or would like to take home. Please check your child's file daily.

**Parent File** – The parent file is in the lobby. The files are organized by classroom and siblings are together. The file is labeled with your child's name. Please check this file daily. You will find notes from our office, upcoming events, your monthly statement etc.

**Trackers** - The trackers component inside 1CORE that allows the school to provide a daily log for Nido and Pre-Primary Communities: Daily records for toileting, eating, sleeping, mood and activities participated in are tracked and sent out to the families at the end of the day.

Individual Trackers can also be created specific to a child for observation purposes. For example, biting and hitting. The Lead Guide will meet with the family to work together to establish the specific tracker for the child. This tool might also be used to observe other behaviors to determine if an outside resource should be called in for early intervention.

**Monthly Newsletter** – Look in your email for our Monthly Newsletter.

**Email** The Head of School has a school email and will communicate via MSOSV email and through the 1CORE Portal. All communication with the classroom teacher is done through the 1CORE Parent Portal. Staff may not exchange personal email, phone or any type of social media in which the child of the school is posted, discussed or photographed. Please note: if the school management learns that this policy has been violated, either the violating staff member may be dismissed, and/or the violating parent will be asked to leave the school.

#### **Parent-Teacher Conference**

Parent-Teacher conferences will be held twice each year in the fall and winter. The conference dates are set forth on the school calendar. Please schedule an appointment at least two weeks prior to conferences. You will receive information about scheduling in an e-mail.

Conferences help teachers and parents to understand better the progress of each child and the class. You will have an opportunity to review your child's progress report and to discuss any questions with the teacher. MSOSV believes that conferences provide vital information and feedback.

If desired, your teacher will meet with you at any mutually agreed upon time. For an immediate concern, you may ask to meet after school. Also, teachers are willing to hold telephone conferences as the need arises. For less urgent concerns, please ask the teacher in advance for an appointment.

**Photos and Videos** As part of the signed Admissions Agreement, parents/guardians agree, as a participant of any event, class, activity or program, to grant full permission to MSOSV to use any photographs, video or other recordings of the family and/or child for any publicity and promotion purposes without obligation or liability.



Photographs of each student and class are taken in the fall and spring of each year. Please consult the school calendar for the date. We suggest that your children dress for this occasion. All parents are asked to sign a release form that gives MSOSV permission to publish photographs of their child in articles, ads, or the web page. The child's name will not be used.

## 44. Separated or Divorced Families

We understand that communication challenges may arise within your family, particularly with families who are divorced and/or going through a separation. Should you be in this situation, our commitment to you is that we stay current with both parents and/or guardians and deliver consistent messages to both. When possible, we ask that both parents/guardians be present for Parent Teacher Conferences unless it is determined by our staff it is in the best interest to schedule separate conferences. We also ask that you keep us current with drop-off, pick-up and visitation schedules.

For enrollment purposes, we will only accept one set of official forms and documents for the child.

Please do not choose MSOSV school grounds as a meeting place to exchange your child from one parent to the other.

MSOSV provides care for the child and will not get in the middle of any dispute between the adults. We will not write letters on behalf of one parent siding against the other parent, and only will become involved if subpoenaed to do so.

## 45. Montessori Materials

We are proud to have quality Montessori materials available in every classroom for your child to use. This equipment is expensive, and it is our expectation that your child will use it with care and respect. From time to time, a child might break or damage the equipment, or even become attached to a small piece and take it home—e.g., small cubes, cylinders, triangles, beads, pegs, etc. Each piece, no matter how small, is an important part of the classroom environment. We would greatly appreciate it if you would check your child's pockets and belongings from time to time and send such items back to school.

## 46. Clothing choices

***Weapons of any kind, including handguns, fictional or real are not allowed at any time.***

We also request that you be mindful of any clothing choices that reference media-related or branded characters, particularly those of a more mature nature. While there are no further restrictions on what your child can wear to school, we do want to acknowledge that some media-related characters on clothing (and other items) can pose challenges within the dynamics of the classroom community. Please be mindful that some children have not yet been exposed to media, and some characters/images can be confusing and potentially frightening to young children. Please trust that if we perceive any clothing choices as problematic, your child's guide will speak directly with you.

## 47. Items to leave at home

We kindly request that children leave toys, purses, money, candy, gum, cosmetics and any blankets or pillows at home. Should your child bring any of the above items to school, they will be stored until the end of the day. Toys resembling guns or weapons will be sent back home immediately. The same rule applies to any clothing items, lunch boxes, other items that depict weapons of any kind.

See "Sharing Day" in "A Day in the Montessori Classroom."

## 48. Toys

Your child may not bring toys to school.



