



Growing Minds, Nurturing Spirits

Established 1983

**Parent Handbook
2009 – 2010**

**The New School, Inc.
A Montessori Center for Children**

Table of Contents

Welcome to the New School, Inc.....	5
History and Philosophy.....	6
<i>Non Discrimination Policy</i>	
<i>Mission Statement</i>	
Contact Information.....	6
<i>School Address and Phone Contacts</i>	
<i>Website Information and E-Mail Address</i>	
Administration and Faculty.....	7
Hours of Operation.....	9
<i>Emergency School Closure</i>	
Administration and Billing Information.....	10
<i>Enrollment</i>	
<i>Before and After School Care and Fees</i>	
<i>Student Record Transfers</i>	
Records on File.....	11
<i>Medical and Immunization Records</i>	
<i>Emergency Contact</i>	
<i>Disciplinary Policy</i>	
<i>North Carolina Child Care Laws and Rules (Pre-School only)</i>	
Admission and Withdrawal from the School.....	12
<i>Terms of Admission</i>	
<i>Withdrawal</i>	
<i>Occurrence Reports and Incidence Reports</i>	
<i>Criteria for Discipline and Expulsion</i>	
<i>Procedure for Expulsion</i>	
Conduct.....	14
<i>Rights of the Child</i>	
<i>Responsibilities of the Child</i>	
<i>Role of the Adult</i>	
<i>Ground Rules of the School</i>	
<i>Discipline</i>	

Arrivals and Departures.....	16
<i>General</i>	
<i>Arrival</i>	
<i>Departure</i>	
<i>Greeting Your Child at the End of the Day</i>	
School Safety and Security.....	19
<i>Abandoned Child</i>	
<i>Kidnapped Child</i>	
<i>Lost Child</i>	
<i>Abuse and Neglect</i>	
<i>School Security</i>	
<i>Fire Drills</i>	
Communication with the School and the Teachers.....	21
<i>Communication by Phone</i>	
<i>Communication with Messages</i>	
<i>Conferences and Reports</i>	
<i>Classroom Procedures</i>	
<i>Observations and Visits</i>	
<i>Changes in the Child’s Environment</i>	
Student Attendance.....	23
<i>General</i>	
<i>Excused Absences for Elementary and Middle School Students</i>	
<i>Extended Absences for Elementary and Middle School Students</i>	
<i>Student Tardiness</i>	
<i>Early Dismissal or Return</i>	
Illness.....	25
<i>When to Stay Home</i>	
<i>Returning to School after an Illness</i>	
<i>Medication</i>	
<i>Allergies and Dietary Restrictions</i>	
Dress Code and Children’s Possessions.....	28
<i>Dress Code</i>	
<i>Toys and Personal Belongings</i>	
<i>Lost and Found</i>	

Children’s Houses and Infant-Toddler Clothing
School “Belongings”

Food.....	31
<i>Lunch</i>	
Field Trips.....	32
Special Events.....	33
<i>School Picnic</i>	
<i>Parent-Child Night</i>	
<i>Holidays</i>	
<i>Invitations</i>	
<i>Children’s House and Toddler Birthdays</i>	
Parents and the School.....	34
<i>Parent Involvement</i>	
<i>Parent Volunteering and the Classroom</i>	

Welcome to the The New School Montessori Center

*Welcome to The New School, Inc.
A Montessori Center for Children*

Dear Parents,

On behalf of the faculty and the Administration at The New School Montessori Center for Children, we welcome you and look forward to working with you and your child in making this an excellent school year. We wish to thank you for choosing our school and for entrusting your child to our care.

Communication between the school and its families is essential in maintaining a supportive environment and creating an excellent school experience. Toward this goal this handbook offers important information, guidelines, and procedures for many aspects of our program. Please read it carefully and keep it handy for reference. We suggest that you reread it after a month or so of school when you are more familiar with the routine.

We consider this handbook a living document. Changes and updates to this handbook may occur throughout the year. These will be submitted to each staff member and each family in writing and will be added to this handbook in a section marked addendum.

We know that you will want to become involved in your child's education at The New School, and we welcome your involvement. Parents who are actively involved with their child's educational experience not only directly contribute to their child's success, but also share in the pleasures and satisfactions the child experiences in these learning years. We invite you to come to the school to observe your child at work. We also want to hear from you concerning any inquiries, concerns, or suggestions that you may wish to offer.

The "Acknowledgement of Receiving and Reviewing the New School Handbook" form must be signed by both parents/guardians, unless otherwise agreed, and returned to the school within 10 days of receipt of this handbook. This is necessary to comply with North Carolina Child Care law.

We look forward to working with both you and your children in making this a truly "excellent educational" experience. Thank you once again for being a part of our school

Sincerely yours,

The Administration of The New School

History and Philosophy

The New School, Inc. (hereinafter referred to as “TNS”) was founded in June of 1983. The school began classes in August of that year. The school became affiliated with the American Montessori Society (AMS) in September of that year and has maintained its membership to date.

TNS is dedicated to the Montessori Philosophy of education as prescribed by Dr. Maria Montessori. TNS adheres to the AMS Code of Ethics (located in the back of this handbook). The purpose of the School is to promote the intellectual, emotional, physical, and social development of the students; to further the development of the Montessori Method within the bounds of scientific research; and to advance community understanding of the Montessori Method of education.

Non Discrimination Policy

The New School, Inc., admits students of any race, color, national, and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities accorded to or made available to the students of the school. The school does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national, and ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, hiring policies, or any other school-related activities.

Mission Statement

The goals of TNS are very personal to our staff members and very close to our hearts. These goals reach beyond our obvious commitment to offer each child the best environment to enrich language, math, science, geography, and living skills. We are all deeply committed individually to the following goals for the children, parents, and staff members:

To provide a nurturing environment and atmosphere of acceptance, love, and respect for all children, parents, and staff members.

To create a community where children learn concrete ways to live and work in peace and harmony with themselves, with each other, with their families, and with the natural world and its abundant creatures.

Contact Information

School Address and Phone Contacts

The New School, Inc.
5617 Sunset Lake Road
Holly Springs, NC 27540

School Phone: 919-303-3636
Fax: 919-303-3605

Emergency Alternate Cell Phone Contact (Jonathan Schroer): 919-422-2535
Emergency Alternate Cell Phone Contact (Julie Schroer): 919-422-3172

Please use the emergency alternate phone contacts only in the event of an emergency and/or an inability to contact the school using the number listed above.

Website Information and E-Mail Address

Web Address: www.montessoricenter.org

E-Mail: info@montessoricenter.org

Please refer to our website often as this, in conjunction with handouts and mailings, is an important mode of communicating events and updates about the school and about the individual classrooms. Most of the information posted on the site will also be sent home or will be emailed to you. However, by referencing the website frequently, you can catch information that may not have made it home, or that may have been recently updated. Please feel free to provide feedback on the site and provide suggestions about what type of information you would like to see available online.

Each faculty member at the school has their own Montessori email address. These emails are listed on the faculty and staff page of our website.

Administration and Faculty

Chain of Responsibility

The following is a brief overview of the administrative structure of the school. There are other duties and responsibilities not mentioned below that overlap and fall into more than one administrator's domain. If you are unsure of whom to contact for a problem or question, please come to the front desk or send an email to info@montessoricenter.org.

Administration

Head of School

Jonathan Schroer (jon@montessoricenter.org)

The Head of School is responsible for providing leadership to the Administration by recommending and overseeing policies, priorities, projects, programs, and budgets, parent billing, organizing school and classroom schedules, mediating faculty and parent issues, and supervision of student matters.

