



Sunny Hollow  
M O N T E S S O R I

# PARENT HANDBOOK

**Updated August 30, 2011**

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# SUNNY HOLLOW MONTESSORI MISSION, VISION, VALUES

## MISSION

Sunny Hollow Montessori cultivates each child's intellectual and creative potential, appreciation of relationships in nature and society, and sense of individual responsibility. We follow the educational philosophy of Dr. Maria Montessori as set forth by the Association Montessori Internationale.

## VISION

Sunny Hollow Montessori is an AMI accredited school that educates children from primary through elementary years. The school's community of families, staff administration and Board of Trustees trust in, and are committed to, the Montessori method. This commitment influences all decisions that impact the community, the school's physical environment and the curriculum.

**Community:** Sunny Hollow attracts and retains a student body and staff diverse in culture, experience and perspective. The community shares a passion for and long-term commitment to the rich experience of Montessori education as well as the warm and friendly connections of a small and committed community. All members of the community participate in the life of the school, thereby building a strong community that supports the growth of each child.

**Environment:** The school's physical environment supports the Montessori curriculum by considering the child's experience of beauty, peace and interdependence in all aspects of the indoor and outdoor learning environments. Located in an urban setting, the school draws on the resources of the surrounding community to support the child's education.

**Curriculum:** A dedicated staff is empowered to utilize their AMI training to nurture, empower and educate each child to her or his fullest developmental potential. Staff invests in each child and by modeling respect for self, others and the environment, guides the child through each phase of development, prepares the child for the next phase of growth and lays the foundation for the adult she or he will become.

# Sunny Hollow Montessori Parent Handbook

## **VALUES**

In order to create an environment at Sunny Hollow Montessori in which each child can be nurtured and educated to that child's fullest potential, all members of the community must have a shared understanding of the values that influence and guide our actions. To that end, Sunny Hollow embraces the following values:

**KINDNESS:** An environment of kindness and warmth aids in creating peace and harmony, essential to the growth of children, and contributes to the greater harmony on earth.

**RESPECT:** Treating ourselves, others, and the environment with respect recognizes that we are part of a greater world and our success does not happen independently. We value the contributions of others both now and in the past in shaping our world and our experience. We recognize the impact our actions have on those around us, both now and in the future.

**DILIGENCE AND CRAFTSMANSHIP:** We achieve excellence in our work by employing diligence and craftsmanship, working within our limits while seeking to grow beyond them.

**APPRECIATION OF DIVERSITY:** Bringing together people of different cultures, perspectives and experiences enhances the overall experience of our community and the education children receive.

# Sunny Hollow Montessori Parent Handbook

## THE MONTESSORI METHOD

*“Scientific observation has established that the education is not what the teacher gives; education is a natural process spontaneously carried out by the human individual, and is acquired not by listening to words but by experiences upon the environment. The task of the teacher becomes that of preparing a series of motives of cultural activity, spread over a specially prepared environment, and then refraining from obtrusive interference. Human teachers can only help the great work that is being done, as servants help the master. Doing so, they will be witnesses to the unfolding of the human soul and to the rising of a New Man who will not be a victim of events, but will have the clarity of vision to direct and shape the future of human society.”* Dr. Maria Montessori, Education for a New World.

The Montessori Method of Education is a philosophy of both child growth and rationale for guiding such growth. The approach is based on the child’s developmental needs for freedom within limitations. In a carefully prepared environment the child is guaranteed exposure to materials and experiences through which to develop intelligence as well as physical and psychological abilities. The Montessori environment is designed to take full advantage of the child’s self-motivation and unique ability to develop his or her own capabilities.

Founded in 1981 by Mary Sue Dobbin, Sunny Hollow Montessori was established as a non-profit organization which is accredited by the Association Montessori Internationale. We are dedicated to high standards and a broad range of educational experiences that care for the intellectual, emotional and social well being of the child.

Sunny Hollow Montessori’s major concern is that we always keep the needs of the child in the fore front. Although Sunny Hollow Montessori presents a dynamic program of skill building which brings about a healthy independence for the child, another important dimension of the child’s need is for nurturing and guidance. The Montessori program at Sunny Hollow supports the developmental progress from young child through elementary years.

