



Smyrna Montessori
School
Parent Handbook

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Smyrna Montessori School reserves the right to amend this handbook as needed and will provide notice of such to parents. By acknowledging your receipt and review of the handbook you are also agreeing to abide by any terms and conditions stated in these amendments.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Hours of operation are: 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Months of Operation: August- May (School Year) June-July (Summer Program)

Telephone: (404) 530-9081

Fax: (404) 935-0628

Website: www.smyrnams.org

Nondiscrimination Policy: Smyrna Montessori School does not discriminate against individuals on the basis of age, race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, marital status, sexual orientation or any other characteristic protected by law in the administration of either its admissions or employment policies or procedures.

About Smyrna Montessori School

Smyrna Montessori School is an independent, non-denominational Montessori school for children ages 18 months to 6 years. We offer an inspiring educational environment with highly-qualified teachers, small class sizes, and an innovative program based on Montessori principles. This approach fosters independence, confidence, and respect, while promoting high academic standards. Smyrna Montessori School encourages environmental stewardship through a focus on outdoor education, the "No Child Left Inside" project, and the "Farm to School" program, which provides organic, locally-grown fresh fruits and vegetables to the school daily.

VISION AND MISSION

Our vision is to provide a challenging and respectful educational environment for the young children in our community by maintaining a commitment to the principles and teaching methods of Montessori education.

Smyrna Montessori School is dedicated to nurturing and honoring the whole child. We strive to gently encourage each child's spirit, creativity, imagination, and ability as we "follow the child". We are committed to supporting the child's natural ability and desire to learn as well as the child's drive for independence. Smyrna Montessori School seeks to promote environmental stewardship and a commitment to becoming a Green School.

OUR PROGRAMS

Full Day Programs and Half- Day Programs

Smyrna Montessori School welcomes children ages 18 months to 6 years of age for our Toddler and Primary Montessori programs.

Toddler Program: (18 months - 3 years)

The Toddler Program is designed to guide the 18-months to 3-year old child in his or her quest for independence. Toddler Program is a wonderful place to begin what Dr. Montessori called, "an education for life." Toddlers are encouraged to develop their individuality and self-confidence in a secure setting through activities that teach care of self and the environment, control of movement, lessons in grace and courtesy and the exploration of sensorial and manipulative materials.

Primary Program: (3 - 6 years)

Our Primary Program follows the Montessori tradition of multi-age classrooms organized into three-year age groupings. Our children will feel the community atmosphere where kindness and respect are encouraged as they teach and learn from each other. Carefully designed Montessori materials are used to develop competency in care of self, care of environment, sensorial development, control of movement, mathematics, language, science and social studies.

SMS Schedule Options

8:00-8:30 Early Birds Session

8:30-11:30- Toddler Morning Session

8:45- 11:45- Primary Morning Session

8:30- 3:15pm – Toddler Full Day

8:45- 3:30pm – Primary Full Day

School Calendar

Smyrna Montessori School follows a "Balanced School Year" Calendar. Please see the attached school calendar or visit the website to view our school year calendar. The calendar includes holidays, parent education nights, events, conference schedules, etc.

Multi-Cultural Statement

Diversity is not only recognized, but celebrated at Smyrna Montessori School. Multicultural awareness is integrated into the curriculum in daily activities including songs, books, games, and other Montessori materials as it is important for children to learn about tolerance, peace, and respect for others. However, specific religious holidays will not be celebrated at school. Please remember that we are a non-denominational, independent school.

Additional Programs

Summer Programs

As an independent school, Smyrna Montessori School follows a traditional school year (August through May) calendar. If there is sufficient interest, we will offer six weeks of Summer Programs while school is out of session. Please see the school calendar for specific summer session dates.

Transportation

Smyrna Montessori School does not provide transportation. Children will be transported in parent's vehicles for any potential field trips.

ENROLLMENT PROCESS AND REQUIREMENTS

Smyrna Montessori School accepts children in the following order:

1) Currently enrolled children, 2) Siblings, 3) New Enrollees.

For each new student, an Application Form must be submitted to the school with a check for the non-refundable application fee of \$25. Fee can be transferred if you wish to have your child placed on the waiting list.

Application Process

1. Attend an information session.
2. Submit completed application form.
3. Pay application fee of \$25.

Admission Process

1. Receive email or letter of acceptance.
2. Complete and submit full enrollment packet.
3. Sign contract and make first payment.

Smyrna Montessori School does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, national origin, or disabilities.

