



Bellevue Montessori School
Park Elementary Campus
Parent Handbook

Park Elementary School Campus

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Mission Statement

The purpose of Bellevue Montessori School is to provide a nurturing environment that supports each individual child in building a foundation for life-long learning.

Bellevue Montessori Principles

The Teachers:

- Assist the child in his/her physical, intellectual, emotional, and social growth;
- Provide a reality-based interrelated curriculum;
- Encourage left and right brain integration;
- Acknowledge sensitive periods for learning;
- Serve as guides who link the children with appropriate materials;
- Know that love, rather than judgment, teaches acceptance;
- Recognize that appreciation of all life is inherent to happiness;
- Believe peace, through education, is attainable.

The Children:

- Study in a richly prepared environment;
- Work in mixed-age groupings;
- Enjoy freedom of choice with responsibility;
- Use self-teaching manipulative materials;
- Develop character and personality;
- Progress at their own pace;
- Build a positive self image;
- Learn logical consequences for behavior;
- Work individually and interact in groups;
- Teach each other;
- Receive perceptual motor education for neuromuscular development;
- Receive lessons in grace and courtesy to attain self-control;
- Experience sensory - based learning to establish discernment skills.

Parent Communication

Good communication between you and our staff is essential to the proper education of your child. You are always welcome in our school. We encourage you to visit to observe your child or to participate in volunteer class activities. These activities are coordinated with your child's teachers. Please plan your formal observation of the classroom after September when the class is settled.

At the beginning of each month the classroom teacher will send home a newsletter highlighting curriculum and other activities in the classroom for that month.

We schedule two parent conferences, one in November and one in March, to discuss your child's progress. Parents also receive written progress reports in January and June. If you have any questions or concerns at any time, please contact your child's teachers by phone or e-mail. Teaching staff is available by phone from 8:00 – 8:30am on school days. Teachers access their emails after school and at various times when the children are with specialists.

It is important that you feel comfortable about the choice of school you have made for your child. Please plan to attend parent discussion groups, parent meetings, conferences, and special events.

Administrative Staff

Christine Hoffman, Director
Jayme Thornton, Assistant Director
Kathryn Cox, Office Manager

Discipline

Obedience is no mechanical thing, but a natural force of social cohesion, intimately related to the will, even its sublimation. At first sight this statement may astonish, but it is true. Obedience of the right kind is a sublimation of the individual's will, a quality in the human soul without which society could not exist. But obedience without true self-control, an obedience which is not consequence of an awakened and exercised will, brings whole nations to disaster.

"To Educate the Human Potential"

Maria Montessori

Our discipline policy is based on respect. We teach students how to think for themselves and how to solve problems in original and creative ways. Our goals are to build a community of respect, to teach the children to be collaborative, and to express disapproval in a socially acceptable way. We provide an atmosphere in which each child can feel safe to express dissenting viewpoints and be heard.

School Guidelines

We have two simple ground rules that are discussed regularly with the children and played out daily in the classrooms and on the playground:

- We show respect for others, for ourselves, and for the environment.
- We resolve our conflicts through talking, listening, and understanding.

We also make sure that students understand the consequences of breaking one of the ground rules:

- A reminder to the children about the rules
- Separation from an activity
- Loss of a chance to participate

Aggressive Behavior Policy

We do not expect or tolerate any verbally or physically aggressive behavior. If a child intentionally harms another child, either the teacher or an administrator will contact the child's parents and the teacher will arrange for the child to work alone for the remainder of the day. The teacher will discuss what occurred with all students involved to get a clear view of the sequence of events. The teacher will then discuss with those involved, alternative ways to handle future difficult situations.

If there is a second incident of aggressive behavior, the teacher or an administrator will contact the child's parents immediately so that the child can be taken out of school for the remainder of the day.

If there is a third incident, the parents will be required to have a conference with the teacher and the administration.

A student who shows a pattern of misbehavior may be dismissed from the school at the discretion of the Director. Tuition will be forfeited.

The School Day

Example of a Daily Schedule

7:15	-	8:30	Activity Club
8:30	-	8:45	Arrival Time
8:45	-	11:30	Academic Time
11:30	-	12:30	Lunch & Recess
12:30	-	3:00	Academic Time
3:00	-	3:15	Dismissal
3:15	-	5:45	Activity Club

Arrivals

Early Arrival & Activity Club

Students may arrive for school as early as 7:15, for participation in the Activity Club until the regular school hours beginning at 8:45.

