

**Wellsville Montessori School  
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**Wellsville Montessori Preschool and Before & After School**

# **Parent Handbook**

*Revised 1/4/10*

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## **Message from the Staff & Board of Directors**

Dear Parents,

We welcome you and your family to our school. We look forward to sharing with you the special feeling generated by the warmth and fellowship of our teachers, parents, administration, and most of all, the children.

We hope you will become involved with your child's school program, supporting the educational and social experiences and sharing in the joys and satisfactions the child experiences in his or her own learning.

You are invited to come to school often to observe your child at work. By observing, you will discover much about what your child is learning. After the first few weeks of school have passed and we have settled into a regular routine, you will have the opportunity to sign up to observe at a time that is convenient for you.

Please let us know immediately about any questions, problems or suggestions you may have. The Head Teacher is available to talk to you during school hours. You may also contact the parent advocate during evening hours. Feel free to ask your child's teacher when and how best to discuss your concerns.

Also, please plan to attend the meetings and activities including parent-teacher conferences, socials and fund-raising activities. You will learn and understand more about the philosophy, psychology and practical applications of the Montessori materials with which your child chooses to work, and you will also enjoy the family activities we have planned.

This handbook contains important information in which we hope will answer many questions you may have about the Montessori philosophy, goals and activities. In addition, it contains a calendar for the school year, a schedule of hours and fees, and practical information pertaining to the children's clothing, lunches, snacks and health. Please save this handbook for reference as needed throughout the year.

Your involvement is vital to your child's success at school. We are glad you have chosen to be a part of the Wellsville Montessori School.

Sincerely,

The Wellsville Montessori Staff  
and the Board of Directors

## **Montessori Mission Statement**

*"We will do whatever is within our talents and capacity to protect the right of each child to have the freedom and opportunity to develop to his or her full potential." (From the Children's Bill of Rights, The American Montessori Society)*

The mission of the Wellsville Montessori School is to provide a living, learning, playing environment in which children between the ages of three and five can develop their individual capabilities in all areas of intellectual growth, and can enjoy, embrace and have healthy curiosity about life and the world around them. The goal is to balance the relationships between freedom and structure so children discover for themselves the concepts inherent in the learning activities and take pride in doing real-life work with child-sized tools. Through these practices, children become active participants in the life of the school, learning to see themselves as part of a loving, happy community.

## **Before and After School Mission Statement**

To provide a safe and nurturing environment for children 5 to 12 years. To provide quality child-care that meets the community's needs. The entire staff and Board of Directors approach this goal in a constructive supportive way.

## **(Mont.) Program Description**

The Wellsville Montessori School seeks to meet the needs of children and parents who live and work in the Wellsville area by providing an excellent preschool program that can also serve as a day care facility. The Wellsville Montessori School is an independently operated non-profit organization. An active Board of Directors composed of parents, professionals and community members provide support and supervision to the school. Parents are welcome and encouraged to participate in all aspects of the school. The Wellsville Montessori School has an absolute charter from the NYS Department of Education and is a licensed day care facility by the NYS Department of Social Services.

## **History of the Montessori Approach**

Maria Montessori, an Italian physician-educator, developed the Montessori approach in Rome, Italy. Dr. Montessori, working with under-privileged children in the 1900's, discovered that young children become absorbed in a serious interaction with specialized manipulative materials. Through the interaction and experience in her prepared environment, the children developed an extraordinarily high level of intellectual and social ability at young ages.

Expanding her study of the young child, she gradually refined her approach to all child development areas through her experience and research in countries as diverse as Spain and India until the time of her death in 1952. The Montessori Method is now being successfully implemented with children in nearly every country of the world.

The Montessori Method became a significant influence in the United States in the early 1960's, when parents and educators began to appreciate the importance of early childhood education. Today there are more than 2000 Montessori programs in this country, which have a tremendous influence in all facets of American education. The Montessori Method is applied most frequently in pre-school and elementary education grade levels.

Montessori education has no religious affiliation, is not therapy, nor is it an approach useful only with certain categories of special children. The Montessori Method is effective in pre-school, elementary school, and high school. In addition, Montessori techniques can be used successfully with gifted children, children with learning disabilities and other special needs.

## **The Montessori Philosophy**

Dr. Montessori developed her educational philosophy as a result of observations and discoveries she made of the ways in which children learn. She found that they learn in distinctly different ways at different stages of development. She formulated an educational program to meet the particular needs of the child at whatever stage of development, to help him/her reach his/her fullest potential.

