



# Parent Handbook

*Gig Harbor Campus  
2023-24*

*Updated February 2024*

## **Parent Handbook Acknowledgement**

*We require the acknowledgement that you have received, read, and understand the Harbor Montessori School parent handbook and the policies contained. The acknowledgement form will be assigned to you for your review and execution via Transparent Classroom.*

## **Emergency Preparedness Plan**

Harbor Montessori School has an Emergency Preparedness Plan in a binder located in the main office behind the front desk. Parents are welcome to look over and review the Emergency Preparedness Plan at any time during office hours.

*We require the acknowledgement that you have been offered the opportunity to review the HMS Emergency Preparedness Plan by the HMS Administration Team. The acknowledgement form will be assigned to you for your review and execution via Transparent Classroom.*

Dear Families::

Welcome to Harbor Montessori School! This handbook has been prepared as a reference for you about the school and its policies, procedures and practices.

Harbor Montessori School was founded in 1981. Harbor Montessori School is dedicated to nurturing the whole child through intentional academic guidance, purposeful learning environments, and peace-minded community support.

The goals for the children who attend Harbor Montessori School are:

- To develop a positive attitude toward school and learning
- To grow as a learner in a peaceful and safe environment
- To develop a sense of high self-esteem
- To establish habits of concentration for lifelong study skills
- To develop and foster a deep curiosity
- To develop habits of initiative and persistence
- To foster inner discipline and a sense of order
- To develop sensory-motor skills so as to attain the ability to discriminate and judge
- To acquire the basic skills necessary for a lifetime of learning
- To help develop each child's innate, ultimate potential through high self-expectations
- To be exposed to a culturally responsive curriculum, which allows all children to be seen and have a voice.

With this mission and these goals in mind, we have created the policies, procedures and practices you will find in this handbook. Please be aware that handbooks are ever-evolving. Harbor Montessori School reserves the right to change or add policies as needed, at any time, with appropriate written notice to parents.

Harbor Montessori School admits students of any race, color, gender identity, national and ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities available to students at the school. Harbor Montessori does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, gender, identity, or national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, and other school-administered programs.

***“Children are human beings to whom respect is due, superior to us by reason of their innocence and of the greater possibilities of their future.”***

***-- Maria Montessori***

### **Affiliations and Memberships**

**Accredited by the American Montessori Society**

**Accredited by the Northwest Association of Independent Schools**

Fully licensed by the Washington State Department of Early Learning

Approved Private School by the Superintendent of Public Instruction

Pacific Northwest Montessori Association Member

Member of Independent School Management

Member of Washington Federation of Independent Schools

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**Modification of Policies**

*Harbor Montessori School reserves the right to change or add policy as needed, at any time, with advance written notice to parents. In addition, this Handbook is not a contract or promise of specific treatment in all circumstances.*

## Montessori Philosophy

The basis of the Montessori philosophy of education is the belief that all children carry within themselves the foundation of the person they will become. In order to develop physical, intellectual, and spiritual potential to the fullest, the child must have freedom: a freedom to be achieved through order and self-discipline. The world of the young child, say Montessori educators, is full of sights and sounds which at first appear chaotic. From this chaos children gradually create order, learn to distinguish among the impressions that assail their senses, and slowly but surely gain mastery of themselves and their environment.

Dr. Montessori recognized that the only valid impulse to learning is the self motivation of the child. Children move themselves toward learning. The teacher prepares the environment, programs the activity, functions as a reference person and a model, and offers the child stimulation. It is the child, however, who learns, who is motivated through the work itself (not solely by the teacher's personality) to persist in a chosen task. If the Montessori child is free to learn, it is because they have acquired from exposure to both mental and physical order an "inner discipline". This is the core of Dr. Montessori's educational philosophy. The Montessori Method introduces children to the joy of learning at an early age and provides a framework in which intellectual and social growth go hand in hand.

Montessori Education is developmentally based and includes not just academics, but social, emotional, and physical development as well. The Montessori Method has proven effective for over one hundred years. Maria Montessori was a careful observer and her life's work was based on direct study of children. Today through technology and neuroscience we know how we best learn. The observations of Dr. Montessori have an uncanny resemblance to the best practices recommended by neuropsychologists today. Additionally there is much research that shows that the Montessori Method is successful for children regardless of race, class, socio-economics, identity, religions, cultural traditions, etc.

Head teachers at Harbor Montessori School are trained and certified in Montessori education at the developmental stage and age in which they work. Classroom assistants, and enrichment teachers participate in training upon hire. All HMS employees undergo at least eighteen hours of training and development per year.

We strongly encourage parents to learn more about Montessori.

Recommended Reading:

*Montessori: The Science Behind The Genius* Angeline Lillard

*Montessori Madness* Trevor Eissler

Recommended websites: [www.buildingbetterbrains.com](http://www.buildingbetterbrains.com); [www.amshq.org](http://www.amshq.org)



# AMS Code of Ethics

## **Principle I - Commitment to the Student**

In fulfillment of the obligation to the children, the educator—

1. shall encourage independent action in the pursuit of learning;
2. shall protect the opportunity to provide for participation in educational programs without regard to race, sex, color, creed, or national origin;
3. shall protect the health and safety of students;
4. shall honor professional commitments and maintain obligations and contracts while never soliciting nor involving students or their parents in schemes for commercial gain;
5. shall keep in confidence information that has been secured in the course of professional service, unless disclosure serves professional purposes or is required by law.

## **Principle II - Commitment to the Public**

The Montessori educator shares in the responsibility for developing policy relating to the extension of educational opportunity for all and for interpreting educational programs and policies to the public.

In fulfilling these goals, the educator—

1. shall support the American Montessori Society and not misrepresent its policies in public discussion. Whenever speaking or writing about policies, the educator should take the precaution of distinguishing private views from the official position of the Society.
2. shall not interfere with nor exploit the rights and responsibilities of colleagues within the teaching profession.

## **Principle III - Commitment to the Profession**

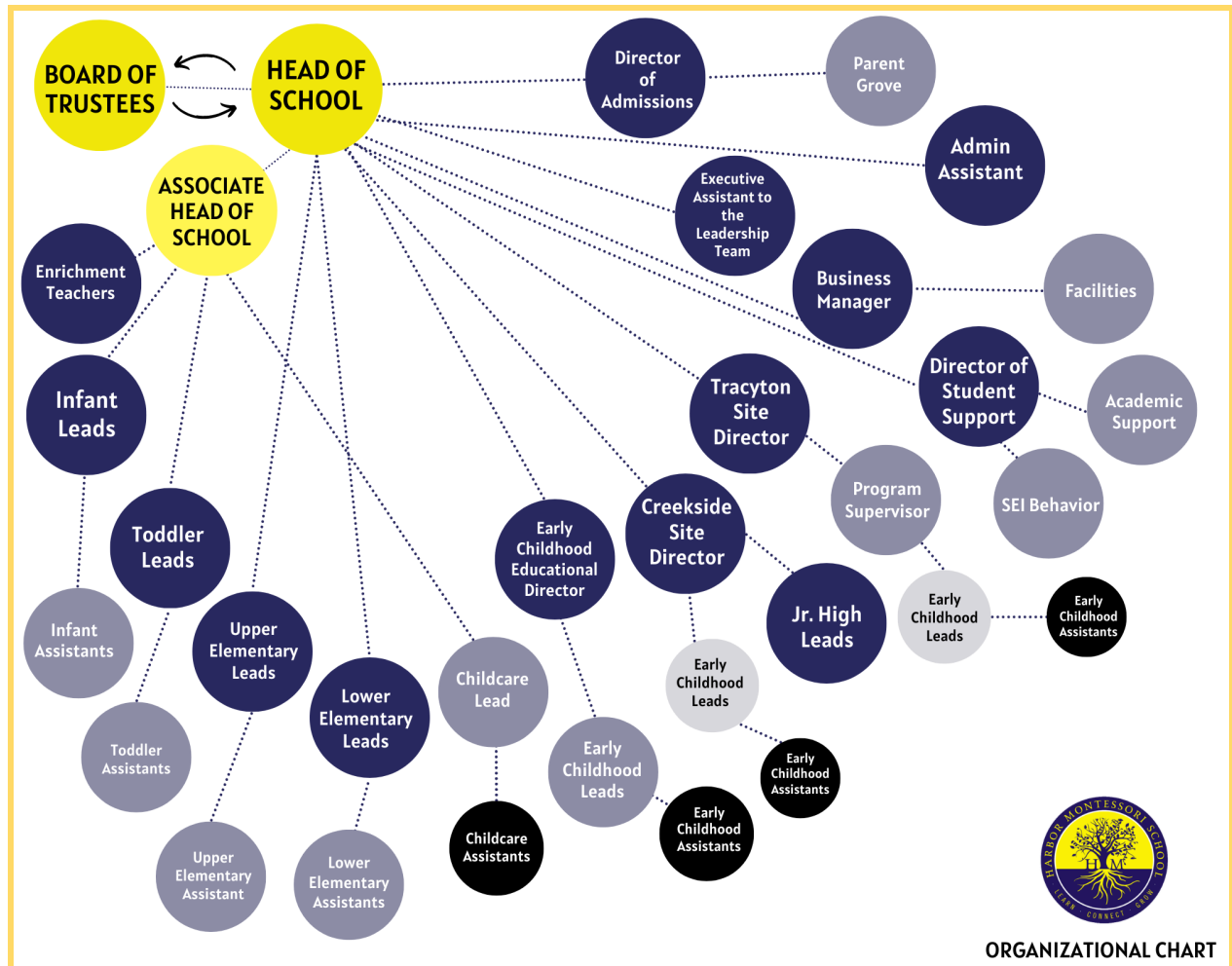
The Montessori educator makes efforts to raise professional standards and conditions to attract persons worthy of trust to careers in Montessori education.

In fulfilling these goals, the educator—

1. shall extend just and equitable treatment to all members of the Montessori education profession;
2. shall represent his or her own professional qualification with clarity and true intent;
3. shall apply for, accept, offer, recommend, and assign professional positions and responsibilities on the basis of professional preparation and legal qualifications;
4. shall use honest and effective methods of administering duties, use of time, and conducting business.

*Adopted 1969, AMS Board of Directors. Expanded 1975. Updated 2008 and 2010.*

## Organizational Structure



### Communication

We recognize the value of parental support. Ongoing communication with your child's teacher is highly desirable and should be the principal vehicle for questions that may arise. Parent/Teacher conferences are scheduled twice a year for this purpose. However, parents are encouraged to communicate to the class teacher at any time they have a concern. Harbor Montessori School publishes a weekly update and monthly newsletter to keep parents informed of current activities at the school. HMS uses Brightwheel as a vehicle of communication, here you will find classroom news, all school information, sign-up sheets and photographs. Additionally, all head teachers have email addresses and are good about checking their emails. We ask that you do not text teachers on their personal home numbers. Texts can be sent via Brightwheel. Please note that during school hours, teachers will be focused on your children and will not be able to respond to texts right away. If you need to contact a teacher in real time, please call the main office at 253-851-5722.

## **Board of Trustees**

Harbor Montessori School is a non-profit corporation that is governed by a Board of Trustees.

### **The purpose of the Board of Trustees is to:**

- Support School Mission
- Identify, implement, and maintain a vision for the school.
- Formulate a long-term plan to reach this vision.
- Establish general policies and set goals to achieve the long-term plan.
- Set strategic direction of the school.
- Ensure the financial well-being of the School.
- Select an administrator to manage the school.

## **School Staff**

### **Administration**

The Head of School deals with policy implementation and is responsible for the management and operations of the school. The Head of School holds the importance of your child's safety and education at the forefront of all decision making. Additional administrative staff includes the Associate Head of School, The Early Childhood Program Director, the Executive Assistant to the Leadership Team, the Administrative Assistant, the Director of Admissions, the Director of Development and Student Support, the Business Manager and the Assistant to the Business Manager.

### **Teaching Staff**

The school is staffed according to licensing regulations from the Washington State Department of Children, Youth, and Families, the Washington State Department of Education, and follows the guidelines of the American Montessori Society. Our teachers are highly dedicated, specially trained, and passionate about teaching and learning.

