

BROCKVILLE MONTESSORI SCHOOL PARENT HANDBOOK

Dear Parents,

Welcome to the Brockville Montessori School. We are pleased you have chosen this school for your child's preschool experience. As a parent or guardian, you are certainly interested about the early start that your child will get prior to starting their formal education in grade 1.

Brockville Montessori School promotes health, growth, and learning while accommodating the needs of individual children. Parents are encouraged to visit classes during the school year. In order for interested parents to gain greater understanding of our philosophy and program, we provide parent education evenings. These evenings consist of a presentation on one or two of the five core areas of the classroom and an opportunity for questions & answers regarding the materials and the curriculum in general.

HISTORY AND OPERATION OF BROCKVILLE MONTESSORI SCHOOL

The Brockville Montessori School was established in 1976 as an independent school for children between the ages of 2 ½ and 6 years. It offers a complete educational program for the preschool child. The school is now, as of July 1st 2011, privately owned and operated by Mary Jane Leslie and Erica Swirsky. It is licensed by the Ministry of Education. The children enrolled are given individualized instruction and the opportunity to develop to their full potential – intellectually, physically, emotionally and socially. Our educational institution presently offers a five day/week full day program and a five day/week half day (morning) program.

PHILOSOPHY

The classroom is a prepared environment that allows children to meet their needs through individual spontaneous activities. The children work intently with self-correcting materials to build concentration and self-discipline, while learning skills progressively. Class time involves individual, small group or whole class activities. Most of your child's time will be spent working independently or with a friend in the following five areas of Montessori class: Practical Life, Sensorial, Cultural, Language and Mathematics.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parents have the opportunity to be involved in many events the school puts on, as well as volunteer for field trips. If you are unable to volunteer your time for activities organized by the school, there are many other ways you can contribute that would be greatly appreciated (donation of classroom "wish" list items, playground toys etc). As Montessori parents, your child will get the most from the program if they have a consistent home and school environment with a positive approach. Children whose

parents educate themselves on the Montessori philosophy and incorporate it in their home lives and provide a stable routine always have the most success.

NEWSLETTER AND CALENDAR

A school calendar for the year will be supplied. The calendar includes PD days, field trips, special events and classroom information. In addition, newsletters regarding school activities and general news are distributed by the Directresses.

STAFF

All BMS staff have an understand of the privilege of working with children in their formative years. Your child's start to school and development into a well rounded child with a sense of community is their most important task. They provide a safe, comfortable and inviting environment for your child. The school is licensed by Ministry of Education and must follow their requirements for an 8:1 ratio of children to teachers.

Currently there is one classroom, with one qualified Montessori Directress one qualified Montessori Assistant. Any additional staff is selected by the owners of the school. French language begins in October usually once a week and is provided by a volunteer French teacher. The children also have a yoga class once per week.

To ensure continued quality education for the children, the Directresses periodically upgrade their skills by attending conferences and refresher courses.

As of March 1, 1995, as required by the Ministry of Education, all staff and volunteers working in the classroom are subject to a vulnerable sector criminal reference check to ensure the safety and security of the children.

AGE OF CHILDREN

Brockville Montessori School is licensed to accommodate children aged 2 ½ to 6 years. There are a maximum of 16 children in the classroom. All children **must** be toilet-trained by the first day of school.

DAYS AND HOURS OF OPERATION

The school year runs from September to June, excluding holidays and PD days (see school calendar).

Morning drop off is **8:30 - 8:45 am.**

Pickup is at **11:45am - 12pm** for AM only students.

Pickup for full day students is **3:15 - 3:30 pm.**

Early Care(7:30am - 8:30am)

After Care – Full Day Students (3:30pm - 5:00pm)

There is a \$20 late fee charge for late pick up. We appreciate your cooperation with this matter.

If your child is going to be absent for the day, or if you will be delayed, a simple courtesy call or text to the school would be appreciated.

ARRIVAL AND PICKUP

Drop off time is 8:30-8:45am and children will be greeted at the classroom door by a Directress or assistant.

The school is responsible for the safe release of your child. As a result, unless otherwise arranged, children will not be released to any person other than those specified by the parents/guardians on the application form or the authorized pick up list.

FEES

The tuition fees are reviewed annually by the owners of the corporation and can be paid monthly or by term.

Half day school..... \$590.00 per month (1 of 10)

Full day school.....\$890.00 per month (1 of 10)

Half day school.....\$2950.00 per term (1 of 2)

Full day school.....\$4450.00 per term (1 of 2)

Early Care.....\$5.00 per use

Late Care.....\$10 per use

Tuition fees are **non-refundable for the terms September to January and February to June after the commencement date of the term.*

***There is a 5% sibling discount applied to the lower tuition.*

EXTENDED CARE

Extended care is available from 7:30-8:30am (Early Care) for a cost of \$5 per use which will be billed monthly. Late care is offered from 3:30pm-5:00pm for a cost of \$10 per use.

For children attending the **Full Day Program**, class time ends at 3:15pm with a grace period of 15 minutes until 3:30pm.

EARLY AND LATE CARE MUST BE BOOKED IN ADVANCE

Please talk to Erica or Bonni if you require early and/or late care to discuss a schedule so proper staffing can be ensured.