Dr. Montessori preferred not to call this a "method", but an "approach" to life. She said, "What I have done is merely to study the child, to take and express what he has given me." She believed that no one is educated by another, he must do it himself, and thus, the goal of early childhood education should be to cultivate the child's own natural desire and ability to learn and to protect the essential nature of the child.

Young children, she discovered, have a unique aptitude for learning not found again at any other period of life. Montessori identified this quality as the "absorbent mind." The young child literally absorbs information from his or her surroundings. During certain periods in this phase of development he/she is more easily able to absorb specific types of learning. Dr. Montessori referred to these as the "sensitive periods." Acquiring information in this way is a natural and delightful activity for the young child who employs all his senses to investigate his interesting surroundings.

Since the child retains the ability to learn by absorbing until he/she is almost seven years old, Dr. Montessori reasoned that his or her experience could be enriched by a classroom where he/she could handle the materials that would demonstrate basic educational information. Montessori designed just this kind of classroom, and she called it the "prepared environment." In this environment, everything is scaled to the child's size; the material is attractive, didactic, and presented in an orderly manner. The materials cover the areas of practical life (care of the person and the environment); sensory awareness; language; mathematics, and cultural subjects (art, music, geography, history, and science.) In the classroom the environment is the real teacher, the child, the central focus.

### **The task of the staff is:**

1. To prepare a series of motivational activities linking the child with the materials
2. To direct and relate the child's energies to the material, according to the state of development.
3. To demonstrate their proper use, and then to refrain from interference.

Within the prepared environment children of different ages and abilities work, each at his/her own rate, never under pressure to complete with other classmates. Children refer to their activities as "work." They speak of their "work" with pride, equating it to their parent's work.

The program is designed to help the child to develop concentration, coordination, inner discipline, and good working habits. As the child grows to self-discipline, he/she is allowed greater and greater freedom to move about the environment and work with whatever material he/she chooses, provided they are appropriate to the child's developmental level and that they are used in a constructive way.

The children in a Montessori classroom learn by doing; they pursue their tasks independently, either in a group or alone. The staff acts as a guide and stimulus to their never-ending curiosity. Montessori materials are designed to be self-correcting, which encourages independent problem solving and eliminates the correctional, disciplinary role of traditional teachers. Staff and students are fast friends with a healthy respect for one another.

Montessori believed that a child who is allowed to develop his or her personality freely and independently, who is encouraged to investigate and try new things will grow to be a far more responsible and creative adult than one who is heavily suppressed and disciplined. Her philosophy is not to be confused with over-permissiveness as is usually construed. There is an order in a Montessori classroom, which works to the advantage of everyone. Children quickly learn that if they care for their environment and fellow human beings, they themselves will have a richer variety of experience. They learn that freedom is precious, but to retain it we must assume certain responsibilities.

The Montessori environment is a highly social one in which the children are continually interacting with and caring for each other. They are proud of their environment because they are directly involved with caring for it and contributing to it. There are numerous animals and plants in the classroom and the children are encouraged to help with these and to add new ones. There is a great deal of material available to them concerning plants and animals throughout the world. Artists and musicians are represented through reproductions and recordings of their works, and children enter the world of the arts through participation in arts and crafts and musical activities.

The Montessori environment is designed to be a total environment, representing all aspects of the child's world. It is hoped that each child will achieve a feeling of self-confidence, enthusiasm and responsibility about his/her world, and a sense of satisfaction about him/herself.

### **Montessori Goals Summarized**

#### **The primary goals of the Montessori Method are:**

1. To promote the growth of a positive self-image in each child and satisfaction about him/herself, which is the key to the development of a person's full potential.
2. To promote feelings of enthusiasm and responsibility about one's world.
3. To create an awareness of one's own feelings and a sensitivity to the feelings of the others.
4. To encourage the natural desire, ability, self-discipline, and independence inherent in learning.
5. To ensure the mastery of the basic skills in order to pursue knowledge.
6. To teach physical coordination and control.
7. To develop the ability to concentrate and to attend to details.
8. To develop a sense of order.

## Montessori Materials and Activities

The materials in the classroom can be divided into five main areas. Activities with these materials involve both physical and mental action, linking body and mind.