## **Administrative and Teaching Staff 2023-2024 Academic Year**

### **Administration**

Aimee Allen, M. ed., Head of School  
Master of Education with Concentration in  
Montessori grades 1-6, Endicott College, Beverly Ma  
AMS certification Elementary ages 6-9  
AMS Administrator's certification Head of School  
WA State Residency Certificate, Elementary K-8 Endorsement  
BA Sociology & Elementary Education, University of Massachusetts, Amherst MA

Jennifer Mason, Associate Head of School  
M.Ed. with Concentration in Montessori ages 2 1/2 - 6, Loyola University Maryland, Baltimore, MD  
AMI diploma, Montessori Northwest, Portland, OR  
BA History, University of Washington

Carrie Butler, Early Childhood Program Director  
BA Education, The Evergreen State College, WA  
MEIPN/AMS Early Childhood Montessori Certificate  
MEIPN/AMS Elementary I Montessori Certificate

\*AMS American Montessori Society  
\*MACTE Montessori Accreditation  
Council for Teacher Education  
\*MEIPN Montessori Education  
Institute of the Pacific Northwest  
\*AMI Association Montessori  
International

Brittany Cummings, Executive Assistant to the Leadership Team  
BA Elementary Education, Central Washington University

Adena Himmelstein, Business Manager  
BA Business Administration, Washington State University

Nikki Hemphill, Director of Admissions

Rachel Lezcano, Administrative Assistant, Summer Program Coordinator

Lisa Derouin, Site Director, Tracyton Campus

Elise Maupin, Site Director, Creekside Campus  
AMI Certification of Adolescent Studies, Ohio  
B.A. in Ethno-Environmental Journalism, Spanish minor, Western Washington University

Jenna Brasch, Director of Development and Student Support  
BA University of Washington, Tacoma WA  
MEIPN/AMS Elementary I & II Montessori Certificates  
MIE/MACAR Montessori Inclusion Endorsement (in progress)

Corey Peterson - Assistant to the Business Manager  
BA Math and Fine Arts Washington State University

### **Teaching Staff**

April Crichfield, Infant Teacher  
MEIPN/AMS Infant/Toddler Montessori Certificate

Marisin Wissman, Toddler Teacher

Brenda Ruiz, Toddler Teacher  
CGMS/MACTE Credential in progress

Jeanie Bree  
BA, Family & Consumer Science, Illinois State University  
MACTE Early Childhood Montessori Certificate, Spring Valley Montessori, Wa

Kelsey Getman, Early Childhood Teacher  
MEIPN/AMS Infant/Toddler Montessori Certificate  
MEIPN/AMS Early Childhood Montessori Certificate

Melissa Megee, Early Childhood Teacher  
AAS ECE, Olympic College, WA  
BA, The Evergreen State College, WA  
MEIPN/AMS Early Childhood Montessori Certificate

Cheyenne Wahto, Early Childhood Teacher  
MEIPN/AMS Early Childhood Montessori Certificate

Mehrnaz Fardi, Lower Elementary Teacher  
BA History, London University, England  
Diploma in Montessori Education, St. Nicholas Montessori Teacher Training Ctr., London, England  
AMI Elementary Teacher Training Certificate, Spring Valley Montessori, WA

Nadine Peacock, Lower Elementary Teacher  
BA Humanities, University of Texas, TX  
MEIPN/AMS Infant/Toddler Montessori Certificate  
MEIPN/AMS Elementary I Montessori Certificate

Gail Pederson, Upper Elementary Teacher  
BS Business Administration, Cal Poly, CA  
K-8 Teaching Certificate, San Jose State University, CA  
MEIPN/AMS Elementary I & II Montessori Certificates

Saralee Broback, Upper Elementary Teacher  
MEIPN/AMS Elementary I Montessori Certificate

### **Support Staff**

Sydney Burns - Infant Assistant  
Abby Reville - Infant Assistant  
Brianna Schauer - Infant/ Toddler Floating Assistant  
Malina Dominguez - Toddler Assistant  
Kylie Carlson - Afternoon Toddler Assistant/ Early Childhood Assistant  
Julie Whitlow - Toddler Assistant and Morning Childcare  
Mallory Goddard - Early Childhood Assistant  
Kendra Hunsaker- Early Childhood Assistant  
Megan Varner - Early Childhood Assistant and Afternoon Childcare Lead  
MaryAnn Small - Early Childhood/Elementary Assistant  
Heidi Pavlu - Lower Elementary Assistant  
Carl Tweeten - Lower Elementary Assistant, enrichments, Afternoon Childcare  
Pamela Purdue - Art  
Alene Hochstetter - Music, Movement  
Mason Ward - Physical Education, Student Support  
Heather Wheeler - Student Academic and SEL Support  
Cami Mayon - Afternoon Childcare  
Sunny Derouin - Afternoon Childcare  
Kyleigh Derouin - Afternoon Childcare  
Brooklyn Bruno - Afternoon Childcare  
Kalaila Swift - Afternoon Childcare  
Natsumi Kawaa i - Floating Assistant/Japanese & Spanish/Afternoon Childcare  
Michael Allen - Facilities Manager

## Admin team directory

Matter Related to	First Contact	Other Resources
Admissions Policies	Nikki	handbooks
After school Studio Programs	Rachel	Brightwheel
Annual Fund	Nikki	Aimee, Brittany
Auction	Jenna	Jennifer
Billing	Adena	parent handbook
Board of Trustees	Aimee	Wendy Holt-Board Chair
Brightwheel	Rachel	Brittany
School event Calendar	Rachel	website
Child Development	Classroom teacher	Aimee
Childcare- billing, costs, hours	Adena	parent handbook/website
Childcare- programming	Megan	Jennifer
COVID Response	Rachel	Aimee
COVID policy	Website	Rachel/Aimee
DCYF/OSPI	Aimee	Adena
Developmental Screenings	Classroom teachers	Carrie and Jennifer
Educational /Academic concerns infant/toddler	Classroom teachers	Jennifer
Educational /Academic concerns early childhood	Classroom teachers	Carrie
Educational /Academic concerns infant/toddler	Classroom teachers	Aimee
Field Trips	Classroom teacher	Rachel
Financial Aid	Adena	Aimee
Grievances-Aimee	Aimee	Wendy Holt - board chair, handbook
Grievances-faculty, staff, parent	Person involved	Aimee, handbook
HMS Policies	Parent handbook	Aimee, Board of Trustees
Illness policy	Parent handbook	Rachel
Marketing Events	Jenna	Nikki
Montessori Education	Classroom teacher	Aimee, Jennifer, Carrie
New Family Questions	Classroom teacher, Nikki	Administrative Team
Program transition	Classroom teacher	Nikki, parent handbook
Programming & Enrichments	Aimee	Classroom teachers
Prospective Families	Nikki	Aimee
Security-earthquake, fire, lockdown	Rachel	Emergency procedure book

Social media	Nikki	Aimee
Student Progress-inf/todd	Classroom teacher	Jennifer
Student Progress-EC	Classroom teacher	Carrie
Student Progress-elem	Classroom teacher	Aimee
Student Records	Rachel	Nikki
Teacher qualifications	Parent handbook	Lobby
Transparent Classroom	Rachel	T.C. website
Tuition & fees questions	Adena	website, parent handbook
Volunteer opportunities	Room Parent	Admin team
Emergency Kits	Rachel	Aimee
Summer Program	Rachel	Aimee
Re-Enrollment	Nikki	Admin Team
All other questions	Aimee/ Jennifer	handbook, Admin team

## **Admissions Policy**

Harbor Montessori School (HMS) admits students without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national and ethnic origin, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, genetic information or any other characteristic or status protected by law to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally made available to students in the school. It does not discriminate in administration of its educational policies, admission policies, and school-administered programs. HMS strives to admit families who align well with our school mission statement:

HMS is dedicated to nurturing the whole child through intentional academic guidance, purposeful learning environments, and peace-minded community support.

## **Wait Pool Policy**

A wait pool is a group of highly qualified, mission aligned families seeking admission at HMS. While wait lists are thought of as a vertical, ranking system based on “first come, first served”, our wait pool is a horizontal “pool” in which we determine admission by the following policy:

### **Wait Pool Policy**

In the case that the program or classroom that you are applying to is full, you will be placed in our wait pool. Moving off the wait pool will be determined by open availability within the program or classroom AND the following considerations:

1. Is the parent/guardian of the child currently working at HMS (STAFF)
2. Does the child have any current siblings attending HMS (CURRENT FAMILY)
3. Has your family ever been enrolled at HMS (ALUMNI FAMILY)
4. Does your family have any previous Montessori experience (MONT. EXP.)
5. Does the family align well with the mission of HMS (PROSPECTIVE FAMILY)

Families on the wait pool will be communicated with on a quarterly basis to confirm their wait pool status.

**School Tours & Observations of the school. Prospective Elementary and Junior high students will be invited to spend three days with their potential class, during which time their skills are assessed and their questions about the program are answered. Please reach out to Nikki Hemphill, Director of Admissions for**

Prior to securing a wait pool spot, we ask that parents attend an informational meeting to learn more about the Montessori method and about HMS. During this meeting you will receive a tour **more information.**

**Applications**

If there is wait pool availability, we welcome prospective families to complete an electronic application. A one-time, non-refundable \$50.00 application fee applies. If a child will be applying for Lower Elementary, Upper Elementary or Junior High, they will also be required to complete a student questionnaire.

**Trial Period**

Once an application for enrollment has been received by the office, a new student trial period will be scheduled if the new student will be in one of the following programs: Lower Elementary, Upper Elementary, or Junior High. \*Please note that prospective Early Childhood students need to be able to use the restroom independently before admittance.\*

- The Lower Elementary, Upper Elementary, & Junior High trial period will last at least three full school days or longer if determined necessary by the administrative and teaching team. Trial periods for these programs run from 8:30AM – 3:30PM.

**Acceptance**

Upon completion of a successful trial period, an offer of acceptance will be made to prospective families by our Director of Admissions. At this time, families will receive the following in order to finalize enrollment with HMS:

1. Registration form
2. Enrollment & Tuition Agreement
3. Required annual forms (Immunization Forms, Parent Handbook Acknowledgement, Emergency Preparedness Plan Acknowledgement, COVID 19 Acknowledgement of Risk, etc.)
4. Other relevant student information (i.e. transfer of student records, student information form, immunization form to be completed by parents/guardians, etc.)

Once these forms are completed and turned into our office along with a non-refundable registration fee, the student's placement is secured for the current school year.

**Transitioning Students for Infants into Toddler & Toddler into Early Childhood**

Students who are of age AND are developmentally ready will transition between the above listed programs during the following months of the year:

- September, January, & June



- April transitions will happen on a case-by-case basis

The transition process is as follows:

1. Head teacher(s) will determine when a student is ready to transition.
2. Head teacher(s) will communicate an anticipated transition month to the Admissions Director and families.
3. The Admissions Director will then communicate this transition to the student's future teacher(s).
4. Informational meetings for parents of transitioning toddlers will occur in December and May.

### **Classroom requests and changes**

The administrative team at HMS puts great care into the design of every classroom. We strive to create a classroom community that is balanced in age, personality, and level of independence. We are fortunate to have excellent teachers and assistants at HMS and we trust them to offer your child an individualized experience within their classroom community. Our intention is to have a child in the same classroom for the duration of their age level cycle (typically three years). We do this for many reasons including the opportunity for the child to:

- Have ownership and responsibility of their space
- Create meaningful relationships with the teacher
- Have ample time to fully explore the classroom environment
- Feel a sense of security and belonging that is unique to the three year age groupings
- Have a chance to be the youngest, middle, and oldest in a family-like model.

Because of all of the factors listed above, we do not take requests regarding classroom placement. Further, it is extremely rare for a child to change classrooms during an age level cycle. If you have a concern about your child's classroom, please feel free to contact Aimee to discuss options.

## **Tuition and Payments**

Payment Plan One	Pay these charges in full by June 30, 2023 Two months of the annual tuition is nonrefundable	3 % discount *No discount if awarded financial aid
Payment Plan Two	Two payments of _____ each by June 30th and December 1st Two months of the annual tuition is nonrefundable	1.5% discount will be given for this semi-annual payment *No discount if awarded financial aid

Payment Plan Three	Ten installment payments of _____each with nonrefundable two months due in advance (1 payment due June 1st to cover June 2024, 1 payment due July 1st to cover September 2023) . Remaining payments to be paid monthly October-May.  Two months of the annual tuition is nonrefundable	No discount for this plan
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Please note that for all payment plans, two months of annual tuition is nonrefundable.

**PAST DUE ACCOUNTS**

Harbor Montessori School is a private, non-profit educational institution. Enrollment and your tuition contract are based on a ten-month academic year for Early Childhood and up, a twelve-month year for Toddler, and 10 consecutive months followed by month to month for Infant programs. When you enroll your child(ren), you are enrolled for the entire period listed above and are responsible for the entire tuition associated with the program(s) in which your child is enrolled..

Payments are due on the first day of each month. A late charge of \$50.00 will be charged on any payment due that is not made by the 30<sup>th</sup> of the month. A \$50.00 fee will be charged for all returned NSF checks. In the event of default (default being 60 days past due), by committing to this agreement, you agree to pay all costs of collection, including collection agency fees, attorneys' fees, and court costs.