Thank you.

ADMISSION POLICY

Upon receipt of your child's completed application and enrolment fee:

1. You will be notified that your child has been accepted into the Program. Admission is on a first come, first served basis. If you accept the admission your enrolment cheque will be cashed at that time. If you choose not to accept the admission, your enrolment cheque will be returned to you. Please note there are no refunds once the admission has been accepted.
2. Your child's record of immunization **must** be forwarded to the School by the first day of class. Failure to do so will result in your child not being admitted into the classroom.

DEMISSION POLICY

The demission policy will be used if a child is displaying behaviours which endanger the health, safety and security of the other children or staff.

After the following steps have been taken, a child may be asked to leave the Program:

1. The staff has exhausted all teaching resources at their disposal and there are no reasonable methods of program accommodation.
2. Discussion has been held with the parents to find possible solution within the Program.
3. Failure to pay two monthly payments will result in termination of the Program.

The school reserves the right to discharge a child if continuation of the program is not in the best interest of the child or the school.

Please refer to the Policy Manual, which is on location at the school, for complete details of the Brockville Montessori School policies and procedures.

CHILD ABUSE REPORTING

We are required by law to report any indicators of suspected child abuse to Family and Children Services of Brockville. Childhood Educators receive training regarding the observation of signs and symptoms of abuse. This benefits the well being and protection of every child in our care.

Legal Requirements: In accordance with the *Child and Family Services Act*, it is the legal responsibility of every person in Ontario, including a person who performs professional or official duties with respect to children, to immediately report to a Children's Aid society if they suspect that child abuse has occurred or if a child is at risk of abuse. This includes any operator or employee of a day nursery. An individual's responsibility to report cannot be delegated to anyone else.

Failure to Report: It is an offense under the *Child and Family Services Act* for a professional to contravene one's reporting responsibilities. The penalty imposed emphasizes that a child's safety must take precedence over all other concerns.

Confidentiality: The duty to report suspicions of child abuse overrides the provisions of confidentiality in any other statute, specifically those provisions that would otherwise prohibit disclosure by a professional or official.

WAIT LIST

Brockville Montessori School will keep a wait list in the potential students binder. A wait list will commence when the classroom has reached its maximum (16 CASA students). If/when a space becomes available the wait list will be notified to occupy this space.

The wait list is made on a first come, first serve basis. Names are placed on the wait list in accordance to the time they contact the school and wish to enrol.

First priority for the following school year (September start) is always given to current students to re-register, as Montessori provides a three year program. The current families will be notified of a "re-registration period". Once this time has expired, spaces will be filled from the wait list in the order they were received from the school. Priority will be given to siblings of current families.

Priority of the wait list families goes to:

- 1- Current families Siblings of current families
- 2- Siblings of current or past 3 year alumni families Desire for the three year program
- 3- 3 year program
- 4 - Order on wait list
- 5 - Full time over part time

There is no cost for being on the wait list. If a family received confirmation that there is space available then they may submit their registration package and a registration fee will be collected to guarantee their space.

When a space becomes available, families are contacted in order of priority. If BMS does not hear back from a family within an acceptable amount of time (48-72 hours) then the next family will be contacted. This will be explained to anyone who wishes to be placed on the wait list.

If a family wants to know their place on the wait list, they will be verbally informed of the amount of families ahead of them. The names on the list will remain confidential.

HEALTH

Prior to admission, each child must be immunized according to the local Medical Officer of Health. Each child is also required to have a copy of immunizations on file.

The staff carry out regular health inspections of the children and follow the Department of Health regulations. A CHILD MAY BE REFUSED ADMITTANCE/REQUIRE A PHYSICIAN'S NOTE IF ANY OF THE FOLLOWING ARE NOTICED: Unusual skin rash, fever, red and irritated eyes, heavy mucous, unusual infectious sores or any other suspected communicable disease. An ill child does not function well at school and may infect other children. Please be prepared for care at home when necessary.

TRANSPORTATION/PARKING

Transportation to and from school is the responsibility of the parents. Some of our parents arrange car-pooling amongst themselves.

Parking is permitted in the parking lot in front of the school building, off Park Street as well as along Pine and Park street. Please exercise necessary diligence and strict child supervision while using the school parking lot.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION

BMS has an emergency plan. In the case of an emergency evacuation, parents will be notified via text or phone call of their location.

CLASSROOM PROGRAM

The class program is an authentic Montessori Education that consists of an independent work period and small/large group period (circle time, stories etc.) A daily schedule for the school year is provided separately.

SPECIAL GUEST VISITS

Occasionally there are special guest visits to the classroom (i.e. doctor, dentist, and musician).

VOLUNTEERS/STUDENTS

All volunteers and students who will be with the children must submit a vulnerable sector criminal reference check prior to being with the students. All volunteers and students are in place to learn or be an aid to the Directress, no student or volunteer is responsible for any students, they are not included in our 8:1 ratio. All volunteers and students will be supervised by an employee of BMS at all times and are not permitted to be alone with any child.