PAYMENT PROCEDURES

1. Tuition is based on an annual (10 months) amount and may be paid in full prior to the first day of school **or** on a monthly basis starting on August 1 (or on the first of the month in which your child begins attending SMS).
2. If a payment is returned or declined due to non-sufficient funds, a \$35.00 fee will be assessed.
3. If any payments made by check are returned due to non-sufficient funds, a \$35.00 fee will be assessed and must be replaced with a cashiers check.
4. SMS reserves the right to apply a late fee of \$10/ day to tardy tuition payments.
5. There will be no make-up days scheduled or refunds given due to inclement weather. Tuition is based on an annual tuition rate, regardless of number of contact days.

Late Payments & Past Due Balances

1. If tuition and/or fees remain unpaid and other payment arrangements have not been made, the school reserves the right to:
 - a. remove the student from the activity or program for which the fee was assessed;
 - b. terminate the contract for any private or fee-based program;
 - c. dismiss the student without tuition abatement until the account is brought current;
 - d. employ any and all rights and remedies allowed by law.
2. Families who fall more than one month behind in payment of tuition, without arranging for an alternate payment plan, will not be eligible for continued enrollment in the program. **This will be firmly enforced.**

Refunds

1. Early Withdrawal From Toddler or Primary Programs:

- a. **Return of Fees and Deposits:** Parents or guardians agree and understand that the Application Fee and the Tuition Deposit are non-refundable and will not be returned for any reason.
- b. **Tuition Payments:** Parents or Guardians agree and understand: Early withdrawal of the student from Smyrna Montessori School will be effective (a) 30 days following Smyrna Montessori School's administration's receipt of written notice of the student's intent to withdraw or (b) the date of withdrawal, whichever occurs later. Payment of the last month's Monthly Tuition Payment will be prorated as of the effective date of withdrawal; and Smyrna Montessori School will refund unused portions of the One-Time Annual Tuition Payment if the student withdraws or is disenrolled prior to the end of the school year. This refund will be calculated by subtracting the total tuition due for the student's enrollment at Smyrna Montessori School which is calculated by multiplying the number of months attended, including partial months, by the full Monthly Tuition Rate from the total One-Time Annual Tuition Payment.
- c. **Termination.** Smyrna Montessori School reserves the right to terminate the Enrollment Contract and disenroll the student from our programs with or without notice for any reason.
- d. **Illnesses and Vacations:** Smyrna Montessori does not give refunds for days the student is absent due to illnesses, vacations or other personal reasons.

Attendance

Please note that children must always be escorted to and from the school by the parents, person authorized by the parents, or SMS staff.

Drop Off

Parents should park and walk their child into the school. Please sign your child in at the front door and a teacher will walk your child into the classroom. All children should arrive by 8:45am to begin the day. **Please ensure your child arrives on**

time in order to reap the full benefits of the Montessori environment. If children arrive late, they are missing out on valuable class time. Absences and tardiness are disturbing to students, disrupt their schedules, require readjustment to the class routine, and diminish learning.

Pick Up: Please sign your child out at the front desk and refrain from entering your child's classroom. A staff member will let your child know you have arrived and help your child get ready to leave. This will allow the remaining children to continue their day with minimal interruptions.

Absences

In case of an absence please call to the school office to inform the school of the child's absence should be made as soon as possible. If a child needs to leave school early, please send a note to the teacher and sign the child out in the office.

Drop-off and Pick-Up

For the safety of all our children and parents, please drive slowly and with caution at all times while parking. Please refrain from the use of cell phones while driving on SMS property.

Sign in/out

Children must be signed in and out each day by parents or designated individual (18 years and older). If someone other than the parent will be signing a child in and/or out, the school must have written permission on file. Please make sure the signature is legible.

Dismissal

1. Identification is required from any adult who is not known to school personnel and who comes to pick up a child. We will not release the child to anyone other than the custodial parent, or an authorized person **as stated on the child's emergency card**. If someone else is going to pick up a child, the parent must notify the staff in writing that a different person will be picking up the child. The written notification must include the date, the name and relationship of the person authorized to transport your child, and must be signed by the parent or legal guardian. If the person is already listed on the authorized pick-up form on file, a simple phone call or verbal message the day before is sufficient. Prepare your child, if at all possible, ahead of time by letting them know that someone else will be picking them up. Have that authorized person be prepared to show a picture I.D.

In cases of doubt, we will phone the custodial parent to confirm that someone else has been authorized to pick up the child.

Late Pick-Up

Late Pick-Up Fee: A five-minute grace period is given to accommodate any unforeseen circumstances. Beginning five minutes after the scheduled pick up time, a \$2.00 per minute, for each minute thereafter, will be automatically charged to your form of payment on file. Excessive "late pick ups" may jeopardize your child's

enrollment.

