



**UNITARIAN
MONTESSORI
SCHOOL**
WHERE CHILDREN COME FIRST

Contact Information

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Mission Statement and School Core Values

Our school is built on five core values:

- Collaboration
- Unity
- Excellence
- Integrity
- Compassion

Our school's mission is to create a learning environment where children are encouraged to be confident and creative while following the principles of Montessori education. Our vision is to instill a strong foundation of love of learning in each child, recognizing their individuality and innate gifts. We want our children to grow into independent thinkers, to be able to feel confident in asking questions and to develop mutual respect for our planet. The heart of our school lies in the philosophy that children come first.

School History

The Unitarian Montessori School, established in 1986, is a member of the New Jersey Montessori Administrative Council and a full member of the American Montessori Society. The school is licensed as a childcare center by the State of New Jersey.

The school's program follows the educational philosophy of Maria Montessori. It is part of and is offered to the community by The Unitarian Society, a Unitarian Universalist congregation, a liberal religious community organized in 1955. The school is operated through the Montessori Director with oversight from the Unitarian Montessori School Board, a body elected by the membership of the Unitarian Society and composed of Society members, nonmembers, and at least one parent whose child attended the School for at least one year.

The School is housed in the Education Wing. This is a state-of-the-art facility, built in accordance with upgraded safety features required by the State of New Jersey's Division for Youth and Family Services for use by preschoolers and toddlers ages 18 months to 6 years. Our children enjoy a large, shaded, beautiful playground with plenty of space to run, climb, have fun, and learn.

THE UNITARIAN MONTESSORI SCHOOL

Established 1986

TODDLERS

18 months to 3 years

Full Day Programs

Five, Three (Mon., Tues., Wed.) or Two Days (Thurs. & Fri.)

8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Half-Day Programs

Morning 9:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

If space is available.

PRIMARY

3 years to 6 years

Full Day Programs

Five, Three (Mon., Tues., Wed.) or Two Days (Thurs. & Fri.)

9:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Half-Day Programs

Morning 9:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

If space is available.

BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL DAYCARE

18 Months to 6 Years

7:30 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.

3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

SUMMER CAMP

18 Months to 6 Years

Toddlers to Kindergarten

July – August (Six Weeks)

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Communication:

The Unitarian Montessori School completes and maintains on file, for each enrolled child, a Children's Record Checklist, signed by the Director, which documents:

- The child's name, address, birth date, and date of enrollment;
- The name(s), home and work address (es), and telephone number(s) of the child's parent(s) and signature of the parent(s);
- The name(s), address (es), and telephone numbers of any person(s) authorized by the parents to be contacted in the event of emergencies, to pick up the child, and in other applicable situations as explained in more detail within this Handbook.

Other Contacts and Social Media Policy:

E-mail Contact:

Email – UMS communicates primarily via phone (732.246.0606) and e-mail (unitarianmontessori@comcast.net). Parents are included in the school and class-specific email communication groups upon enrollment. Parents may communicate with their child's teachers using their Unitarian Montessori email address. Please allow 24 to 48 hours of response time since teachers spend most of their time in the classroom with students. In the event that a quick response is needed, please mention that in the email subject line and contact our Administrative Assistant or Director to have the teacher contact you as soon as they are out of the classroom.

iCare Childcare App: Parent-teacher phone app allows two-way communication while creating a supportive classroom community. This app is used for check-in and Check-out children and billing information.

The Use of Technology and Social Media Policy:

The center will use Facebook (facebook.com/Unitarian Montessori School), Instagram (@unitarianmontessorischool), and Pinterest (pinterest.com/UnimontOrg) to share important updates and valuable information/articles. The staff will take pictures of the children only if the parents have signed and agreed to the media release policy, and those pictures will be used strictly for the yearbook or sharing with parents. Parents visiting the school to participate in a school activity/event may only take photos of their child. Posting photographs or videos other than your child's own is prohibited, including, but not limited to, pictures or videos of other children obtained through hand-held devices, computers, and video monitoring systems. If you are taking pictures of other children, you need to have approval from their parents. Please note that vulgar or abusive language, disparaging remarks, or personal attacks are strictly prohibited.

Conferences and Class Observations:

Parent conferences are scheduled with parents of all children in November and March. These conferences are essential for reporting your child's needs and progress. A teacher will contact each parent to set up a convenient time.

Children are not permitted to attend conferences. We also ask parents not to discuss a child's behavior in front of them without including the child in the discussion.

Of course, if either the parent or teacher determines that there is a need to discuss a child's progress before or between conferences, an appointment will be arranged. If you would like to speak with your child's teacher by phone, call the office and request that they contact you at their earliest convenience.

Parents can visit at any time. For our school's security and your children's safety, we encourage that prior arrangements be made. After November 1, parents may schedule classroom observation visits with their child's teacher.

Concerns, Questions, and Needs – Our goal is to provide our clients with excellent education, care, and service. Should you have any questions or concerns or wish to check in, we encourage you to promptly contact your child's teacher or the Director at any time to address your needs. Waiting too long can aggravate the situation and make it more challenging to address.

Contact information – To promptly respond to emergencies, we require that you update your contact and all related information immediately upon change. Family Updates forms are available in the office, or an email with the changes may be sent to the school Administrative Assistant. If you choose to email, please look for confirmation to ensure we receive your information.

Website – Our website is unimont.org. It is updated weekly with important announcements and helpful information. Be sure to check out the blog and classroom happenings for additional information.

Special Information From Home

All information will be regarded as confidential. Written information about your child will be kept secure in the Director's office. Please inform the Director immediately if a significant change occurs in your home. Common causes of distress may include, among others: (1) either or both parents being away from home for any reason for an extended period; (2) a new person living in the home; (3) the illness of either parent; (4) the illness of a sibling; (5) any hospitalization; (6) an accident or death in the family; (7) a new caretaker or any new employee; (8) moving; or (9) the death of a pet.

In cases of separation or divorce or other situations involving legal custody arrangements, we require written documentation signed by the court stating clearly who has custody of the child. Each family must submit a list of adults designated to pick up their child from school.

The State of New Jersey requires age-appropriate car seats to be used for all children. We will only permit children to leave the school if such a car seat is used.

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Attendance and Policy of the Release of Children

● Arrival and Dismissal:

Arrival and dismissal times must be followed closely. The morning session begins at 8:30 a.m. The afternoon session ends at 3:30 p.m. Children should arrive no earlier than the time of arrival, 8:30 a.m., and be picked up no later than 5 minutes after the session ends unless previously arranged.

Teachers spend the time immediately before and after sessions handling record keeping and preparing the classroom. It is essential that teachers have this time free to devote to these duties to get the children's day off to a good start. Children must arrive on time. Children who arrive late will miss First Circle, which includes the group lesson for the day.

● Drop-Off:

The safety of the children is our first concern. Cars must use the rear of the parking lot. Teachers will meet the children at the Montessori Entrance. An adult must escort your child up the steps to the teacher from the car. The parent must punch in the individual code assigned. Please note that the staff member's primary concern is responsibility for the children and cannot engage in long conversations with parents.