FIELD TRIPS

Local field trips outside of the classroom are held during the year and are sometimes based on a theme (such as Fall Harvesting) to enhance learning. Dates, permission slips and fees will be sent out prior to the trip. A permission form must be returned for your child to attend any field trips off campus. Trips to the park or nature walks do not require a permission slip. Your agreement is given when you register your child. The trips provide enrichment experiences for the children. The children usually travel by school bus for the trips. An additional fee may apply for field trips. If you do not wish for your child to attend, your child(ren) may remain home for the day. Parents are welcome to participate but must provide a Criminal Reference Check and are responsible for their own entrance cost.

The children and teachers often spend time outside to incorporate nature in the curriculum. The school is based close to a park and in a lovely neighbourhood in town. Sometimes the children leave the school grounds, as a group, accompanied by both teachers to go on a nature walk. This is done at a time in the year when the teachers know the children and have trust in their ability to walk safely on the sidewalk with a partner. The group stays together at all times.

PLAY AREA

Occasionally, the play area is used for outdoor group time. If outdoor group time overlaps dismissal, you may pick up your child in this area.

All children attending the full day program play outside after lunch for an hour. They spend half an hour at the beginning of the day and at the end of the day outside as well. These half hour outdoor times may change certain days depending on weather and special programming. Please provide appropriate clothing for the weather. During the cold weather season the children will often be dressed in their outdoor clothing when you arrive to take them home as they will be practicing independent dressing.

CLOTHING AND POSSESSIONS

All families are asked to please provide a change of clothes for their child (in the event of spills from learning materials) in a bag and each article of clothing labeled with the child's name. Please leave an extra pair of shoes for indoor use during winter weather.

Children may bring items they find in nature for show and tell which is held occasionally. However children bringing toys, candy or other personal items to school will be asked to leave them behind.

Please ensure that **ALL items are clearly labeled** with Child's name

- A pair of indoor shoes
- 1 change of indoor clothing
- Appropriate seasonal outerwear (see below)

Appropriate Seasonal Outerwear

- **Winter** –Snowsuit, winter boots, 2 pair of water-resistant mittens (no gloves for toddlers and preschool), hat (without strings)

- **Spring/Fall** –Lined jacket with hood or hat (without strings) splash pants, rubber boots
- **Summer** – Sun hat, running shoe or closed toe sandal with heel strap, sunscreen Please send sun block to the Centre with your child's name on it. **Please apply sun block to your child prior to their arrival** and we will apply the sun block again before outdoor play in the afternoon.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

It will be at the Directress' discretion to cancel school in the case of poor weather conditions and the parent's responsibility to call the school to confirm cancellation.

PARENT / TEACHER INTERVIEWS

There are three sessions of Parent / Teacher interviews held in November, February and June. These interviews allow parents to discuss their child's progress and any other questions parents might have. Sign up sheets will be provided.

PARENT NIGHTS

Parent nights will be offered throughout the school year. They will include discussions of the learning materials in all 5 areas of the classroom. We strongly encourage parents to attend these evenings as they help you understand what your children are doing at school every day and are a nice chance to socialize with other parents.

COMMUNICATION

Communication between parents and teacher is vital. If any concerns arise, please contact the Directresses and a personal meeting can be set up.

The work your child has completed will be sent home monthly. Any parent notices etc will be handed out at drop off or dismissal time.

Parent Issues and Concerns Policy and Procedures

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a transparent process for parents/guardians, the child care licensee and staff to use when parents/guardians bring forward issues/concerns.

Definitions

Licensee: The individual or agency licensed by the Ministry of Education responsible for the operation and management of each child care centre it operates (i.e. the operator).

Staff: Individual employed by the licensee (e.g. program room staff).

Directress: The lead “teacher” of the classroom.

Policy

General

At Brockville Montessori School we strive to maintain open communication between parents/guardians and staff. The goal is to provide children with an atmosphere that is inviting, comfortable, familiar, child sizes and enticing to help every child learn to their fullest potential. Montessori understands the incredible amount of brain and overall development that occurs during this time, the most formative time in a humans life and provides a program that encourages children to be independent and develop to their fullest potential. The ultimate goal is to provide the best *foundation* for children. We strongly believe that routine and *consistency* is key for children of this age to develop and become contributing members of society. If there are any issues or concerns, we feel it is in the child’s best interest that all adults in their lives are away of the situation and circumstances and are on the same page for dealing with these experiences.

The school is very open and encourages communication between the classroom Directress and parents. BMS, as all other authentic Montessori Programs, does not offer “report cards” or “grades” for children’s work and behaviour. Grades, like other external rewards, have little lasting effect on a child’s efforts or achievements. The

Montessori approach nurtures the motivation that comes from within, kindling the child's natural desire to learn. We strive for the children to be self-motivated learners who can be self-sufficient, without needing reinforcement from outside. In the classroom, of course, the teacher is always available to provide students with guidance and support. The school believes it is in the best interest of the child if the adults influencing their lives are also providing similar boundaries and expectations. This will help the child to better form their perceptions of what is appropriate and not appropriate behaviour and allow them to adapt to their society and customs in a fluid and natural manner.