Program Director

Julie Schroer (julie@montessoricenter.org)

The Program Director is responsible for overseeing the quality and content of the core curriculum offered in each classroom, specialty programs, overseeing the organization of school events, directing the marketing and online presence of the school, updating the website, payroll, and supervision of employee benefits and budget.

Assistant Director

Susan Daniel (susan@montessoricenter.org)

The Assistant Director is responsible for the smooth day-to-day operation of the office and school, routine communication between parents, staff, and administration, Division of Child Development ("DCD") compliance issues, student health issues, student and faculty files, and ordering food and supplies.

Property Manager

Brian Lischin (brian@montessoricenter.org)

The Property Manager is responsible for overseeing the condition, repairs, upkeep, and daily functioning of the physical site, overseeing school security, building code compliance, and landscaping management.

Faculty

Toddler Ones (12 to 24 months) Michelle Little
Sue LaCasse
Eleanor Noel

.....
Toddler Twos (24 to 36 months) Chris Dileo
Lori Deach
Charity Kizer

.....
Children's House 1 Kit Dukas
Betty Silliman

.....
Children's House 2 Norly Sargent
Jane Dill

.....
Children's House 3 Lina Gosrani
Lacey Parker

.....
6 – 9 Elementary One Robyn Stady
Nancy Harte

.....
6 – 9 Elementary Two Hank Faber
Nancy Faber

.....
9 – 12 Elementary Tara Stanford

.....
After School Program Charity Kizer
Michelle Little
Jonathan Schroer
Beulah Wiggins

.....
Specialty Teachers

Spanish	Andrea Edery
Sign Language	Stacy Sailsbery
Music	Lisa Sharp

Physical Education	Laura Lackey
Chess	Jonathan Schroer
Yoga	Christine Morris
French	Julie Schroer
Private Piano Lessons	Loogwah Kradlak

Hours of Operation

The traditional TNS school year is from late August to early June, Monday through Friday. Check the current calendar for holidays, teacher workdays, and special events. You can access an updated calendar of events on our website.

Program	Arrival	Dismissal
Before School Care	7:30am	8:20am
Half Day	8:30am	12:00 noon
Full Day	8:30am	4:30pm
Extended Day	8:30am	3:00pm
Elementary	8:30am	3:30pm
Late Care Early Childhood	4:30pm	6:00pm
Late Care Elementary	3:30pm	6:00pm

Emergency School Closure

We will make every possible attempt to remain open during the school day, but there are times when severe weather prohibits us from opening the school for the day. Please note we do not follow the Wake County school closing policy. If we do plan on closing, your child's teacher will attempt to contact you by phone before 7:30am. All decisions concerning the closing of the school are made by the Head of School no later than 6:00am.

Delayed openings and early closings will be aired on WRAL TV5, and other local listings. In addition, if possible, details will be posted on our website and will be delivered as a mobile phone text notification for those who sign up for this service.

In the case of snow, hurricanes, or tornado warnings, the school may be required to close during the course of the day. If the Head of School decides it is in the best interest and safety of the children to close the school, you will be notified by phone to come and pick up your child. It is the responsibility of each parent to:

- Have at least three current emergency contact phone numbers on file, including cell phone numbers.
- Be ready and available to leave work or home immediately to pick up your child.

Parents may at their discretion pick up their child if the school remains open. If for any reason, a

parent or emergency contact person cannot be reached, an administrator, or staff member will remain at the school with the child (see Abandoned Child section).

Important: It is imperative that parents update phone numbers, addresses, and contacts throughout the year as they change!

Administration and Billing Information

A one-time application fee will be required upon placement into the program. This fee is non-refundable.

Tuition is based on annual tuition costs per student for the entire school year, including holidays, vacation, and sick days. Billing statements will be sent home with your child in the last half of each month for the following month's tuition payment. The current tuition rates and fees are available at the office and on our website.

The school depends upon your prompt payment of tuition for its smooth economic functioning. All tuition payments are due and payable on the 28th of each month. There is a five-day grace period from this due date. Thereafter, a late fee of \$15.00 will be added to your account. Please contact the Head of School with any billing questions at jon@montessoricenter.org or by calling the school at 919-303-3636.

Mail all tuition payments to The New School, Inc. billing address:

The New School, Inc.
5617 Sunset Lake Road
Holly Springs, NC 27540

You can also submit payments at a secured designated place in the office. If you wish to pay by credit card, you may make a payment online by visiting our website and clicking on the *online payment* link. Paying by PayPal, however, does require an additional 3% fee imposed by the PayPal service.

Families may be asked to withdraw from the school for nonpayment or excessive late payments of three or more in one school year.

Before and after school charges will be reflected on your bill. If there is a change in your child's class placement or extended hours during the school year, your account will be revised to reflect such a change.

Enrollment

Toddler and Children's House students may be enrolled for either the half-day program (8:30am – 12:00pm) or the full day program (8:30am – 4:30pm) for five days per week. Students enrolled in a Children's House program are also eligible for the extended day program (8:30am – 3:00pm). Elementary students must enroll for the full day program (8:30am – 3:30pm), five days per week.

Before and After School Care and Fees

Only children enrolled in TNS are eligible for before and after-school care. TNS childcare hourly charges are based on the sign-in and sign-out sheet. Parents who remain at the school with their child may continue to accumulate childcare charges.

The childcare fee is charged in 15-minute increments. The charge is rounded to the next quarter hour. For example, if you pick up your child at 4:40pm, you will be charged to 4:45pm. The hourly childcare fees are the following:

Before class for children under 24 months old (7:30am – 8:20am): **\$7.10 per hour**

Before class for all children over 24 months old (7:30am – 8:20am): **\$4.80 per hour**

Extended class hours for half-day one year olds (12:00pm – 4:30pm): **\$8.80 per hour**

Extended class hours for half-day 2 – 6 year olds (12:00pm – 4:30pm): **\$6.50 per hour**

Extended class hours for extended day 3 – 6 year olds (3:00pm – 4:30pm): **\$6.50**

After class for children under 24 months old (4:30pm to 6:00pm): **\$7.10 per hour**

After class for all children over 24 months old (4:30pm to 6:00pm): **\$4.80 per hour**

Any parent who arrives after school closes (at 6:00pm during the school year and at 5:30pm during the summer) is charged a late pick-up fee of \$1.00 per minute. The late pick-up fee is recorded on the childcare chart and will be added to your account.

Student Record Transfers

When a child leaves our school, conference reports, testing, and medical reports will be forwarded to the next school upon written request by the child's next school.

Records on File

Medical and Immunization Records

Upon enrollment at The New School, the State of North Carolina requires each child to have on file an updated medical form signed by a medical doctor. If your child is a new student, the State of North Carolina allows a 30-day grace period of the time from the 1st day of school to have this form on file. After the 30-day grace period has elapsed, the State of North Carolina requires us to remove the child from the school.

At the beginning of each year thereafter, an updated medical form is required for each child.

We are also required by the State of North Carolina to have an updated immunization record on file for your child. Contact your pediatrician or the North Carolina Department of Health to get information concerning your child's required immunizations.

Emergency Contact

Upon enrollment at The New School, the State of North Carolina requires that each child have an emergency contact sheet on file on the 1st day of school. No child may attend the school if the contact sheet is not completed and on file. Please list all persons who may pick up your child from the school. You may change the names at any time. Please inform all the people who are listed on the form that they must show picture identification when they come to the school to pick up your child.

Important: You must notify the school immediately of any changes to your address, phone, cell phone, or contact information.

Disciplinary Policy

It is a requirement of the Child-Care regulations of the State of North Carolina that you have a copy of our rules and policies. We are required to have on file a signed form stating that you have received a copy of our ground rules and policies and that you understand and agree with them.