## 49. Lost or damaged items

Montessori teaches independence and care of one's own belongings. We are not responsible for any lost or damaged personal items. We have a "lost and found" box in the office. Labeling items helps in the recovery of lost items. Also, families shop at many of the same stores. To make sure your child's items are not mixed up with another child's, labeling helps to solve these conflicts between families. Please ask your child's guide or Head of School for the Lost and Found basket, if you are looking for a particular item.

## 50. Classroom Parents

Each year the school will ask for one or two room parents for each classroom. The Room Parents may participate and help with school wide events as well as events for students and staff only (such as Thanksgiving Feast, Valentine's Day, etc.)

The Lead Guides and Head of School will guide the room parent to help with:

- Birthdays
- Special events: planning and preparation
- Curriculum prep: photocopying, booklet making and projects If you are interested in becoming a room parent, please speak with your lead teacher or the Head of School for more information.

## 51. Classroom Volunteers and Special Presentations

Throughout the school year parents and outside professional groups are encouraged to give special presentations in the classrooms in their area of expertise. These presentations can be culturally related to give the children firsthand experience with other cultural backgrounds, professionally related to inform the children about community helpers, or various informative resources that will encourage the children's understanding of the presented topic.

These guest presentations will typically pertain to the curriculum or monthly cultural calendar. While we do try to schedule and notify parents in advance, some presentations might be rescheduled or postponed without notice to parents. The regularly scheduled staff will remain in the classroom at all times during the presentations. The select individuals will be professionals and adhere to all school policies and procedures.

All volunteers will meet the Texas Health and Human Services requirements for volunteers including:

- Background clearance
- Evidence of required clock hours and any other training certificates

## 52. Extra-Curricular Programs

Each MSOSV campus offers Extra-Curricular Programs. These programs are NOT part of the tuition. MSOSV hires outside contractors who are experts in their profession. Some Extra-curricular activities might include: Bucket Drumming, Chess, Dance, Gymnastics and Soccer. Families sign up directly through the vendor.

MSOSV has strict guidelines for all outside contractors. The outside contractors are required to submit and keep current:

- Background clearance for all staff who work with children
- Liability insurance with the school listed as "named insured"
- Complete school orientation as required by Texas Health and Human Services
- Evidence of required clock hours, CPR and First Aid training certificates



## 53. Social Media

Social media (such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, blogs, etc.) can serve as a bridge between teachers and families in the MSOSV community, but care must be taken to ensure respectful communication and confidentiality. Interacting on-line with is no different than interacting with these individuals or groups face-to-face—i.e., we are required to maintain the principles of respect, dignity, prudence, and professionalism and concern for the safety and protection of children, parents, families and Montessori School of Silicon Valley in all interactions.

MSOSV provides information for parents of MSOSV through the MSOSV website, weekly bulletins and notes, class lists, the school directory and MSOSV Facebook page, emails, etc. These communications are strictly for informational purposes and content is not to be redistributed to public forums or in any other inappropriate manner.

### **MSOSV Website**

The MSOSV website can be found at [www.msosv.com](http://www.msosv.com). This site serves as a virtual space to share school information with the public as well as other relevant information with MSOSV community. The website contains photographs only of children whose parents have signed releases. On the website is a school calendar that you can access for the latest information.

## 54. Suggestions and policy discussions

We welcome your suggestions. If you would like to discuss any of our policies or procedures, please reach out to the Head of School for an office meeting.

## 55. Summary of Parents Rights

Senate Bill 1098 from the 88th Legislative Regular Session added Section 42.04271 to the Human Resources Code and states that a parent or guardian of a child at a childcare facility has the right to:

- Enter and examine the child-care facility during its hours of operation and without advance notice.
- File a complaint against the childcare facility.
- Review the childcare facility's publicly accessible records.
- Review the child-care facility's written records concerning the parent's or guardian's child.
- Receive inspection reports and information about how to access the childcare facility's online compliance history.
- Have the facility comply with a court order that prevents another parent or guardian from visiting or removing the child.
- Be given the contact information for the childcare facility's local Childcare Regulation office.
- Inspect any video recordings of an alleged incident of abuse or neglect involving their child provided that:
- Video recordings of the alleged incident are available.
- Exercise these rights without receiving retaliatory action by the facility.

Cantera Montessori School has the following video cameras installed for security purposes:

- Main Hallway
- Front Gate

Cantera Montessori School has the following video cameras installed to observe sleeping children under the age of 12 months.

- Oak Infant Classroom Sleeping Area
- Juniper Infant Classroom Sleeping Area



Note: Video is recorded when motion is detected. Video footage is saved for 30 days from the day of recording. If the internet or facility electricity is interrupted, video footage may not be available.

#### Required Notifications (related to Video policy)

- The childcare facility must provide written notice to the parent or guardian of any other child captured in a video before allowing a parent to inspect a recording.
- The childcare facility must provide a parent or guardian with a written copy of the rights no later than the child's first day at the facility.