Dismissal times:

11:30 for Half-day toddlers

11:45 for Half-day primary students

3:15 for Full- day toddlers

3:30 for Full- day primary students

STUDENT HEALTH

Illnesses

- 1. If a child becomes ill at school, he will be isolated and the parent or authorized person listed on the emergency form will be notified by the director via phone or email for the child to be picked up immediately.**
2. It is particularly important that the school be informed if your child has contacted any communicable diseases.
- 3. As required by State regulations : A child will not be accepted nor allowed to remain at school if the child has the equivalent of a 101 degrees or higher oral temperature and/ or another contagious symptom such as, but not limited to, rash, sore throat, or diarrhea. The child may not return to school until symptom free for 24 hours.** If antibiotics are required, the child must stay home for at least 24 hours after beginning treatment. A child with any of these symptoms may infect other children. If all parents keep sick children at home, everybody's children will stay healthier.

Please let the office know as soon as possible if the child has a communicable disease. SMS will notify all parents of exposure to a communicable disease by sending a written note to each child and by posting a notice by the front office.

Additionally, a child who is not able to comfortably participate in classroom activities or has a greater need for care than the teachers are able to provide without compromising the care of the other children will be sent home. We will work with each family to use our best judgment as to when a child is unable to remain at school.

Conditions Requiring Temporary Exclusion

If your child is not feeling well, we will recommend temporary exclusion. Often this decision is not only based on your child's physical symptoms, such as a fever, but also on their inability to be comfortable in a group setting. Some reasons of exclusion are as follows:

- A child is not able to participate comfortably as determined by SMS teachers.
- The child's illness or symptoms result in a greater need for care than the teachers are able to provide without compromising the level of care provided to the other children.
- Your child appears to be ill.

- Has a fever of 100.F auxiliary (armpit) or 101. F orally
- Any diarrhea that is outside of what is considered a normal bowel movement for your child, loose, watery bowel movement that is not contained in diaper OR a child cannot make it to the toilet in time.
- Vomiting
- Complaints of abdominal pain
- Unexplained rash
- Pink or red conjunctive with white or yellow discharge
- Severe diaper rash lasting for more than 3 continuous days

If your child exhibits any of these symptoms, for the sake of your child and the other children at our school, we expect parents to keep their child at home. They are unable to participate, potentially infect other children and most importantly, need extra care that a group setting cannot provide.

Physician Notes

On occasion, we may request a physician's note in order for your child to return to school. Most often this is not the case, but in the event of a concern for the well-being of the children in the school, this may be required. A notice from your child's pediatrician is not alone reason for your child to be able to return to school. Other factors will be taken into consideration, primarily the ability for your child to comfortably participate in a group setting. We understand that children may appear well at home and seem ready to return to school. However, a child may still be recovering and may having difficulty keeping up with the level of activity in a school setting. We ask that parents take this into consideration.

Minor Accidents and Incidents

The teacher is ultimately responsible for preparing a written accident/incident report for the guardian and the student's file. Minor injuries or accidents will be addressed by a staff member who has current first-aid training.

If determined necessary by SMS staff, the child will be brought to the school office and parents will be notified by phone to pick up the child.

Medical Emergencies

In the event that a student needs emergency medical attention, 911 will be called. The parent or person responsible will be notified. If it is necessary to transport a child to the hospital, a staff member will accompany the child and remain with that student until one of the parents (or someone designated by the parent) arrives at the hospital. Our nearest hospital is Emory Adventist Hospital. Parents will be expected to assume responsibility for any expenses incurred. Staff members with current CPR/First Aid training are present on campus and will administer aid whenever necessary.

Parents are responsible for keeping all emergency information current by making any changes in addresses, telephone numbers, or emergency contact information at the front office.

Medication

We prefer not to administer medications to children at school unless absolutely necessary. Please make every attempt to schedule your child's medication outside of school hours. If necessary, our medication procedures are as follows:

1. A designated staff member is responsible for the administration of all medications including storing, supervising ingestion, and recording date, time amount, and any adverse reaction on the child's medication authorization form. We will notify the parents by phone call if a child has a reaction to a medication given at school.
2. The administration of medication is not permitted unless the child's parent completes the medical consent form.
3. Prescription medication will only be administered from a container dispensed by a pharmacy and non-prescription medication will only be administered from a prepackaged container labeled for use by the manufacturer and labeled with the enrolled child's name. No medication will be administered that has been transferred from one container to another.
4. Medication is to be brought directly to the office by an adult. **It is NOT acceptable to send medication or vitamins in a child's backpack, lunchbox, or pocket. This is a serious health hazard to the other children on campus.** No medication will be administered without a signed medical consent form.