North Carolina Child Care Law and Rules (Pre-school only)

Each parent/guardian is required to receive the North Carolina Child Care Law and Rules from the DCD. We are required to have on file a signed form stating that you have received the North Carolina Child Care Law and Rules.

Please note that you may download these and other important forms by visiting the forms and documents page on our website.

Admission and Withdrawal from the School

Terms of Admission

Students are admitted regardless of race, color, religious or national origin and all are entitled to the rights, privileges, responsibilities, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to the students of the school. Also, TNS does not discriminate based on physical or learning disabilities. Eligible students are admitted in the following order:

1. Siblings of children currently enrolled in the school
2. Transfer students from other Montessori Schools throughout the world
3. Children entering the Montessori program for the first time

Children may be accepted at any time during the school year. A waiting list is kept when classes are filled. As openings occur, students from the waiting list are contacted and admitted based on the application date and desired starting date.

Withdrawal

All enrolled children are subject to a 30-day provisional period, which may be concluded by the school or the parents with no additional cost to the parents. The school reserves the right to extend this period if deemed helpful in determining that TNS will benefit the child.

It is agreed and understood that the parent/guardian will provide notice **in writing** to the school office 30 calendar days prior to the last day of attendance. Failure to give 30 days **written** notice will result in your being charged for the next 30 calendar days from receipt of such notice, regardless of your child's attendance.

In the event your child is dismissed from TNS for any reason, including disciplinary issues, your account will be assessed for the next 30 days as if written notice was given.

Occurrence Reports and Incident Reports

Appropriate conduct and language is expected at all times. Behavioral problems that require interventions beyond redirection are documented. These records become part of the child's records. TNS uses the following forms to communicate to parents that inappropriate behavior has occurred. These forms include:

1. An Occurrence Report that is recorded by the teacher/administrator, signed by the parent, and placed in the student's file;
2. An Incident Report is recorded by the teacher/administrator, signed by the parent, placed in the student's file, and requires the scheduling of a meeting between the parents and the teacher.

Criteria for Discipline and Expulsion

We believe that by enforcing the following rules we are helping to guarantee that your children are in a safe and healthy environment during these important learning years. The following are some situations of concern and may be cause for discipline and / or expulsion:

- **Physical Aggression.** Any child who displays physical aggression toward peers or teachers.
- **Disrespect.** Any child who shows disrespect toward peers or teachers.
- **Uncooperative Parents.** Children whose parents are un-supportive of the Montessori Method or who are destructively critical of the school.
- **Vandalism.** Any child who vandalizes the school, school property or other children's possessions.
- **Weapons.** Any child who brings a weapon of any type to school.
- **Excessive lateness in arrival or excessive absenteeism.** (Elementary only) Consistent and/or continual excessive lateness in arrival or absenteeism from classes, unless excused by a medical doctor (see Student Attendance section).
- **Theft.** (Elementary only) Any child who steals from the school or from any other child.
- **Drugs.** (Elementary only) Any child who brings any illegal substance onto school property or to school functions.
- **Language / Gestures.** (Elementary only) Any child using foul language, obscene language, or displaying obscene gestures.
- **Schoolwork.** (Elementary only) Any child who refuses to do the required class work.

In addition to the above, any child who does any of the following may be expelled from school:

- Excessively disrupts the class
- Shows no interest in the work and is therefore not benefitting from the program
- Shows through actions that the Montessori program is not suitable to his or her educational needs.

Procedure for Expulsion

We truly hope that we never have to expel a child from our school, but we must have the process in place should the situation arise. Examples of such behavior include but are not limited to: physical harm, persistent misuse of materials, destruction of personal property, difficulty staying within designated boundaries, extremely inappropriate dress, and excessive teasing or bullying. Incidents of this nature will be documented using the occurrence and incident reports mentioned above.

Should the nature and frequency of these incidents become a concern or have escalated to additional inappropriate behavior, the Administration will notify (in writing) the parents/guardians that the student has been placed on a probationary status for the remainder of the academic year. The notification of probationary status must be acknowledged and signed by both parents/guardians before the student returns to school. Incidents of a serious nature may require immediate pickup, the scheduling of official meetings, an in-home suspension period, and/or expulsion.

During probation, TNS uses the following procedure in the event of further issues:

1. **Step One:** The parent/guardian will receive a written notice that their child has been placed on probationary status. This probationary notice must be acknowledged and signed by both parents/guardians before the student returns to school. A copy of this notice will be placed in the student's permanent school file. A meeting will be scheduled with the parents, the teachers, and the Head of School or Program Director. If another student is involved in the incident(s), the parent/guardian of the other child will also be notified the same day. A plan of action will be discussed in addition to outlining the procedures should the problems continue;

2. **Step Two:** The student will be sent home with a written report describing the incident. The parent may be asked to pick the child up early and to keep the child home for a specified length of time. A copy of this report must be acknowledged and signed by both parents/guardians before the child returns to school. Again, a copy of this report will be placed in the student's permanent school file. A final meeting will be scheduled with the parents, the teachers, and the Head of School or Program Director. If another student is involved in the incident, the parent/guardian of the other child will also be notified the same day;

3. **Step Three:** The student will be expelled. The parents/guardians will be called to pick up the student from TNS immediately.

Conduct

Dr. Maria Montessori believed that “education centers upon the care of the living being...the total person including the biological and social. Education is a natural process, which develops spontaneously in the human being. It is acquired by experiences in which the child acts on his/her own environment.” This is the positive base of the Montessori approach expressing her central attitude and “view of man.”

TNS adheres to the following rights, responsibilities, roles, and rules.

Rights of the Child

- To program the day (during the work period) and choose friends to work with
- To work alone, with another, or in a small group

- To repeat an activity as many times as she/he has a need to
- Not to choose an activity, but to observe others instead
- To ask and receive help from an adult
- Not to join a group activity if she/he prefers without disturbing the group in session

Responsibilities of the Child

- To respect the rights of others
- To respect the environment
- To complete the cycle of activities he or she has chosen
- To use problem solving skills to resolve conflict
- To engage in purposeful constructive activity throughout the day

Role of the Adult

- To respect the child
- To prepare the environment
- To give lessons to children
- To act as an appropriate model for children
- To observe the child at work
- To reinforce the ground rules
- To intervene if the child is disturbing, dangerous, or destructive to him or herself, or others
- To mediate in problem solving, if required

Ground Rules of the School

- School is a peaceful place, so walk slowly.
- School is a quiet place, so speak softly.
- Chairs are for sitting on.
- Tables are for working or eating on.
- Anyone may watch another working.
- Teachers help children to remember not to disturb another person's work or belongings.
- Keep your hands behind your back or in your lap and be silent while you watch someone working.
- Use an activity only when you understand how to use it properly.
- Children show respect for materials by not damaging them.
- A person may not hurt another person.
- Be polite at school and everywhere, saying please and thank you, and good morning or

- hello when greeting someone.
- People use only kind words to each other.
- People remember to say good-bye when leaving to go home

Discipline

At the school, we adhere to the Montessori Method of education, liberty, and discipline. We operate on the assumption that everyone in the school will treat everyone else in the school with care and dignity. To this end, three basic behaviors are forbidden:

1. No child or adult will hurt another child or adult in any way.
2. No child or adult may disturb the work of another in any way.
3. No child or adult may mistreat the property of the school in any way.

These rules of conduct apply to any student, teacher, parent, or visitor in the school.

We use positive and creative methods of discipline that are appropriate to the age and developmental level of the child. We promote this by the use of privileges and logical consequences, as opposed to rewards and punishment. Discipline is not intended to control the child, but rather to help a student toward the goal of self-control. We also try to take into consideration any environmental factors at home or in the child's life that may be influencing their behavior. Discipline will only be used in the case of the breaking of an established rule previously outlined for the child.