We provide support for families in meeting the challenges of raising children by providing a loving and supporting environment to nurture a child’s personal growth. We offer a rich educational environment, including exercises for motor development, self-mastery, and programs in language, reading, math, culture, sensorial, practical life, geography, science, technology, music and art.

## ACCREDITATION AND OVERSIGHT

All educational programs at Sunny Hollow Montessori are accredited by the pedagogical organization founded by Dr. Montessori in 1929, the Association Montessori Internationale (AMI) (800) 872-2643 (<http://amiusa.org>). In addition to AMI, our staff also holds affiliation with North American Montessori Teacher’s Association (NAMTA) (<http://www.montessori-namta.org>). Our primary level program is licensed by the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS), Division of Licensing (651) 431-2000.

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### Administrative Staff

Head of School	Renee Campion	renee@sunnyhollow.com
School Administrator	Ashley Kaiser	ashley@sunnyhollow.com
Marketing and Development	Amy Sutter	amy@sunnyhollow.com
Bookkeeper	Gina McDonald	gmcdonald@sunnyhollow.com
Office Support	Gina Murray*	gina@sunnyhollow.com

\* Taking one year leave of absence from Casa Lake.

### Faculty

Casa River	Lannette Peterson	Guide	lannette@sunnyhollow.com
	Brooke Young	Assistant	brooke@sunnyhollow.com
Casa Lake	Katie London	Guide	Katie@sunnyhollow.com
	Mary Jacobson	Assistant	Mary@sunnyhollow.com
Casa Creek	Jennifer Skaptason	Guide	Jennifer@sunnyhollow.com
	Christy Love	Assistant	Christy@sunnyhollow.com
Elementary West	Joe Hayes	Guide	Joe@sunnyhollow.com
	Catherine Brown	Assistant	Catherine@sunnyhollow.com
Elementary East	Shanna Rodenstein	Guide	Shanna@sunnyhollow.com
	Gillett Cole	Guide/P.E.	gillett@sunnyhollow.com
Classroom Support	Tammy Clemens	Assistant	tammy@sunnyhollow.com
	Beckie Shoberg	Aide	beckie@sunnyhollow.com
	David Shubat	Aide	david@sunnyhollow.com
	Amy Miller	Aide	amym@sunnyhollow.com
Extended Day	Beckie Shoberg	Aide	beckie@sunnyhollow.com
	Maggie Turner	Aide	Maggie@sunnyhollow.com
	David Shubat	Aide	David@sunnyhollow.com
	Amy Miller	Aide	amym@sunnyhollow.com

*Staff can be reached by leaving a message with the school office or by requesting a call using the green communication form available in the school office or by the student files.*

School Hours	8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.	Monday through Friday
Office Hours	8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.	Monday through Friday

# **Sunny Hollow Montessori Parent Handbook**

## Head of School

Sunny Hollow Montessori employs a full-time Head of School who provides overall leadership of the school in conjunction with the Board of Trustees. The Head of School's major responsibilities include: pedagogical leadership, supervision of teaching and office staff; public relations; and overall management and administration of school finances and operations. The Head of School is employed by, supervised by, and accountable to the Sunny Hollow Montessori Board of Trustees.

## School Administrator

The School Administrator is responsible for management of the administrative operations of the school, including registration, student records, legal and regulatory compliance, administrative process development, and management of the school's facilities. The School Administrator reports to the Head of School.

## Director of Marketing and Development

The Director of Marketing and Development has responsibility for the overall development of and implementation of the school's marketing and communication plan and the fundraising and development plan. Areas of responsibility include school communications such as newsletters, overseeing events planning, parent communications, and volunteer coordination. The Director of Marketing and Development reports to the Head of School.

## Bookkeeper

The bookkeeper handles all accounting records for the school under the supervision of the Head of School.