Morning Arrival & Drop Off

When entering the driveway, form two lines and pull forward before dropping off students at the walkway. Students walk around the side of the building and enter through the cultural room.

Elementary Children: Elementary children must arrive on time so that they can begin their work. Teachers will begin class and take attendance promptly at 8:45.

Kindergarten Children: During the arrival time a staff member will be outside to assist your child from the car to the sidewalk.

Academic Time

During the morning time students select work from a variety of curriculum areas: math, reading, writing, geography, history, geometry, botany, or zoology. After a student's completed work is reviewed by one of the teachers, the student may choose another learning activity. Teachers give individual and small group lessons throughout the morning. In the afternoon, children may select new lessons, complete work begun during the morning, or attend classes taught by one of our specialists.

Teachers will hand out a classroom schedule during the fall parent meeting.

Snack

Children may eat a healthy snack (e.g., fruit, vegetables, cheese, crackers, yogurt, etc.) from their lunchbox during the morning work time.

Lunch

Please send your child's lunch in a sturdy lunch box clearly labeled with the student's name. **Always include two napkins, required spoons or forks, and a straw in the lunch box.** There are no cooking facilities, including microwave ovens, available to heat student lunches. Since no refrigeration is available for student lunches, please include a cold/ice pack to keep food cooler before the lunch time.

We encourage students to eat nutritious lunches, and require that students eat the nutritious parts of their lunch before any dessert. Nutritious whole grain foods better prepare students for focusing on the work of learning. If you include dessert, consider providing fruit and omit any sugary items. Water is the ideal beverage for lunch and is always available at school. Do not include pop or other sugary drinks (including flavored milks), or candy. Please help us teach your child good eating habits by reinforcing these guidelines.

So that the staff will have an adequate opportunity to take safety precautions, it is imperative that we receive written notification from your child's pediatrician of any food allergies or dietary restrictions.

Recess

On most days our children go outside for recess. We encourage students to wear layered clothing, including waterproof jackets and hoods, when the weather is cool or rainy. Layered clothing generally is advisable from late October to April.

School policy maintains that a child who is well enough to go to school is well enough to go outside for recess. If outdoor play is not advisable, please send a written notice from your physician explaining the situation.

Field Trips

The students take several field trips throughout the school year. The children will travel by chartered bus. Parents will be notified of all trips.

Dismissal

Afternoon

Children will be dismissed by as follows:

Kindergarten 2:45 pm to 3:00pm

Lower Elementary 3:00 pm to 3:10pm

Upper Elementary 3:10 pm to 3:20pm

Please form two lines of vehicles and drive forward as far as you can. Teachers will accompany students to their cars. ***If you must leave your car for any reason, please park in one of the designated spaces.***

Late Dismissal and Activity Club

Children not picked up by 3:20 will be signed in to Activity Club and you will be charged for the Activity Club drop in fee.

General Information for your Student

Clothing

Students bring many identical items each day, and children are responsible for their clothing at school. To avoid confusion, last minute delays and hurt feelings, clearly label all removable clothing, belongings and lunch boxes.

All belongings left at school in our lost and found box will be set out at conference days and unclaimed clothing will be donated to charity. You may look through the lost and found at any time.

Shoes

Children do not wear shoes or sandals in the school. They may bring simple slippers to wear inside, or can wear non-slip socks.

Birthdays

Children have the privilege of being the center of attention at a circle on their birthday. They may share pictures of their development and some anecdotes about each year of their life to date. Please observe these simple guidelines to help birthday observance go smoothly:

- Send a note to the teacher in advance so that class time can be allotted.

- You may provide a special birthday cookie or fruit treat that comes prepackaged from a store.
 - **We have several children with severe life-threatening allergies and the staff must be able to read the ingredients on the package.**
 - The children prefer fresh fruit or cookies.
 - **Cupcakes, cakes, or anything made with chocolate will not be served.** If this rule is forgotten, the school will provide a substitute snack.
 - Napkins and cups for water should be included.

There is a standing policy that invitations to birthday parties may not be distributed at school, unless you invite each child in the class. This avoids hurt feelings if not all children are invited to your child's party. You may request a list of student addresses from the main office.

Gifts

School is not the appropriate place for children to exchange gifts. Please do not ask the staff to distribute any type of gifts to the children.

Sharing

Children who would like to share something related to classroom learning or a special event may bring it to class. Please let the teacher know in advance to ensure that it is appropriate.

Toys

Please leave all toys at home because they cause great disruption in the classroom and sometimes disputes between children. This includes stuffed animals, electronic games and trading cards of any kind.