The guidelines for discipline are as follows:

- Discipline will be appropriate to the problem.
- Discipline will be intended to help the child internalize the rule.
- Discipline will be positive and will never be intended to lower a child's self esteem.
- Discipline will never involve food or drink.
- Discipline will never be physical.

Arrivals and Departures

Parking Lot and Car Pool guidelines

The safety of the children in our school is something we obviously take very seriously. As with any parking lot, there is always an element of danger to be cognizant of. For everyone's safety, we ask that you adhere to the following rules:

Drop-off

- Your child must remain in their car seat or with their seat belt on until the car has reached one of the car pool staff members who will assist your child in exiting the vehicle.
- Please have your child "ready" to help expedite drop-off. This keeps the process moving quickly.
- If you are walking your child into the classroom, park your car in a non-curbside parking space. Please note there is no curbside parking at any time. The curbside is our fire lane!
- You may not leave your car unsupervised in our carpool/fire lane at any time!

Driving and car pool lanes

- At drop-off and pick-up times we ask that you stay in one of two lanes only (that is, no cutting in and out of lanes). One lane (the curbside/fire lane) is for student drop-off and pick-up, the other (furthest from the curb) lane is for those parking cars and for the lead drop-off car to join once they are ready to leave.
- Once you are in one lane, do not pull around other cars. Patiently wait your turn to exit. Also, please observe our 5mph speed limit!
- If you need to drive by other vehicles pulled over in the car pool lane, please drive very slowly. Children are exiting vehicles at this time, which can lead to a very unsafe situation.
- Please drive slowly, be patient, and be aware! Our parking lot has a strict 5mph maximum speed limit.

Child supervision

- All children must be placed under the care of a staff member upon arrival. Do not drop your child at the door and drive away.
- No child should be in the parking lot without an adult. Do not leave children unattended in your vehicle under any circumstances!
- Always hold your Children's House child and Toddler's hand in the parking lot. (If you have more than two children in tow, they can hold each other's hands.)
- At all times during the day, lock your car doors. TNS assumes no liability for theft, loss, or damage to personal property.
- If your Elementary child is late in coming outside at pick-up time, park your car and walk in to pick up your child.

Arrival

Being **on time** is essential! The first 10 to 15 minutes after arrival are important for your child to adjust to the school day. Being on time is a way of showing that school is important. Entering late, when others are already working, disrupts the class and your child loses valuable instruction time.

7:30am to 8:20am

Between 7:30am and 8:20am, parents must escort their child into the school building. When entering the school building, the on-duty faculty member signs-in your child and assists your child with his or her coat and lunch box.

8:20am to 8:40am

From 8:20am, staff members are present at "car pool" to assist your child as he or she exits your vehicle. Please pull up to a staff member, discharge your child and drive off, making room for the next vehicle. We find this process encourages independence in young children. The staff members will either guide or watch your child to make sure they reach their classroom safely.

If you wish to enter the building with your child, please park your vehicle and walk with your child into the building. Please say good-bye to your child before they enter the classroom. Entering the classroom with your child can lead to a greater incidence and intensity of separation anxiety and more confusion and distractions for the children and teachers already in the room.

For the safety of the children in the classroom, please do not attempt to engage your child's teacher in conversation at this time; he or she is very busy overseeing the arrival process and is supposed to be greeting and assisting children as they enter the classroom. Also, do not engage other parents in conversation in the classroom as this is very disrupting to the operation of the environment.

Separation Anxiety

In pre-school, sometimes children have difficulty separating and saying good-bye to their parents at the start of the day. Their tears, clinging behavior, and even full-fledged “tantrums” almost always subside within a few moments of the parent leaving. If you find yourself in this situation, please find a teacher, say a cheerful good-bye to your child, and leave quickly. We ask that you do not return to the classroom. The observation booths are very helpful at this time. You may also wait in the hallway or office for reassurance that your child has settled in. We will call you if the situation is not resolved quickly. You may also feel free to call us to check on your child.

Departure

Please inform persons picking up your child of all safety rules outlined in this manual. Anyone on your emergency pick-up list may be asked for picture identification such as a driver’s license. We even “card” Grandma and Grandpa if we are not familiar with them. Please be on time for pick-up as this will help the child feel more secure in their routine and will also prevent the need for you to pay late pick-up fees.

Children’s House Departure (12:00pm and 4:30pm Pick up times)

If the weather permits, the children will be on the play area. **You must ensure that a faculty member on duty knows that you are leaving with your child.** If picking up at noon, please wait at the gate for your child; we ask that you do not enter the playground at noon-time as this can lead to confusion for the faculty responsible for tracking the whereabouts of the children present. Please leave the area when you pick up your child. The time that you and your child are within the supervised area will have child care charges applied (indoors or outdoors).

Half-day children must be picked up by 12:00 noon. Any child not picked up by 12:00 noon will return to the building with the full-day children and the parent will be charged childcare fees for any time after 12:00 noon. We recommend arriving at TNS by 11:55 as some children become concerned when their friends leave and they must go inside and wait for their parent. It is compounded as the children who stay are being served their lunch.

Full-day children must be picked up by 4:30pm; parents will be charged a childcare fee for any time after 4:30pm. Please refer to our tuition and fees rates for the applicable child care charges.

Elementary Class Departure: 3:25pm to 3:35pm

All elementary families are assigned a vehicle number for pick-up, which we ask to be visible to the faculty from the outside. We ask that parents please remain with their vehicles and the children will be escorted from the building to the vehicles. If you wish to pick your child up from their classroom during this time, please park in a parking spot and enter the building through the car pool door. Elementary class students should be picked up between 3:25pm to 3:35pm. Parents are charged a childcare fee for any time after 3:35pm.

Late Arrival and Early Departure

It is important that any elementary class student arriving late to school or leaving earlier than their scheduled departure time be **signed in/out by their parent/guardian at the front office** and an acceptable reason given for the change. This is necessary for the education and safe keeping of your child. For more information, see the Student Attendance section.

If you know ahead of time you will be late in picking up your child, please inform your child and the staff at drop-off time or call the school. If you pick up your child during class or “circle” time, please do so quietly with the least possible interference to the program.

Special Pick-up Information

Please send a note to your child's teacher **ahead of time** regarding any planned changes in your child's pick-up. Children sometimes insist that they are going home with another friend for a play date. Unless changes have been noted or called in ahead of time by a child's parent or guardian, children will not be sent home with anyone but their regular ride.

Car Pools

Car-Pooling is a popular means of transporting children to and from school. It is imperative that the car-pool driver's name is listed on your emergency contact sheet and that you have informed your child's lead teacher that your child will be participating in that car pool. If your car-pool arrangements change, please be sure to notify the school of that change immediately.

Rest Periods (4-year olds and younger)

The State of North Carolina requires that any child under the age of 5 years spending more than 4 hours in the environment have a rest period. Each child will have his/her own mat and bottom sheet for the school year. Each child who rests will be required to have a crib size blanket labeled with his/her name. The bottom sheets are laundered here at the school on a weekly basis or as needed in the case of an accident. We request that linens (blankets and pillows) be taken home on a bi-weekly basis for laundering.

School Safety and Security

We understand the following are difficult subjects. Thankfully, these situations have never happened at our school. However, as a precaution, we continually enhance our emergency drills and strictly enforce very rigid and thorough safety procedures to prevent or be prepared for any type of emergency situation we may face. These procedures and precautions have been outlined below.

Abandoned Child

Please **be assured** that every attempt will be made to care for or find proper arrangements for your child. We are aware that emergencies may happen when TNS cannot be contacted.