## School Faculty

Each Montessori classroom is staffed by a certified AMI trained guide. Sunny Hollow Montessori employs both assistant teachers and child care aides as needed based on student enrollment and our license requirement to maintain applicable staff/student ratios. Guides maintain the Montessori curriculum by attending professional in-services and various workshops. All staff are Red Cross certified in First Aid, CPR and Blood-borne Pathogens. The faculty is regularly observed, supervised and evaluated by the Head of School.

# Sunny Hollow Montessori Parent Handbook

## Board of Trustees 2011-2012

Sunny Hollow Montessori is a non-profit organization with a volunteer Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees is responsible for the overall strategic vision and management of the school. A set of the bylaws that govern the Board of Trustees is available in the school office. The Board meets seven times during the year. The agenda for each meeting is posted at the school in advance of the Board meetings.

The Board delegates work to three standing committees: Finance, Governance, Marketing (open), and Development (open). In addition, the Board of Trustees is establishing several new committees for the purposes of carrying out the recently approved strategic plan for the school. These committees include Buildings and Grounds (open), Diversity (open), and Toddler Feasibility Study (open). Parents are welcome to join any of the open committees

Board members (with the exception of ex-officio members) serve minimum terms of three years. The tenure of board members is staggered so that the board always has a mix of experienced and new members. New members are nominated by the Governance committee and elected by the Board. If you would like to serve on the Board, or nominate someone to serve, please contact a board member who will forward the information to the Governance committee.

## **2011/2012 Board Trustees (August 2011 – July 2012)**

<b>Habib Amini</b>		<b>Teddie Gaitas</b>	Chair
<b>Hilary Caligiuri</b>	Secretary	<b>Tricia Hips</b>	
<b>Renee Champion</b>	Head of School	<b>Katie London</b>	Staff Representative
<b>Carrie Cunningham</b>		<b>Kimberly Miller</b>	
<b>Irve Dell</b>		<b>Liam Monahan</b>	
<b>Kris Donnelly</b>	Chair Elect/Treasurer	<b>Tohr Vorvick</b>	Past Chair
		<b>Leah Weaver</b>	

## Parent Association

The Sunny Hollow Parent Association is a parent-run group focused on building a connected and inspired school community by helping families find ways to become involved in their children's school community. The Parent Association holds meetings that are open to all members of the school community.

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## Room Parent Program

The primary roles of the **Sunny Hollow Room Parent Program** are to foster a sense of community among Sunny Hollow families and staff, to provide support and assistance to teachers and to act as a support for new families. Each classroom has one or two volunteer room parents that assist in activities such as contacting new parents, reaching out to parents before school events, organizing classroom events outside of school hours and assisting teachers with special classroom needs or requests. If you have questions or ideas for the room parents, please feel free to contact them directly. They will also be contacting all parents about how they can get involved. This year's room parents are as follows:

<b><u>Casa River</u></b>	Nicole Righini (mother of Luca) & Anna Love (mother of Layla)
<b><u>Casa Lake</u></b>	Kim Balkcum (mother of Clara) & Molly Campe (mother of Kai)
<b><u>Casa Creek</u></b>	Jennifer Flood (mother of Sebastian)
	TBD
<b><u>Elementary East</u></b>	TBD
<b><u>Elementary West</u></b>	TBD

## GUIDELINES FOR ALL COMMUNITY MEMBERS

All members of the school community must behave in a way that supports the Mission, Vision and Values of the school. Thus, while a parent or guardian of a child enrolled at Sunny Hollow Montessori, we ask all parents and guardians to agree to:

1. Abide by school rules and policies and support the mission of Sunny Hollow through actions such as respecting others, embracing diversity and promoting kindness.
2. Actively communicate with other members of the school community openly, directly, promptly and constructively without resorting to gossip and rumor.
3. Model appropriate ethical behavior for the children and others and exemplify the school's core values of kindness, respect, diligence and craftsmanship and appreciation of diversity.
4. Honor financial commitments to Sunny Hollow whether they are required or voluntary.
5. Fulfill volunteer obligations and actively participate in educational opportunities for parents and guardians.
6. Read and respond to oral and written communication from the school, including school publications such as News and Notes, Parent Handbook and website postings.
7. Support the security procedures of the school at all times.