If your child has trouble separating, we strongly suggest you follow the routine by allowing them to stay with the staff member. Your child will quickly learn to trust the situation if you show your belief that they can do it. Try to keep the situation light. We suggest that the adult allow the staff member to bring the child into the school while the adult remains outside.

● Pick-Up:

3:30 p.m. dismissal will take place outside the Montessori Entrance. Do not allow children to run ahead of you in the parking lot. Drivers may be unable to see a child darting out between parked vehicles. Please observe the **7MPH** speed limit while driving in the parking lot.

● Pick-Up from the After-School Care Program from the Playground:

On pleasant afternoons, children may play in the playground during After-School Care. For pick-up, come to the back gate and remain there until a Teaching Assistant brings your child to you at the gate. Please use the iCare check-in app to sign out your child.

If your child is not picked up at their scheduled time, every attempt will be made to contact you or a person authorized by you to pick up your child. If, after two hours, your child remains in the custody of school personnel, we are required to call the Division of Youth and Family Services (DYFS).

Late Pick-Up Assessment:

If a student is picked up after their program's dismissal time, parents will be assessed a late fee of \$2.00 for each minute after 5:30 p.m. This fee is due on the day it occurs.

Pick-Up Authorization:

You must notify the Director in writing if your child is leaving with anyone other than a parent. Children will not be released to an unauthorized person under any circumstances.

Staff members may not transport children to or from school under any circumstances.

Sign-In and Sign-Out – NJ State Law requires that all students be signed in and out of the school each day of attendance, with the authorized pick-up person's full, legible signature on the appropriate form, indicating the arrival and the pick-up times or Childcare app by iCare sign in and out with the authorized person's login and password. The signature or the computer sign-in/out with your code is crucial and confirms that your child has been placed in our care or picked up from UMS. In the event of an emergency, especially in the case of an evacuation, UMS uses this information to account for every student.

General Policies And Procedures

Bad Weather and School Closings:

Kindly refer to the iCare app alert message sent by the school administration. You may also tune in to WCTC – 1450 AM, WMHGQ – 98.3 FM, 101.5 FM, or Channel 8 (East Brunswick Access TV station) for school closing announcements. We will be closed whenever the East Brunswick Public Schools are closed. The website for East Brunswick Public Schools is <http://www.ebnet.org/>. We will open at 10:30 a.m. for school and Before-School Care when East Brunswick has a delayed opening. If snow begins during the day, you may be contacted to pick your child up.

Extended Care:

The Morning Extended Care Program operates between 7:30 a.m. and 8:30 a.m. The Afternoon Extended Care Program operates between 3:30 p.m. and 5:30 p.m. Students enrolled in the program will be brought into the building by an adult in the morning and picked up in the building (or playground in nice weather) by an adult by 5:30 p.m. each evening. You will be billed monthly for this service. The Division of Youth and Family Services requires an adult to sign the student in at the beginning and out at the end of the day. If you cannot use the iCare check-in app, kindly sign in and sign out your child on the sheet provided outside the school on the clipboard.

Birthdays and Holidays:

UMS welcomes the opportunity to celebrate every student's birthday at school. Their teacher

plans a special circle for the birthday child. To make this an extraordinary event for your child, we request that you prearrange your plans with the lead teacher. **Items on our Approved Treat List may be brought to school** as they align with our food program and the health and safety policy. **Treats that do not meet the guidelines on our Approved Treat List will not be served.** Parents are asked to bring the treats into the school and **never** directly into the classroom. Our teachers will distribute them to the respective classrooms.

We encourage children to spend time with their parents, making a Timeline for their birthday. Pictures of the child's birth, special occasions, siblings, parents, and extended family can all be included to show the days leading to the birthday. We ask parents to explain the Timeline to the child before the special day. The Timeline will become part of the Montessori birthday ceremony. To avoid disparities among children, we do not allow goodie bags; instead, you can donate something for the classroom from the teacher's Wishlist as a gift from your child for all the students.

If you are hosting a birthday party or other party away from school, **you may send invitations to be distributed only if all of the students in your child's classroom are being invited.** The school office can provide you with a current student count. Likewise, **if you wish to invite students to more than one classroom, invitations may be distributed only if all the students in each group are invited.** If you wish to **invite only specific students in your child's classroom or other classrooms, you must find an alternative method of sending invitations. Please do not send your child to school with presents or goodie bags.**

Clothing:

Your child's clothing to school should be neat, comfortable, and appropriate for the weather. As part of helping our students develop self-reliance and independence, we urge you to send your child to school in clothes that can easily be removed when necessary. Therefore, we discourage overalls, shoulder straps, tight snaps, and belts.

For your child's comfort at school, we recommend casual play clothing that can be easily laundered. Please mark each item of clothing – including underwear, rainwear, boots, shoes, slippers, hats, and mittens – with their name. Please provide a pair of slippers for your child's use in the classroom. We encourage a home-like atmosphere in the classroom, and replacing outdoor shoes with slippers upon entering the classroom helps the child transition. We recommend purchasing slippers from Montessori Movers – www.montessorimovers.com

Extra Set of Clothing:

We ask that each child bring a complete set of extra clothing, including shoes and slippers. Please place these additional clothing items, each labeled, in a cloth bag with your child's name written clearly on the front. We use a tote bag inscribed for the extra clothing and shoes your child brings into school. All children will receive their tote, which will be theirs to keep.

Parents should provide disposable diapers and diaper wipes for children who use them.

Nap Needs:

Also, each child needs a blanket and sheet for their rest mat. We charge a small fee to cover these costs. The blanket and sheet will belong to your child and be marked on the label with your child's name. The bedding will be sent home to be laundered at the end of each week. It is to be sent back on Monday, or the first day the child returns to school. You may take the bedding home to keep at the end of the year.

Lost and Found:

Many pieces of clothing are lost each year, so every item must be marked with your child's name. Please look through the lost and found basket when you notice your child is missing something. In December and June, unclaimed items will be given to charity.

Classroom Placement:

The optimal dynamic in our classes calls for a careful balance of age, gender, and the diverse needs and contributions of the children. Teachers are involved in placement decisions because they know their classroom community intimately. The Director's involvement is also essential for the broader view of the school's population.

Children will remain in the same classroom from year to year. New students will be placed as openings become available.

Unitarian Montessori School kindergarten students determined to be developmentally ready for first grade will not be accepted for an additional kindergarten year at our school.

Babysitting:

To avoid conflicts of interest, staff members may not babysit for children enrolled in the school. Referrals to other sources are available upon request.

Lunch:

Lunches should arrive with your child. Each full-day student must bring a nutritious packed lunch from home and 2 daily nut-free snacks (labeled A.M. or P.M. if there is a difference) in an **insulated lunchbox** as state regulations prohibit the school from storing food in the refrigerator or freezer for students. The lunch box should be clearly marked with their name. Lunches should be self-contained, with utensils and napkins included, if needed. Use thermal containers or cold packs when appropriate. A microwave is available for each classroom to heat foods for **Two Minutes** or less.