If a child has not been picked up by 6:30pm, parents and emergency contacts have not been able to be reached (leaving messages on all answering machines and cell phones), if TNS has not been notified of delays, and if other arrangements cannot be made (that is, calling in another staff member to care for the child) and the staff member in charge *must* leave, s/he has the right to call the Crisis Line (911) to report an abandoned child. A note will be left for the parents at the front door of arrangements made for the child.

Again, please be assured that we will make every effort to avoid taking the above steps.

Kidnapped Child

The staff member in charge will:

- Let the child go if bodily harm / injury is imminent

- Call another staff member for assistance
- Get a description of the person and / or a license number
- Call police immediately
- Call custodial parent(s)/guardian(s) immediately to inform them of the event and the steps taken by TNS

Please note that the parent(s)/guardian(s) are responsible for producing any court documents intended to prohibit a former legal guardian to pick up the child. Without documentation to the contrary, we are obligated to release children to their legal guardian of record.

Lost Child

Should a child become lost or leave TNS without our knowledge or permission, the staff members in charge will:

- Report to the Administration and immediately search all areas of the school. If on a field trip, one teacher will retrace the steps of the group while another adult is to stay with the group.
- Phone a parent/guardian or the emergency contacts (if parents cannot be reached).
- Phone the police, if parent/guardian or emergency contacts cannot be reached.

Again, we do not mean to scare you. Please know that your child's safety is our number one concern. Please contact the school if you wish to learn more about the safety procedures in place for a particular field trip. (Ratios, protocols, driving expectations, etc., vary depending on the age of the class, the location, and type of activities of the field trip.)

Abuse and Neglect

The New School is required by law to report any reasonable suspicion of child abuse or neglect upon observation of a child being subjected to circumstances or conditions, which could reasonably result in abuse or neglect, to the Wake County Department of Social Services, the police department, or the local law enforcement agency.

School Security

All doors will remain closed and locked at all times unless directly supervised and monitored by a faculty member or the Administration.

There is continuous video surveillance on the outside of the building in addition to an alarm system, which is continually monitoring for open doors.

There is also a security system in place located at the front office door. This door remains locked at all times and entry into the building is controlled by access cards provided to each family. All families will be provided with two access cards, which when scanned in front of the black receiver box located on the door, will automatically unlock the door and permit entry to that person. Should a family misplace a card, they should contact the school immediately and inform them this card is missing. A \$4.00 replacement fee will be added to your account should you need either a third card or a replacement card.

In the event a card is left at home, the parent should either knock at the office door to get the attention of an administrator or a faculty member, or call the school from a cell phone. If you request to enter through a door into a classroom where the teacher is unfamiliar with you, please be prepared to show a form of identification such as your driver's license.

Please do not enter the car pool door as people are exiting from that door (except during car pool time). This makes it very difficult to monitor who is entering the building.

Fire Drills

Fire drills are required by the Wake County Fire Department. A planned fire drill will be conducted monthly. Initially, the Administration will inform the faculty members of planned fire drills on the day of the drill. Eventually, there will be unannounced drills. All lead teachers are responsible for instructing the students in their care of the proper way to exit the building during a fire drill.

Communication with the School and the Teachers

All questions and concerns regarding your child and his/her school progress and activities should be addressed to your child's lead teacher. If you have further questions, or for general school concerns, please contact the Head of School or Program Director. We are thankful for and appreciate your feedback. We can only help situations if we know about them.

Communication by Phone

Please do not request a phone conversation with your child's teacher during the normal school day as teachers are asked not to leave their classrooms to receive phone calls unless the call is urgent. If you would like to have a phone conversation with your child's teacher, please call the school and leave a time for the teacher to return your call.

Children are permitted to make phone calls from the school only with teacher/administration permission. Cell phones, beepers, and other electronic devices of that nature are not permitted at the school for use by children.

Communication via E-mail

As mentioned before, all faculty members have been given a Montessori email address. You will be able to find this address either by asking your child's teacher or by clicking on the faculty and staff link on our website at www.montessoricenter.org. The faculty will be able to check their e-mail on the staff computer in our lounge area. Emails are generally the most effective and least disruptive way in which to communicate with your child's teacher.

Communication with Messages

The New School policy requests that all messages to faculty or administration be written and dated. This will help assure the accuracy and delivery of the message.

Conferences and Reports

Two parent/teacher conferences are held for all children during the year, one in the fall and one in the spring. The lead teacher will contact you individually to schedule these conferences. The purpose of these conferences is to share with you observations of your children and their activities and to report on their progress. Both parents should attend if possible.

We consider conferences to be our major communication during the year, at which we present a profile of your child. Please feel free to use this venue to discuss your own observations or concerns so that we may fully help your child grow and learn. Other conferences may be scheduled during the year if a parent or teacher feels it is necessary.

In addition to the conferences, the staff is also committed to being available to communicate with parents throughout the school year. As mentioned earlier, emailing or sending written notes to the teacher is the most effective way to communicate questions or other information without taking up valuable class time. Please ask your child's teacher early in the year about their individual protocol and preferences for communication.

Observations and Visits

TNS encourages you to spend some time observing your child's class. Four of our classrooms have observation booths, while the other four rooms have a tinted glass pane in the door. Parents are invited to observe their child's classroom indirectly at any time using these booths or by looking in through the tinted glass.

We request that all in-classroom observations and visits, however, are scheduled a minimum of one day ahead by contacting either the administration or teacher of the classroom.

When observing, please do not interact with the children or attempt to engage your child's teacher in a conversation. We request that you sit quietly and observe the children at work. At the end of your observation, you may wish to meet with the Head of School or Program Director to discuss your time in the class or you may wish to make an appointment to speak with your child's lead teacher. We recommend an observation period of not less than one hour.

Lead teachers have been instructed to ask parents to leave the classroom if:

- The parent attempts to interact with the children.
- The parent moves among the children disrupting their work period.
- The parent attempts to engage the teachers in conversation.
- The parent makes comments that are unsuitable to either the children or the teachers.

Cameras and video recorders are not allowed (unless specifically permitted by the administration or teacher). Picture taking is very distracting to the children when they are attempting to work. In addition, picture taking without permission may be a potential violation of the privacy requests of other families.

Changes in the Child's Environment

Please inform us of any changes in the emotional environment of your child, such as a death in your family (including a pet); if a parent has changed jobs or job schedule; if a parent is going on an extended business trip; if a baby is born; if a change in the status of family life (such as a separation or divorce) takes place; or there are other departures from your normal family routine.

Also, if you are planning a vacation without your child and s/he is staying with someone else, please report this to the administration or the lead teacher.

The emotional environment of your child is as important as the physical environment. Please help us be sensitive to this important area. All information provided is shared only with your child's teachers.

Student Attendance

General

We are committed to providing a quality education for our students. Regular attendance promotes learning. Those who attend regularly realize the greatest benefit from our programs. Much of our instruction is hands-on or involves student-teacher interaction. Excessive absences can lead to significant negative academic consequences. Regular attendance helps set the stage for your student's attitude toward school, for consistency of expectations, and for the reinforcement of concepts and skills your child is learning. It is to your child's great advantage to make every effort to ensure they attend school regularly.

Nonetheless, absences are occasionally necessary. Please notify the school as soon as possible, but no later than 8:15am if your student will not attend that day, or at the beginning of an extended illness.

Elementary students are responsible for making up work in a timely fashion when they are absent or tardy. Individual classrooms may require homework to be completed by the following day in proportion to the amount of class time lost. Students who are absent or anticipate being absent for two or more days may arrange to get assignments from their teacher ahead of time.