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### MONTESSORI EDUCATION PROGRAMS AT SUNNY HOLLOW

#### Primary

The Montessori experience at Sunny Hollow begins at the primary level in the “Children’s House” or “Casa.” Our Children’s House program is licensed by the Minnesota Department of Human Services to serve up to 84 children from approximately 33 months through 6 years of age. This program serves the developmental needs of children over multiple years and culminates in the leadership year as the child transitions into the next stage of development. The primary program offers a half day option (8:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.) and a full day option (8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.). Both program options are held five days a week, Monday through Friday. All children in the leadership of the primary program (age 5 or 6) are required to attend the full day.

#### Elementary

The Montessori elementary experience begins after the child has completed the Children’s House experience. At Sunny Hollow Montessori, the elementary program serves children the ages of 6 through 12 years old. Children ages 6-9 years old are assigned to Elementary West and children 9-12 years old are assigned to Elementary West. The children have the opportunity to mix between classroom experiencing the materials and unique offerings of both environments.

Specific policies about the Primary and Elementary academic programs will be communicated through a handout from the classroom guides.

### **OTHER PROGRAMS AT SUNNY HOLLOW MONTESSORI**

**These programs are provided through separate contracts.** See the office for enrollment and fee information.

#### Extended Day Program

Before School	7:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m.
<i>Children enrolled in the Before School program will have protein smoothies and cereal available until 8:00 a.m.</i>	

After School	3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.
	3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Families interested in the Extended Day Program should contact the school office for more information and to obtain the program contract and a copy of the Extended Day Program Policies and Procedures.

#### Language Instruction

Sunny Hollow has partnered with Language Sprout to bring language instruction to both the Children’s House and Elementary levels. This year, Children’s House students will have the option of French or Spanish instruction. Elementary children will have several options to

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choose from including French, Spanish, Chinese I and Chinese II. Registration will take place in September through Sunny Hollow. Classes begin in October.

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## **ADMISSIONS AND ENROLLMENT**

Sunny Hollow Montessori is a non-profit organization and not affiliated with any religious organization. We admit students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admission policies, scholarship programs, and other school-administered programs.

On an annual basis, the school offers Application for Registration and Enrollment Agreements to families in late January. It is within the discretion of the classroom guides and the Head of School to determine whether a child will move to the next level within the school. The registration period for currently enrolled students for the following academic year extends for two weeks. Current school families have registration priority through mid-February. If current families have not submitted an Application for Registration and Enrollment Agreement along with the Registration Deposit by the stated deadline, the school cannot guarantee placement in the program.

New families may apply for admission at any time, however, families applying before the stated application deadline in the admissions procedures and timeline will be included in the first round of applicant admissions. Families will be notified of acceptance to Sunny Hollow Montessori in late April. Classroom placement will be determined based on achieving a balance of age and gender in each Montessori environment and will be communicated to families in August. Sunny Hollow maintains a waiting pool when a program has reached full enrollment.

Any child for whom application for admission is made must be at least 2 years and 9 months old by the date of first attendance. The child must be toilet-trained, able to communicate and be physically, mentally and emotionally capable of participating appropriately in classroom activities, with or without reasonable accommodation. It is up to parents to truthfully represent in the Application for Admission that the child meets these requirements. Any parental questions regarding readiness for the program should be brought to the attention of the school on the Application for Admissions. In instances where there is a question of readiness, Sunny Hollow staff may recommend an additional meeting with a child closer to the school start date to check in on developmental progress and readiness for the program. If it is found that the child does not meet the readiness requirements described here, the school administration is entitled to temporarily or permanently exclude the child from a particular classroom or the school.

Children with special needs are welcome to enroll at Sunny Hollow Montessori, provided the child can be reasonably accommodated by Sunny Hollow Montessori. A consultation with the child, the parent(s) or guardian(s), a guide and Head of School will be scheduled. The purpose of the consultation is to observe the child in the Montessori classroom environment, assess the staff person's ability to work with the child and the child's ability to adapt to the group. Enrolling the child for a trial period may be necessary to accurately assess whether the child's attendance at Sunny Hollow Montessori is beneficial to both parties.