Food items should be fully prepared and ready for heating and serving at school. For example, cut whole fruits into pieces if your child prefers smaller portions. Grapes must be halved or quartered. Prepackaged lunches that require combining individual foods, such as pizza and tacos, are complex and messy for young children to manage. These should be assembled at home and ready to heat at school.

Good nutrition is a concern since it affects the children's ability to learn and mental and physical health. Children are given the opportunity to eat lunch at an appropriate time. Eating protein and fruits from their lunches before eating treats or desserts is recommended. Candy, gum, and carbonated soft drinks will be returned to the child's lunch box. Water will be provided for the child if the drink is not provided. Your child's teacher can advise if you need suggestions for appropriate lunch items.

Note: Lunch boxes are sometimes used to send messages home from school. Check your child's lunchbox daily for notes.

Outdoor Policy

The outdoor policy is based on several principles:

Going outdoors is a positive experience for the children. It gives them a change of pace in the middle of the day, fresh air, and the opportunity to move about freely (and loudly) with minimal restriction. Unless weather conditions prevent it, outdoor times are a scheduled and required part of every day for children who attend school. New Jersey Office of Licensing requires 30 minutes of outdoor physical activity if the child is less than 4 hours at school and 60 minutes if the child attends the school for more than 4 hours (weather permitting). Our school policy encourages going outdoors every day for all children. Any child well enough to attend school is well enough to go outdoors. In rare instances that your child cannot go outside, please provide a doctor's note. Germs make people sick, not air and the warm indoor environment harbors far more of the organisms that cause illness than the colder outdoors. If a child is to be kept indoors for medical reasons, the school must be provided with a current, signed, dated letter from their doctor outlining the conditions of the restriction.

Children are expected to come to school daily with appropriate clothing for outdoor play. This includes appropriate footwear. We can borrow from the lost and found in a pinch, but this does not encourage the children to learn responsibility for their belongings. The school staff will use reasonable discretion in deciding if weather conditions are appropriate for the children to be outdoors.

The classes use 25 degrees Fahrenheit as their usual cutoff, although they may go out when the temperature is lower than 25 degrees, depending upon the circumstances and the wind chill factor. A still, sunny 25-degree day can be delightful, while a breezy 30 degrees can be miserable. We use the childcare Weather Chart for guidelines.

Toys:

Toys should remain at home. Please assure your child that their toys are for home use and that they have special "work" to do at school. Occasionally, a child may share a book or other item at circle time. Check with the teacher first.

Unitarian Montessori Approach to Discipline:

One function of the school is to guide children through this process of developing self-discipline and awareness of their role in a group.

What is the most significant sign of success for a teacher...? It is to be able to say, *“The children are now working as if I did not exist.”* -Maria Montessori.

The root word of discipline is from the word disciple—one who is a follower or learner. We who teach in the classroom setting are guiding or teaching our students not only math and reading but also how to live in the world.

Discipline helps a child develop socially; they feel free to be themselves. They need guidelines, however, to be part of the group. They must not disturb the group, respect the other children’s needs, and treat them with kindness. Children are always expected to show respect for each other, the teachers, and the environment. Through our Grace and Courtesy exercises, we provide them with clear examples of positive behavior and how to act in specific situations. Through gentle redirection, setting clear limits, and teaching in neutral moments, the discipline of the classroom is maintained.

The rights of others are ensured specifically by using ground rules in the classroom. This is especially true when a child is involved in their “work.” In Montessori, work refers to any activity in which the child is engaged. The teacher and the children have an obligation to keep the environment in order. The following basic ground rules will be followed:

- Any object a child uses must be returned to its original place, in its original order, after the child has finished with it.
- Any task, once begun, must be finished.
- When a child is working on an activity, others must wait until the work is returned to its place

Ground rules are introduced positively as soon as the child enters school for the first time. It is important to ensure that expectations are clear. “You may find work, take it to the table or rug, and return it to the shelf when finished,” or “That is _____’s work; you may use it when he/she is finished.” The child soon learns what behavior is acceptable and what is not.

At times, a child may have difficulty respecting the rights of others. When this happens, the teacher chooses from various possible actions. She must intervene where necessary.

Behaviors that dictate immediate intervention include:

- Deliberate aggressive physical contact.
- Taking another child’s materials or destroying another child’s work.
- Altercations between two children where one or both refuse to negotiate.
- Using a material in a way that will harm others.
- Using inappropriate or hurtful language.
- Hurting another person through words or name-calling.

When possible, the adult helps the offended child use appropriate words to tell the other child why his actions are wrong and how the offended child feels. Children respond to their peers more readily than to adults.

Adults use specific terminology in these cases. For example:

“Hitting hurts! Tell _____ that this is your work,” and,

“_____ is still learning. You must tell him how you feel when he disturbs your work.”

The adult may also suggest alternative behavior:

“You may do _____ until _____ is finished with this work, or you can ask to join her.”

If all alternatives have been exhausted and the child is still out of control, the child may be removed to another area of the room but under the supervision of a staff member. The teacher may hold them gently but firmly while they regain control if necessary. We believe children need an adult to co-regulate with them and not isolate them when visibly stressed. The teacher will serve that function, and the child may return once they have their control in order.

Often, giving positive language or directions can encourage positive behavior. “You can stop teasing.” rather than “Can you please stop teasing?” Also, logical consequences are appropriate in some situations. For example, if the children throw blocks in the block area, the block area can be closed for the rest of the day.

If the behavior seems persistent, a strategy will be discussed among the staff members under the direction of the Teacher. Parents of the child will be informed of the strategy so that it can be implemented at home whenever possible. Strategies could include anticipating the negative behavior, redirecting the child’s negative energy, and giving positive reinforcement for appropriate behavior. The Director of the school welcomes further discussions of specific situations.

Expulsion Policy:

Unfortunately, there may be reasons we must expel a child from our program, either on a short-term or permanent basis. We want you to know we will do everything possible to work with the family of the child in order to prevent this policy from being enforced. These measures are taken in the best interest of the child, the parents, and the other children. School readiness and stress in social situations can sometimes only be evaluated after a child is present in these programs. Sometimes, the behavior is only temporary in the child’s life, but the school cannot be responsible for modifying difficult behavior patterns. Unitarian Montessori will provide the parents with support, essential advice, and encouragement.

The expulsion process does not excuse any financial obligations owed to the school by the parent. The following are reasons it may be necessary to terminate or suspend a child from the school:

Parental Actions for Child's Expulsion:

1. Failure to pay/habitual lateness in payments.
2. Failure to complete required forms, including the child's immunization records.
3. Habitual tardiness when picking up your child.
4. Physical or verbal abuse to staff.
 - a. Respect is a central tenet of the Montessori philosophy. Parents who behave in a manner that does not meet this standard as determined by the Director and Unitarian Montessori School Board will be asked to remove their child and find a school that is a better fit for them.

Child's Actions for Expulsion:

1. Failure of the child to adjust after a reasonable amount of time.
2. Uncontrollable tantrums/angry outbursts.
3. Ongoing physical or verbal abuse to staff or other children
4. When a child is a danger to himself or others.