Supplies

Elementary students must provide a clipboard (to hold 8 1/2 x 11 paper) to use in the classroom. The school will provide all other classroom supplies.

Cell Phones

We discourage students from bringing cell phones to school. If your child brings a cell phone, it must be turned off throughout the school day and left in the student's pack.

Pet Policy

If there is a fish, reptile or other pet in the classroom, parents will be notified. Children may not bring their pets to school.

Health and Safety

In case of an emergency, school personnel will call 911 and follow the recommendations of the responding emergency medical personnel.

Medical Information

We are required by state law to maintain immunization records for each student. Parents must submit an adequate, updated **Immunization Form** annually. New **Consent for Emergency Treatment** and **Health Information & Policy** forms must be signed and on file in our office each year. Any child without immunization records on file at school will be excluded from school.

Medications

No medications are given to children without a written request signed by a parent or physician. All medications must be supplied by the parent and must be in their original, labeled container with the child's name printed on it.

Allergy Medication

If your child requires an Epi-Pen or other allergy medication to be kept at school you need to fill out the **Instructions for Medication**.

For Asthma we also need completed the **Child Asthma Plan**; and for allergic reactions we need the **Child Care Emergency Plan for Food Allergic Reactions**, which also needs your physician's signature.

It is the parent's responsibility to check on the expiration dates of the medication throughout the school year.

Illness

If it becomes necessary to send your child home due to illness, we will attempt to contact the parents first. In the event that a parent cannot be reached we will contact the emergency contact person. Although we do not have a sick room, every effort will be made to keep your child comfortable while we make contact with you. It is important that you or your emergency contact person is able to pick up your child during school hours. **It is important that we are able to contract either a parent or emergency contact person at any time!**

If your child is ill please keep him/her at home. Please report severe or communicable diseases to us, as we are required to report these occurrences to the Health Department.

When to keep your child at home ...

<u>Colds:</u>	For three to four days after symptoms appear especially if your child feels poorly, has a persistent cough, his/her nose is very full or secretions are yellow or green.
<u>Strep Throat:</u>	From the day your child is diagnosed and 24 hours following the administration of antibiotics.
<u>Chicken pox:</u>	Until all lesions are crusted over. This usually takes seven to ten days. Children are most contagious the day before a rash occurs. Children may still get Chicken Pox even though they have been immunized.
<u>Stomach Flu:</u>	Generally for as long as the child has diarrhea or fever of 100° F or more and for 24 hours after vomiting.
<u>Vomiting:</u>	If your child throws up during the night, before school, or on the way to school, please do not bring him/her to school for 24 hours.
<u>Conjunctivitis (pink eye):</u>	If the infection is bacterial keep the child home from the time the child's eyes are red and oozy until 24 hours after s/he starts antibiotics. Viral conjunctivitis is contagious for five to seven days.
<u>Fever:</u>	If a child has a fever of 100° F or more or is lethargic or irritable.
<u>Impetigo and Scabies:</u>	Children need to stay home until infection is gone or we receive a written notification from Doctor.
<u>Hepatitis, Measles, Meningitis, Mumps, Rubella, and Tuberculosis:</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These are very serious diseases and we need to be notified immediately when diagnosis is made. • Your child needs to be kept home and cannot return until we have written notice from your child's doctor.

Safety

Safe Student Transportation: If any staff member of Bellevue Montessori School feels that the adult picking up a child is not capable of driving home safely, i.e. inebriated, appropriate measures will be taken to ensure the child's safety, like calling another family member or the police.

Bellevue Montessori School does not provide any kind of transportation to or from school.

Reporting Suspected Child Abuse: All staff members of Bellevue Montessori School will report any suspected abuse or neglect of a child to Child Protective Services.

Safety in the Traffic Lanes and Parking Lot: If you must get out of your car with your child, please hold his/her hand at all times.

Pesticide Application: We have a forest environment and pesticides may be applied on a Saturday. If any other application is required, parents will be notified.

Emergency Situations

The staff of Bellevue Montessori School is committed to the safety and protection of the children in case of any emergency, including natural disaster. Even though the staff's own families are scattered throughout the area, we know our number one obligation is to the children in our school.

In case of an emergency, our priorities are to assess the condition, secure children and staff, and provide aid as needed. To ensure security and safety, the buildings will be locked until we are able to account and provide immediate care for all students and staff. We then can begin a safe and orderly dismissal of students to parents. There is no possible way we can give you a time frame, as it would depend on the conditions of the emergency.