Although the school does not offer report cards or grades, it does offer three sets of Parent - Teacher Interviews throughout the year. It is at this time that Parents/Guardians can discuss with the teachers; what their child has been working on recently, how they have improved, what they enjoy doing, what they have mastered, what they may need some more time working with, how they appear to be socially and physically in the class etc. There are also Parent Observations that occur before the three sets of Interviews. This is a time to allow parents/guardians to observe in the classroom during class time to watch their child as well as the flow of the classroom as an entirety to see how their child as well as the class are developing.

Aside from Interviews and Observations, staff at Brockville Montessori strongly encourages parents to have an active role in their child's development and learning. The classroom Directress is/are available to engage parents/guardians in conversation and support a positive experience during all interactions. Staff at BMS **strongly believe that issues regarding the children or child should not be discussed in front of them.** We give our students our highest respect and do not speak about them in front of them. They are however, happy to speak with parents other than the allotted Interview times. All parents are contacted at the end of September (the child's first month of school) to discuss their settling in period. The classroom Directress is also available to be contacted at school *outside of classroom time* between 8:00am-8:30am and after 3:30pm. The owners/operators/ Directresses at BMS provide all parents with their personal phone numbers and are happy to speak with parents outside of class time whenever they are available. They are also happy to set up additional meetings to discuss a child's development or any issues aside from Interview times. The classroom Directress(es) will discuss with parents only information pertaining to their own children. We respect the confidentiality of all students and will not

discuss an information pertaining regarding a child that is not theirs. We thank you for your understanding.

The Directress will meet with any parent to discuss any issues or concerns at the earliest convenient time, outside of school time, for both parties. They are not available to speak with parents regarding any issues or concerns at drop off or pick up times. Children are present at this time and they are the Directresses priority at these times.

All issues and concerns raised by parents/guardians are taken seriously by the Directress and the owners/operators and will be addressed. Every effort will be made to address and resolve issues and concerns to the satisfaction of all parties and as quickly as possible.

Issues/concerns may be brought forward verbally or in writing. Responses and outcomes will be provided verbally, or in writing upon request. The level of detail provided to the parent/guardian will respect and maintain the confidentiality of all parties involved.

An initial response to an issue or concern will be provided to parents/guardians within two business day(s). The person who raised the issue/concern will be kept informed throughout the resolution process.

Investigations of issues and concerns will be fair, impartial and respectful to parties involved.

If any parties feel a third party should be involved (ie: an agency also involved with the child, such as developmental services) then a separate meeting will be set up with them following the initial meeting with the parents and Directress to discuss the initial matter.

Confidentiality

Every issue and concern will be treated confidentially and every effort will be made to protect the privacy of parents/guardians, children, staff, students and volunteers, except when information must be disclosed for legal reasons (e.g. to the Ministry of Education, College of Early Childhood Educators, law enforcement authorities or a Children's Aid Society).

Conduct

Brockville Montessori School maintains high standards for positive interaction, communication and role-modeling for children.

Harassment and discrimination will therefore not be tolerated from any party.

If at any point a parent/guardian, provider or staff feels uncomfortable, threatened, abused or belittled, they may immediately end the conversation and report the situation to the supervisor and/or licensee. If the licensee also feels uncomfortable, threatened, abused or belittled it is left up to their discretion to end the conversation and resume again at another time or contact a third party to mediate a meeting. If applicable the child will be asked to remain in the care of the parents/guardians until the issue or concern is resolved.

Concerns about the Suspected Abuse or Neglect of a child

Everyone, including members of the public and professionals who work closely with children, is required by law to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect.

If a parent/guardian expresses concerns that a child is being abused or neglected, the parent will be advised to contact the [local Children’s Aid Society](#) (CAS) directly.

Persons who become aware of such concerns are also responsible for reporting this information to CAS as per the “Duty to Report” requirement under the *Child and Family Services Act*.

For more information, visit <http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/childrensaidthereportingabuse/index.aspx>

Procedures

Nature of Issue or Concern	Steps for Parent and/or Guardian to Report Issue/ Concern:	Steps for Staff and/or Licensee in responding to issue/concern:
<p>Program Room-Related</p> <p>E.g: schedule, sleep arrangements, toilet training, indoor/outdoor program activities, feeding arrangements, etc.</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the classroom Directress directly <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the supervisor or licensee. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Address the issue/concern at the time it is raised <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - arrange for a meeting with the parent/guardian within two business days. <p>Document the issues/concerns in detail. Documentation should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the date and time the issue/ concern was received; - the name of the person who

Nature of Issue or Concern	Steps for Parent and/or Guardian to Report Issue/ Concern:	Steps for Staff and/or Licensee in responding to issue/concern:
<p>General, Centre- or Operations- Related</p> <p>E.g: child care fees, hours of operation, staffing, waiting lists, menus, etc.</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the supervisor or licensee. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the issue/concern; - the details of the issue/concern; and - any steps taken to resolve the issue/concern and/or information given to the parent/guardian regarding next steps or referral. <p>Provide contact information for the appropriate person if the person being notified is unable to address the matter.</p>
<p>Staff-, Duty parent-, Supervisor-, and/or Licensee- Related</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the individual directly or - the supervisor or licensee. <p>All issues or concerns about the conduct of staff, duty parents, etc. that puts a child's health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the supervisor as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.</p>	<p>Ensure the investigation of the issue/ concern is initiated by the appropriate party within [insert number] business days or as soon as reasonably possible thereafter. Document reasons for delays in writing.</p> <p>Provide a resolution or outcome to the parent(s)/guardian(s) who raised the issue/concern.</p>
<p>Student- / Volunteer- Related</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the staff responsible for supervising the volunteer or student or - the supervisor and/or licensee. - <p>All issues or concerns about the conduct of students and/or volunteers that puts a child's health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the supervisor as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.</p>	