1. **Practical Life**-Exercises such as pouring, grating, polishing, sorting, washing, buttoning, etc. help the child learn to function in his own environment, and are preliminary to more advanced learning. The child develops an attention to details, a lengthened span of concentration, and muscular control and coordination through the successful completion of these basic exercises.
2. **Sensorial Activities** are designed to isolate and sharpen each of the five senses. Grading and comparing sounds, sizes, colors, textures, and shapes help organize the impressions a child receives. The materials have built-in control of error so the child can correct his own mistakes. Sensorial materials are sequential and provide a foundation for mathematics and language.
3. **Language Materials** are presented individually to take advantage of the greatest interest on the part of the child. Children are taught the sound and formation of the letters kinesthetically through the use of sand paper letters and similar materials. Word building activities of increasing difficulty are done over a long period of time. Reading follows naturally.
4. **Mathematical Concepts** are presented through extensive use of concrete materials. The child's sensorial training enables him to identify and differentiate the idea of quantity, which is built into the Montessori materials. The child gains the conception of number and its application on arithmetical operations.
5. Geography, history, botany, biology, music and grammar are introduced through the use of concrete materials.
6. Enrichment activities are offered when available. Volunteers among parents and community members may provide special interest units.

In addition to activities involving the materials described above, the full Montessori day includes a lunch period, a listening and rest period, and individual and group activity periods. These include art and craft projects, special interest units, cooking, music, games, and outdoor activities. The children also enjoy field trips throughout the school year. The parents must sign a permission slip before any child is allowed to participate in a field trip.

### (B&A) Program Description

The B&A program seeks to meet the needs of the school age children ages 5 – 12 years. Also, the needs of parents who live and work in the Wellsville area. The B&A program is an independently operated non-profit organization and is a licensed day care facility by NYS Dept. of Social Services.

### The B&A Program Philosophy

The program is designed to accommodate group recreational activities which meet the needs in the areas of: Education, Social, Cultural, Emotional, Physical / Recreational. Following these five objective areas help the children with self-esteem, peer pressure and new friendships, as well as

allowing for recreational breaks from the everyday classroom routines. The program will also encourage individual time if requested by the parents for homework studies.

### **B&A Goals**

1. To promote a positive self image.
2. To promote responsibility about ones actions.
3. To create sensitivity to the feelings of others.
4. To enjoy recreational activities away from academics.
5. To promote a safe and fun atmosphere with one's friends.

### **B&A Materials and Activities**

Board Games, Puzzles, Crafts, Computer, Organized games (indoors and out) Outside play, Books, Holiday Special Games, Free Day on Fridays, Toys, Card Games.

In addition to the specials we offer each child chances to be a leader and choose their favorite organized game daily. Birthdays are recognized by group song.

### **Admission Criteria**

Our school admits children of any race, creed, national or ethnic origin. Children ages 3 through 5 years are eligible for acceptance in our preschool and 5 – 12 year olds for our Before and After school program. All students new to the school are accepted on a 60-day trial basis and must be toilet trained. All parents are required to fill out and sign a registration card, a contract and a parental release. In addition, parents of Preschool children must complete the health information form, which includes the immunization record and a physical examination within 90 days prior to admission to the school.

### **Standards for acceptance into the Program**

The purpose of the 60-day trial period is to insure that this is an appropriate program for your child. For instance, many Montessori materials contain small parts and a child who is not developmentally ready may put these objects in his/her mouth. After alerting the parents of this problem and if no progress is made with the child's actions, it is at the Board of Directors / Directors discretion to withdraw the child from the program. Other instances of developmental readiness and behavior may pose a problem for the child's safety and will be dealt with on an individual basis with the Board of Directors / Directors.

### **Students with Special Needs**

Because the Montessori method uses an individualized approach wherein children proceed at their own pace and according to their own interests, it has been successfully used with "normal", "gifted" and "handicapped" children. However, it must be acknowledged that not all children thrive in the same environment, and special attention must be given to students who appear to display special needs. The teachers will report at regular staff meetings any incidents, which lead them to believe that a student is having difficulty in the Montessori classroom. Those students who appear to have difficulty in hearing, seeing, speaking, controlling their behavior, or who appear to be tired,

stressed, ill, or having a hard time adapting to the environment will be discussed in staff meetings, and the parents or guardians of a child who displays such behavior will be notified at once. The staff, in conjunction with the parents or guardians, will formulate a plan of action to be taken. If the advice of an outside professional is needed, the staff will offer either to arrange professional evaluation or provide the parents with adequate information to seek help themselves. As reports become available in the diagnostic process, any pertinent information including (but not limited to) psychological reports, physical therapy and/or occupational therapy reports, speech and/or audiology reports, social history, and Individual Education Plan (IEP) reports are essential in making accurate and timely assessments. Confidentiality is strictly maintained. The needs of the student take top priority and prompt attention to these needs will be given. If it is determined that the Montessori setting is not benefiting a particular child, parents may be asked to seek an alternative program. In this case, parents will be presented with a list of alternative programs in the area that may be more beneficial for the child.