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Like all schools, Sunny Hollow has a series of annual forms that families must complete and return to the school. It is the parent or guardian's sole responsibility to have all enrollment forms, including the immunization form, emergency release form and health form, completed and turned in to the office 48 hours before the first day of school. Attendance and enrollment is conditional on the receipt of satisfactory health form and immunization documentation. **If any of these forms is not completed, your child may not be allowed to attend until all said forms are received.**

If any child presents an unusual or serious behavior problem that is not corrected in a reasonable time following consultation with the child's parent(s)/guardian(s), the school administration is entitled to temporarily or permanently exclude the child from a particular classroom or the school. It is intended that the advice of the classroom guides on these questions shall be given substantial weight. However, the parent(s)/guardian(s) of any child whose exclusion is recommended will have an opportunity to meet with the Head of School and the classroom guide before any determination is made to exclude the child. Please see the section entitled, "Behavior Guidance," for a description of this process. The parent(s)/guardian(s) may bring the child and/or a professional of their own choice to such a meeting. Should the school administration desire to obtain a further medical or psychological opinion, they may request an opinion from a professional of their choice. The cost of all such medical, psychological or other professional consultation shall be borne by the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the child, and refusal of the parent(s)/guardian(s) to provide such independent professional opinion, if requested by the school administration, shall terminate the right of appeal. After a meeting, the decision of the administration shall be final.

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## **TUITION AND FEES**

Sunny Hollow Montessori's Board of Trustees sets the annual tuition for each program option on an annual basis in January. Tuition may be paid annually, semi annually, or monthly (via SmartTuition). An annual fee is assessed by SmartTuition for the monthly payment option.

### **Registration Deposit Policy**

In order to secure your child's enrollment, families are required to prepay a specified, non-refundable Registration Deposit which is determined annually. This Registration Deposit, along with a signed Enrollment Agreement is required to hold your child's spot in the program. If the Registration Deposit payment is not received by the requested date, Sunny Hollow Montessori reserves the right to fill your child's spot. Your Registration Deposit is part of the total tuition and fees shown in the fee schedule.

### **Elementary Program Activity and Supply Fee**

The elementary program engages in many "going out" activities, as well as inviting experts into the school to share their knowledge with the classroom through residencies or projects. The activity and supply fee is used to cover the additional expense of these programs, as well as the various supplies used by elementary students.

### **Family Discount**

Sunny Hollow Montessori offers a sibling discount of 10% for each additional sibling enrolled in any program. The discount will be applied to the program with the lowest tuition amount. The discount applies to tuition only and does not apply to the Registration Deposit or other fees.

### **Tuition Assistance**

We value your commitment to enroll your child in a private Montessori environment and recognize the financial sacrifice this commitment may bring to families. Tuition assistance is available to families that qualify to the extent that funds are available. You must apply annually by March 1 to receive consideration. Applications for assistance are processed by Student Services for Financial Aid, a unit of the National Association of Independent Schools. Applications are available at [www.nais.org/financialaid/ss](http://www.nais.org/financialaid/ss) or in the Sunny Hollow office. There is a financial aid application fee per family set by Student Services for Financial Aid. Priority is given to applications received from returning families. Award notifications will be made in late April. The application information is kept strictly confidential.

### **Late Payment Policy**

Tuition is due on the date specified for each payment option in the current Schedule of Tuition and Fees. Annual or semi-annual payments received more than five days after the payment due date will be automatically assessed a \$15 late payment fee. Late fees for the monthly payment will be assessed by SmartTuition. See SmartTuition information for specific information on late fees.

Continued enrollment is contingent upon payment of tuition. Families who are experiencing financial difficulties must make tuition payment arrangements with the Head of School.

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Families who are delinquent in their tuition payments and have not made payment arrangements will be dismissed.

### **Other Tuition Policies**

Other tuition payment policies are set forth in the Annual Application for Registration and Enrollment Agreement.