Proactive Actions That May Be Taken To Prevent Expulsion:

Staff will try to redirect the child from negative behavior.

Staff will reassess the classroom environment, appropriateness of activities, and supervision.

Staff will always use positive methods and language while disciplining children.

Staff will praise appropriate behaviors.

Staff will consistently apply consequences for broken rules.

The child's disruptive behavior will be documented and maintained in confidentiality.

The parent/guardian will be notified verbally to discuss a repetitive problem behavior and the steps used to correct it.

Parent/guardian will be given written copies of incident reports documenting the disruptive behaviors that might lead to expulsion.

The Director, classroom staff, and parent/guardian will have a conference(s) to discuss a joint, home, and school approach for replacing a problem behavior with positive behavior.

The parent will be given literature or other resources regarding methods for addressing problem behavior.

In some cases, a child's behavior may be impacted by the presence of an as-yet-unidentified disability. The school may recommend that the parent/guardian consider contacting an independent professional or their local school district's Director of Special Services/child study team to request an evaluation for the presence of a disability and the provision of special education services. For information about classification for special education and services provided to eligible children aged 3 to 21 by their school district, see the Parental Rights in Special Education (PRISE) manual published by the New Jersey Department of Education, <http://www.state.nj.us>.

Schedule of Expulsion:

If the remedial actions above have not worked, the child's parent/guardian will be advised verbally and in writing about the child's or parent's behavior warranting an expulsion. An expulsion action is meant to be a defined period in which the parent/guardian may work on the child's behavior or come to an agreement with the center.

1. The parent/guardian will be informed regarding the length of the expulsion period.
2. The parent/guardian will be informed about the expected behavioral changes required for the child to return and remain at the School.
3. Failure to satisfy the behavior expectations mutually agreed upon by the parent and school may result in the child's permanent expulsion.
4. The parent/guardian will be given a specific expulsion date that allows adequate time to seek alternate child care (approximately one to two weeks' notice, depending on the risk to other children's welfare or safety.)

A Child Will Not Be Expelled Solely For Any Of The Following Reasons:

If a child's parent(s):

- Made a complaint to the Office of Licensing regarding a center's alleged violations of the licensing requirements (1-877-667-9845)
 - Reported abuse or neglect occurring at the center: (1-877-NJ-ABUSE) [1-877-652-2873]
 - Question the center regarding policies and procedures
2. Without giving the parent adequate time to make other childcare arrangements unless circumstances warrant immediate expulsion. (1 to 2 weeks).

Summer Camp

Unless otherwise noted, the schedule and all general policies and procedures in this handbook apply equally to summer camp.

Camp is an eight-week program, beginning at the end of June and ending in August. Children may sign up for all eight or any number of weeks. Full payment is due for summer camp in advance by May 1st. No refunds will be made.

Children should bring the usual extra clothing to camp. Children should also bring a bathing suit, towel, and water shoes, all marked with their name if there are any assigned water days.

Financial Policies And Information

- 1. ENROLLMENT FEES:** The **\$500.00 enrollment fee is nonrefundable** under any circumstances. \$400 of this will be applied towards June tuition and is payable upon the child's application submission. If, for any reason, the child is withdrawn from the program (even with prior notice), the enrollment fee is **non-refundable** and may not be used for the payment of tuition.
- 2. SCHOOL TUITION PAYMENTS:** Annual tuition is divided into ten equal payments. These are not weekly or monthly charges but are installment payments for the ten-month school year. Tuition payments are due from September to June by the first of the month. Make your check payable to **The Unitarian Society**. Payments may be dropped off or mailed to:
Unitarian Montessori School
176 Tices Lane
East Brunswick, NJ 08816
- 3. EXTENDED DAY PAYMENTS:** Parents will be billed monthly for any before and after-school care charges accrued during the previous month at the rate of \$12.00 per hour. Please note the drop-in rate for Extended Care is \$15.00 per hour. This rate applies to those who do not use this service daily. You will be able to access your monthly account activity statement online, and it will list the tuition and extended day charges. Payment is due immediately upon receipt of the bill. If a child is not properly signed in or signed out, we reserve the right to charge for a full extended day. If a child is picked up after 5:30 p.m., you will be charged a late-pickup fee of \$2 per minute per child. There will be no waivers for the 5:30 p.m. dismissal time. If you are more than 2 hours late, we are required to contact the New Jersey Division of Youth and Family Services.
- 4. APPLICATION OF PAYMENTS:** Payments received will be applied to your account in the following order: Last Month's Tuition, returned check and late fees, daycare charges, tuition, and summer camp charges.
- 5. LATE PAYMENTS:** Tuition payments are due by the first of the month, September through June. If payment is not received by the **10th** of the month, **YOU WILL BE CHARGED A LATE FEE OF \$50** automatically for each month or portion of a month that your payment is late. There will be no exceptions to this policy. When mailing your payment or using a bank to mail the check, you should allow 3 to 4 business days prior to the first day of the month. This will allow for unexpected delays in the postal service. You will be responsible for the late fee if an online bank payment is received after the 10th of any month. Failure to pay school tuition or other charges promptly will result in losing your child's enrollment. Your account may be referred to a collection agency, and legal action may be taken to recover the debt. In this event, you may also be charged legal fees. We reserve the right to deny any application for enrollment due to poor payment history.
- 6. RETURNED CHECKS:** Any check returned for insufficient funds will be charged a returned check fee of \$25 plus a \$25 processing charge. If the check is not accepted, a bank check, certified check, or money order must be presented immediately, or your child's enrollment will be in jeopardy. We reserve the right to require certified funds for future payments if checks have been returned for insufficient funds.

- 7. ABSENCES AND SUBSTITUTION DAYS:** Please let us know when your child won't be attending school. No substitution days will be permitted for days lost to absences, vacations, or scheduled holidays.
- 8. EXTENDED ABSENCE:** In the event that you remove your child for any reason for an extended period (three weeks or more), you must continue to make tuition payments if you want your child's space to be guaranteed. Tuition will continue to be charged until a change of schedule form is completed, notifying us of an Extended Absence. If an Extended Absence is taken and tuition is not paid, the child's space in the classroom will be forfeited. You may not use the enrollment fee applied to June tuition to substitute for your last month's payment. If you wish to re-enroll, and the child's space is still available, a \$250 reinstatement fee must be paid before the child will be re-enrolled. This non-refundable fee is in addition to the usual tuition charges.
- 9. PROGRAM CHANGES:** If you would like to make any change to your child's program during the school year, other than increasing to five full days, a change of schedule form must be completed 30 days in advance of the requested change. Acceptance is subject to space availability.
- 10. PAYMENT FOR CHILDCARE DURING SPRING BREAK:** So that we may plan for adequate staffing, registration and prepayment will be required for daycare during spring break. You will receive written notice of the deadlines for enrollment and prepayment. Daycare during spring break is subject to enrollment; we require a minimum of 12 children to register in order to provide daycare.
- 11. SIBLING DISCOUNT:** If you have two or more children enrolled in the school at the same time during the school year, a sibling discount of 5 percent is available. This discount will be applied to the youngest child enrolled in the school.