### **Registration Discount**

When a family registers more than one child in the Montessori Program 5 full or half days or 4 full or half days they will receive a 5% discount on the additional child's tuition. When a family registers more than one child in the Before and After School Program (B&A) they will receive a discount equal to one registration fee. Only students in the same program qualify for the discount.

### **Board Member Discount**

Board Members will receive a 10% discount for Montessori Tuition and B&A daycare.

### **Payment Policy**

Tuition is due on the first of each month. If it is not paid by the tenth of the month, a twenty-dollar charge will be added to the balance. If the balance due is thirty days late, the Board will be notified by the Directors and the parent will be notified in writing that his/her balance must be paid within thirty days. If the balance is not paid within thirty days, the child cannot attend school until it is paid. Parents have the option to contact the Board to discuss their situation.

Note: The annual tuition charges are derived from the schools yearly expenses; therefore we cannot refund a portion of the tuition for days missed due to your child's illness or due to school closing for inclement weather. Withdrawal from school prior to the end of the month does not excuse tuition payment. A notice in writing must be submitted to the Head Teacher at least 30 days prior to withdrawal. Failure to give this notice will result in being billed for another month. Exceptions will be granted for a child who is not accepted into the program following the 60-day trial period for a child with an extended illness.

Day care charges will be billed at the end of each month and can be paid with the next month's tuition. The same policy will be followed regarding late day care payments as is followed regarding late tuition payments.

### **Daycare**

Supplemental day care is available for children before school from 7:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m. and after school from 4:00 p.m. - 5:30 p.m. Half-day students may attend during the lunch/nap hour (12:00 - 1:00) but will be charged for one hour of day care and must notify the school at least 24 ahead of time so that we can plan for adequate staffing.

*\* The due date for day care charges is the 10<sup>th</sup> of each month for services previously used. Upon receipt of your day care charges, you must include your day care payment with your next tuition payment.*

## **School Policies**

### **Food**

All-day children may bring a nutritious lunch (including beverage) from home in a lunch box or bag labeled with the child's name or they may buy one from the Wellsville Elementary School (menu will be sent home each month). All-day children must bring a separate snack for the afternoon. Each Preschool child will be expected to bring in a morning snack once a month. This will include enough for twenty children: one-gallon drink, healthy snack and napkins. Extra supplies are welcomed. When your child's birthday falls in the month, that will be the day your child will be scheduled to bring in snack.

We ask that parent provided snacks be low in sugar and food coloring.

Your child's lunch will obviously reflect his/her tastes, allergies and dietary needs. Lunches should be nutritious. Parents will be asked to supply food allergy information and will be responsible to supply lunches and snacks that meet their child's individual needs. The Head Teacher will make the staff aware of all children with allergies and training needs to safe guard the child if exposed to allergen.

Holidays are celebrated with items provided by parents and teachers. Sign-up sheets will be provided for these occasions.

Parents with children in the Before and After school program may send in an afternoon snack or pay a monthly fee for us to provide one.

### **Clothing**

Because many activities are done on the floor, play clothes are appropriate. We suggest slacks for both sexes and sneakers or oxfords. In warm weather, please do not send your child to school wearing clogs, "flip-flops", or cleats. These are hazardous for outdoor activities. Also, sunscreen, hats, or sunglasses are recommended during warmer weather. In winter, children will need either shoes or hard-soled slippers and warm boots. We plan to go outside every day unless it is below 20 degrees, so please send outdoor clothing for whatever the daily weather conditions are. These may be heavy jackets, hats or hoods, mittens, scarves, snow pants, and winter boots and extra socks. Clothing should be selected that the children can get into and fasten by themselves as much as possible, to foster independence. Please label your child's outdoor clothing.