**Should your account fall behind the following actions will be taken:**

20 days past due	Email reminder from the business office.
30 days past due	\$50 fee added to account and written notification of past due account.
60 days or \$3000 past due	Written notification of the past due account is sent to the account holder. A payment plan must be established by the account holder with the school business office. A monthly interest of 6% APR will be assessed on the account balance on the 10th of the month beginning 30 days after the date when payment was due.
No payment plan established after 60 days and/or breach of payment plan	Will result in the dismissal of your student(s) and your account will be turned over to collections.

Any and all account balances owed to HMS for any reason, including but not limited to amounts assessed in lieu of volunteer hours, must be paid in full by June 14, 2024. If such balances are not so paid, the affected student and any sibling thereof will not be permitted to enroll for the following school year until the balance is paid.

## **FINANCIAL AID**

HMS offers financial aid to qualified students based on school policies, demonstrated financial need, and the availability of funds. A third-party system is used to make recommendations based on information submitted by families. HMS awards up to 65% per child in tuition assistance for families who qualify.

New families must submit an admissions application and \$50 nonrefundable application fee to be eligible to apply for financial assistance. Financial aid applications for the following school year open in January and close in March. If there are any financial aid funds left in the budget after all awards are made, financial aid will be awarded to qualifying families on a first come, first served basis.

Families must be current on their accounts to receive financial aid. However, families who have delinquent accounts and demonstrate circumstances of hardship and/or acute life changing events may (re) apply for financial assistance. Families who receive financial aid and have a past due account must establish and adhere to a written payment plan. If the account holder does not fulfill the written payment plan, financial aid will be revoked and the account holder will not be eligible to apply for financial aid in the future.

## **ILLNESS/VACATION/HOLIDAY**

There are no credits or refunds on tuition for any absences, which include, but are not limited to, illness or vacations. Further, HMS does not credit families for school holiday closures. In the event of an emergency closure, such as snow days, natural disasters, pandemics or other acts of God, war, terrorism, order of public official or other similar events, HMS will not credit or refund tuition unless the closure goes beyond ten school days, including non-consecutive days, for the same event.

## **PARTIAL RECOMMENDED AND/OR MANDATED CLOSURES**

In the event that the Governor, Department of Children, Youth, and Families, the Washington State Board of Education, the Office of Superintendent of Public Schools, Department of Health and/or any other official recommends or mandates a partial school closure due to an emergency, Harbor Montessori School will investigate whether or not the rest of the school can safely remain open. Possible options would include, but are not limited to, smaller class size, modified or staggered schedules, and/or shorter school days. Should Harbor Montessori implement these measures, families in these open programs are still obligated to pay 100% of their child's tuition during this time.

## **EXTENDED EMERGENCY CLOSURES (beyond ten school days)**

In the event that the school or a classroom in the school should close due to an emergency for more than ten accrued school days, including non-consecutive days for the same event, the following discounts will be applied to your account:

- Infant & Toddler 60% discount per month after the initial ten accrued school closure days, while school is closed. For example, if school is closed on January 29-Feb 3, only one month's tuition will be discounted.

- Early Childhood/Primary 25% discount per month after the initial ten accrued school closure days, while school is closed. For example, if school is closed on January 29-Feb 3, only one month's tuition will be discounted.
- Elementary and Junior High no discount. Students will immediately switch to remote learning.
- Unlimited, Before and After School Care no charge after the initial ten accrued school closure days, while school is closed.

## **NEW STUDENT PROBATION**

While most children acclimate to the Montessori classroom within eight weeks, occasionally we have a child who would benefit from a different environment. During the first eight-week period teachers will observe the child to make sure our program is a good fit. If teachers, parents, and the Head of School mutually agree that the child would benefit from a different learning environment, the family will be released from their enrollment agreement without incurring additional charges. The family will not receive a refund of the first 1/10<sup>th</sup> payment, however the thirty day notice fee listed in the withdrawal section of the Tuition and Fees Agreement will be waived, and the second 1/10<sup>th</sup> tuition payment (June of academic year) will be refunded.

**I understand the HMS new student probation period policy as stated above \_\_\_\_\_INITIAL**

## **WITHDRAWAL**

Your child's educational tuition and fees are based on an annual schedule. By committing to this agreement, you have committed to paying the tuition and fees listed on this agreement in their entirety. We realize that sometimes circumstances arise that are outside of a family's control. In this case, HMS will work with you to determine if withdrawing from the program before the end of the contract period is beneficial and mutually agreeable between both parties. Should you need to withdraw, you must submit notice in writing, and it must be received by Harbor Montessori School 30 days before withdrawing your child. Tuition payments incurred or paid before the withdrawal date are not refundable. Tuition payments falling due within the thirty-day written notice period must also be paid. You will not be responsible for any additional payments (under the payment plan), which are due past the expiration of those 30 days. If you withdraw your child without 30 days written notice, you are obligated to pay any tuition payments that would normally be due during the course of the 30 days after you withdraw your child. The 2/10<sup>th</sup> non-refundable, prepaid tuition cannot be applied to tuition owed within the 30-day withdrawal notice and will not be refunded.

I understand and accept the terms of the HMS withdrawal policy.

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**Parent/Guardian Signature** \_\_\_\_\_

If Harbor Montessori School requests a student to leave because of violent, inappropriate, or hazardous behavior, HMS reserves the right to collect any unpaid balance including, but not limited to, thirty days' worth of tuition for the upcoming month.

## **HOURLY CHILDCARE**

HMS offers drop-in childcare to HMS students only, based on availability. HMS charges \$13.30 per hour for any before school and/or after school childcare not provided for under a pre-paid childcare agreement. Any portion of an hour used is charged as an entire hour. I agree to pay these charges should I use these services.

HMS charges \$13.30 per hour for childcare during most school vacations or holidays. I understand that childcare for these days is based upon a reservation system so that HMS can plan staffing based upon need. As such, I agree to reserve my childcare needs in advance of these days, and to pay the hourly rate for the amount of time I **reserved, even if not used**. I understand that the hourly childcare charges on school closure days do not apply to me if I have agreed to enroll my child in the unlimited childcare program.

## **Academic Procedures**

### **Developmental Screenings**

All students ages 0-5 will receive the CDC Developmental Screening within 90 days of enrollment. HMS teachers are required to share the screening with you at the October conference or within 30 days of the screening.

### **Serving Students with Learning, Developmental or Behavioral Differences**

When working with children who are experiencing difficulty academically, emotionally, behaviorally, or socially, it is the teacher's duty to make reasonable adjustments and accommodations for the child within the mission of the school and the teacher's level of education and expertise. If these adjustments do not seem to help the child on their journey to independence and success, and/or create an ongoing negative impact on the rest of the classroom community, parents will be contacted. The parents will be asked to partner with teachers to help find outside resources to continue to support the student. This can only be successful if everyone works as a team.

HMS is committed to working with our children and families to continue to have the child in our classroom community. In rare cases it may be determined that a student would be best served in another environment. In these cases the school will be clear and compassionate with families and will do what we can to help the child transition.

### **Service Animals**

In accordance with state and federal law, Harbor Montessori School must allow a student with a disability to bring a service animal to school if having the animal at school helps expand their independence. HMS must permit the animals to have appropriate access to facilities along with the student. The state of Washington limits service animals to dogs and miniature horses only. Service animals are not required to wear a vest or have any other identifying markers, though it is encouraged. There is no restriction on the breed or size of service dogs.

Service animals must be under the control of the handler at all times. In most instances, the handler will be the individual with a disability. HMS employees may need to provide some assistance to enable a particular student to handle his or her service animal. HMS staff will need to clean up after the service animal if the student is unable to do so. Service animals can roam

freely in the classroom unless this is a distraction to the rest of the class, however the service animal must be harnessed, leashed, or tethered while in public places such as school hallways and the playground unless these devices interfere with the service animal's work or the person's disability prevents use of these devices. In that case, the person must use voice, signal, or other effective means to maintain control of the animal.

If the service animal is behaving in an unsafe or aggressive way HMS reserves the right to call the student's parent and send the animal home. The ADA does not consider allergies or fears as valid reasons to exclude a service animal.

In accordance with federal law, Harbor Montessori School will not request proof of certification for the animal as a service animal, though it is encouraged that families share that information voluntarily. However, all service animals must have proof of vaccination and proof that they are free of parasites.

**Service animals are different from therapy animals. Harbor Montessori School does not allow students to bring therapy animals to school regularly. This policy is reviewed annually.**

### **Conferences and Reports**

Parent/Teacher conferences are scheduled twice a year. These are in October and February. A written report will be sent home in February and June. In addition to these, parents or teachers are urged to call for conferences as the need arises. Teachers use an online recordkeeping program called Transparent Classroom; for more information on this program, please ask your classroom teacher or Aimee.

### **Homework**

Homework is gradually introduced to the children in the Elementary Classes as a preparation for home study in their future education careers. It is used primarily to promote independent work habits, to use skills they are establishing, and to memorize material to be used later in class.

For children to get the full value from homework, parents must help create the proper conditions and atmosphere for concentration and study. A quiet room in the house where other people in the family are also reading or studying is ideal.

For more on homework at the Junior High Level, please see the Junior High Handbook section on page 55.

### **Tutoring**

The school will recommend certain students have extra sessions with our academic support teacher. Additionally, the school will alert the parents if we feel outside tutoring is necessary. The school also provides guidance as to what resources are available to children with special needs.

## **School Schedule**

### **Infant/Toddler Hours for drop-off and pick-up**

Drop Off	7:30-9:00
Full Day Infant/Toddler Pick Up	3:00-5:30*

\*We are required by law to close the doors to our Infant and Toddler programs exactly ten hours from the time we open the doors. Parents must have their children out of the classrooms at that

time. Nursing mothers are welcome to feed their babies in Aimee's office at the end of the day, as long as there is still HMS staff on campus. If students are not signed out and have not **exited their classrooms by 5:30pm, the late charge is \$5.00 per minute.** This policy also applies to all children who are not picked up by noon on noon dismissal days.

**Early Childhood Elementary & Junior High Grace Period for drop-off and pick-up**

Before School Childcare	7:00 – 8:30
Junior High Bus Pick up	8:00-8:15
Elementary	8:30-8:45
Early Childhood Drop Off	8:45-9:00
Full Day Early Childhood Pick Up	3:00-3:15
Elementary	3:15-3:30
Junior High Pick Up	3:30-3:45
Afternoon Childcare Pick Up	3:30-5:30
Due to parking constraints we highly encourage elementary families to wait until 3:15 before arriving on campus	

**School Hours**

Before School Childcare (Early Childhood & up)	7:00 – 8:30
Early Childhood	9:00 - 3:00
Elementary - Grades 1-6	8:30 - 3:15
After School Childcare	3:15 - 5:30*
School Office Hours	8:00 - 4:00

\*Children are to be picked up by 5:30p.m. A fifteen minute grace period will be granted to 5:45p.m. If students are not signed out and have not **exited the building by 5:45pm,** the late charge is **\$5.00** per minute. This policy also applies to children who are not picked up by noon on noon dismissal days.

**Montessori Curriculum**

**Overview**

Harbor Montessori School is dedicated to nurturing the whole child through intentional academic guidance, purposeful learning environments, and peace-minded community support. Our purpose at HMS is to foster independence and embrace the innate curiosity in every child. This is done in a nurturing environment using a traditional Montessori curriculum combined with current best practices in education.

Each trained Montessori teacher brings to the classroom an understanding of child development, of varying abilities, and learning styles. The teachers at HMS embrace freedom and curiosity and are committed to delivering a deep and well rounded education that relies heavily on hands-on learning, touching, doing, and questioning.

Montessori education is time-tested and research proven. We know that for most parents it is very different from their own schooling experience. Harbor Montessori School is proud to be an accredited Montessori program for students aged eight weeks to 15 years old. HMS empowers students to find their voice, interests, and passion. This is done by honoring the child's interests, preparing the academic, social, and emotional environments, and making sure that students' needs are met. At Harbor Montessori School we embrace the American Montessori Society's eight qualities for student learners. They are as follows:

- Independence
- Confidence and Competence
- Autonomy
- Intrinsic Motivation
- Social Responsibility
- Academic Preparation
- Spiritual Awareness/Cosmic Education
- Global Citizenship

These eight qualities manifest at each age level, though they may look different depending on each developmental level. You will see these qualities referenced in our outcomes section of the curriculum document.

At the Infant and Toddler level (ages 0-3) our curriculum focuses on independence and the development of self. At the Early Childhood Level (ages 3-6) the curriculum focuses on the child's order, concentration, coordination and continued independence. Students are developing their academic interests and are learning about the world around them. They are also learning to read, write and do more complex mathematics. Maria Montessori referred to the Elementary Levels as the Age of Imagination. The curriculum centers on Cosmic Education which are stories and lessons that revolve around the interconnectedness of all things. The Lower Elementary Program (ages 6-9) focuses on Maria Montessori's Five Great Lessons. The Upper Elementary Program (ages 9-12) uses these Great Lessons as a springboard into areas of world history and science. The Junior High Program (ages 12-15) strives for the valorization of each student. Students become active citizens in and out of the classroom. The curriculum at this age is both rigorous and vigorous and reaches far beyond academics to engage the rapidly changing adolescent brain.