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## **FUNDRAISING AND VOLUNTEERING**

### **Fundraising**

Annual tuition and fee amounts do not cover the full per-student cost incurred by Sunny Hollow Montessori to operate our academic program. We can operate on this basis only because of funds received from voluntary tax-deductible contributions solicited through our annual giving program, which is directed to parents, alumni and friends of the school. If it were not for these supplementary funds, tuition charges at each level would necessarily rise significantly. We expect families to participate in the annual giving program at whatever level is appropriate for each family.

Sunny Hollow Montessori conducts regular fundraising events, such as the Fall Festival, the Annual Fund, the Great Gala, and the Spring Fun Fair to support the mission of the school. Please see the school calendar for specific dates of these community fundraising events.

Sunny Hollow is in a growth phase. The commitment and hard work of our families, Board and staff has brought us to a point in our history where we are investing in the future of our school through significant capital improvements. The Board has established a strategic plan for the next phase of development. Funding capital improvements may occur through fund-a-need activities or through a capital campaign. Because the growth of the elementary program supports the long-term health of the school, we ask that every family participate in these fundraising efforts.

These fundraising events are essential to maintaining and improving the exceptional education environment that our children experience daily.

### **Volunteer Commitment**

Your involvement is a vital feature of Sunny Hollow Montessori Community. In an effort to keep tuition costs down, we rely on the strong volunteer commitment of **a minimum of 10 hours per year from each of our families**. At the beginning of the school year, parents and guardians are asked to commit to various volunteer opportunities. In addition, volunteer opportunities are posted throughout the year. As you volunteer, please sign in at the school office so your hours are tracked. This investment of your talent and time is a direct benefit to the children and is essential to the efficient operation, maintenance, and growth of our school.

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### **ATTENDANCE AND ABSENCE REPORTING**

Regular attendance is important for your child's understanding of the prepared environment and his or her role as part of a community. The children who benefit most from their Montessori experience are those who arrive promptly and attend consistently in order to fully participate in the work cycle. Please make every effort to see that your child comes to school regularly and on time.

School aged students are expected to attend school every day except when excused according to Minnesota State compulsory attendance laws. The school **is required to report** excessive absences or tardiness to the appropriate agencies.

#### ***Absence and Late Arrival Reporting***

**When a student is absent or you anticipate the child will arrive late, the parent or guardian should call the school at (651) 690-2307** and report the reason for the child's absence or tardiness. Even though the threat of H1N1 has lessened, we continue to track symptoms. We ask families to report symptoms when their child is ill. In case of contagious illness, parents or guardians should indicate the specific illness (e.g. strep throat, chicken pox). The *Communication Form* should be used to give advance notice of late arrivals, absence due to a vacation or extended time out of school.

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### **DROP OFF AND PICK UP POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

The Sunny Hollow school day begins **PROMPTLY at 8:30 a.m.** and ends **PROMPTLY at 12:00 p.m. for half day students and 3:30 p.m. for all others.**

**Please turn off cell phones before entering Sunny Hollow.** The time you spend in dropping off and picking up your child should be solely “his/her” time and should have your full attention.

#### **DROP OFF PROCEDURES – Please Read Carefully**

Drop-off begins at 8:30 a.m. Unless your child is enrolled in the before school program, you may not drop your primary-aged child off before 8:30 a.m. as there is not a staff person available to supervise children before then. We ask your cooperation with this policy to ensure the safety of children.

Students are expected to **arrive on time.** Children who arrive late feel uncomfortable, just as adults feel uncomfortable when walking into a meeting late. **Children arriving late to school must have a parent check them in at the office. A member of the office staff may escort them to class.**

At morning drop off, we offer a drive up option for drop off. To reduce the congestion in the foyer of the school **we ask families of older children to use the drive up option.** We have made some changes to the routes into the school to ensure the safety of everyone in the parking lot. As always, please observe the 10 mph speed limit in the parking lot.

#### ***Drive Up – 8:25 – 8:40 a.m.***

**Enter the parking lot from the Woodlawn entrance** at the south end of the parking lot. A staff person will be available at the south side of the garden to assist your child in getting out of the car and into school. If a child experiences difficulty saying goodbye at the car, the staff person may ask you to park and walk your child into the building’s foyer area. At 8:40 the car greeter will go back inside.