New Jersey Transportation Rebate:

Children of kindergarten age attending the Unitarian Montessori School who reside over two miles but less than twenty miles from the school may be eligible for financial reimbursement from their local school district. Application forms for reimbursement are available from the transportation department of your local school district or our office. The form must be filed with the public school district in May preceding the next school year. After receiving this form, your local school district will determine whether it will provide transportation or a rebate.

If you still need to complete a form and your child will be of kindergarten age in September, please contact our Director and your local school district immediately, or you may not be entitled to a rebate.

Emergency Financial Aid:

In a dire emergency (i.e., loss of breadwinner, family breakup), funds may be available for one or two months to enable current students to remain in school.

Availability of emergency aid is subject to the supply of reserved funds and financial aid criteria. Please get in touch with the Director for more information.

Parent Participation:

Your active support and participation in the school's activities are essential. We need you, and your child needs to know that you care and are involved. Parents who volunteer develop a greater understanding of the Montessori philosophy and get to know staff members and other parents. You may wish to join us in becoming involved in some school traditions: family socials, workshops, our yearbook, and other ongoing activities. The easiest way to become involved is to volunteer for one of our committees.

Gifts to The School:

The School is operated as a non-profit corporation. Contributions to The Unitarian Society, designated to the School, are tax-deductible and are welcome at any time. Donations to our playground fund are particularly appreciated.

Parent Education:

Your active support and participation in the school's activities are essential. We need you, and your child needs to know that you care and are involved. Parents who volunteer develop a greater understanding of the Montessori philosophy and get to know staff members and other parents. You may wish to join us in becoming involved in some school traditions: family socials, workshops, and our yearbook.

The easiest way to become involved is to join our Parent-teacher organization. This organization meets monthly and assists and sometimes enhances the school's activities. Joining this group is a wonderful way to become more involved in your child's experience at the school. In the past, some fundraising has been done to purchase items that benefit the children.

Employee Background Checks:

All employees of the Unitarian Montessori School have a criminal record background check, and fingerprinting is done using live-scan electronic fingerprinting. In addition, all employees have a child abuse and neglect record check done by the State of New Jersey to determine whether any allegations of child abuse or neglect have ever been made against any candidate for employment.

Division Of Youth And Family Services (DYFS) Information:

To the extent that our school is a childcare center, it is required by the State Child Care Center Licensing Law to be licensed by the Bureau of Licensing of the New Jersey Division of Youth and Family Services (Bureau). A copy of our current license is posted in the Director's office. Please look for it when you visit the school.

To be licensed, the School must comply with the *Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers*, the official licensing regulations. These comprehensive regulations cover physical environment/life safety; staff qualifications, supervision, and staff/child ratios; program activities

and equipment; health, food, and nutrition; rest and sleep requirements; parent/community participation; and administrative and record-keeping requirements.

Our School must have a copy of the Manual of Requirements on the premises and make it available to interested parents for review. If you would like to review our copy, ask any staff member. Parents may secure a copy of the *Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers* online or for a nominal fee by writing to the Bureau of Licensing, DYFS, CN 717, Trenton, NJ 08625.

We encourage parents to discuss with us any questions or concerns about the policies and program of our School or the meaning, applications, or alleged violations of the *Manual of Requirements*. We will happily arrange a convenient opportunity for you to review and discuss these matters. If you suspect that our center may be in violation of licensing standards, you are entitled to report them to the Bureau of Licensing. Of course, we would appreciate your bringing these concerns to our attention too.

DYFS Requirements:

Our center must have a policy concerning releasing children to parents or people authorized by the parent(s) to be responsible for the child. Please discuss your plans for your child's departure from the center.

Our center must have a policy about dispensing medicine and the management of communicable diseases.

Our center must cooperate with all DYFS inspections/investigations. DYFS staff may interview both staff members and children.

Our center must post its written philosophy statement on child discipline, also included in a previous section of this Handbook, in a prominent location. We encourage you to review and discuss any questions with us.

Our center must post a listing or diagram of those rooms and areas approved by the Bureau for the children's use. Please get in touch with us if you have any questions about the center's space.

Our center must offer parents of enrolled children ample opportunity to participate in and observe the center's activities. Parents wishing to participate in the activities or operations of the center should discuss their interests with the Center Director, who can advise them on what opportunities are available.

Parents of enrolled children may visit our center anytime without securing prior approval from the director or any staff member. Please feel free to do so when you can. We welcome visits from our parents. Advance scheduling would be helpful and permit the teacher to plan coverage so she may speak with you.

Our center must inform parents in advance of every field trip, outing, or special event away from the center and obtain prior written consent from parents before taking a child on each such trip.

Anyone who has reasonable cause to believe that an enrolled child has been or is being subjected to any form of hitting, corporal punishment, abusive language, ridicule, harsh, humiliating or frightening treatment, or any other kind of child abuse, neglect, or exploitation, by any adult, whether working at the center or not, is required by state law to report the concern immediately to the DYFS' Office of Child Abuse control, Toll-Free at (800) 792-8610, or to any District Office. Such reports may be made anonymously.

Health Protection, Promotion and Safety Procedures:

The procedures below are in place for the protection and safety of the students and staff and to give specific and detailed information to parents. These procedures are drawn from the *Manual of Requirements for Child Care Centers* at N.J.A.C. 10:122 et seq and national requirements and standards.

PLEASE READ THIS INFORMATION CAREFULLY. Note the action steps that you must take under various circumstances for the well-being of your child and others, as well as the action steps Unitarian Montessori School (UMS) staff are required to take.

All staff members are expected to be fully aware of and conversant with these procedures and must adhere to and comply with them as a condition of employment. The procedures cover the following areas:

Section I: Emergency Preparedness And Fire Safety:

Disaster Preparedness:

We have always provided an environment prepared for the predictable day-to-day risks. Our staff is trained in CPR as well as First Aid. We update our training quarterly. We have communicated with the East Brunswick township emergency management officials and coordinated our emergency procedures with their emergency plan. Our classroom wing is constructed and equipped with modern safety and security measures.

Schools have been identified as safe havens for children. We will continue to do all possible to maintain our students' safe haven. If the police advise that keeping the children in school is safer, we will do so. The authorities call this "shelter in place." In that case, the emergency management officials will advise us where and when we will be able to dismiss students. Therefore, should an emergency occur, the district requests that parents do not rush to the School but instead watch EBT Channel 3, listen to local radio stations (97.5 FM WPST, 98.3 FM WMGQ, 101.5 FM, 1450 AM WCTC), or visit the town's website: **www.eastbrunswick.org** to receive up-to-date information and instructions. Our goal will be to get the children to their families as quickly as possible.

All parents are asked to complete a form with updated and expanded emergency contact numbers. Parents must provide phone numbers for a local contact, nearest relative, family work numbers, and an out-of-area contact. Also, parents are urged to communicate with the friends

and family members authorized to pick up their children in an emergency to ensure that these individuals are aware of the school's plans and that their contact numbers are accurate. All Parents are urged to sign up for our "Reminder" messaging system.