### **The Planes of Development**

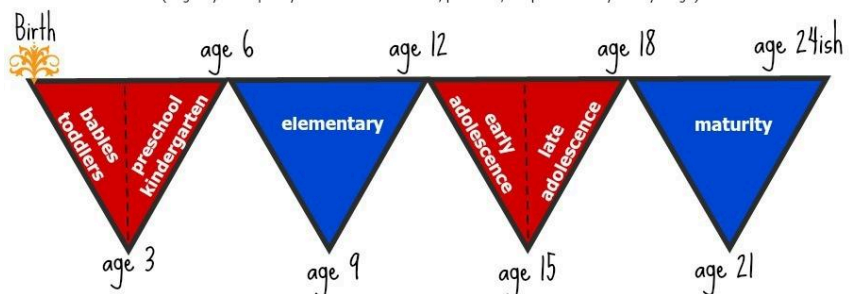
The Planes of Development is the framework upon which Montessori built her vision of child development. This theory explores human development from birth until maturity at around age 24\*. The Planes of Development are defined by common characteristics of each age group in all aspects of their development--emotional, social, academic, physical and spiritual. The Montessori curriculum is based on these developmental planes.

Chart Courtesy of  
Child of the Redwoods

ChildoftheRedwoods.com

## **The Planes of Development The Constructive Rhythm of Life**

(Originally developed by Maria Montessori in 1951, presented/interpreted here by Aubrey Hargis)



This is the absorbent mind, A period of calmness and Another period of The last passage into



## **The Five Great Lessons**

The Five Great Lessons--The Birth of the Universe, The Coming of Life on Earth, The Coming of Humans, The Coming of Language and The Coming of Math and Science--were designed by Maria Montessori, her son Mario and several of their colleagues to capture the imagination of the Elementary child. Developmentally these children are looking for answers to the questions "Who am I?" and "How do I belong?" The lessons provide an umbrella that allows students to see the interrelationships of the content areas. The lessons are delivered using stories and timelines in a big picture overview. Once these lessons are given students are introduced to increasing levels of detail. The teacher's role is to provide the stories and ignite the spark of interest in the child. The students then find their areas of interest and research further. While the lessons are designed to capture a sense of wonder for children of all backgrounds, they do focus on science and evolution. To find out more, please ask one of our elementary teachers!

## **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

In order to nurture the whole child and adolescent it is important that we give them age-appropriate opportunities to understand what is going on in the world. Montessori education has always emphasized peace and justice with the ultimate goals being to:

1. Create a sense of belonging for every child/adolescent.
2. Build understanding and learn from one another: moving toward equity and inclusion, not division.
3. Help create a more peaceful and just world.

<b>What we do</b>	<b>What we don't do</b>
Embrace all families and have developmentally appropriate conversations about our world. This may include a myriad of topics including, but not limited to race, gender, ability, culture, civics, etc.	Blame, shame, or guilt children. Put our personal politics on the child. Avoid topics because they are uncomfortable.
Have books, art, and discussions that allow students to have windows and mirrors into the world.	Tell families or students they can't bring in a particular book or beloved author.
Look at our curriculum and materials and update anything that harmfully perpetuates stereotypes.	Introduce a new curriculum without it being approved. New curriculum must be aligned with Montessori education.

Look at many reputable sources to understand events in science and history. Tell stories from multiple perspectives.	Allow students to opt out of parts of our curriculum.
Allow students to ask questions and talk about topics that they feel passionately about.	Tell children what to think.
Understand that having families with varied backgrounds, experiences, politics, etc only makes our community richer.	Judge or exclude families.
Encourage confidence, competence, and individuality in a connected community.	Encourage conformity.
Create an environment where all children feel welcome and included.	Ignore important facets of a child's identity and culture.

## Sexual Health Education

At Harbor Montessori School we believe that educating the whole child includes learning about the human body and healthy relationships. For students in grades 4-9 we have a sexual health curriculum that is delivered in the spring, every two years. In the Upper Elementary grades this is led by a healthcare professional, most often a certified nurse midwife. In the Junior High classroom this is led by the classroom teachers. A preview of the curriculum is sent out to parents in early spring.

## General Policies and Procedures

### Arrival and Dismissal-Early Childhood-Junior High

**Please follow the "in" and "out" arrows when entering and exiting the ONE-WAY parking lot.**

HMS staff will meet families in the parking lot and will escort your child to class. Please wait for a staff member to approach your car and please **make sure your child exits on the passenger side of the vehicle.** If you need to park and come into the office for any reason, please arrange that in advance with a member of the admin team. Also, drivers need to use extreme caution when backing up and parking.

Upon arrival, if the parking lot is full, please wait on the right side of 54th St. Please do not block the intersection and avoid blocking Comte Drive.

Please drop off sometime within the ten minute window for your child's program. Younger siblings in Early Childhood-Elementary are welcome to be dropped off during the older sibling's drop off time without a childcare charge:

Junior High riding in the van=8:15am

Elementary=8:30-8:45

Early Childhood=8:45-9:05

Dismissal will happen at different outdoor locations when weather allows. In inclement weather students will be picked up outside of their classrooms.

Pick up times:

Early Childhood=3:00-3:15

Elementary=3:15-3:30

Junior High=3:30-3:45 (arriving from van. If picking up directly at Creekside please do so between 3:15-3:30)

### **Arrival and Dismissal-Infant and Toddler**

Infants and toddlers should be dropped off and picked up outside their classrooms. The infant classroom can be accessed through the greenhouse on the left side of Building B. The infant and toddler classroom hours are 7:30-5:30 M-F.

### **Locked Campus**

Harbor Montessori School is a locked campus. Teachers are required to carry their key with them from building to building. The main building will be unlocked, but supervised, during drop off and pick up only. It will be locked at all other times. Anyone who needs access to buildings B and C must check in at the office. Staff, substitutes and visitors will all carry badges when on campus.

### **Signing in & out Procedures**

Parents of children in infant-elementary are required by state law (WAC 170-295-7030) to sign their complete full legal signature or record the child's attendance using an electronic system when they bring and pick-up their children. At HMS, we ask that you sign your child in and out via Brightwheel. We are offering a touchless sign in system. This will allow parents to scan a QR Code at drop off and pick up. Harbor Montessori can be fined by the state of Washington a \$250 fee per day for each incomplete signature, of which Harbor Montessori will charge to the parent. We also have an iPad available to enter your Brightwheel code if you do not have your cell phone. All approved pick persons will also need to sign up the child(ren) using Brightwheel.

### **Observation**

Parents are welcome to observe the children at school, provided that the observation does not disrupt the children's activities. Parents of children ages 0-5 are asked to allow at least six weeks adjustment time before observing newly enrolled students. Observation appointments may be scheduled by calling the school office.

### **Separation Anxiety**

Sometimes children and/or parents suffer an attack of separation anxiety at the time children enter school. In this case, a calm, pleasant and prompt exit on the part of the parent, leaving the child in the care of a reassuring staff member, will be the most helpful. **Lengthy goodbyes usually only make the situation worse.** You are welcome to call the office and check in on your child after you have left. Thank you for helping us create a happy and successful school experience for your child.

### **Holiday & Vacation Closures**

Please consult the school calendar for holiday school closures. Childcare will be provided during some school closures including parent teacher conferences and spring break. An additional fee will be charged for this service.

### **Attendance**

Parents of all children infant-Junior high are asked to notify the school when a child will be absent from school. Communicable diseases must be reported to the school immediately, as mandated by Washington State Law.

Please be sure your child is at school on time. Excessive tardiness may be grounds for dismissal at the discretion of the administrator.

Kindergarten-Junior High attendance is mandatory, in accordance with the WA State Board of Education attendance policies.

Parents who choose to un-enroll their child are still bound to the HMS withdrawal policy and are legally obligated to enroll their child in an alternative school in accordance with WA State Attendance requirements.

At the Elementary and Junior High levels, excessive absences may result in failure to progress to the next grade level. If your child's attendance is a concern the following steps will be taken:

1. The administrative team will notify parents/guardians when a student has missed seven days of school per semester (without a doctor's note).
2. When a student has missed ten days of school the Head of School will call a conference with parents to discuss the reasons for absence.
3. Students who are absent for ten or more days may be referred to an outside tutor to help catch up with missed work.
4. Excessive absences and tardiness may be grounds for repeating a grade or for dismissal from the program.
5. Additional steps may be taken, please see Truancy, below

### **Truancy**

Students in kindergarten-Junior High School are expected to attend school daily. Excessive tardiness and unexcused absences will be addressed in a parent/administrator meeting. If there is little to no improvement the school will take corrective action which may include reporting to the Community Engagement Board and/or family court.

Parents who choose to un-enroll their child are still bound to the HMS withdrawal policy and are legally obligated to enroll their child in an alternative school in accordance with WA State Attendance requirements.

## **Illness**

A child exhibiting signs of illness will be isolated. The parents or another authorized person will be called to pick up the sick child **immediately**. No child can be released to a person other than a parent or guardian without written permission. Parents are asked to keep these authorization permissions updated. We also ask that you keep all contact information current, as well as any authorized adults' contact information on your approved pick-up list. If the immediate parent or guardian cannot be reached after 30 minutes we will begin to call the approved pick-up list to have the child picked up.

An ill child must be sent home if:

- (a) The illness or condition prevents the child from participating in normal activities;
  - (b) The illness or condition requires more care and attention than the teacher can give;
  - (c) The required amount of care for the ill child compromises or places at risk the health and safety of other children in care; or
  - (d) There is a risk that the child's illness or condition will spread to other children or individuals.
- Unless covered by an individual care plan or protected by the ADA, an ill child must be sent home or isolated from children in care if they have:

- A fever 101 degrees Fahrenheit by any method, and behavior change or other signs and symptoms of illness (including sore throat, earache, headache, rash, vomiting, diarrhea);
- Vomiting within the past twenty-four hours.
- Diarrhea where stool frequency exceeds two stools above normal per twenty-four hours for that child or whose stool contains more than a drop of blood or mucus.
- A rash not associated with heat, diapering, or an allergic reaction.
- Open sores or wounds discharging bodily fluids that cannot be adequately covered with a waterproof dressing or mouth sores with drooling.
- Lice, ringworm, or scabies. Individuals with head lice, ringworm, or scabies must be excluded from HMS and may return to school 24 hours after being treated.
- Children exhibiting signs of Hand Foot and Mouth Disease will be sent home. HMFD is easily spread with others. After contact with HMFD, children come down with symptoms in 3-6 days. Children can return to school 24 hours after the fever is gone and all blisters have scabbed over.
- Children exhibiting signs of Conjunctivitis (pink eye) will be sent home. Children can return to school with a doctor's note and 24 hours after beginning treatment.
- **Children exhibiting signs of COVID-19 will be sent home. Children with symptoms of COVID-19 will need to stay home and follow the guidance of Returning to School on our school website, <https://www.harbormontessori.org/covid>**

Outside playtime is a regular part of our daily schedule. Children well enough to be at school are considered well enough to play outside. It is important that children arrive at school dressed appropriately for the weather. Please provide a hat, mittens, boots and extra socks at school in addition to a supply of extra clothing.

## **Hygiene and Infection Control Practices**

The control of infection and spread of disease is of the utmost importance in any environment with children. Hand washing is the single most effective method of preventing the spread of contaminants and disease.

### **Staff and children will wash their hands:**

Before and after handling food

After using the bathroom

Before and after diaper changes  
After coming in from outside  
Before giving or receiving medication  
After coming into contact with bodily fluids  
After handling pets

Toys, laundry, counter tops, floors, tables, shelves, diaper changing tables, toilets and sinks are disinfected regularly with Clean Republic disinfectant cleaner.

### **HIV/AIDS/Hepatitis**

Every staff member is required to take a blood borne pathogens awareness course. Families are not required to inform schools of their child's diagnosis, and there may also be undiagnosed children in care. For that reason, staff members will treat all exposures to blood and bodily fluids with universal precautions including:

1. Using gloves or some other barrier when dealing with a bleeding wound.
2. Washing hands thoroughly after dealing with blood or bodily fluids, even if gloves were used.
3. Disposing of bloodied gloves, tissues, etc., by sealing in 2 plastic bags and placing in a waste receptacle outside the classroom.
4. Washing all contaminated cloth in hot water with bleach added.
5. Cleaning all exposed surfaces with a bleach solution.

In this way, the transmission of illness and infection is kept to a minimum..