At the beginning of the school year, please send a complete outfit (shirt, slacks, underwear and socks) all labeled with the child's name to prevent possible loss. A drawstring bag or shoebox should be provided to hold your child's change of clothing. This change of clothing is to be used in case of an accident and should be replaced as needed

### **Blanket and Mat**

Nap mats will be provided by the school. We ask parents to provide a blanket labeled with child's name for the rest period (No large sleeping bags please). These should be taken home on Friday's to be washed and sent in on Monday's ready to be used.

## **Share Items**

Children are encouraged to bring books, music and nature items (such as fossils, leaves) to share. The bringing of toys is discouraged unless we announce a special day for this purpose.

## **Morning Arrival**

Children should arrive by 9:00 a.m. for the morning session. Supplemental care is available between the hours of 7:00 - 9:00 a.m. if you need to bring your child in prior to the start of the school day. Promptness is appreciated so that the morning program is not disrupted by late arrivals.

## **Pick-up Time**

Morning session ends at 12:00 p.m. and afternoon session at 4:00 p.m. Supplemental care is available between the hours 4:00 - 5:30 p.m. It is very important that you tell us when you are leaving with your child so we can account for the children. State law requires that we maintain a list of names of persons whom your child may be released. Each family is also required to have at least one emergency contact person available during the day.

Failure to pick up your child by 5:30 p.m. will result in a late fee of \$15.00 an hour unless arrangements have been made ahead of time. If you anticipate the inability to pick up your child by 5:30 p.m. (e.g. snowstorm or other emergency), please call the school. In the event that the school is not notified, a staff member will wait with your child at the school for a reasonable amount of time. In addition, the staff member will try to telephone both parents and the emergency contact person.

## **Classroom Staff**

The staff is composed of Directors, Teachers, Teacher Assistants, and occasionally, volunteers or interns. All staff members are screened and supervised by the Directors and the Board of Directors. By law, each employee or intern is screened by the State for a record of child abuse.

## **Home / School Communication**

Communications between the school and home are essential to both parents and teachers for greater understanding of the child and his/her development in the Montessori environment. We welcome your involvement; your questions, comments, suggestions, and we want you to join us as full partners in your child's educational experience. Our guidelines for home-school communication follow:

### **Observations**

1. Parents are encouraged to make classroom observations, especially before participation in conference so that there is a basis for discussion with the teacher. It is through direct observation of your child that you gain an understanding of the Montessori approach to education. We sincerely hope that if you have any questions about the program, you will take time to observe a full cycle or work activity and then discuss any concern with us. Drop-in observations are encouraged.
2. Parents and other observers are requested to comply with the following procedure:
  - a. Guests are asked to observe the class routine quietly. Comments and questions are encouraged and will be discussed later.

b. The Directors or Teacher will meet with the parent following the observation to discuss any questions or comments and their child's progress.

## **Parent Teacher Communication**

Parent and teacher conferences are a main element of our home-school communications. A formal conference is scheduled each semester. Additional conferences may be set up at the request of the teacher or parents.

One of the basic values at the Wellsville Montessori School is to emphasize cooperative, rather than competitive behavior. We try to encourage the children's academic and social growth in noncompetitive ways as well. Rather than expect the children to measure up to some artificial grade level, we hope to help them develop their skills and abilities on a continuum, a steady pattern of growth. We do not want to compare them to what others in their age group "should" be doing. We do want them to achieve at their own best level.

Parents are concerned, of course, about their child's progress and want to know what he/she is "doing". The very best way to answer that is to come and visit the school and watch your child at work and play. We suggest that you do this at least once each semester. The observation then forms the basis for the conference with your child's teacher. In between parent-teacher conferences, you may phone or visit anytime. Please try to call a day in advance for an appointment if a longer time-period is needed to allow for staffing needs.

## **Newsletter**

One additional and very important element of our home-school communication network is the monthly newsletter. Parents will receive a newsletter or memo each month of the school year listing important dates, school functions, classroom activities and other important items of interest to you and your child.

## **Notices and bulletins**

The bulletin board above the mailboxes and the desk in the foyer are used to display important reminders and sign-up sheets. Please remember to check frequently when picking up or dropping off your child. Memos and newsletters are sent by e-mail or placed in the parent mailboxes – please check these periodically.

## **Committees**

Parents are asked to participate in a variety of activities that support the school. These include collecting materials, fund-raising, outreach and publicity activities, all supported by parent committees.