Escalation of Issues or Concerns: Where parents/guardians are not satisfied with the response or outcome of an issue or concern, they may escalate the issue or concern verbally or in writing to the program advisor.

Issues/concerns related to compliance with requirements set out in the *Child Care and Early Years Act., 2014* and Ontario Regulation 137/15 should be reported to the Ministry of Education's Child Care Quality Assurance and Licensing Branch.

Issues/concerns may also be reported to other relevant regulatory bodies (e.g. local public health department, police department, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Labour, fire department, College of Early Childhood Educators, Ontario College of Teachers, College of Social Workers etc.) where appropriate.

Contacts:

Program Advisor: Lori Hickling 613-536-7276/1-800-646-3209 ext. 7276

Developmental Services: 613-345-1290

Language Express: 1-888-503-8885 or 613-283-2742

United Counties of Leeds and Grenville: 613.342.3840

Ministry of Education, Licensed Child Care Help Desk: 1-877-510-5333 or childcare_ontario@ontario.ca

CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS

Parents are invited and encouraged to observe the classroom in November and February. A sign-up sheet will be provided. It is important that parents visit the classroom once a semester so that they will gain insight into what their child is working on and how the classroom operates. Parents will be invited to sit quietly in the classroom to observe the atmosphere and activities of the regular day.

PARENT LENDING LIBRARY

There is a lending library, located in the cubby area of the school, available for parents interested in taking books home. There is a maximum lending period of two weeks per book at any one time. Parents are asked to sign out in the book provided.

BULLETIN BOARD

Notices are posted on the bulletin board in the hall. **It is the parents' responsibility to read all information.**

SNACK AND LAUNDRY LIST

Each day a nutritious snack and drink are provided for the children. Please inform the staff of any food allergies your child may have. Parents provide snack for a one week period usually two or three times during the school year. Parents are asked to do the class laundry as the school does not have laundry facilities.

A rotating snack and laundry list is distributed at the beginning of the school year.

Class laundry is picked up on the last day of the week. Snacks are to be brought in the first day of the following week. Laundry consists of wash cloths, polishing cloths, aprons and towels used in the classroom.

The snack list provides suggestions of appropriate items for the week; other items are welcome.

BIRTHDAYS

Birthdays are a simple celebration in the classroom. Parents are welcome to bring in a special treat for the occasion (e.g. cupcakes, cookies) as long as they adhere to the anaphylaxis policy.

Parents are also asked to send a picture of the child for each year of their age. These will be returned at the end of the day.

For those students whose birthdays are missed due to the summer holidays, their birthdays will be celebrated on or close to the same day in June.

CONCERNS / QUESTIONS

It is important that communication between parents and Directresses be as open as possible. Please feel free to contact the Directresses of your child's classroom with any questions or concerns.

LUNCH BAG POLICY FOR FULL DAY PROGRAM

Full Day students are required to bring their lunch daily. The lunch bag must be clearly labeled with the child's name. If your child attends full days at Montessori, you are

required to read and sign the “Lunch Bag Policy” provided to you and submit it to a Directress. Please note the guidelines include only healthy foods, therefore we ask for your cooperation in not sending candy or sweets and ensuring a healthy, balanced meal. All lunches must meet the recommendations of Canada’s Food Guide. Any lunch that is lacking food groups or does not follow Canada’s Food Guide (is missing nutritional requirements) will be substituted with food from the schools snack items. If the child’s lunch does not meet nutritional requirements, more than once the parents will be informed and provided with examples of adequate lunches and some different lunch ideas. Children set tables daily with table clothes, china plates, cutlery, centrepieces etc daily and are encouraged to have nice conversations, use manners etc. Children are helped and encouraged to eat with manners and take turns talking to help them learn proper etiquette and table manners. Any food that is left after lunch time, that is not garbage (could be eaten again later) is packed up in their lunch and sent back home. This is done to help parents know what they did eat each day, if they may be sending too much food and what foods they seem to like or dislike. If a child is not sent with a lunch, their parents/guardians will be contacted to see if they can bring one. If that is not possible the school will provide an adequate lunch from the snack food.

Here are a few suggestions to assist you:

- We have a microwave if you send food that needs to be heated.
- Lunch bags are kept in the refrigerator until lunch time.