### **Communicable Illnesses**

Please notify the school office of contraction of any communicable disease/virus as soon as possible, so that notice of possible exposure may be posted and sent to all parents. Contagious diseases and viruses include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Novel Coronavirus-19
- (b) Bacterial Meningitis
  - (i) Haemophilus influenzae invasive disease (excluding Otitis media)
  - (ii) Meningococcal
- (c) Diarrheal diseases due to or suspected to be caused by an infectious agent
  - (i) Cryptosporidiosis
  - (ii) Giardiasis
  - (iii) Hepatitis A
  - (iv) Salmonellosis
  - (v) Shigellosis
  - (vi) Shiga toxin-producing Escherichia coli (STEC)
- (d) Diseases spread through the air - Tuberculosis
- (e) Vaccine preventable diseases
  - (i) Chickenpox (Varicella)
  - (ii) Diphtheria
  - (iii) German measles (Rubella)
  - (iv) Measles (Rubeola)
  - (v) Mumps
  - (vi) Whooping cough (Pertussis)
- (F) Hand Mouth and Foot Disease

### **Health Records**

To comply with state requirements, all health records and other enrollment forms must be completed at the time of the child's entry. The Certificate of Immunization form needs to be complete and signed by the parent. These records and forms are kept in the school office and must be updated yearly. The State of Washington is no longer issuing philosophical/personal exemptions for the measles vaccine. Please be sure your child's vaccinations are up to date.

### **Required Immunizations**

According to the Washington Administrative Code WAC 246-105-030, any child attending school, preschool, or child care in Washington State is required by law to be fully immunized against the following diseases: Chickenpox (Varicella), Mumps Diphtheria Pneumococcal disease\*, German measles (Rubella), Polio (Poliomyelitis), Haemophilus influenzae type b disease (Hib)\*, Tetanus, Hepatitis B, Whooping cough (Pertussis), Measles (Rubeola)

\*required only for preschool and child care attendance

### **Medication**

Forms for dispensing medication are available in the office. All medication must be in the original prescription container. Children who require rescue medication such as an epipen or inhaler must have a full action plan from their doctor. For a sample of an action plan, please see Rachel. If possible, please administer medication at home.

An early learning provider must receive written authorization from a child's parent or guardian and health care provider with prescriptive authority prior to administering if the item does not include age, expiration date, dosage amount, and length of time to give the medication:

- (A) Vitamins;
- (B) Herbal supplements;
- (C) Fluoride supplements;
- (D) Homeopathic or naturopathic medication; and
- (E) Teething gel or tablets (**amber bead necklaces are prohibited**).

### **Non Medical items**

A parent or guardian must annually authorize an early learning provider to administer the following nonmedical items:

- (A) Diaper ointments (used as needed and according to manufacturer's instructions);
- (B) Sunscreen;
- (C) Lip balm or lotion;
- (D) Hand sanitizers or hand wipes with alcohol, which may be used only for children over twenty-four months old

### **Head Injuries/Concussion**

If a child hits their head at school, a staff member will call to notify a parent or guardian. If the injury is minor, staff will monitor the student for classic signs of concussion.

If a child is suspected of having a concussion, a parent/guardian will be required to pick the student up and must seek medical attention. Students will only be allowed back to school with a release to return from a medical professional. If a child loses consciousness at school, HMS will call 911 and then will immediately notify the parent.

**If a student receives a concussion outside of school (sports, at home, etc), parents must notify the school and must have a release to return to school from a medical professional.**

### **Emergency Procedures**

In case of emergency, the parents or other authorized person will be contacted for instructions. If no emergency instructions can be obtained, the child will be transported to the closest hospital and instructions and recommendations of the attending physician followed. Please turn your radio to either KOMO (AM 1000) or KIRO (AM 750) for emergency information in the event of a disaster. Also, the school will send a text or email from Brightwheel whenever it is practical to do so. Harbor Montessori School WILL call 911 in a medical emergency.

### **Fire and Earthquake Drills**

Fire drills are conducted at regular intervals; usually at least once a month. Each classroom has immediate access to the outside and the children are taught how to react in a fire drill. Earthquake drills are conducted quarterly. Students do not participate in lockdown or active shooter drills, however teachers and staff do practice for these unlikely events.

### **School Closure - Inclement Weather**

In the case of inclement weather, Harbor Montessori will send a message via Brightwheel regarding school delays, early dismissals, or closings. We will also post on our Facebook page, King5 and Q13 Fox News. We try our best to follow the Peninsula School District, however we do take into consideration that we have students and staff members traveling from places as distant as Bremerton, Federal Way, and Lakewood. Thank you!

### **Field Trips**

Montessori philosophy emphasizes the importance of “going-out” and having the world as a classroom. Students in the elementary and Junior High programs will go on field trips regularly. Written/digital permission from the parent is required for a student to participate. When shorter or individual field trips are taken, parents may be asked to participate as chaperones. HMS has two school vans which we take on trips. Depending on the size of the group parents may also be asked to drive. Liability and medical insurance must be carried by the driver and the vehicle must be in safe operating order. All volunteers must have submitted a Field Trip Chaperone Packet to the office prior to driving for a field trip and completed a background check through either DCYF or Washington State Police. When traveling in private vehicles **children may not ride in the front seat** and all children must be buckled in a seat belt and car seats/booster seats as required by state law. Private vehicle drivers must follow the same protocol as drivers of the school vans. Parents driving private vehicles must be “gassed up & ready to go” prior to loading children for field trips. For more information on school vans, please see below.

### **School Vans**

Harbor Montessori School owns two 12 passenger vans. Vans are driven by school employees. Any employee wishing to be a driver must give permission for HMS's insurance company to do a driver and background check. Students riding in vans must comply with Washington state law. Children less than 8 years old must be secured in some form of child safety system unless the child is 4 ft 9 in or taller and the seat belt fits correctly.

- Children less than 8 years old must be secured in some form of child safety system unless the child is 4 ft 9 in or taller and the seat belt fits correctly.
- Children older than 8 years old and taller than 4 ft 9 in must ride with a secure seat belt. If the seat belt does not fit correctly the child must remain in a child restraint regardless of height or weight
- Children under the age of 13 years old should ride in the backseat.



- Booster seats must be strapped in with a shoulder belt. Seats with five-point restraint system and anchor can use a lap belt.

There should be no stops between the school and the field trip destination except in an emergency situation or when pre-authorized by the Head of School and/or Summer Program Director.

School vans are regularly maintained.

## Lunch

Lunch time is from either 11:30am-12:00pm, 12:00pm-12:30pm or 12:30pm-1:00pm daily. Your child's teacher will let you know their classroom's specific schedule. Children are encouraged to serve and clean up at lunch time in order to promote independence and social skills. Children will be encouraged to eat, or at least taste, everything in their lunch.

### Food Policy

We are working to develop consciousness about good health habits in our students. We ask that you assist us by providing a lunch with a nutritional value that will support an afternoon of learning and growing. Specifically:

- Avoid most processed foods. These are usually sugary and salty and tend to be both calorie intensive and nutritionally lacking.
- Make sure they have at least two fruits and/or vegetables (one as part of their morning snack and one as part of their lunch)
- Teach children that there are some foods (treats) we must save for "once in a while" because they are not very good for us (some avoid them altogether but there is a middle ground). If you do pack a treat, please be sure it is only one.
- Do not send soda pop and candy in school lunches. It will be returned home
- Students should not bring caffeinated beverages to school unless the school has on file a letter from a physician or psychiatrist stating that it is part of a therapy or treatment plan.
- Send small sized containers for young children. Most of them throw out over half of the juice cartons and yogurt tubs.
- Try to provide containers that your child can open and close independently.

### Nut Free and Nut Friendly Classrooms

Below you will see the terms "nut-free" and "nut-friendly." Nut-free means no nuts or nut products whatsoever in that classroom. Nut-friendly means there are some nut products (see chart below) that will be permitted in the designated classrooms only. **Please note, we cannot transfer a student from a nut-free to a nut-friendly classroom. Any classroom that has students with nut allergies is nut-free.**

**Early Morning childcare and afternoon childcare are nut free.**

**Allowable in Nut friendly classrooms: Willow, Magnolia, Spruce, Aspen, Oak, Madrona**

YES	NO
Foods baked with almond or other nut flour	tree nuts
Cereal containing nuts	Tree nut butters

Granola or energy bars containing nuts	
Veggie burgers made with nuts	
Pesto sauces	
peanuts	
Peanut butter	

**Reminder for Nut Free Classrooms: Spruce, Birch, Juniper, Alder, Maple**  
 NO nut or nut products, including:

Foods baked with almond or other nut flour
Oatnut bread or similar breads containing nuts
Cereal containing nuts or made on equipment that uses nut products
Granola or energy bars containing nuts or made on equipment that uses nut products
Veggie burgers made with nuts
Pesto sauce or other sauce made with nuts
Peanuts
Tree nuts
Nut butters of any kind

**Allergies**

The State of Washington requires an individual action plan for all students who have a food allergy. Please email Rachel for this form.

**Snacks**

Families must provide their own snacks for their children. We strongly encourage you to pack nutritious snacks and please include a fruit or vegetable for snack. Any children staying at HMS for more than seven hours should have enough food for a morning snack, a midday lunch, and an afternoon snack. Food brought from home may not be shared with the class.

**Rest Time**

All children under the age of six will have a quiet time after the lunch hour. Children who stay and rest or nap in the afternoon, must have a SMALL LABELED SHEET AND BLANKET. Bedding will

be sent home weekly for laundry. It should then be returned to school on Monday. Favorite "snuggle toys" are allowed at naptime if the child desires.

It is our school policy to allow students the opportunity to finish their sleep cycle whenever practical. The faculty and staff will try their best to let children sleep until they are ready to wake up on their own.

## Personal Belongings

Children should wear comfortable clothing, appropriate for both indoor and outdoor activities. To foster independence, parents are encouraged to purchase clothing that the children can easily manipulate. Children must keep a complete change of clothing on hand at school for spills and other emergencies. These clothes, as well as those worn to school, should be labeled. Shoes should be sturdy and appropriate for indoor and outdoor play. Hard-soled **slippers or inside shoes** are strongly encouraged for the classroom. Children who take naps may bring a "sleeping friend" (e.g. stuffed animal).

Please leave toys at home or in the car. Children may bring books, science specimens and other items of educational interest to the class for sharing. Items relating to a special project, nature treasures or seasonal items are always welcome. HMS cannot assume responsibility for loss or damage to any personal items children bring to school.

You may discover tiny cubes, puzzle pieces, beads or other items in your child's pockets or cuffs. Please return such items to the school.

**Please leave at home all candy, soda, and gum.**

## Classroom Pet(s)

Several of our classrooms have a class pet(s) that may consist of small animals (gerbils, hamsters, etc.) reptiles or amphibians, fish or insects. Caring for pets is part of your child's practical life learning and may include observations, feeding and/or cleaning of habitats. Please inform your child's teacher if your child has any allergies to animals. Contact your local veterinarian or physician for any other possible health risks caused by classroom pets.

## Religious Activities

We welcome opportunities to learn about each other and follow any special restrictions or needs for a child. HMS employees do not impose their own religious beliefs on children or families.

## Birthdays

We celebrate each child's birthday with a small ceremony in the classroom. Children may choose to bring a gift for the class, as part of their birthday celebration.

Please consult your classroom teacher for gift ideas. Families are welcome to attend birthday circles in person and can also choose to participate in a virtual birthday circle or video, allowing the parent to be part of the birthday celebration. **We do not allow treats or birthday parties at school (e.g. cake and ice cream). Please do not bring gifts for other students, balloons, or other party favors. Birthday party invitations must be sent outside of school rather than distributed at HMS, (e.g. in the classroom, placing invitations in student sign-outs, etc.) Families who are inviting the entire class may do so using Brightwheel.**

## Holiday Celebrations

Dr. Montessori celebrated the diversity of holidays around the world. Harbor Montessori does not teach any particular religious belief in relation to holidays, but attempts to incorporate arts and activities such as songs and dancing that pay tribute to our various cultures. If you are interested in sharing information about a particular holiday, please contact your classroom teacher.

## Dress Code

HMS does not have a specific dress code for students, however we reserve the right to talk with parents or students about any clothing choice that we feel is offensive or inappropriate. During election season, we ask that students do not wear clothing associated with a particular candidate or their campaign slogan. We do encourage students to wear closed toed shoes and appropriate clothing and footwear for play. HMS does not allow students to wear costumes or masks to school. We realize that some costume clothing can also pass as regular daily wear. We ask that you use your best discretion in these cases.

Please note, the State of Washington no longer allows students to have amber teething necklaces at school.