During the first month of school, you will learn more about these committees at an All-School Parents' meeting, the date and time of which will be announced. You will also have a chance to meet other parents involved with the Montessori School, and will learn more about ways in which you can reinforce your child's educational experience at home.

## **Board of Directors**

We are a non-profit school and have a Board of Directors. Members of the Board are parents of children or friends of the Wellsville Montessori School. The members direct the operations, goals and finances of the school. Meetings are held once a month at the school and are posted in the foyer. If you would like to learn more about serving on the Board, please contact the Board President, or one of the Directors.

## **Parent Advocate**

We appreciate your feedback on your child's school experiences. Should you have any concerns, ideas, suggestions or problems that you would like resolved or brought to the school board's attention, please call the Parent Advocate. The name and phone numbers of the advocate for parents' concerns are posted in the school

## **Health and Safety Guidelines**

During the hours when your child is in school, every precaution is taken to protect him/her and insure his/her good health.

1. Under the new state daycare regulations we are not licensed to administer medication to children (with the exception of an Epi-Pen). This includes prescription and over the counter medicines like Tylenol, Benadryl, Sudafed etc.
2. Emergency Medical Permission Form. This should be signed and left with the teacher on the first day of school.
3. Health Information Form. This should be filled out prior to admission and left with the teacher.

A list of emergency numbers is posted in the school, which contains parents' home phone numbers, business numbers, and addresses. Should a parent be unavailable, however, it is necessary for the school to have authorization to receive medical treatment for the child. Teachers may only administer topical over the counter medication or Epi-Pen to a child when the parent, with written instructions provides it. If a student requires medication while at school the parents must make arrangements for a designated adult to come in to administer the medication. Whoever administers the medication will need to sign a log indicating when and how much medication was administered. Parents must also supply the staff with a list of side affects or other symptoms to look for if the child should have a reaction to the medication.

## **Contagious Disease**

Whenever a contagious disease has been reported to the school, the school will notify all parents. If your child has been diagnosed by a doctor as having a contagious disease, please call the school immediately.

## **Illness Policy**

To protect children and staff from exposure to infections and contagious diseases, the following criteria will be used to determine if a child will be sent home or not permitted to attend for the day:

- feverish
- diarrhea
- red, watery eyes
- nasal discharge that is not clear
- vomiting
- flu symptoms
- discharge from eyes or ears
- unidentified rash or postulates

Please keep your child home if he/she exhibits any of the above symptoms. Also, if your child does have any of these symptoms they should be kept out of school for at least 24 hours to allow your child recovery time from the illness. Your child may be refused admission to the classroom or sent home during the day if the staff detects an illness. If any of these conditions develop during the school day, the staff will contact parents to come and take their child home. Sick children will be kept apart from the group until the parent arrives. Please notify the school if your child will be absent due to illness. Please remember - we plan to go outside every day (unless below 20 degrees), so please keep your child at home if they are ill as all staff members need to be outside to maintain the required staff/child ratio.

## **Injuries**

If your child sustains a minor injury during the school day, an injury report is filled out describing the situation in which the injury resulted, the injury itself, first aid procedures taken and the name of the adult supervisor who handled the situation. This report is signed by both school personnel and parent when the child is picked up. In the case of serious injury, the child will be taken to the hospital by ambulance and the child's parent/guardian will be notified immediately.

## **School Insurance**

The Wellsville Montessori School does not provide medical insurance for the students enrolled in the program. If your child is injured during the school day and requires medical attention, the parents are responsible for payment. In the event of an injury requiring medical intervention of a child during program operation hours, the Parent/s or Guardians insurance will be the primary source of payment for the medical expenses of the injured child. If the parent has no insurance coverage, the parent or guardian must assume full responsibility for the medical expenses for their child.

## **Emergency Drills**

Because it is necessary for all children and teachers to clear the building immediately in any fire, disaster, or emergency, the school will practice fire drills as determined by the Directors & Head Teachers. The Montessori staff, volunteers and children will be familiar with emergency procedures. Guidelines for emergency situations will be posted in the classroom

## **Non-Child Areas**

No children are allowed in the kitchen area or storage area at anytime.

## **Snow – Day Policy**

Decision to close or delay opening of the Wellsville Montessori School will be made by the Director of B&A. When Wellsville Central School is closed the Montessori School will be closed. Once a decision is made to close the school, the Director of B&A will notify the Head Teacher and staff directly about the school closing. Please listen to the Wellsville radio station for information about school closings due to inclement weather.