Please note that the school assumes expenses that cannot be reduced by a student's absence. Charges are made for a place in the school and not for a period of attendance. The absence of a student does not materially decrease the expenses of the school. Therefore, the school cannot refund tuition paid, or cancel unpaid obligations when a child is absent. In order to maintain the required adult/student ratio, we will not be able to grant any make-up days for children under the age of six and who are not enrolled in a five-day schedule. Also, classroom lessons cannot be made up when a student is absent.

Excused Absences for Elementary Students

We encourage you to schedule appointments and travel during non-school hours and on scheduled breaks. Valid conditions for **excused absences** as stated by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction are:

- Illness or injury that makes the student physically unable to attend school.
- If your child has a contagious disease or infection, you must call the school as soon as possible and inform the Administration so that parents of other students in your child's class can be notified.
- Medical or dental appointments.
- Death in the immediate family.

- Court or administrative proceedings.
- Religious observance.
- Educational opportunity – Approval for such an absence must be made in writing by the Administration **at least two days** in advance of the absence.

Extended Absences for Elementary Students

- Your teacher will contact you after three consecutive days of absence.
- Letters will be sent to the parents/guardians when a student accumulates ten and thereafter ten more absences – total twenty. **These absences may be any combination of excused or unexcused absences.**
- In the event of continued absences, the Administration will contact the parent to determine if there is a problem.
- After more than thirty days total absence during one school year, the student's records will go before a review board to determine if the student will be retained in their current class for the following year. Consultation with the classroom teacher and work completed while absent will be considered. Our desire at TNS is not to see a student retained, but to have a healthy and successful school year for our students.

Student Tardiness

Tardiness affects your student and the other students in the classroom. The first 10 to 15 minutes after arrival are important for the socialization progress that naturally occurs at the start of the day. Being on time is a way of showing that school is important. In addition, entering late when others are already working disrupts the teacher and other students. Valuable lesson time is lost to the tardy student.

Although we understand occasionally circumstances do arise where lateness results, we must, in the best interest of the students and staff, strictly adhere to our lateness policy.

Any Elementary student arriving after 8:40am is officially tardy and is required to sign in at the main office with the parent or guardian.

Procedures to be followed in the event of continued Elementary student tardiness (as defined as a student arriving after 8:40am):

- When a student accumulates five days of tardiness, your classroom teacher will notify you.
- In the event of ten days of continued tardiness (and each 10 day continued tardiness thereafter), a letter will be sent to the parents/guardians.
- When a student has accumulated more than thirty days total tardiness during one school year, the student's records will go before a review board to determine if the student will be retained in their current class for the following year. These tardies may be any combination of excused or unexcused tardies. Our desire at The New School is not to penalize the student but to foster the importance of commitment and respect for themselves, for their teachers and classmates, and for learning.

Early Dismissal or Return

If you must pick up your child earlier than their normal departure time, please provide a note or email telling the time they will be picked up and if they will be returning. When you pick up your child inside the building, please sign the “Late Arrival/Early Dismissal” record at the office. The same procedure is followed for return to school.

For elementary students, to be counted as present, the student must be in attendance at least one-half of the student day. If a student gets sick during the school day and needs to leave school prior to 12:00pm, they will be marked absent. Also, if the student comes in after 12:05pm they will be considered absent for daily attendance records.

Illness

If a child exhibits any of the following symptoms at school, a parent will be notified to make arrangements to take the child out of school. We will do the best we can to prevent needlessly sending a child home. However, there may be instances where symptoms arise that concern us and require the school to request you to seek medical advice.

We realize that it may be inconvenient to have a sick child at home, but it also would be extremely unfair to the sick child, to the other children, and the staff to do anything less. You must have a back up system in place at all times.

As required by the state, if your child has a contagious disease or infection, you must call the school as soon as possible and inform the Administration so that parents of other children in your child’s class can be notified.

Please note there are CPR and First Aid certified staff members present in the school at all times. Most staff members have also taken an anaphylaxis workshop.

When to Stay Home

Please keep your child at home if s/he shows one or more of the following symptoms. Chances are that s/he is not healthy enough to attend school if there is:

- An inability to go outside
- A temperature (non-medicated) of 100 degrees and/or rising
- Deep coughing
- A listless and/or “droopy” feeling
- An upset stomach
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- An undetermined rash
- An undetermined swelling of any body parts

- Whenever you are on the fence if s/he is well enough to come or not

Returning to School after an Illness

The following table lists common illnesses that occur in child care centers and schools. Your child **may not return to school** until they meet the criteria listed in this table.

Illness	When a child can return to school:
Fever	A child must have a normal (non-medicated) temperature for at least 24 hours before returning to school.
Upper respiratory tract infection	A child's time at home depends upon the severity of the illness and physician's instructions. In the case of the common cold symptoms (runny nose, coughing), it is advisable to keep the child home until the acute state subsides, usually one or two days.
Vomiting	The child may return to school 24 hours after the last episode.
Diarrhea	The child may return to school 24 hours after the last episode.
Strep throat	The child must be on medication for at least 24 hours before returning to school.
Conjunctivitis (pink eye)	The child must be on medication for at least 48 hours, and there must be no more "sand" around the area of the infected eye before returning to school.
Chicken pox	A child must remain home for seven to eight days from the onset of blisters or two days after the last blisters have scabbed over. Incubation averages from 13 to 17 days.
Undiagnosed rash	A child must receive treatment before returning to school.
Croup	Depending on the severity of the case, the child may return to school when the deep, "barking" cough has subsided.
Scarlet fever	A child may return to school after antibiotic treatment has rendered the child completely recovered.
Impetigo	A child may return to school after treatment has rendered the condition no longer contagious. The doctor may allow the child to return to school if the area is treated and covered.
Ringworm/ pinworm	With proper treatment, a child may return to school.
Head lice	A child must be louse and nit free to return to school. Continue checking the child to verify the condition is under control.

The child may return to school after he or she is symptom free and the above criteria are met. We are aware that this can be a burden. However, it not only makes the child comfortable and prevents relapse, but it prevents exposure to the rest of the students and staff. Also, it is important to note that we are bound by the health care regulations of the Department of Child

Development.

Please always make sure that your child does feel well enough to return, even if symptoms are gone and/or the required time period has elapsed.

We feel we **must** be very strict on this, so please help us by having arrangements made ahead of time for any periods of illness your child may have. We thank you in advance for helping to keep the children and staff in our environment healthy.

Medication

If a child must receive medication during the school day, the office/teacher must be notified, as students are not allowed to self-administer medications. This includes over-the-counter medications such as cough drops, Neosporin ointment, vitamins, lip balm, sunscreen, and so forth. **This is inclusive of all ages.** All prescription medications at school are stored in a locked box in the refrigerator if refrigeration is required, or in a locked box in your child's room.

The following table describes how the Administration or Teacher can dispense medication.

Prescription medication	No medication may be administered to students by school personnel unless the Parent Request / Medication Form is signed by a physician and parent and is in the possession of school officials. These forms are available in the office. We cannot honor verbal instructions under any circumstances.
Short-term prescription medications and over-the counter items	The only situation in which a Parent Request / Medication Form is not required is when a student is prescribed an antibiotic or other medication to be taken 2 weeks or less following an acute illness. Then the medication must be brought to school in the original bottle with the pharmacy label. The medication must be accompanied with a note from the parent requesting that the medication be given and should include instructions as to when, how, and how long the medication should be given.
Over-the-counter medications	This includes such items as Tylenol, vitamins, cough drops, Neosporin ointment, sunscreen, lip balm, and so forth. A school staff member will give no medication unless it is in the purchased container with the student's name, name of medication, and dosage and time for administration clearly marked. If a non-prescription medicine is ordered by the physician on a medication form, it must be received in the original container and will be administered according to the physician's written instructions.