Classroom evacuation plans are posted in each individual classroom by the exit door and on the bulletin board in the office.

Emergency Drills

Fire drills are conducted and recorded once a month. Fire and evacuation safety is also part of our curriculum.

Students and staff conduct monthly "duck and cover" drills for potential earthquake threats.

Emergency Response Plan

A copy of the **Emergency Response Plan** is available on the website.

Administrative Policies

Children's Records

Parents can access their child's progress report at any time.

We try to keep our enrollment records current. Please help us by immediately notifying us of any changes of address, telephone numbers, email addresses or emergency information.

Please note that the person you designate as an emergency contact must be available to pick your student up during school hours if you are unable to do so.

Teacher Recommendations

Teachers are happy to fill out recommendations for graduating students. Out of respect for the teacher's time please allow a minimum of 2 weeks to fill out school questionnaires or recommendations. The form needs to include an addressed envelope with adequate postage. Consistent with the requirements of most schools requesting teacher recommendations, the form will be directly mailed to the school requesting the information.

School Closure

Occasionally school has to be closed because of inclement weather or power outages. In November, we send home complete information concerning school closures. We belong to schoolreport.org and, by checking this website, you can obtain accurate information. If we aren't listed, school is open. The voicemail message on our telephone is changed daily by 6:30 AM with up-to-date information regarding school closures. Missed days are made up at the discretion of the Director.

Non-discrimination Policy

Bellevue Montessori School welcomes all children. We do not discriminate with respect to race, creed, color, national origin, sex, age, or physical ability.

Cultural Diversity

Bellevue Montessori School celebrates the diversity of all ethnic and religious backgrounds of the children in our community. We do not prescribe to any specific religious organizations or practices. However, we do invite all families to share with us their ethnic, cultural or religious observances.

DSHS Posting

The following information is posted in the office as required by DSHS:
License, monitoring checklist, compliance agreement, staff names,
schedule and snack guidelines

Posted in each classroom are:
Staff names, schedule and evacuation diagram

Confidentiality

Photography: Please inform the school in writing if you do not wish your child to be photographed while at school. Parents who request that their child not be photographed also may not take photos of their own or other children at school.

Addresses: If you obtain either mailing or email addresses of staff or children, please use them only for personal use and not for any other purpose.

Classroom Supervision

The mission of the classroom teacher at Bellevue Montessori School is to provide a warm, nurturing, and safe Montessori learning environment where self-concepts are enhanced, independence and individuality are encouraged.

The classroom teacher has full charge of his/her students and agrees to apply diligently, and without compromise the Montessori methods and philosophy. Teachers also agree to implement the curriculum as directed by the Director and Assistant Director.

Students are always under the supervision of staff. Volunteers supplement, rather than replace, staff members.

Volunteers

Parent volunteers are welcome in our school. Please speak to your classroom teacher about volunteer opportunities. All volunteers must complete a background check (form is available at the main office).

Playground Supervision

The playground is actively supervised at all times when children are playing outdoors. Teachers are walking the playground or standing at one of the designated teacher stations. Students are supervised during transition times.

Parent Access

Parents may have free access to all areas of the building occupied by students.

Activity Club

Activity Club provides before and after school care for students. The program includes structured indoor and outdoor playtime, snacks and circle time that includes songs and stories. For students in Activity Club, the parents must sign their children in and out each day.

The full benefits of Activity Club are available to students who contract for it for the entire school year. Childcare is provided every school day from 7:15am until 8:30am before school and from 3:00pm until 5:45pm after school. In addition, childcare is provided from 7:15am until 5:45pm on teacher preparation days, conference days, mid-winter break (not including Presidents' Day), and spring break by reservation at no additional charge.

Vouchers:

Any Bellevue Montessori student may participate in Activity Club on an occasional basis, with reservation, before or after school. You may use vouchers to pay for Activity Club, as follows.

- A Morning Voucher can be used for care on any morning from 7:15am until 8:30am.
- An After School Voucher can be used for care on any afternoon from 3:00pm until 5:45 pm (or any portion thereof).
- Morning or afternoon vouchers may be purchased in groups of five to a book or care for one morning may be paid by check.
- When school is not in session there may be a few openings for children who do not have a School Year Activity Club contract. Reservations for these sessions must be made at least 10 days in advance. Please call the administrative office at 425-454-7439 for reservations.

Late Pickups:

Pickups after 5:45pm are charged a \$10.00 fee plus \$1.00 per minute.