In the event of early dismissal, parents will be notified via phone at the number(s) they have listed on their registration cards.

Credit will not be given or days rescheduled due to school closing for inclement weather unless there are extenuating circumstances.

(B&A) In the event of early dismissal, (Wellsville Central School) after or before Daycare hours it is the responsibility of the parents to communicate with WCS concerning arrangements for your child.

## **Walk Policy**

Whenever the entire class leaves the classroom, the following procedures must be followed:

1. A head count of the children is made and compared against the daily roll book.
2. Prior to the last adult leaving the room, he/she must confirm the head count and check the bathroom area and cubby area.
3. A sign must be posted on the door indicating where the children have gone and the answering machine must be on to take any messages.

## **Discipline Policy**

Self-discipline is a goal of the Montessori Method. The freedom of activity in a Montessori classroom is balanced with discipline and structure. The Montessori environment is orderly and the limits of social behavior are strictly adhered to. Staff intervention should be firm, fair and consistent. Helping a child learn self-discipline is the responsibility of all classroom teachers and aides and discussions regarding discipline should be held in staff meetings to ensure fairness and consistency.

Staff intervention must always display respect for the child, and must never include physical or corporal punishment, belittlement, or other behaviors that would thwart the growth of a positive self-image in the child. Time-out is recommended as a method of intervention. Teachers will receive in-service training on our discipline policy.

## **Confidentiality**

Information regarding students is strictly confidential. Student records are confidential and no information from those records may be given to another party without written approval of the parent(s) or guardian.

## **Child Abuse Policy**

All staff members are Mandated Reporters and are required to take a course in recognition of signs of child abuse, with periodic retraining as required by New York State Office of Children and Family Services.

Pursuant to applicable law, any staff member who has reasonable cause to know or suspect that a child has been subjected to abuse or maltreatment will immediately report this to the New York State Central Registry (Child Abuse Hotline). The Directors will document the report in writing. The report will be dated and signed by both the Directors and the staff member who is making the report. The Directors will have the staff member make contact with the Register by using the Mandated Reporters Hot Line (1-800-635-1522). The Mandated Reporter will file a written report with local Child Protection Services within 48 hours after the Mandated Reporters Hot Line call.

It is not the responsibility of the Directors or the staff to prove that abuse or maltreatment has occurred. It will not be necessary for the school personnel to contact the child's family, or any other person to determine the cause of the suspected abuse or maltreatment.

The Directors of the school are responsible for providing an environment that ensures the safety and protection of any child named in a report of child abuse or maltreatment involving a situation which occurs while the child is in attendance at the school. The Directors must also take all responsible steps to preserve any potential evidence of abuse or maltreatment while maintaining as little disruption as possible in the classroom.

The Directors, in consultation with the Board of Directors, may take one or more of the following actions with regard to school staff named in a report of child abuse or maltreatment involving a child while in attendance at the school:

- A. Dismissal or suspension of any employee, volunteer or other person who is the subject of a child abuse or maltreatment report.
- B. Increased supervision over a person who is the subject of a report.
- C. Provision of instruction and/or remedial counseling to a person who is the subject of a report.
- D. Initiation of appropriate disciplinary action where applicable and/or increased supervision of staff and/or volunteers pertinent to the prevention and remediation of child abuse and maltreatment.

In accordance with the law, any staff member who fails to report an instance of suspected child abuse or maltreatment may be guilty of a Class A misdemeanor and may be held liable for the damages caused by failure to report. The law grants those who report instances of child abuse immunity in good faith from any liability that might otherwise be incurred. The Montessori School will be responsible for providing staff with the opportunity for training in the identification and

reporting of child abuse and maltreatment. Attendance at training sessions will be required for the Directors and staff.

### **Parent Handbook and Forms**

1. When the Parent Handbook is issued at the beginning of the academic year in September, the parent(s) or guardian(s) must sign a form to indicate that they have received a handbook. A copy of the signed form is kept with the student file.
2. All students must have a physical examination. Preschoolers will not be permitted to begin school without a completed physical and immunization record.
3. An Emergency Medical Permission Form must also be submitted prior to enrolment. This form allows the school to seek medical attention for the student in the event of an emergency.
4. The parent(s) or guardian(s) must fill out a form that lists where they can be reached in case of an emergency and lists other people that may be contacted in the event of an emergency.