All medication must be handed by the parents/guardians to the office or teacher and from the office or teacher to the parent or guardian. All transfers must be adult to adult. The parents for the child must furnish a measuring device.

Please call the office if you have questions.

In our Children's Houses and Infant/Toddler classes, lip balm, cough drops, sunscreen, and so forth are to have a signed parental form, be in locked storage in the classroom, and only be administered by the teacher.

Medicine forms for administering medication are available in the office. Parents must notify the child's lead teacher of the need and instructions to administer the medication (as written on the medical form) before leaving the school. We cannot honor verbal instructions.

Allergies and Dietary Restrictions

If there is an indication on the medical form that a child has an allergy, the school immediately constructs a specific allergy care plan for the child. A copy of this plan is then provided to the child's teacher and any other adult who may be responsible for the child at any time during the day. Please inform us of all allergies and/or dietary restrictions your child may have or may acquire during the school year.

Peanut and Tree-Nut Policy

All of the classrooms in our school are peanut and tree nut-free. Due to allergies related to nuts, eggs, and other food items, we ask that you assist us in making sure that the lunches and snacks you bring into the classroom do not contain any nut products.

Please make sure any store-bought baked goods you bring into the classroom for birthday treats do not contain any peanuts or tree nuts. Also check to make sure the product was not manufactured on equipment that is shared with peanuts or tree-nuts. Please note that we are no longer allowing home baked goods in the school for birthday celebrations.

If your child has any additional allergies, please provide a special snack that can be kept in the classroom for birthday celebrations. Providing a snack for your child will keep them safe from allergic reactions.

Dress Code and Children's Possessions

Dress Code

The New School, Inc., reserves the right to add other items to this list, as required. Any article of clothing that detracts from students' productivity will be restricted from the school.

Be aware that your child will be engaging in a wide variety of indoor and outdoor activities. We request that your child dress in comfortable, washable, durable clothing. Please give daily consideration to the weather and scheduled activities. Children are required to dress in a clean and neat manner, as follows:

- **Pants** – Properly fitting pants must be worn to school. Pants must be worn around the waist. The following are unacceptable:
 - ❖ Pants hanging off the buttocks
 - ❖ Torn or frayed pants
 - ❖ Extremely tight fitting pants
 - ❖ Extremely loose fitting pants
 - ❖ Rope belts or chains

- **Shoes or footwear** – The following footwear is unacceptable:
 - ❖ Improperly fitting footwear. They might cause a child to fall while playing on the play area.
 - ❖ Open-toe shoes (on the playground). These also may cause accidents outside. However, the students may wear open-toe shoes inside.
 - ❖ Flip-flops (on the playground). Again, these shoes pose a safety issue outside but may be worn inside.
 - ❖ Cowboy boots. They do not allow a child to walk naturally.
 - ❖ Platform and high heel shoes.
- **Shirts or sweatshirts** – Shirts should be tucked into the pants when possible. Tee shirts and polo shirts are acceptable. The following are unacceptable:
 - ❖ Any clothing with questionable comments or pictures on them.
 - ❖ Loose fitting shirts or blouses exposing undergarments.
 - ❖ Spaghetti strap tops.
 - ❖ Torn or frayed shirts.
- **Jewelry** – We discourage, but do not prohibit, children from wearing earrings. The following items are unacceptable:
 - ❖ Nose rings
 - ❖ Lip rings
 - ❖ Pierced body rings or body pins other than earrings
 - ❖ Hand rings with questionable gestures
 - ❖ Necklaces with questionable comments or gestures
- **See-through clothing** – All articles of see-through clothing are unacceptable.
- **Undergarments** – Proper undergarments are required at all times.
- **Skirts and dresses** – Skirts and dresses must be low or lower than the student's middle finger when their arms are placed pointing down and straight against their sides.
- **Make-up** – An excessive amount of makeup is unacceptable. We discourage, but do not prohibit, the use of a reasonable amount of makeup.
- **Hats and sunglasses** – Hats and sunglasses may not be worn into the school building. All hats must be removed upon entering the building.

Toys and Personal Belongings

Only items required for classroom use and/or organization should be brought to school. Please leave the following at home:

- Toys, trading cards, electronic games, personal belongings, and jewelry
- Money (excessive of classroom needs)
- Wallets and purses
- Expensive jewelry or items of sentimental value
- Candy, gum, and other similar products

Lost and Found

If you discover that your child has misplaced one of their possessions, and you are unable to locate it in their classroom, please check with the front desk to make sure it was not turned in to our lost and found.

The teachers and children make every effort to see that articles of clothing do not get misplaced or lost. There are a few things that you can do to assist us with our efforts.

- Label all of your child's clothing. Many children wear the same designs and sizes. Note: Please use only your child's initials, not their full names. This is recommended by the police department.
- Label your child's lunch box (this is required by the Division of Child Development). Note: Please use only your child's initials, not their full names. This is recommended by the police department. Please also record the days date on the tape.
- Attach your child's gloves or mittens to your child's coat sleeves.
- Periodically, parents and children should check the lost and found to see if an article of clothing belonging to the child has been placed there.

Children's Houses and Toddler Clothing

Please have your children dress in practical clothing that they can manage on their own, which increases their skill and desire to become independent. Pants with elastic waists are preferable until the child can handle more difficult fasteners. Overalls are suitable only if children can fasten and unfasten them independently. For children with shoe laces, see that they are long enough and have tips. In rainy or snowy weather we recommend shoe boots (which fit directly over the socks) since these seem to be the simplest for young children to manage themselves.

We require two full changes of clothing for all children age 5 and under to be left at the school in case of an accident. This change of clothing should include shirts, pants or shorts, underwear, and socks. Extra underpants are helpful for newly toileting children. When soiled clothing is sent home, replacement clothing must be sent with the child on the next school day. From time to time, a child may be required to borrow another child's clothing. Please wash and return the article of clothing as soon as possible. We also ask that parents change the extra clothing depending upon seasonal changes and the growth of their child. Ask your classroom teacher for

individual classroom information.

School “Belongings”

If you should find unfamiliar objects in your child’s pocket or in your child’s room, please return them to us. Sometimes a child likes to take home mementos from the school. A small pink cube, for example, may be very intriguing to small hands but is also an important component of our “Tower of Cubes.” Much of the equipment is very expensive and difficult to replace.

Food

Children’s House and Toddler parents pay an annual snack fee for their children. We serve only wholesome foods. We do not serve items with extra sugar added; any sugars in the snack items are natural. The snack selections include, but are not limited to: fruit, raw vegetables, raisins, crackers, cheese, and so forth. **All classrooms are peanut and tree-nut free** in order to protect our students with allergies to these food products.

Parents are responsible to notify the school of any special nutritional needs of the child. It is also the responsibility and the commitment of the parents to provide healthy and nutritious snacks and meals for their children. Foods with excess sugar, candy, gum, and chocolate are not acceptable for children’s meals or snacks at school.

Lunch

Parents are responsible for providing their child’s lunch. Each classroom has space within our refrigerators set aside for their lunches. Any food not eaten is put back into the lunch box and sent home with the child at the end of the day. We make a point of returning the uneaten food as we want you to know what and how much your child has eaten for lunch. We also prevent sharing of food at lunchtime since dietary restrictions of some children could make sharing very dangerous.

Children are given ample time to eat lunch. They are taught to use proper table manners here at school. We request that the parents insist on the same table manners at home and in restaurants in order for the child to internalize these manners.