## Technology in the Classroom

Children in Infant-Early Childhood generally do not use technology in the classroom. Students in Elementary and Junior High use technology as a tool in the classroom for a number of purposes. In the Lower Elementary classroom technology is generally limited to power points and keyboarding. In the Upper Elementary and Junior High programs technology is used more extensively. The following should be noted:

### **Cell phones, Fitbits, Apple Watches**

**All programs through Upper Elementary:** Cell phones and other devices used to transmit messages, (i.e. FitBit, Apple Watch) should be left at home or handed into a teacher upon arrival at school. Students can use the school phone to call home, if needed.

**Students in Junior High:** may bring cell phones, Fitbits, and Apple Watches to school, however they must be kept in their cubbies and used only with teacher permission. no cell phone use in childcare.

### **Laptops**

HMS provides Chromebooks or laptops for our students in the Elementary and Junior High programs. Personal laptops are also permitted in the Upper Elementary and Junior High classroom, though HMS cannot be responsible for devices brought in by students. Laptops are used for school work only. Laptops are also available for student checkout. A fine of \$300 will be issued if the laptop and accessories are not returned by the end of the current school year

### **Reading devices**

(Kindle, etc.)- everyone learns differently. HMS recognizes that reading devices are important tools for many of our students. While we do not provide reading devices, we do allow students to bring them from home.

### **General Technology Expectations for Students**

- Google Suite for education is our main tool for school work completion. All work should be done on Google whenever practical. If work is done on Microsoft Word, Mac Pages, or another similar program it must be saved on a flash drive or to the student's Google Drive account.

- Use all school devices for school-related purposes only. Personal social media is strictly prohibited. Social media is allowed with teacher supervision when related to an elective or student business marketing.
  - If you see anything inappropriate or uncomfortable close the window, then tell a teacher or parent (if at home).
  - Use an appropriate amount of time, do not get caught up in things such as fonts and graphics unless the project you are working on is specific to that.
  - Leave all the settings the way they are.
  - File titles must be appropriate.
  - Use the internet for school-related purposes only.
  - Keep personal information to yourself – never give out your passwords!
  - Personal phones are not allowed at school (including message-receiving watches, such as a Fitbit or Apple Watch) unless it is necessary for your family's communication. If these devices are at school they must be handed to a teacher each morning (through Upper El). Junior High students must keep devices in your cubby, unless otherwise authorized by a teacher.
  - No open food or drinks near the school computers (closed water bottle is acceptable).
  - HMS is not responsible for damages to personal technology devices that students bring from home.
  - Cyberbullying is an offense. Do not use technology outside of school to tease or bully others. If you know someone is being treated poorly, speak up. Tell an adult immediately.

### **Grace and Courtesy on Zoom**

- Use the chat feature as instructed.
- Keep your video on during any meetings or if a teacher asks you to during work time.
- Note that even private chats can be seen by the video-conferencing host if the chat is saved. If it's not appropriate for everyone to see it, don't say it.
- Use the chat for clarifying questions and/or as instructed by the teacher. Be kind and appropriate.
- Do not interrupt or comment on something when someone is talking. Allow them to finish.
- Use the raise hand or similar features.
- Pay attention to how much airtime you use: allow your classmates to have opportunities to talk, too.
- Be present during synchronous sessions-avoid looking at your phone, side texting, or having private chat conversations.

### **#WinAtSocial**

Students in the upper elementary and Junior High programs will be working with a curriculum called "#WinAtSocial". This curriculum provides students with tools to help navigate technology and social media. HMS teachers are trained to guide students through a specific curriculum. Parent training and collaboration is encouraged.

## The Role of the Parent in Relation to the School

Parents play an essential and positive role in the life of an independent school. Not only are parents advocates for their children, but they also support the faculty and administration through extensive volunteer activities and events. The relationship between parents and the faculty and administration are governed by the school's written enrollment contract and handbook, in which its procedures are outlined. When parents choose to enroll their child in an independent school, they agree to subscribe to its Mission, follow its rules, and abide by its decisions. However, most teachers and administrators would agree that trust and mutual respect are the most essential underpinnings of effective working relationships with parents.

- HMS encourages parents to work productively with teachers and administrators by staying informed about their child and important events in the life of the school. Thoughtful questions and suggestions are welcomed by the school.
- Parents best support a school climate of trust and respect by communicating concerns openly and constructively to the teacher or administrator closest to the problem. Efforts by parents to lobby other parents will be viewed by the school as counter-productive.
- While parents may not agree with every decision by the school, in most cases, the parent and school will find common ground to continue a mutually respectful relationship. In the extreme case, however, an impasse may be so severe that the parent cannot remain a constructive member of the community. In such cases, both the parent and the school should consider whether another school would be a better fit for the family.

### Volunteer & Committee Hours Program

Nearly all non-profit organizations and schools operate with volunteer assistance. At Harbor Montessori we depend on our parent volunteers to keep expenses down, assist the teachers, and support the efficiency of the school. Harbor Montessori School requires **seven** volunteer hours per family per year. Please note that parent(s) will pay **\$30.00 per hour** for hours unfulfilled by June 1, 2024. Teachers and school admin will contact you through Brightwheel with volunteer opportunities. Volunteers who work regularly in the classroom and/or with students must pass a background check and be up to date on all required vaccinations. Please see Rachel for details.

Some ways you can help:

- Auction Committee
- Gardening
- Grounds and Maintenance Work Parties
- Classroom material maintenance
- Occupation or special interest videos for our learning library (cooking, specific subject, sewing, etc.)
- Guest speaker in person or via Video Conferencing
- Listening to students read
- Volunteering as an HMS representative at community events such as Race for A Soldier and the Scarecrow Festival
- Parent Grove

### **Parent Grove**

Parent Grove is a parent group similar to a PTA. Parent Grove helps liaise between families and classroom teachers. Additionally Parent Grove helps organize social events at the school.

### **Parent Education**

Families have agreed to attend five (5) hours of HMS sponsored parent education programs per family during the school year. Per your Tuition and Enrollment Agreement, please note that parent(s) will pay **\$30.00 per hour** for hours unfulfilled by June 1, 2024. This fall we will have several Parent Education opportunities.

### **Conflict of Interest**

Harbor Montessori school values community and friendships. We expect our families and staff to feel a sense of warmth and belonging. Just as in any community, relationships may form outside of the work environment. It is vital for our staff to remain professional and practice confidentiality no matter the situation. If you have developed relationships with staff members, please be sure to respect their boundaries. Please understand that it is never appropriate for HMS staff to engage in conversations about school policy and procedure, HMS employees, and/or other children and families.

Please only use Brightwheel to text our teachers/classroom assistants. Please do not contact our teachers on their personal numbers. Head teachers can be contacted on their direct classroom lines or via email.

**Please be aware that HMS staff have a Do Not Compete Clause in their contracts. Hiring current and former HMS Employees without school approval could result in action taken against the employee. Assistant teachers may babysit for current and alumni students as long as such work does not interfere with their current hours or work. Head teachers are not allowed to babysit for families without explicit permission from the Head of School and in very rare and specific situations. Please understand this before engaging a staff member in other employment.**

### **Conflict Resolution**

Conflict resolution, not conflict avoidance, is the goal at our school. Please make it a habit to direct any concerns or disagreements with any staff member directly to that person. We encourage thorough discussion and quick resolution of differences. Holding back complaints creates unhappiness, a negative climate in the school and classrooms and destroys relationships. Please grant one another the gift of sharing your thoughts, feelings and ideas and receive them from others with respect. If you need support in doing this please visit the head of school. If we want to teach peace we must live it. (see also grievances page 46.)

## Discipline Procedures

### Positive Discipline

Harbor Montessori School believes all children should be treated with dignity and respect. We use the Montessori philosophy, positive discipline and restorative practice strategies to help guide students in their actions and interactions. Rewarding and bribing children to elicit desired behaviors is in direct contradiction to the Montessori Method. Further withholding movement, care, or food from children is strictly prohibited.

At HMS, we teach children the expectations of being in community and allow them to have a voice in many of the expectations and rules. Children are expected to be kind, honest, respectful and to communicate frustrations in a non-violent manner. If this is a challenge for them we work with their classroom team and parents and implement very specific strategies.

Teachers model conflict resolution strategies and emphasize empathy. Harbor Montessori School teachers use the book **Positive Discipline in the Montessori Classroom** by Jane Nelsen and Chip DeLorenzo to help assist in these practices.

### Additional Disciplinary Action

Minor disciplinary infractions are handled by the classroom teacher. **Continual behavior of this manner will be brought to the attention of the parents, the Program Director (when applicable), Associate Head of School, and/or Head of School.**

If a student is unable to show a positive change in their behavior, a student will be referred to the office for an in-depth conversation and understanding of the problem and behavior.

Higher-level discipline and exceptional misconduct offenses are addressed by the Associate Head of School and/or the Head of School. The AHOS and HOS make final decisions concerning consequences depending on the nature, severity, duration and mitigating circumstances in each situation. Discipline is a confidential matter and details are not shared with other students or other families.

HMS works with the parent or guardian to determine the problem and support understanding for the student on behavior impact to the community. Disciplinary action taken may consist of the following (depending on the severity of the infraction):

- Acts of Apology (Restorative Practice)
- Acts of restitution and/or community service (Restorative Practice)
- Removal from class for an appropriate period of time decided by the Program Director, Associate Head of School or Head of School. Our goal is not to make this a punitive experience, but to make sure that the child has a place to safely calm down and evaluate their behavior. Phone call to parents and an incident report is sent home. Meeting with parents may be requested.
- Behavior contract : this can be a stand alone discipline or in conjunction with one of the actions listed below.
- Probation : a defined period of time in which a student's behavior and/or academic performance is carefully scrutinized. Probation may either follow suspension or serve as a warning that suspension is pending. Parents are immediately notified both verbally and by letter.



- Informal suspension : removal from school that day. Phone call to parents and an incident report is sent home. Conference with parents, teacher(s), and the Associate Head of School and/or Head of School to discuss positive solutions. The student will reflect on unsafe behavior and how to choose safer behavior in the classroom and share with parents and staff during the conference.
- Short-term suspension : the student is removed from school up to 3 consecutive school days and can return after a conference with parents, teacher(s), and the Associate Head of School and/or Head of School to discuss positive solutions.
- Emergency expulsion : imposed when a student is considered an immediate and continuing disruption of the educational process. The student is removed from school and loses the right to attend HMS. The Head of School arranges a parent conference, usually within three days. If a parent is asked to withdraw their child, they will forfeit the current month's tuition as well as the first two tuition payments (September 1 and June 1 prepayments). There will be no refund of registration or materials fees.

### **Bullying, Harassment, Intimidation**

Bullying, harassment and intimidation are very serious situations and should be treated as such. Research has shown that helping students understand the impact bystanders have in these situations is one of the most effective tools for prevention. In other words, your voice is important even when you are not directly involved in the situation. HMS takes all cases of bullying seriously and works with students and families to support and educate all involved so that bullying behaviors do not continue. It is important to keep in mind that children are learning social roles and rules, many times through trial and error. It is a learning process and not all errors are cases of bullying. For example, due to the willful and conscious nature of bullying, children under the age of 5 are not typically developmentally capable of carrying out bullying and are more often involved in normal peer conflict.

Bullying implies repeated, targeted, purposeful acts when there is a power imbalance. Help your child to remember when working with peers that treating each other with respect and kindness is always the best choice. If you have any reason to believe your child or another child is being bullied, please contact your child's teacher immediately.

### **Weapons**

Any student who brings a pocket knife, bladed tool (sword, dagger, etc.), squirt gun, airsoft gun, paintball gun, or look-alike weapon to school will be referred to the Head of School for disciplinary action. The item will be confiscated and parents notified by telephone and in writing.

Harbor Montessori School has a zero tolerance "gun-free" school policy. No firearms, as defined by RCW 9/41/010, and/or a firearm/weapon, as defined by Federal Law 18 U.S.C. Sec 921, are permitted on school premises at any time. **This includes parents, even those with a concealed weapons license. In this case we ask that the weapon is stored properly in your vehicle and that the vehicle is locked.**

1. Any student who brings a firearm to school will be expelled and will be referred to the state juvenile delinquency system. Parents are notified immediately by telephone and by written notice.
2. Any staff person who brings a firearm, as defined by RCW 9.41.010, and/or a firearm/weapon, as defined by Federal Law 18 U.S.C. Sec 921, is suspended immediately and referred to the Executive Committee for a hearing. This is done verbally, followed by written notice within five days.

## **Health and Wellness of all Students**

### **Reporting Child Abuse**

All HMS staff members are mandated reporters: WAC 388-150-148 states that we must report suspected physical, sexual, or emotional child abuse, neglect or exploitation to Child Protection Services (CPS) or local law enforcement agency immediately. We are also required to inform our DCYF Licensor of any report made.