#### ***Walk In***

Parents may escort their child into the building. To ensure the safety of students and adults in the parking lot, please **enter the parking lot from the north entrance on Hartford Avenue. Proceed to a parking space.** Children and adults will be crossing from cars to the front entrance of the building. As a driver, be alert to children in the parking lot. As a parent walking your child in, be sure your child is within your reach when in the parking lot. We share this parking lot with the Temple and the community. There are many cars coming through at all times of day.

**Children’s House students** will be greeted his or her Children’s House staff members in the front foyer. This is the time to say goodbye. The morning activities of putting away coats and putting on slippers is part of the day’s work in Montessori and is done independently.

**Elementary students** will proceed up the stairs to the coatroom. Parents and guardians may say good bye at the foot of the stairs or walk up. The guides greet the children upstairs.

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## PICK UP

The school day ends at 3:30 p.m. The Children's House half-day program ends at 12:00 p.m. If you need to pick up your child before that time, please fill out a communication form and submit it to the school office. Following this procedure will minimize the disruption to the classroom that occurs when a child is asked to end their work early without being told in advance.

The Release Authorization form provides an opportunity for parents to identify other adults to whom Sunny Hollow may release your child. Please notify the school when you will be having an individual listed on the Release Authorization form pick up your child from school. This extra step ensures a smooth pickup for your child. We must have your written permission to release your child to an adult other than a parent or guardian.

If a child is to be picked up by a friend or relative not listed on the *Emergency Release Information Form* or the *Release Authorization*, the school must have advance written consent from the parent or guardian.

### *Children's House Dismissal Procedure*

At dismissal time children will visit their lockers under the supervision of the Children's House staff. When the children finish at their lockers, they will be dismissed to their parent/guardian in the foyer area of the school.

### *Elementary Dismissal Procedure*

Parents of Elementary students will be given a choice for the dismissal of their child. The choice will be the regular method of dismissal for the school year. Families are asked to avoid changing the dismissal option for their child once it has been selected. The choices are: Inside pickup: This dismissal option follows the practices of past years. The parents are asked to wait on the landing and the teacher dismisses the children once she/he has made eye contact with the parent.

Outside pickup: Children will be escorted by a teacher to the garden area and will be dismissed once the teacher has made eye contact with the parent. Please ensure that you make eye contact with the teacher before leaving the area with your child.

Parents and guardians are expected to be on time to pick up their children at dismissal time. Just as being on time for school is important, it is equally important to be prompt when picking up your child. Your child trusts that you will be timely. If for some reason you are late, please call the office and inform us of your delay. We can then explain the circumstances to your child, eliminating any unnecessary fears.

Children who are not picked up timely will be brought to the extended day program. Sunny Hollow reserves the right to impose a late pickup fee on parents and guardians who are routinely late in picking up their child. These fees are described in the Extended Day Policies and Procedures available from the office.

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## MEALS

### Snack Program

A nutritional snack is available during the morning Children's House Montessori class. In the Children's House Montessori environment, the "food preparation" work in the Practical Life area also provides an opportunity for the child to consume nutritional food items.

For elementary students, the Guides will provide parents and guardians with information on the snack policy of the classroom.

### Lunch Program

Children enrolled in the Elementary and Full Day Children's House programs are required to bring a nutritious lunch daily. Please clearly mark your child's name on the **outside** of the lunch container and on all reusable small containers and utensils.

For Children's House students, these lunches must meet the nutritional guidelines provided below. Lunch food contents that are not consumed by your child will be kept in the child's lunch box so the parents or guardians can monitor nutritional intake. Milk is provided for lunch. Lunches of Children's House students will be kept in refrigerators as required by law. Elementary student lunches may not be refrigerated. Please use ice packs or insulated lunch bags as necessary.

Lunch time is a good opportunity to teach children about the importance of nutrition and to reinforce positive messages about respect for the environment that is an important part of the Montessori curriculum. When making choices about items to include in lunches, we encourage families to discuss nutritional content, reusable containers and packaging to teach these important concepts to children. Please do not send food in squeezable tubes ("go-gurt" etc.) as children are often unable to open them independently without creating a mess.