Immunizations

The State of Georgia immunization law requires all students to have an immunization record on file for school attendance. If your child is exempt from immunizations, he must have a signed exemption on file. In the event of an outbreak of a vaccine preventable disease for which you cannot provide proof of immunity of your child, your child will not be allowed to attend school until the risk period ends. All needed immunization records must be on file prior to the child attending school. **If your child does not have current immunizations or a signed exemption on file within 20 days of enrollment, he will not be allowed to attend classes until the situation has been remedied.** It is the parent's responsibility to bring any updated immunization records to the school office.

Emergency Card

A child will not be admitted unless an emergency card is on file. Parents are asked to call or go to the office to make any changes to the emergency card. Please keep in mind that if your child was to have an accident and the information on the emergency card was incorrect, we would have no way of contacting you.

Allergies

Make sure that you note any and all allergies on your child's emergency card. Also make sure that your child's teacher is aware of all allergies.

Emergency Evacuations

All staff and children have practiced safety procedures to be implemented in

emergency situations. Tornado drills and fire drills are scheduled to ensure familiarity of procedures. Information and evacuation routes are posted within each classroom. **Emergency plans for severe weather, fire, power failure, etc., are posted for parent viewing near the front office.** If we have an emergency school closing mid-day, school staff will contact you by phone.

COMMUNICATION

From Home

Please inform the child's teacher of any changes at home or in the child's life that may have an effect at school so that we can better provide for the needs of the student.

From SMS

The Smyrna Montessori website is designed for prospective families to learn about our school as well as for keeping our current parents informed. You can find announcements, events, school calendar, and more on our website at:

www.smyrnams.org

Parent Education

Parent Education sessions are held throughout the school year at various locations. Please check the School Calendar for dates. These meetings are held to help parents understand the Montessori philosophy and to provide information on parenting techniques and other relevant topics. We welcome suggestions of topics and speakers and encourage all parents to attend.

School Closing

In regards to school closings due to inclement weather, in most cases, due to location, Smyrna Montessori School will be closed if the Cobb County Public Schools are closed. To determine if school is closed, check your email, the SMS website, and the SMS Facebook page for updates.

Smyrna Montessori School does NOT follow the Cobb County School System Inclement Weather Policies and will not schedule make-up days due to inclement weather.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

Parents are invited to participate in our program in a variety of ways. They are invited to help on a regular basis or to share a special interest or skill. We also welcome parents to share family cultural traditions throughout the year. Please contact your child's teacher with your level of interest.

LUNCH and SNACKS

Lunch

1. Parents are to provide lunches. If a child comes to school without a lunch, parents

will be contacted.

2. Please pack a balanced, nutritious lunch for your child. USDA guidelines require that every child is offered milk at lunchtime every day and therefore, it is our policy that milk be included with every lunch packed by the parents.

3. Please have your child bring a lunch box that includes an icepack.

4. The microwave will be available for limited use to reheat previously cooked items. Please do not send frozen entrees.

5. Candy, gum, and soda are not allowed. If a child comes to school with any of these items in his lunchbox, it will be sent home unopened. If you need suggestions for healthy lunches, please ask your child's teacher or come to the school office.

6. Please encourage children to participate in the preparation of their own lunches.

7. We try to teach the children to reduce, reuse, and recycle whenever possible.

Please try to pack your child's lunch in reusable containers.

8. Due to concerns about allergies, **food may not be shared** among children.

9. The children participate in preparing for lunch, setting the table, and tidying up after lunch.

The USDA has strict rules when it comes to the types of foods each child must have available at schools. We are required to check each child's packed lunch each day to ensure it meets USDA requirements. Please follow the attached USDA guidelines carefully to ensure your child has all of the components necessary.

If the packed lunch from home is missing any components, the school must provide it for the child. While we understand that we may occasionally have to supplement a child's lunch, we will not be able to afford to do this on a regular basis.

Snacks

Smyrna Montessori School will provide a supplement for morning and afternoon snack. This snack will typically include a fresh fruit or vegetable as part of our Farm to School program. Please send a fresh, healthy fruit or veggie for snack for your child each day.

BIRTHDAYS

We recognize that your child's birthday is a very important day in his/her life. We will recognize your child's birthday as a class that day and make your child feel special. Children at this age are very sensitive, so to eliminate any hurt feelings, we ask that parents let the teachers and students make that day special for your child at school. It will not be necessary for you to send in any items on that day.