Please be assured that we are committed to providing a safe environment for your children and that we are closely following the advice of our emergency management officials.

Requirements in Connection with Fire Safety and Emergency Preparedness:

- a. All UMS employees are required to study emergency plans and participate in regularly scheduled meetings. In the event of an emergency, staff are expected to remain with the children and follow emergency personnel's directions.
- b. Fire/evacuation drills will be practiced monthly.
- c. Documentation of a fire/evacuation drill will include the date, time, total time taken to evacuate, and number of children and adults present.
- d. Teachers will be responsible for counting and ensuring all children are out of the building.
- e. UMS staff will demonstrate the ability to locate and operate fire extinguishers
- f. Response to fire and burns:
 - Children will be instructed to STOP, DROP, and ROLL when garments catch fire. Children will be instructed to crawl on the floor under the smoke.
 - Cool water will be applied to burns immediately.
 - The injury will be covered with a loose bandage or clean cloth.

Section II: Health Protection, Promotion and Safety Procedures:

1. Personal Hygiene Requirements
2. Rest and Sleep Requirements
3. Accessibility of Drinking Water
4. Health and Immunization Requirements for Children
5. Health Requirements for Staff Members
6. Administration and Control of Prescription and Nonprescription Medicines and Health Care Procedures
7. Illness
8. Illness/Communicable Diseases
9. Reporting of Illness and Reportable Diseases
10. Injury to a Child while in School
11. Use of Poison Control Center
12. Environmental Sanitation and Safety Discipline
13. Special Requirements to Prevent Child Abuse and/or Neglect and Inappropriate Staff Behavior towards Children

14. Reporting suspected Child Abuse, Neglect, and/or Exploitation
15. Attendance by Children and/or Staff Members Known to be Infected with Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV)

1. Personal Hygiene Requirements:

Hand Washing:

1. UMS staff will ensure that children wash their hands with soap and running water:
 - Before food intake
 - Immediately after using the toilet
 - Immediately after coming into contact with blood, fecal matter, urine, vomit, nasal secretions, or other body fluid or secretions
 - Immediately after coming in contact with an animal's body secretions

2. Staff members will wash their hands with soap and running water immediately:
 - Before preparing or serving food
 - After toileting
 - After assisting a child in toileting,
 - After caring for a child who is sick
 - After coming in contact with animal or body secretions,
 - After coming in contact with blood, fecal matter, urine, vomit, nasal secretions or other body fluid secretions

Staff will use disposable gloves, which shall be discarded after each use when coming into contact with blood or vomit.

Clothing Requirements:

- The child's clothing will be changed when wet or soiled
- UMS staff will ensure that a change of clothing is provided for each child
- Soiled clothing will be placed in a sealed plastic bag that has been labeled with the child's name and returned to the child's parents at the end of the day for laundering

Toilet facility requirements:

- Supply of soap, toilet paper, and individual hand towels or disposable paper towels will be provided
- Mirrors, dispensers, and other equipment will be fastened securely
- Platforms will be provided as appropriate for use by children when children use adult-size toilets and/or sinks
- Hand washing sink shall not be used for rinsing soiled clothing or cleaning equipment that is used for toileting

2. Rest and Sleep Requirements

UMS will provide opportunities for daily rest and sleep as follows:

- Children 18 months of age will be offered daily rest and sleep according to the child's physical needs.

- For children over 18 months and under the age of 4 years UMS will provide the following:
 - Daily rest or sleep for each child who attends UMS for 4 or more consecutive hours
 - Daily rest or sleep for each child who attends fewer than 4 consecutive hours but whose physical needs call for a rest period
 - An alternative, quiet activity for each child who has rested for 30 minutes and does not appear to need additional rest or sleep

- UMS will provide a rest area for children who need to rest off-schedule, including children who become ill, at least until the child leaves UMS for care elsewhere

3. Accessibility of Drinking Water

Filtered drinking water in single-service cups shall be accessible to children indoors and outdoors.

4. Health and immunization requirements for children

Each child will have a health examination performed by a healthcare provider within:

- Six months prior to admission for children who are 2.5 years of age or younger
- One year prior to admission for children above 2.5 years of age.

If immunizations are contraindicated for medical reasons, the School may choose to admit the child, provided the parents submit to the UMS a written statement from the healthcare provider the following:

- The reason the immunization is medically contraindicated
- The specific time period that immunization is medically contraindicated

The child shall be exempted from physical examination, immunization, or medical treatment if parents object in a written statement submitted to the School, signed by parents, explaining how examination, immunization, or medical treatment conflicts with the child's exercise of bona fide religious tenets or practices. The School shall maintain the parent's written statement on file as part of the child's record.

5. Health requirements for staff members

Prior to or upon beginning work at the school, each staff member whose duty requires contact with children for at least 20% of the school's weekly operating hours shall take a Mantoux tuberculin skin test, except that the staff member shall have a chest X-ray taken if they have had a previous positive Mantoux test. In addition, they will submit a written statement from a health provider indicating that they are in good health and pose no risk to persons at the school. Such a statement will be based on a medical exam completed within 6 months preceding employment.

The school will maintain records on file in the UMS office.

The Director of the school will exclude staff members who

- Exhibit illness and symptoms specified in N.J.A.C. 10:122-7
- Appear to be physically, emotionally, or mentally impaired or who appear to have a drug-induced condition that would endanger the health, safety, and well-being of a child. The Director will document the action taken.

6. Administration and control of prescription and nonprescription medicines and health care procedures

NOTE: Medications will be administered only after receiving written approval from the child's parents. If your child is past the contagious phase and you want the School to dispense medication, you must sign the Medication Log in the office. Medications must be hand-delivered to the staff. Parents must complete the Medication Log to state the instructions regarding the dosage, the time of day, and the number of days it will be given. No child should have possession of any medicine, nor should it be placed in their cubby or lunch box.

- The school will designate staff members who are authorized to administer medications.
- All medications and health care equipment will be kept in a locked cabinet or an inaccessible area to the children.
- Medications will be refrigerated if so indicated on the label.
- Unused or expired medications will be returned to the child's parents or disposed of safely in a child-resistant waste receptacle when they no longer need to be administered.

All prescription medications for a child will be:

- Prescribed in the name of and specifically for the child
- Stored in its original prescription container, labeled with the child's name, expiration date, date it was prescribed, and directions for its administration
- The UMS staff will inform a child's parent immediately if the child exhibits any adverse effect of a medication or health care procedure.

7. Illness

UMS will maintain on file a log of the initial illness and symptoms of illness/disease that each child exhibits. The illness log will include the following:

- Child's name
- Date and time of illness/symptoms
- Description of symptoms or illness
- Action taken

8. Illness/communicable disease

NOTE: Our School prohibits the attendance of a child during an illness. Children are expected to be in good health when in school. Please do not send your child to school if they have a fever or

shows any signs of illness. Once your child is fever-free for 24 hours without a fever reducer, they may return. We reserve the right to send a child home if they show definite or continued signs of ill health that might jeopardize the welfare of other children.

If your child is absent for over three days, kindly report the cause to the school.