### **Safety Assessment Protocol**

If there are any concerns that a student is at serious risk of causing grave bodily harm and/or death to self or others, a safety assessment will be required by an outside professional. If a student indicates that he or she is unable to ensure their ability to remain safe, the following protocol will be enacted:

- If the student is in immediate danger, staff will call 911 and notify the student's parent or legal guardian.
- If not in immediate danger, the school will call the student's parent/guardian to come to campus for a meeting with the student and the Head of School.
- During the meeting, the Head of School will discuss the current risk to the safety of the student and/or others. If the student has indicated that they are at serious risk for causing grave bodily harm and/or death to a specific intended victim(s), to protect the intended victim(s), the school will try to contact and warn the intended victim(s) and/or persons and/or outside agencies able to protect the intended victim(s).
- The parent/guardian will be required to take the student to Mary Bridge Emergency Department for a safety evaluation. The school will let the emergency department know that the student and parent/guardian are on their way.
- The school will inform the administrative team that the student has been required to undergo a safety evaluation outside of school. If the student is admitted to the hospital following the safety evaluation, the school will consult with parents and the student's medical team, to assemble a plan for the student's re-entry and/or continued support services at school and outside of school.
- The student and parent/guardian will be asked to sign a release of information for the Head of School to communicate with hospital staff to prepare for the student's re-entry to school.
- If the student is discharged from the hospital following the safety evaluation, the parent/guardian must submit documentation of the results of the evaluation and written confirmation that the student is safe to return to school.
- The student may be able to return to school following a re-entry meeting. The re-entry meeting will include, at a minimum, the student, a parent/guardian, and the Head of School. When appropriate, other members of the administration, and teachers may also be invited. During this meeting, a release of information will be signed so that the appropriate school personnel can communicate with relevant mental health professionals. A plan of action will be created in order to help the students reintegrate back into the school community. Follow-up meetings will be planned as needed.
- Harbor Montessori School reserves the right to deny re-entry if based upon the results/recommendations of health care professionals and other information obtained by the

school, the Head of School or Board of Trustees determined that the student would present a risk of grave harm and/or death to that student and/or others.

## **Transgender and Gender-Nonbinary Students**

HMS is committed to ensuring the safety and well-being of transgender and gender-nonbinary students and facilitating their social integration and inclusion in the community.

### **Names/Pronouns/School Records**

Students will be addressed by the name and pronoun that corresponds to the gender identity to which they identify. A court ordered name and/or gender change is not required. When HMS is not legally mandated to use a student's legal name and gender on school records or documents, HMS will use the name and gender by which the student identifies. HMS school staff will do what is necessary to avoid the inadvertent disclosure of such confidential information in situations (SAT tests, official transcripts) when legal name and gender is required.

A student's official records will be adjusted to reflect any change in legal name or gender upon receipt of documentation, such as a court order or an amendment to a state- or federally-issued identification.

### **Privacy/Confidentiality**

HMS staff will not disclose any information that may reveal a student's transgender/gender nonbinary status to others, including parents or guardians and other school staff, unless legally required to do so or unless the student has authorized such disclosure. In the rare instance that HMS is legally required to disclose a student's gender status, HMS will provide the student an opportunity to make that disclosure themselves, when possible. This will include providing the student with support services the student would need, and HMS has available, to make the disclosure in a safe and supportive environment.

Transgender and gender nonbinary students have the right to discuss and express their gender identity and expression openly and to decide when, with whom, and how much to share private information. The fact that a student chooses to use a different name, to transition at school, or to disclose their gender status to staff or other students does not authorize school staff to disclose a student's personally identifiable or medical information. When contacting the parent or guardian of a transgender or gender nonbinary student, school staff will use the student's legal name and the pronoun corresponding to the student's gender assigned at birth unless the student, parent, or guardian has specified otherwise.

### **Changing Facilities and Restrooms**

With respect to all restrooms, students will have access to facilities that correspond to their gender identity. Gender neutral facilities at HMS are accessible to all students regardless of gender.

- HMS maintains separate restrooms, or changing facilities for male and female students, but allows all students equal access to facilities that are consistent with their gender identity.
- Students, including non-binary students, will determine which facilities are consistent with their gender identity.
- Any student who is uncomfortable using a shared gender-segregated facility, regardless of the reason will, upon the student's request, be provided with a safe alternative such as a

gender neutral bathroom or other options such as addition of a privacy partition or curtain, provision to use a nearby office, or a separate changing schedule.

- We will not require a transgender or gender nonbinary student to use a separate space or gender segregated facilities that are inconsistent with their gender identity.

**STUDENT PRIVACY** All persons, including students, have a right to privacy, and this includes the right to keep one's transgender status private at school. Information about a student's transgender status, legal name, or gender assigned at birth constitutes confidential personally identifiable and medical information. Disclosing this information to other students or parents or other third parties may violate privacy laws, such as the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), as well as constitutional privacy protections. Additionally, disclosure or misuse of this information may establish a hostile environment for a transgender or gender nonconforming student, potentially subjecting them to bullying and harassment, by peers, discrimination by school staff, or family rejection.

## **Parent Pathways for Questions, Concerns, Grievances, and Solutions**

*We desire to provide a healthy and safe school experience for all students. When areas of concern are addressed quickly, collaboratively, and with care, we will be able to support your student and your family in developing appropriate solutions.*

The guidelines for communication are that it be prompt, honest, directed toward seeking and providing information, respectful, engaging of the parties involved, productive, and clear. To achieve these ends, remember to follow these steps:

1. We encourage your first step be to speak with your child directly.
2. If you have questions regarding your child, ask the teacher. You are welcome to communicate by email (the fastest), and/or by telephone, or to drop by at the end of the school day and try to arrange for a chat or meeting.
3. For more serious or complex matters, please request a student-teacher-parent conference.
  - a. Teachers document all conferences. Copies of the notes are available upon request.
4. If the communication with the teacher does not resolve the issue, please address your question via telephone, email, or conference to the HMS Head of School.
  - a. All parties will work together to share information and achieve a resolution
  - b. A meeting summary will be provided

Further questions should be directed to the Head of School. More information on grievance policies can be found below.

### **Grievance Policy**

While we believe that you and your child's experiences at Harbor Montessori School will be positive, we understand that there may be times when we are unable to meet all of your expectations. If such a situation should occur, we encourage you to raise issues directly with the Head of School. If you are unable to come to a satisfactory resolution with the administrator, please submit your concerns in writing to the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees. They will review your complaint with the Executive Board and/or entire Board of Trustees and determine the appropriate action. The Board Chair will respond to all such communications in writing. Our current Board Chair is Wendy Holt. She can be reached at [boardchair@harbormontessori.org](mailto:boardchair@harbormontessori.org).

## **Additional Program-Specific policies and procedures - Infant, Toddler**

### ***Infant Program General Policies and Procedures***

Welcome to the Infant Program at Harbor Montessori School! We are so pleased that you have decided to share your child with us. We realize how hard it is to leave your baby in the care of others and we assure you we will care for him/her with love, safety and child development as our utmost priorities. The following policies and procedures are put into place to ensure that your child will have the best experience possible at our school. Please refer to this often and do not hesitate to talk to the infant room staff or the administration about any questions or concerns.

#### **Visits**

In typical times we welcome parents to visit the infant room, however, due to COVID restrictions, we are unable to accommodate that. Nursing mothers who need to breastfeed their babies during drop-off or pick-up may use Aimee's office; advance notice is appreciated, but not required.

#### **Routine and the Infant**

Infants cannot fathom "clock time;" their world is ruled by a daily rhythm-a routine of activities. The more predictable this pattern is, the less energy the child must spend on wondering what happens next and they can spend more time and energy on exploration and learning about the world. Arriving at school at about the same time each day is helpful in establishing this school routine and stabilizing transition emotions. Please let someone know if your regular schedule will be altered by more than a half an hour.

We offer a five day program, however, we appreciate that there will be times when you want to keep your infant at home. We embrace that! Please, let us know if you are either taking a day of or will routinely be missing a certain day. Thank you!

#### **Feeding**

Infants must be able to take a bottle before starting at HMS. Infants are fed according to their needs rather than according to an adult prescribed schedule. You will need to bring as many bottles as your infant will use in a day. These bottles are stored in the classroom refrigerator. We will heat bottles when needed and can only keep them for one hour after warming. By law infants under four months are only allowed to have either breast milk or formula in our facility. Between four and six months we can help families introduce baby cereal and pureed fruits and vegetables. Families are required to try any new foods at home for at least 24 hours before we can serve that food at school.

Around the time your child is 12-14 months, we will begin to wean him/her from the bottle. This means providing less milk in each bottle and then cutting back on the number of bottles. This aids in our effort to foster your child's desire for independence. At this time they are also outgrowing the need to suck. We will introduce a cup to your child as soon as he/she starts eating table food. By the time they are weaning from the bottle, they will already have had experience with the cup.

Table foods must be provided by the parents. When an infant is able to sit on their own he/she can eat at the table. Before that children will be fed while sitting in the teacher's lap. This gives another opportunity for the infant to bond with their caregiver. We do not use high-chairs in the Montessori classroom.

The feeding guidelines that we follow are provided by the Department of Early Learning and the American Montessori Society. The appendix includes the guidelines provided to us by DCYF.

### **Napping**

Infants sleep on mats on the floor. The Early Childhood goal of this is that children will go to their mats when they are tired. With no crib, the barrier between infant and caregiver is removed. Our goal for the infant is independence; however, our staff will make sure that infants are sleeping on their backs and that nap mats will be placed six feet apart.

### **Clothing Guidelines**

Parents are asked to send 3-5 changes of clothing to be left at school for your infant (more may be necessary when your child is learning to eat independently and use a cup). Please label all articles of clothing. Infant clothing can be an obstacle to their motor development. Simple pullover shirts with no buttons or snaps is ideal for our program. This will enable the child to move freely and to assist in the dressing/undressing process when he/she is ready. This also helps lessen time involved in diapering and changing. Infants can become impatient during changing and diapering.

Also, it is hard to crawl in a dress and sometimes slippers can limit the infant's ability to learn to walk. Where your child is developmentally will often dictate their clothing.

### **Illness**

Please see page 30 for our illness policy.

### **Transition Policy**

Please see page 17 of your handbook.

### **Diapers**

Parents are required to supply their infant with diapers, diaper cream\* and baby wipes. In the event that the infant's supply runs out HMS will charge a monthly fee (for any part of the month) of \$10 for baby wipes and \$35 for diapers until the supply is replenished by the parents. Parents will be notified when their supply is running low.

Infants will be changed on a regular basis, generally every hour and a half to two hours. Bowel movements will be changed immediately. All diaper changes are documented on a daily report that is given to the parents at the end of the day. A supply of disposable or cloth diapers must be brought from home. Plastic pants, wraps, and plastic bags should be brought in daily or as needed. Due to health department regulations, soiled diapers, underwear, training pants, and clothes from home will be placed in plastic bags and sent home unwashed.

If your diaper of choice is cloth, they will be sent home each day for cleaning. Be sure to provide a fresh, generous supply each day as we do not supply cloth diapers. If you choose disposables, be sure to provide a generous supply each day.

\* Any cream or ointment, over the counter or prescription, is considered medication and requires an annual written consent form from the parent. The authorization is found in your annual enrollment form.

### **Communication**

Good communication is essential for building partnerships. Communication between parents and the school programs can take many forms. Options for parents to communicate to staff:

- Daily informal chats between parent and staff
- Leave a message with office staff for the head of school
- Email is a great way to contact us. Please see office staff for email address
- Contact us through Brightwheel
- Schedule a meeting with the head of school or teacher

Daily communication from the staff to the parents would include:

- Daily records of eating, diapering, sleeping and supply maintenance are supplied
- Assistants will defer questions to the Head Teacher who will respond at the earliest convenience
- A communications log will be located near the attendance notebook for non-personal inquiries

### **Conferences and Progress reports**

- Conferences and reports are provided 2 times yearly. Meetings about concerns (parents or teachers) may be arranged as needed

### **What's best for your child**

In some cases, a group care situation may not be the most appropriate or suitable early care environment for your child. On occasion we may implement a two-month adjustment period after which a determination will be made about continuing enrollment. After thoughtful discussion between teaching staff, parents and the director, a family may be asked to make other arrangements for their child.

### **Behavior Management and Discipline Guide** **Infant Age Children**

1. Harbor Montessori School seeks to promote the child's developmentally appropriate social behavior, self-control, and respect for the rights of others.
2. In accordance with State Regulations, the following will not be used:
  - Cruel, unusual, hazardous, frightening, or humiliating discipline.
  - Corporal punishment by any person on the premises.
  - The withholding of food as punishment.
3. As the infant matures he/she may show aggression toward others. We will monitor the child's behavior and assess it quickly. If safety is a concern, a child may be removed from the group and remain with a staff member for a period of time appropriate to the child's misbehavior.
4. If the concerning behavior continues, the parents will be informed in writing and consulted in an attempt to work together to solve problems.
5. Parents are encouraged to ask questions and discuss their child's behavior, special needs, or problems with the teacher.