- Lunch containers **must be labeled with the child’s name**
- Morning and afternoon snack is provided for the children during a full day program.
- Food allergy lists are posted in all rooms of the school. We ask parents to keep us updated in writing regarding your child’s food allergies
- Each child should bring at least one water bottle during a full day.
- No food items are provided for the lunch unless a child has forgotten their lunch, or the lunch contents are low in nutritional value and/or high sugar content.
- Parents will be given a copy of this Bag Lunch Policy at the time of registration. We ask that you read the policy and sign off that you have read and agreed to our policy.

WE STRONGLY DISCOURAGE foods which are low in nutritional value and/or high in sugar content such as: POTATO CHIPS, SODA POP, HIGH SUGAR DRINKS (PUNCHES), CANDY, CHOCOLATE BARS etc.,

If these foods are in their lunch, they will be kept in their lunch and sent home to be eaten at a different time. If a child has packaged foods, they will be asked to eat their “real food” first.

Please note: Teachers will check lunches daily and send home any unhealthy products or products that may contain peanuts.

Food Policy

Full day children at BMS are sent with a lunch provided by the parents/guardians of the child. Please see the Lunch Bag Policy for further information on lunch food.

A snack rotation is done throughout the year by all attending families. The rotation list is provided at orientation indicating each families "snack week". If a family knows they will be away during their snack week, it is their responsibility to notify the school prior to their snack week. The school can help organize switching weeks with another family. A snack list will be sent home the Friday prior to the assigned week. If any items on the snack list are not available at the store or do not look adequate, the family is welcome to substitute for another item from that category (ie: a different fruit or vegetable).

We strongly recommend that you involve your child(ren) in the process of choosing snack, it is a great opportunity to involve your child in choosing healthy food and being involved in the school community. The school also encourages and welcomes any "taste test" items you may wish to add to the weeks snack. (so long as the item is healthy and peanut free).

It is the families responsibility to provide the snack on Monday morning. All snack preparation is done at school, snack food is simply dropped in the grocery bags. A well balanced snack, according to Canada's Food Guide is provided twice daily for all students and once daily for half day students.

Snack is prepared in the morning and available to the children when they feel hungry and when there is space at the snack table. Water is available at school at all times. Parents/guardians are welcome to send a water bottle with their child's name on it for outdoor time.

***Brockville Montessori School is a **PEANUT FREE ENVIRONMENT**

**If a child enrolls who has anaphylactic allergies other than peanuts, an anaphylactic plan will be made for that child by the parents and BMS. Snack for that child will be changed accordingly, depending on the families wishes. That family can choose to send their own child's snack and be taken out of the school snack rotation.

Measures will be put in place to ensure that child's snack is kept separate so the child does not come into contact with their allergen.

ANAPHYLAXIS Policy

Anaphylaxis is a severe systemic allergic reaction that can be fatal, resulting in circulatory collapse or shock. It occurs in response to an allergen such as nuts, latex, rubber, medication, etc. at the time of registration, parents are responsible for advising the Centre of the child's medical condition including allergies and asthma.

Parents are responsible for providing the following to the Centre.

- A list of food ingredients, items that cause allergic or anaphylactic reaction.
- List of symptoms to look for that may be unique/specific to the child if they are having a reaction/attack
- A completed Anaphylaxis Emergency Plan form signed by the parent and/or guardian.
- An up-to-date Epi-pen
- Any additional information regarding the child's allergy/asthma also provided verbally to staff in a meeting convenient to parent's schedule.
- Updated information at least annually, or any time there is a change in the child's medical condition.

If packaging says MAY CONTAIN or MAY HAVE BEEN PROCESSED IN A FACILITY WHERE THERE MAY BE CROSS-CONTAMINATION or any other phrase that indicates it may have peanuts or other nuts in the product, DO NOT SEND IT IN YOUR CHILD'S LUNCH.

OUTDOOR PLAY AND QUIET TIME

Outdoor play happens in the courtyard of the school. The yard is fully contained and offers child size, age appropriate, outdoor activities to enhance the children's outdoor time. Montessori principles are upheld while outside as well. It is a time for the children to connect with nature, learn to care for their outdoor environment and expand on their gross motor skills. Children remain outside for a 1 hour period following lunch (as well as half an hour in the morning and afternoon). Appropriate attire for all seasons must be sent by parents. Sunscreen will be applied at lunch if weather requires it, IF your child has been sent their spray sunscreen and an Authorization for Non Medical Items has been provided to the school. After lunch and outdoor play time, Full Day students have a quiet time or nap on cots provided by the school.

Your child's pillow which you provide for quiet time must be stored in a separate bag for hygienic purposes. Please provide a cloth bag large enough for your child's provided pillow and blanket for daily storage.

Program Statement

Brockville Montessori Schools mission is to provide an authentic Montessori Education for children aged 2.5-6 years. Individual planning will be done for every child to assure every child has the opportunity to grow and learn to their full potential; socially, physically, emotionally, and intellectually. An authentic Montessori education will be provided in a beautiful, child sized atmosphere that is enticing for children and challenges their natural desire to learn through doing. In each child we want to help foster a love and respect for himself and others. We want to help each child acquire creativity, initiative, independence, self discipline, concentration and a sense of order. Above all else we want to develop and build each child's natural joy, curiosity and enthusiasm for learning.