Under no circumstances will UMS admit any child with any illnesses or symptoms of disease that pose serious health risks to themselves or other children. If your child exhibits any of the following symptoms, they should not attend school. If such symptoms occur at school, the child will be removed from the classroom, and you will be called to take them home. Such illness or symptoms of disease shall include but not be limited to:

- Severe pain or discomfort
- Acute diarrhea, characterized as twice the child's usual bowel movements with a change to a looser consistency within 24 hours, or bloody diarrhea
- Two or more episodes of acute vomiting
- Elevated oral temperature of 101.5 degrees Fahrenheit or axillary temperature of 100.5 or over in conjunction with behavior changes
- Lethargy that is more than expected tiredness
- Yellow eyes or jaundiced skin
- Red eyes with discharge
- Infected, untreated skin patches
- Difficult rapid breathing or severe coughing
- Skin rashes in conjunction with fever or behavior change.
- Weeping or bleeding skin lesions that a healthcare provider has not treated
- Mouth sores with drooling
- Stiff neck

Suppose a child admitted to the UMS manifests any of the above symptoms. These symptoms prevent the child from participating comfortably in activities or result in a greater need for care than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children. In that case, the school may exclude the child.

The school will not permit a child or staff member with an excludable communicable disease to be admitted or remain in school. If a child contracts any of the following diseases, please report it to the school immediately. The child MAY NOT return to school without a doctor's note stating that the child presents no risk to themselves or others. The excludable communicable diseases will include:

Reportable Diseases, as required by N.J. A. C. 10:122-7.10 (a)

9. Reporting of illness and reportable diseases:

Upon learning that the child or staff member has been diagnosed as having contracted or suspected of having a reportable disease, as specified in N.J.A.C 10:122-7, the Director will report this knowledge by the next working day to the local health department.

You will be notified in writing if your child is exposed to any excludable communicable disease at school.

The Director will report the occurrence of any injury or illness that results in admittance to a hospital or the death of a child under UMS supervision to the Bureau by the next working day.

Knowing that a child is injured by a dog, cat, or other animal kept at UMS, and when no physician attends to such a child, the Director will report the injury to the local health department within 12 hours.

Head Lice:

While not a communicable disease, the discovery of head lice necessitates an intervention response and careful management by both families and the staff at Unitarian Montessori.

1. A child initially discovered to have lice and/or nits (unhatched egg casings) will be sent home immediately for treatment.
2. The child is invited to return to school the day after receiving treatment. Before rejoining classmates, a faculty member must inspect the student's scalp to ensure that no evidence of living insects is present.
3. We recognize that nits and/or empty egg casings may remain present after successful treatment. However, UMS reserves the right to send a student home if there is reason to believe that additional treatment is needed.

Families must be aware that lice have become increasingly resistant to treatment; vigilant checking of your child's hair and scalp for two or more weeks after treatment is essential.

Families must inform a staff member upon finding evidence of lice in the family—even if a non-enrolled sibling is determined to have lice. We will protect the confidentiality of your child and family.

Children may be asked to store coats and other garments in their cubbies instead of hooks to reduce the likelihood that lice will be transmitted between families.

10. Emergency, sudden onset of illness, or injury to a child while in school:

An emergency form for each child will be kept in the school office. It is the parent's responsibility to keep the emergency contact information in our office up-to-date.

UMS will take immediate action to protect the child from further harm and shall immediately notify parents when one of the following occurs while the child is in school:

- A child is bitten, and the skin is broken
- A child sustains a head injury
- A child falls from a height greater than the height of the child

- An injury requiring professional medical care

UMS will maintain a record of the incident on file. The incident record will include the following:

- Name of the injured child
- Date, time, and location of the incident
- Name of the person completing the report
- The date report was completed
- A written description of the following:
 - a. The incident
 - b. The injury to the child
 - c. Names of witnesses to the incident
 - d. Follow-up action taken by the school, such as consultation by a licensed physician or other health care provider or first aid treatment

In the event of an emergency, i.e., when immediate response is required, the following procedures will be utilized:

- First aid will be administered, and an emergency medical response team will be called (911)
- Parent/parent's designated emergency contact person (e.g., a person other than the parents, such as a grandparent, aunt or uncle, family friend, or neighbor on the emergency form) will be called.
- If a child needs to be transported to the hospital, a UMS staff member will accompany the child and stay with the child until the parents are available. The child's emergency release form, signed by the parent, will accompany the child so that treatment can be given immediately in the parents' absence.

An appropriately stocked first aid kit must be accessible to staff at all times.

Cuts or sores leaking body fluid will be covered with a dry dressing to avoid contamination of surfaces. Staff will wear gloves if there is any contact with a wound.

A separate room or area within a room will be designated for temporary or ongoing care of a child who needs to be separated from the group because of injury or illness. This area will be located so the child can be supervised. If the child is suspected of having a communicable disease, all equipment the child uses shall be cleaned and sanitized.

Upon request of the child's parent, UMS will provide a written description of the incident by the end of the following operating day.

11. Use of Poison Control Center: 1-800-222-1222

The Poison Control Center will be called for advice about any exposure to toxic substances or ingestion emergencies. The recommendation will be followed and documented. Staff will have the following information ready before calling the Poison Control Center:

- The child's age and sex
- Substance involved
- Estimated amount ingested
- Child's condition
- Time elapsed since ingestion or exposure

NOTE: Staff will not induce vomiting unless instructed to do so by the Poison Control Center

Common Medical Emergencies:

12. Allergies:

We are a peanut-free and tree-nut-free school. Many children are also allergic to shellfish, milk, or eggs. We ask that you read the ingredients when you send snacks for the children to share. Each classroom has posted the ingredients that children are allergic to.

We ask that you not send the school peanuts or other nuts.

Staff Will Call Emergency Medical Services (911) immediately if the child:

- Appears at risk, or there is a risk of permanent injury
- Is acting strangely, much less alert, or much more withdrawn than usual
- Has difficulty breathing or is unable to speak
- Has skin or lips that look blue, purple, or gray
- Has rhythmic jerking of arms and legs and loss of consciousness
- Is unconscious
- Is less and less responsive
- Has any of the following after head injury: decreased level of alertness, confusion or headache, vomiting, irritability, or difficulty walking
- Has increasing or severe pain anywhere
- Has a cut or burn that is large, deep, and/or won't stop bleeding
- Is vomiting blood
- Has a severe stiff neck, headache, and fever
- Is significantly dehydrated: sunken eyes, lethargic, not making tears, not urinating.

NOTE: OUR FIRST PRIORITY IN AN EMERGENCY IS GETTING HELP TO THE CHILD. AFTER WE HAVE CALLED EMS, WE WILL IMMEDIATELY (OR SIMULTANEOUSLY) CALL THE CHILD'S PARENT/LEGAL GUARDIAN.