6. In the unlikely event that a parent is asked to withdraw their child, they will forfeit the current month's tuition as well as the first two tuition payments. There will be no refund of registration or materials fees.

### **The First Day and Other Information for Infant Families**

Please bring the following to HMS on or before your child's first day:

1. All required paperwork
2. Extra sets of clothes, labeled with your child's name
3. A nap blanket and sheets, "napping friend" if needed
4. Diapers and wipes
5. Bottles and food

On the first day, you and your child will be full of excitement, anticipation and without a doubt, a little anxiety. A matter-of-fact approach to the beginning of a new program is most helpful for your child. A calm attitude sends the message that you are looking forward to your child having an enjoyable experience. This is especially important the first few days

Each child will have a different adjustment period when entering a new situation. In the beginning, a few short days may help your child adjust more comfortably. Please discuss a slow-start option with your child's teacher. Please discuss any concerns that come up with your child's teacher. She/he will have further advice on ways to ease your child into his or her new environment. The entire HMS staff wants a smooth transition for both you and your child! Please do not hesitate to ask questions.

## **Toddler Program General Policies & Procedures**

### **Development**

Toddlers have significant developmental differences from Preschoolers. The staff has different expectations for a Toddler than an Early Childhood student. Listed below are suggestions in reference to Toddlers.

Toddler parents are asked to say goodbye at the door to the toddler room. It is easier for your child to say goodbye to you and enter the room on their own. When you enter the room you become part of the environment, which makes it more difficult for your child when you leave for the day.

Every time an adult leaves the environment the toddler experiences saying goodbye to a representative of their parent or caregiver, many times a day. Every time someone enters the environment the child is reminded that indeed their parents have left them for the day; this could happen 15 times every morning. For this one reason we ask toddler parents to hold off visiting their child during the day; instead, once in a while you might adjust your schedule to pick up your child early.

### **Routine and the Toddler**

Toddlers cannot fathom "clock time"; their world is ruled by a daily rhythm- a routine of activities. The more predictable this pattern is, the less energy the child must spend on wondering what happens next and they can spend more time and energy on exploration and learning about the world. Arriving at school at about the same time each day is helpful in establishing this school routine and stabilizing transition emotions. Please try to drop off by 9:00 am. Dropping off after this time can be disruptive to the other children in the class. Other areas that benefit from routine are: eating, sleeping, toileting, dressing and leaving the house.

### **Toddler Behaviors**

Toddlers can have a large personal space. There can be pushing, hitting or biting in a toddler environment. If toddlers hit, we redirect them and help them to communicate with their peers. If toddlers bite we help them communicate and find an object for biting (a teething toy). If a material is being misused, i.e. throwing, we redirect them to an activity that allows for large movement.

### **Biting**

When this behavior happens, it is often the result of thoughts and feelings getting ahead of the vocabulary available to the toddler, or occasionally from not enough crunchy foods for jaw strengthening and stimulation. It is usually a short-lived phase of 2-3 months. Children involved in biting will be given the words to express their actions and /or feelings. All occurrences are documented and patterns or instigators are identified and guarded. As with any other behaviors, we work with the child to give the child better options and assist him/her in implementing them. Persistent biters may be asked to leave the program.

### **Transition Policy**

The move from Toddler to Early Childhood takes place four times per year –September, January, April & June. Please see page 18 of the handbook for further details.

### **What's best for your child**

In some cases, a group care situation may not be the most appropriate or suitable early care environment for your child. On occasion we may implement a two-month adjustment period after which a determination will be made about continuing enrollment. After thoughtful

discussion between teaching staff, parents and the director, a family may be asked to make other arrangements for their child.

### **Diapers**

Parents are required to supply their toddler with diapers and baby wipes. In the event that their toddler's supply runs out HMS will charge a monthly fee (for any part of the month) of \$10 for baby wipes and \$35 for diapers until the supply is replenished by the parents. Parents will be notified when their supply is running low.

Infant and toddlers will be changed on a regular basis, generally every hour and a half to two hours or as needed. All diaper changes are documented on a daily report that is given to the parents at the end of the day. A supply of disposable or cloth diapers must be brought from home. Plastic pants, wraps, and plastic bags should be brought in daily or as needed. Due to health department regulations, soiled diapers, underwear, training pants, and clothes from home will be placed in plastic bags and sent home unwashed. Any cream or ointment, over the counter or prescription, is considered medication and requires annual written consent from the parent. The authorization is included in your enrollment form.

At HMS, "stand-up" diapering will be implemented in a dedicated area for changing soiled diapers. Cloth or disposable diapers are acceptable, "**pull-ups**" are not, as they send the wrong message to young children. It is better to transition your child straight to cloth underwear when beginning to toilet.

If your diaper of choice is cloth, they will be sent home each day for cleaning. Be sure to provide a fresh, generous supply each day as we do not supply cloth diapers. If you choose disposables, be sure to provide a generous supply each day.

### **Toileting**

As your child approaches the transition to the preschool class, the toddler teacher will work closely with the parent to begin toilet learning. Each child's readiness for toilet learning must be the key that begins the process. Toileting requires consistency and patience and close communication between parents and teachers. Remember your child's teacher has worked with many children and toilet training; their advice is worth following.

Children show an interest sometimes between ages 16 to 18 months in toilet paper and flushing the toilet. We take this first window of interest and offer the toilet with words such as "You may flush the toilet after you use it!" Using the toilet at 16 months might consist of taking the diaper off, throwing it away, and sitting on the toilet for no more than one or two minutes. We honor the child's decision.

By offering the toilet at 16 to 18 months when children are drawn to it we avoid the unpleasant power struggles that are a natural part of development that occurs about 2.3 years and above. At this point we could have major battles. We have avoided this by casually introducing the toilet routine.

Toileting is like learning to wash hands before eating. Because toileting becomes part of the child's daily routine the transition to underwear can be very smooth. We avoid "choice" statements like "Would you like to" and use positive statements such as "Let's use the toilet" or "Would you like to go with \_\_\_\_\_ to the bathroom?" "Which book would you like to look at while you sit on the toilet?" and so forth.

### **Communication**

Good communication is essential for building partnerships. Communication between parents and the school programs can take many forms. Options for parents to communicate to staff:

- Daily informal chats between parent and staff
- Leave a message with office staff for the Head of School
- Email to teacher or Head of School
- Schedule a meeting with the principal or teacher
- Check Brightwheel and Transparent Classroom weekly for school and classroom updates!

Daily communication from the staff to the parents would include:

- Daily records of eating, toileting, sleeping and supply maintenance are supplied
- Conferences and reports are provided 2 times yearly. Meetings about concerns (parents or teachers) may be arranged as needed
- Assistants will defer questions to the Head Teacher who will respond at the earliest convenience

### **Clothing Guidelines**

- Toddlers need to wear loose, but not baggy clothes, without buttons, snaps or ties so that they are able to clothe themselves when they use the toilet. Please avoid dressing your child in dresses or skirts during toilet training
- Tee-shirts and sweats work best for this age
- No belts, onesies, or overalls
- Easy to slip on shoes, and crocs for inside shoes

### **Lunch Guidelines**

Please pack a healthy lunch and snacks while avoiding sugary treats. Harbor Montessori School toddler classrooms are nut free!

### **Sharing**

It is not developmentally appropriate to expect toddlers to be able to share toys and materials. Our toddler teachers work hard to help children have agency over their work, space, and body. It is extremely difficult to work on this skill with toddlers when they bring toys from home. Please be sure to check pockets, backpacks, and lunchboxes before entering the classroom.

### **Behavior Management and Discipline Guide - Toddler Age Children**

1. Harbor Montessori School seeks to promote the child's developmentally appropriate social behavior, self-control, and respect for the rights of others.
2. In accordance with State Regulations, the following will not be used:
  - Cruel, unusual, hazardous, frightening, or humiliating discipline.
  - Corporal punishment by any person on the premises.
  - The withholding of food as punishment.
3. The first method used when a child misbehaves is to discuss the inappropriate behavior with him/her, explain what is expected and why the action was wrong. The consequences of continued misbehavior are also explained. The teacher strives to ensure that even the youngest children understand.
4. For repeated misbehaviors, or for physical or verbal aggression, a child may be removed from the group and remain with a staff member for a period of time appropriate to the child's misbehavior.

5. If the misbehavior continues, the parents will be informed in writing and consulted in an attempt to work together to solve problems. Continuing serious misbehavior may result in expulsion from the school at the discretion of the administrator.
6. Parents are encouraged to ask questions and discuss their child's behavior, special needs, or problems with the teacher.
7. If a parent is asked to withdraw their child, they will forfeit current month's tuition as well as the first two tuition payments (May 1 and June 1 prepayments). There will be no refund of registration or materials fees.

### **The First Day and Other Information for Toddler Families**

Please bring the following to HMS on or before your child's first day:

1. All required paperwork
2. Extra sets of clothes, labeled with your child's name
3. A nap blanket and sheets, "napping friend" and/or binky if needed
4. Diapers and wipes
5. Diaper cream and medication form
6. sunscreen
7. Emergency kit
8. Snack, Lunch, and an afternoon snacks for full day students

On the first day, you and your child will be full of excitement, anticipation and without a doubt, a little anxiety. A matter-of-fact approach to the beginning of a new program is most helpful for your child. A calm attitude sends the message that you are looking forward to your child having an enjoyable experience. This is especially important the first few days. You may want to assure your child that you'll be returning as soon as your work is over to pick him or her up.

Each child will have a different adjustment period when entering a new situation. In the beginning, a few short days may help your child adjust more comfortably. Please discuss any concerns that come up with your child's teacher or the Head of School. They will have further advice on ways to ease your child into his or her new environment. The entire teaching staff wants a smooth transition for both you and your child!

## **Appendix A: Harbor Montessori Bullying Policy**

The state of Washington (RCW 28A.300.285) defines harassment, intimidation and bullying as any intentional electronic, written, verbal, or physical act, including but not limited to one shown to be motivated by race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, including gender expression or identity, mental, sensory or physical disability, or other distinguishing characteristics, when the act:

- Physically harms a student or damages the student's property;
- Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education;
- Is so severe, persistent or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment; or

Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school. Nothing in this policy requires the affected student to actually possess a characteristic that is a basis for the harassment, intimidation or bullying.

At Harbor Montessori our first step is typically prevention through education and community building. Throughout the school year, students will be given age-appropriate lessons and scenarios to help prevent instances of bullying. The teacher will play the role of facilitator and guide, focusing first on empathy and assistance. The teacher will make it clear to the children that bullying is not an acceptable option and that there will be consequences. Children will be encouraged to speak up for themselves and for their peers. We hope that by creating a safe environment for students to explore these concepts, we will avoid many issues from beginning or escalating.

Every accusation of bullying will be taken seriously. The teacher(s) along with the Head of School will investigate complaints of bullying thoroughly and in a timely manner. Generally investigations should take no more than two weeks. In more complicated cases, when two weeks is not enough time for a thorough investigation, HMS will keep families updated on progress.

### **Consequences/Discipline**

The consequences for bullying behavior will be decided on by the head teacher(s) and Head of School. Parents will always be informed if their child is involved in a bullying investigation. Whether a report is made confidentially or not may affect the consequences.

If disciplinary action is necessary, parents will be contacted immediately. A meeting with the teacher, parent, administrator and, in most cases, student will be held. The disciplinary action taken with students will be age-appropriate and will follow our disciplinary guidelines on page 40 of this handbook. If the bullying behavior has been addressed and does not change, students may be suspended or may be asked to leave Harbor Montessori.

### **Targeted Students**

Targeted students will never be expected to "talk it out" nor forced to accept an apology.

HMS does not have a guidance counselor on staff. In the event that the targeted family feels they need more support or guidance a list of outside resources will be provided.

Every child should have a voice. Every child has the right to a peaceful, safe classroom. Please encourage your child to talk to their teacher if he/she feels bullied. The sooner the situation is out

in the open, the sooner it is resolved. For more information on RCW 28A.300.285 visit <http://www.k12.wa.us/Safetycenter/BullyingHarassment/default.aspx>

## Appendix B: FERPA

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

[Family Policy Compliance Office \(FPCO\) Home](#)

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.

FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

- Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.
- Parents or eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.
- Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31):
  - School officials with legitimate educational interest;
  - Other schools to which a student is transferring;
  - Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes;
  - Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student;
  - Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school;
  - Accrediting organizations;
  - To comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena;
  - Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and
  - State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

Schools may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. However, schools must tell parents and eligible students about directory information and allow parents and eligible students a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them. Schools must notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA. The actual means of notification (special letter, inclusion in a PTA bulletin, student handbook, or newspaper article) is left to the discretion of each school.

For additional information, you may call 1-800-USA-LEARN (1-800-872-5327) (voice). Individuals who use TDD may use the [Federal Relay Service](#).