The teachers are all Montessori trained and certified. We are committed to providing a rich learning environment for all students based both on Montessori principles and on fulfilling the expectations of the Ministry of Education for all schools. Staff collaborate to ensure that the Montessori philosophy as well as *How Does Learning Happen*, underlies all educational decisions, policies and programs. Montessori classrooms provide a prepared environment where children respond to their natural tendency to work. The children's innate passion for learning is encouraged by giving them opportunities to engage in spontaneous, purposeful activities with the guidance of a specially trained teacher. Through their work, the children develop concentration and self-discipline. Students study language, math, culture, fine arts and physical education.

Brockville Montessori School's goal is to provide an authentic Montessori Program that will provide an excellent foundation for every child who attends. The goal is to provide children with an atmosphere that is inviting, comfortable, familiar, child sized and enticing to help every child learn to their fullest potential. Montessori understands the incredible amount of brain and overall development that occurs during this time, the most formative time in a humans life and provides a program that encourages children to be independent

and develop to their fullest potential. The ultimate goal is to provide the best *foundation* for children. A foundation in learning that is all encompassing; physical, emotional, social as well as intellectual. We hope to provide children a program that will help children learn how to learn and continue with their love of learning. We want to provide a foundation that will remain with the children and enhance their learning as they continue through school.

(a) promote the health, safety, nutrition and well-being of the children;

-All students of BMS will remain in the safe environment of the classroom or yard at all times. Every child will be observed for levels of health throughout the year, sent home if deemed too unwell to be at school and cared for in a way to ensure health and safety at all times. Healthy lunches and snacks will be provided every day. If a child's lunch does not seem adequate to the lunch supervisor they will substitute from the schools snack food. If a child's lunch is deemed inadequate more than twice, the parents will be contacted by the school and provided with some help/ideas for lunch food.

(b) support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents, child care providers and staff;

-All interactions with or in front of children will be positive. If teachers and parents need to speak about a child, they do so in confidence, never in front of the child. Teachers are never to ignore students. In the BMS class, students will be directed to place their hand on a teacher/assistants shoulder (or arm, wherever they can reach) if they are busy or in a presentation and wait until the adult is able to give them their full attention. this promotes a positive and proper way for the child to wait for an adults attention without interrupting.

(c) encourage the children to interact and communicate in a positive way and support their ability to self-regulate;

-Self regulation according to Montessori is a vital competency that is the core of all success in learning and life. It is the ability to ;

- identify and modulate emotions,
- control impulses,
- delay gratification,
- make thoughtful and conscious choices,
- and set goals and achieve them.

Self-regulation is an essential aspect of overall emotional intelligence. People who self regulate have better coping skills and make better decisions because they make their own decisions without the influence of others. Self regulation is not a point in a child's development but rather a journey. Children will learn to self regulate slowly and at their own time. All adults will be aware of their status as role models for children and thus interact and communicate in a positive way at all times while in the presence of a child/children. It is a teachers role also to incorporate the three year age mix of Montessori classrooms in a way that promotes older children to help and provide positive role models for younger children while encouraging younger children to look up to their older classmates for help and encouragement when needed.

Model self control :

-Breathe deeply, drink water, pause, think, visualize

Teach to self regulate:

1. Get down to the child's level (never stand over a child and dictate info, this is not role modelling).
2. Give Empathy - If adults empathize, children feel understood and important which helps them recognize and regulate their emotions.

3. Give them time - remain open, loving and accepting of every child's perspective and experience. Children's emotions cannot be changed for our convenience. It is up to the adult to take the time to wait/ encourage them to change their emotions so they learn to self regulate. It is not something that can be forced or sped up.

4. Let them play- Montessori classrooms allow for a 3 hour uninterrupted "work cycle" where they can make independent choices and be in charge of their own experiences. If adults provide a structured learning environment where they are told what to do and what activities they will do when, they don't have the experience of self regulating because their time is regulated for them. They need that time to have real life experiences to regulate themselves.

(d) foster the children's exploration, play and inquiry;

-BMS will provide an authentic Montessori environment that fosters exploration, play and inquiry through their work. All activities are hands on and enticing so children are learning through their work but in such a way that seems like play to them because it is fun and their choice. Montessori activities are enticing and foster children's natural sense of inquiry. They also provide answers and conclusions to inquiries through the child's work with the materials so the children learn through their exploration of the materials, not by a teacher dictating to them.

(e) provide child-initiated and adult-supported experiences;

-It is a BMS teachers job to support each child individually in their learning. Through careful observation, the teacher will see when a child is interested and ready for new concepts or initiates an interest in certain activities and plan for that child accordingly. They will provide lessons according to a child's initiated interest and ability to learn set new skill.

(f) plan for and create positive learning environments and experiences in which each child's learning and development will be supported;

-Every child learns at their own pace. At BMS every child is planned for individually so their development can be supported. If they require more time to gain concepts then they will be provided that time and support. If they acquire certain concepts quickly or with ease then they can move on to progressive activities to enhance their learning. Every child will be supported in their needs so no one is left behind or bored with their development.