Get medical attention within one hour (an urgent situation that may not necessarily require an ambulance but needs medical attention)

- Fever in any age child who looks more than mildly ill
- A quick spreading purple rash
- A large volume of blood in the stool
- A cut that may require stitches
- Any medical attention outlined explicitly in the child's care plan is required.
Parental notification

The above procedures are approved by the American Academy of Pediatrics Committee on Pediatric Emergency Medicine, Jan 2001

13. Environmental Sanitation and Safety:

- UMS will use a commercially prepared disinfectant that indicates it kills bacteria, viruses, and parasites. The solution will be used according to the label's instructions or a self-made solution consisting of ¼ cup of household bleach for each gallon of water, which will be prepared daily and labeled in a sealed container.
- All areas to be disinfected will be washed with soap and water before disinfecting.
- The following items will be washed and disinfected after each use:
 - Washcloth made of fabric, when used for cleaning children
 - Thermometers
 - Items used by a child who becomes ill while in school
 - Sleeping mats not stored separately
- The following items will be washed and disinfected at least daily:
 - Toilet and toilet seats
 - Sinks and sink faucets
 - Water table and water play equipment
 - Play tables
 - Smooth surface nonporous floors in areas used by children
- Children's eating tables will be washed and disinfected before each meal.
- Sandboxes or play areas containing sand will be:
 - Asbestos free
 - Maintained in a safe and sanitary manner
- Smoking, alcohol, and illegal drugs are prohibited on the premises of UMS.
- The UMS will not allow any firearms, pellet or BB guns (loaded or unloaded), darts, bows and arrows, cap pistols, or objects manufactured for play as toy guns within the premises.
- Poisonous plants will not be kept in the School or outside play areas.

- Plastic bags, whether intended for storage, trash, diaper disposal, or any other purpose, shall be stored out of reach of children.
- Strings and cords long enough to encircle a child's neck are inaccessible.
- Pets will be permitted in UMS only with the approval of the Director and under the following circumstances. Pets must be:
 - Domesticated and non-aggressive
 - Free from disease
 - Vaccinated, if applicable by law or local ordinance
 - Prohibited from areas used for food preparation, storage, and/or service, areas used for cleaning or storing food utensils and toilet facilities
 - Animal waste shall be disposed of in sealed plastic bags in the outdoor garbage receptacle

14. Discipline:

NOTE: Please also review the complete *Unitarian Montessori School Approach to Discipline*, outlined in a previous section of this Parent Manual and posted in the School office.

- Methods of guidance and discipline used at UMS:
 - Are positive, nonviolent and non-abusive
 - Are consistent with age and developmental needs
 - Lead to the child's ability to develop and maintain self-control
- Staff members will not discipline children for failing to eat, sleep, or soiling themselves.
- Children may be removed from group activity to another area, provided they are under another staff member's supervision.

15. Special requirements to prevent child abuse and neglect and inappropriate staff behavior toward children

- Staff members will not use hitting, shaking, or any form of corporal punishment.
- Staff will not use abusive language, ridicule, harsh, humiliating, or frightening treatment, or any form of emotional punishment of children.
- Staff will not withhold food, emotional responses, stimulation, or opportunities for rest and sleep from children.
- Staff will not require children to remain silent or inactive for inappropriately long periods for the child's age.

- Staff members will learn to recognize common signs and symptoms of child abuse and neglect. (See chart, *Clues to Child Abuse and Neglect*, below.)

Clues to Child Abuse and Neglect

Physical Abuse	<p>Bruises or welts in various stage of healing or other visible injuries that appear on the child recurrently and cannot be explained by developmentally expected behavior</p> <p>Unexplained or multiple broken bones, especially a broken rib severe skull fracture or other major head injury</p> <p>Burns or injuries in the same shape of an object use to cause Injury such as bite marks, handprint, cigarette burns, and belt buckle markings. Burns from immersion of scalding water. Unexplained or repetitive injuries</p> <p>Failure to grow at expected rate who seems hungry and eager to eat when offered food</p>	<p>Explanation for physical injury that is inconsistent with the injury or child’s developmental age</p> <p>Persistent or repetitive physical complaints of unclear cause such as headache or belly pain</p> <p>Parent/caregiver report that a significant injury was self-inflicted or the child reports to be injured by care giver</p>
Sexual Abuse	<p>Pain, itching, bruises or bleeding around genitalia</p> <p>Venereal disease</p> <p>Difficulty walking or sitting</p> <p>Discharge from vagina or urine opening</p>	<p>Bizarre, too sophisticated, or unusual sexual knowledge or behavior for the child’s age such asking others to do sex act, putting mouth on sex part, or trying to have intercourse</p> <p>Child reports of sexual abuse by parent or adult</p>
Emotional Abuse	<p>Delayed physical, emotional or intellectual development that is not otherwise explicable</p> <p>Habits such as rocking, sucking on fingers in excess of expectation for developmental age</p>	<p>Impaired sense of self-worth, depression, withdrawal</p> <p>Extremes of behavior, such as overly aggressive or passive, apathetic, empty facial appearance, decrease social interaction with others, phobias or fear of parent</p>
Neglect	<p>Constant hunger, begging for food or hoarding food. Fatigue or</p>	<p>Lack of supervision for long periods of time inappropriate to</p>

	listlessness. Poor hygiene. Inappropriate dress Malnutrition or failure to thrive not explained by physical illness Delayed seeking of professional attention for physical problems	the child's age or development stage
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16. Reporting Suspected Child Abuse, Neglect, and Exploitation:

- UMS will report to DYFS (and the police, if applicable) any instance where there is reasonable cause to believe that child abuse, neglect, or exploitation may have occurred

17. Attendance by children and/or staff members known to be infected with Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV):

- The UMS should admit a child known to be infected with HIV (also known as HTLV III or LAV), the virus that causes Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS).
- The school should not exclude a child known to be infected with HIV to protect them from possible exposure to infectious diseases or other persons at the center.
 1. The school should not exclude the child solely for the reason that the child lives with or is related to a person known to be infected with HIV.
 2. The director shall maintain the confidentiality of any child or staff member known to be infected with HIV.
 3. The school shall not require the routine medical screening of children or staff to detect the presence of HIV.

18. Information to Parents on Recalls

The Center is required to provide parents and staff with the CPSC website at www.cpsc.gov/Recalls, which contains a list from the Consumer Product Safety Commission regarding unsafe products.

References

Manual of Requirements for Child Care Center, Chapter 52 (N.J.A.C. 10:122 et seq.) (2017). State of New Jersey Department of Children and Families, pages 1-88.

Manual of Requirements for Child Care Center, Chapter 122 (N.J.A.C. 10:122 et seq.) (2009). State of New Jersey Department of Children and Families, pages 51-90.

Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards: Guide for Out-of-Home Child Care, 2nd Edition: 83-424.

Our Thanks

This handbook outlines the school's policies, what you can expect from UMS, and parent/guardian responsibilities during your time with us. Please understand the handbook cannot cover all eventualities. If you have questions outside the scope of this handbook, please feel free to contact the Director.

We hope this handbook is helpful to you, and thank you in advance for adhering to the policies set forth herein and partnering with us in this invaluable task of education and raising your children. Unitarian Montessori is committed to excellence and welcomes your comments and suggestions.

“Education is a natural process carried out by the human individual, and is acquired not by listening to words, but by experiences in the environment.”

August 2023