NAPS

Smyrna Montessori School will provide a mat with a sheet and cover for each child in our care during nap time. If parents choose to bring a special blanket for their child, please ensure it is labeled with the child's name. Sheets and blankets will be

laundered every Friday.

VISITOR REGULATIONS

Parents are permitted to access all areas of the school used by their child. Parents and all visitors must check in at the office immediately upon arrival.

OBSERVATIONS

All parents are invited to observe their child's classroom. Please arrange the observation ahead of time we can limit potential disruption. Check with your child's teacher or the director to determine the best times to visit. Most observers find that 20 to 30 minutes is quite fulfilling.

PERSONAL ITEMS

The school is not responsible for damage to, loss, or theft of any personal items brought to school. If personal items are brought to school they will be held in the teacher's possession until the end of the day.

Children may bring nature or science items, small plants, flowers, or cultural artifacts of interest to the class. If you have any doubt, please contact your child's teacher.

CLOTHING

Please allow your child to come to school in clothing that permits full movement and outdoor play. Try to avoid belts, suspenders, difficult snaps, or overalls which can be frustrating for a child to take on and off by his/ her self.

All children are required to have at least one full change of clothes in their cubbies at all times. Messy projects or play do occur on a regular basis. Please label clothing and follow the procedure outlined by your child's teacher. It is your responsibility to make sure that clothes are replaced as needed. If a child has a bathroom accident or gets wet outside and has no extra clothing, the parent may be called to come pick up the child or to bring some clothes.

When inside, children will take off their outdoor shoes. Children should bring a pair of comfortable soft-soled shoes to leave at school to wear inside the classroom.

Please bring a pair of rain boots to leave at school.

Diapering and Toilet Independence: (For Toddler Classroom)

Toilet independence is an important part of our toddlers' day. Please support your toddler's teacher by practicing her toilet training procedures at home.

1. Toddlers should use the toilet at home before arriving at school. They are learning to toilet at all transition times.
2. Toddlers need four changes of clothing at school at all times.
3. Please provide diaper or pull-ups for rest time.

As the toddler develops independence, it will be necessary for teaching staff to do "stand-up diapering." A toddler- sized changing table will be used as necessary.

Staff will follow hand-washing and hygiene diapering regulations as specified by the Georgia Department of Health.

OUTDOORS

The children will go outside for work and play daily unless there is severe inclement weather. Be advised that rain is not necessarily inclement weather! Help your child to dress appropriately for being outdoors. If you feel your child should not go outside due to illness, please discuss this with your child's teacher.

BEHAVIOR

General Conduct

Students at Smyrna Montessori School are expected and encouraged to be safe, responsible, and respectful towards all members of the school community. Development of compassion, helpfulness, cleanliness, politeness, and self-control are built into the Montessori pedagogical principles that are practiced at Smyrna Montessori School. We promote a peaceful and respectful atmosphere in which quality education and productive learning can take place.

All students are expected to:

- ☐ Be courteous and respectful to others
- ☐ Conduct themselves in a reasonable and cooperative manner
- ☐ Act peacefully
- ☐ Use materials appropriately
- ☐ Respect other people's personal space and property

Any behavior that endangers the health or safety of others is prohibited.

Children will be gently guided and encouraged in pro-social behavior. Teachers and staff members will model and identify appropriate behaviors and manners. Children who make mistakes will be verbally reminded of expectations. At times, it may be necessary for the teacher to keep the child nearby in order to prevent disruption to the learning of the other children.

Biting Policy

In order to provide a safe and healthy environment for your child, the school has a biting policy. An occasional biting incident, especially in the toddler programs, is a part of normal toddler development. However, if the child becomes a chronic biter, and if it is determined that the child would be better served in another environment, a parent may be asked to remove their child from school.

TOBACCO POLICY

1. Smyrna Montessori School is a NO SMOKING facility. 2. By state law, no person is allowed to possess any form of tobacco on school grounds, nor in any vehicle transporting children for school functions.

CHILD ABUSE

Smyrna Montessori School staff is required to report any suspected child abuse, neglect, exploitation or deprivation to the Department of Family and Children Services.

NOTICE TO PARENTS:

For more information about the school's policy and procedures, please view the required posted items in the entrance: copy of our Childcare Center License, copy of rules, emergency evacuation route, communicable disease chart, statement of parental access, names of persons in charge, current weekly menu, statement for visitors, and insurance coverage information.

Parent Policy Verification Form

I have read and agree to abide by the policies and procedures of Smyrna Montessori School, as stated in the “Smyrna Montessori School Parent Handbook”.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

**PLEASE DETACH AND RETURN THIS SIGNED PAGE WITH YOUR
ENROLLMENT PACKET**