(g) incorporate indoor and outdoor play, as well as active play, rest and quiet time, into the day, and give consideration to the individual needs of the children receiving child care;

-All full day children will have outdoor play (weather permitting) for the allocated time from CCEYA (2hours). While inside children at this age learn best while they are moving and the environment will be set up to accommodate for this. There is a range of activities that allow for different attention spans and concentration. Many of the activities involve movement and children are rarely expected to sit still for long periods of time as they are in a natural development stage for movement. Quiet time is provided every day for children to have a small rest or nap if they need. Aside from this time, any child who feels they need a nap or quiet time will be welcome to do so at their choice. Book corners will always be available for children to read books or have a quiet area to unwind.

(h) foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents about the program and their children;

-BMS will provide “Parent Nights” every year for all parents, relatives, general public for an ongoing education on the Montessori Philosophy. Parent Nights are a time for parents to come in for a presentation on certain topics including areas of the classroom, Montessori philosophy, theory, child development etc. It is a source of information as well as a time for Parents to ask any questions and a time for parents to interact with other parents.

(i) involve local community partners and allow those partners to support the children, their families and staff;

-BMS is open to local community partners such as “Language Express”, Developmental Services etc if required for support of a child. It is the teachers job to maintain a Montessori classroom if these services enter on a regular basis. These services will be educated on the Montessori philosophy and expectations so an authentic Montessori experience is maintained for set child.

(j) support staff, home child care providers or others who interact with the children at a child care centre or home child care premises in relation to continuous professional learning; and

(k) document and review the impact of the strategies set out in clauses (a) to (j) on the children and their families.

-Individual planning will be kept for every child. Planning is done weekly for new lessons and a record of their lessons is kept for every child. Parent - Teacher Interviews are conducted three

times a year for parents to be updated on their child's progress and discuss any strategies for improvement.

Philosophy

Maria Montessori was an innovator who developed a philosophy of teaching by observing how children learn — particularly through their environment. Brockville Montessori School is a prepared environment which allows children to learn by motivating their natural curiosity and love of learning. Their education is active rather than a passive process. Teachers in a Montessori class should; cultivate a student's natural desire to learn, have observation skills to assess how every child's learning is going by watching what they have mastered and what needs more practice. Montessori teachers are also child advocates who respect each child's individuality and act as facilitators to educate the whole child.

Montessori classrooms are:

- developmentally appropriate
- learning-centered
- equipped with self-correction materials meant to engage learners
- purposefully prepared environments (Practical Life, Sensorial, Cultural, Language and Mathematics as well as music and movement).

The goal of early childhood education is not to fill the child with facts from some preselected course study. Rather it is to cultivate the child's own natural desire to learn. We encourage the children to explore and discover, work independently at their own pace so they can develop a sense of mastery and accomplishment.

School Information

Owners/Operators

Director/President: Mary Jane Leslie
Work: 613-345-0286

Director/Treasurer: Erica Swirsky
ericaleslie86@gmail.com
613-213-3879

Hours of Operation

Brockville Montessori School is open Monday-Friday from 7:30am-5:00pm. The school is closed for statutory holidays, school holidays and PA days.

Programs

Brockville Montessori School has a CASA level program for 2.5 - 6 year olds. The school is licensed for 16 CASA students.

Licensing

Brockville Montessori School operates in compliance with :
The Ministry of Education
The Child Care and Early Years Act
Canada Food Guide
Building, Fire and Health regulations

Weather-Related Closings

Brockville Montessori School will remain open during most severe weather. The owners will monitor weather and news stations to determine if weather is severe enough to close the school. The school will remain open unless there is a loss of power or the owners/operators decide it is not safe for staff or students to be on the roads driving to or from the school. In the event that Brockville Montessori School closes, all parents will be contacted and informed of the situation. Children should be picked up within a reasonable time.

PROHIBITED PRACTICES

There will be no;

- (a) corporal punishment of the child;

(b) physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a high chair, car seat, stroller or other device for the purposes of discipline or in lieu of supervision, unless the physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing a child from hurting himself, herself or someone else, and is used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent;

(c) locking the exits for the purpose of confining the child, or confining the child in an area or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is required as part of the licensee's emergency management policies and procedures;

(d) use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or use of derogatory language directed at or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame or frighten the child or undermine his or her self-respect, dignity or self-worth;

(e) depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding; or

(f) inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

YOUR CHILD'S FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL

To help your child make the initial separation, remember the following hints.

Before school opens:

- Share in the excitement of school i.e. tell him/her some of the things they might expect to see and do
- Visit the school to help the child get familiarized
- Attend orientation so your child can see the school and meet some classmates before they begin.
- Always remain positive, avoid negative things or negotiations (ie: "It's only one more day until the weekend." - This gives them the idea that they shouldn't like school. If they are upset it is usually because transition times are hard, often they don't want to leave either and this is for the same reason. Stay positive and firm and explain that this is what they are doing, let them know what you will be doing that day to ease any anxiety and indicate you will get them at pick up time.
- Talk to them about their favourite things about school.s

On the actual day:

- Say a short goodbye at the door, even if there is anxiety
- Give a word of reassurance to him / her
- Be positive
- Have confidence and trust in your child that they will have a great day and they will pick up on this confidence.
- Be on time for pick-up