When you pack your child’s lunch, consider the following:

- The Division of Child Development requires parents to have a label on their child’s lunch box indicating the name of the child and the day’s date. We have found that using strips of masking tape is one of the easiest ways to do this.
- Do not pack candy, carbonated drinks (any drinks in soda cans) or other forms of junk food.
- Read the ingredient food labels to insure a nutritious lunch for your child. The state regulates that we ensure our children are provided with one-third of their daily nutritional needs. Even though “lunchables” are convenient, their nutritional value is NOT. Please do not send these kinds of prepackaged foods for lunch.
- As the children clean up after themselves, pack a lunch that makes that process easy. Very crumbly foods or messy desserts (such as go-gurts) often frustrate the children in their efforts of independent clean-up.

- To avoid food waste, consider how much your child will actually eat. Please break down pre-packaged items, such as yogurt, canned fruit, and so forth into smaller re-closable containers. The original larger packages often cannot be resealed and food goes to waste after one bite.

If a child forgets his or her lunch, you will be notified. If the school must provide a lunch for your child, a \$5.00 lunch fee will be added to your account.

Field Trips

Car seats are required by law for **ALL** children under the age **8 or under 80 pounds**. No child shall be placed in the front seat with an air bag.

We always need and greatly appreciate parent drivers and chaperones for our field trips. Field trips are designed to increase the student/child's awareness and to be of educational value as well as fun. If your class wears your classroom color, it is easier for supervision, and it distinguishes us as a school group.

Some field trips may require an admission and / or a transportation fee. A permission slip will be sent home to you with all the relevant information prior to the trip. All children will be transported either in car seats (if under the age of 8) or in seat belts (if over the age of 7). No child is permitted to take part in a scheduled field trip unless we have a signed permission slip for that child. Parents of children under the age of 8 years must supply a car seat for the child on the day of the field trip.

Field trips have specific travel rules and emergency road procedures. Adults accompanying field trips will be given these rules and procedures prior to the trip. Some of the basic chaperone guidelines are as follows:

- Drivers must be 21 years of age or older.
- Drivers must submit for approval their driver's license and car insurance information.
- Approved car seats are used where legally needed.
- Children may not under any circumstances occupy a front seat of a car equipped with passenger air bags.
- A sufficient amount of adult supervision is necessary.
- Chaperones are responsible for performing the supervisory or other tasks assigned to them prior to the field trip.
- Upon completion of the field trip, students are to return to school for normal pick-up.

Siblings (older and younger) are not allowed to join field trips unless they have approval by both the teachers and the administration. Children who display a lack of self-control on a field trip may forfeit their privileges for future field trips. For the safety of the children, parents who chaperone on a field trip and are unable to control unacceptable situations or adequately assist in supervising the children will not be requested to chaperone on future field trips.

Any Elementary child not attending a field trip (or whose tardiness makes him/her unable to participate in the field trip) is still expected to attend school for that day. Provisions for classroom supervision and classroom work of a student not attending a field trip shall be arranged ahead of time with the classroom teacher.

Special Events

Parent-Child Night

In the fall and spring, your child hosts Parent-Child Night. The children invite you into their environment and share their “work” with you. The children look forward to your interest and participation.

Holidays

The Montessori Method of teaching developed by Dr. Maria Montessori in Italy is today used in schools of all the world’s major religions. The Montessori program of teaching does not have any specific religious persuasion. TNS is a non-sectarian school.

We are fortunate at TNS to serve children and families of diverse religious and non-religious beliefs. We strongly feel that this enriches our program and teaches tolerance and appreciation of other cultures to our children.

We celebrate holidays in a simple manner. At the discretion of the teacher, special snacks are made available on Halloween, Thanksgiving, Valentine’s Day, and Easter. In December, the children learn about the culture of people in other lands, their customs, foods, and traditions. We simply say “This is how some people celebrate.” We tell the children some of the story and meaning behind the celebration.

Some of the holidays we “present” are Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, and others celebrated by children attending TNS. We feel that these celebrations contribute greatly to respect and acceptance among the children and that it is desirable for us to promote a deep sense of community with our entire TNS family.

Invitations to parties

We have experienced many tears and hurt feelings of children not included in private parties. This happens at all levels of school. Please send party invitations by mail rather than distributing them at school or in the parking lot. The office can help you with a mailing list for your class.

Children’s House and Toddler Birthdays

Parties that are held out-of-school

We ask Children’s House parents to be sensitive to the different school schedules when planning your out-of-school events. By asking full-day and extended-day children to leave during the afternoon for a party, you are also asking the other parents to pull their children from something they are paying for. It also sends an incorrect message about the importance of school to the children asked to leave early for a party. In addition, the children not invited know they are not included.

Celebration of Life Ceremony

At TNS, we celebrate birthdays for the younger children in a special way. During our circle time, we light a candle, which represents the sun, and the child walks around the birthday circle one time for each year of their life. Sometimes parents and their child assemble a short “Story of My Life” (that is, when/where born, learning to walk, riding a tricycle/two-wheeler, trips, acquisitions

of pets, moves, siblings, pastimes, and so forth), which can be represented as a book, a collage of pictures, and so forth. This can be displayed for the day. You may read this book, tell about the pictures, or just “talk” to the class as the child walks around the birthday circle. If you are unable to attend, the teacher will read any “biography” that you create. This is a special activity that most parents and children enjoy and that we encourage.

Birthday Snacks

If you and your child wish to bring a special birthday snack, the lead teacher will serve it to the class during the birthday celebration. Please check with your child’s lead teacher to make the appropriate arrangements, for example, the number of snacks needed.

Also, we ask you bear in mind that we have some children in our classrooms with severe allergies. In particular, **we are very strict about maintaining a peanut and tree nut-free environment.** Please make sure that the snacks you bring in are store bought and that you have read the ingredients to check for any allergy alerts. Please consult your child’s teacher **before** purchasing any snacks for the classroom, and they will be happy to guide you in terms of specific allergies present in the class and offer suggestions for snacks. Please note that we no longer allow home-baked goods.

Please do not bring excessively sweet treats and birthday paraphernalia. We find that the children are equally excited for nutritious snacks such as fruit, popcorn, vegetables, cheese, a nutritious cookie or muffin, and so forth. This will help us to reinforce our teaching the importance of nutritious food.

Arrangements can be made with your lead teacher in April for children with summer birthdays to celebrate in May.

Gifts for School

Often we are asked, “What can we do for the classroom, the children, the teachers, and the school?” Parents are welcome to present a book, tape, or other special item to the school on their child’s birthday or any other special occasion. We will inscribe the gift with the child’s name and the class will share the gift.

Parents and the School

Parent Involvement

We consider it a “Win-Win” situation when our parents are involved in their children’s education and TNS. The child who will benefit the most from enrollment at TNS is the child whose parents are supportive of the Montessori Method. Parents/guardians are expected to take an active role in the following:

- All parent-teacher conferences
- School planned parent education workshops
- Observing their child’s class
- Attending school functions
- Reading and understanding Montessori philosophy

Parent Volunteering and the Classroom

We welcome your involvement in the school and we hope that all of you will offer your time and special talents helping with the classroom during the upcoming school year. This help can take many forms such as cutting paper or doing research from your home, running errands outside the classroom, or being in the classroom.

Your child's lead teacher or the administration will be happy to discuss the possible ways in which you can offer your services and time. There is also a page on our website where you can go to obtain a list of volunteer possibilities and to submit your name showing an interest. In addition, each classroom will have its own web page, which may also have details regarding upcoming volunteer needs.

Please note that there is a minimum of five hours of volunteer time requested from each family. If you are unable to commit to volunteering, you may opt out of this requirement by having a \$50.00 fee added to your last tuition statement of the school year.