**\*If a student forgets their lunch, the parent or guardian will be contacted to make arrangements to have their lunch delivered to school prior to lunch time.**

### *NUTRITIONAL GUIDELINES FOR CHILDREN UNDER 6 YEARS*

Daily nutritional requirements are important for a child's well being and growth. The following menus provide a balanced guideline:

<u>LUNCH</u>	<u>3 YRS</u>	<u>3-6 YRS</u>
Milk/Fluid	1/2 cup	1/2 cup
Meat/Fish/Poultry/Cheese	1 ounce	1-1/2 ounce
Egg	1 egg	1 egg
Cooked Dry Beans and Peas	1/4 cup	3/8 cup
Peanut Butter	2 Tbsp	3 Tbsp
Fruits/Vegetables	1/2 cup	1/2 cup
Bread	1/2 slice	1/2 slice

## Sunny Hollow Montessori Parent Handbook

**Sunny Hollow Montessori staff are required by law to notify the parent or guardian of Children's House students if they observe non-nutritional lunches are being sent with a child.**

Children who stay for lunch will need the following each day:

1. A soft-sided, **labeled** lunch container.
2. Healthy foods in re-usable/re-sealable containers that your child can independently open and close. If keeping a container is important to you, please clearly label it.
3. The guides will cover recommendations for nutritious lunches at the Parent Info and Welcome Back night classroom meeting on September 14

**\*\* Please Note: Children's House classrooms may have children with nut allergies.** Please do not send peanuts/peanut butter in your child's lunch until you have checked with your classroom guide. \*\*

We will provide:

1. Water and milk (from rbST-free cows). If your child has other needs, please see her/his guide.
2. Reusable plates and utensils
3. Reusable napkins and tablecloths.

Children do not have access to microwave ovens at Sunny Hollow. Warm food such as casseroles and soups may be sent in a (labeled) hot thermos.

*Note: Pre-packaged foods such as Lunchables, Softwiches, etc. are strongly discouraged as they lack the nutrition needed to sustain a child's growth in a full day program... Go-gurt and other push-up packaging food items are not permitted at Sunny Hollow and will be sent home.*

# Sunny Hollow Montessori Parent Handbook

## **HEALTH PROGRAM**

The *Emergency Release Information, Child Health Care Summary and Immunization forms* provide the school with information regarding the health history, child's doctor, dentist and preferred medical facilities. **It is imperative that parents and guardians keep the school informed of changes in your home and/or work phone number(s), as well as medical conditions. ALL ALLERGIES, FOOD SENSITIVITIES OR DIETARY RESTRICTIONS MUST BE REPORTED TO THE OFFICE.**

### **EMERGENCY RELEASE INFORMATION FORM**

The **Emergency Release Information (ERI) Form** and **Release Authorization form** must be completed and signed by the parent or guardian and returned to Sunny Hollow Montessori at the start of the school year or the child will not be permitted to attend school until it is received.

The Emergency Release Information form documents the contact information for parents/guardians, as well as authorized person(s) to be contacted of an emergency if a parent or guardian cannot be reached. In addition, this form collects contact information for your child's physician, dentist and hospital of choice. You will also be asked for insurance information and to document any medical problems or concerns. This form will be the school's main source of providing information to emergency personnel in the event of an emergency. Please remember to update the form with any changes in contact information, health concerns, health care provider or emergency information.

### **IMMUNIZATION AND HEALTH CARE SUMMARY**

When a child is enrolled at Sunny Hollow Montessori, a *Child Care Immunization Record and Health Care Summary form* must be completed by the child's physician and submitted to the office prior to admittance. Children will not be admitted or enrolled without an up-to-date Child Care Immunization Record on file in the office. The completed form must contain documentation of current immunization against:

- Diphtheria
- Tetanus
- Pertussis
- Polio
- Haemophilus
- Influenza Type B
- Chicken Pox
- Measles/Mumps/Rubella

(or a signed, notarized statement of parental objection to the immunization or a medical exemption), and a Health Care Summary. The *Child Care Immunization form* must be updated annually through Kindergarten or until the full series of childhood immunizations has been given in keeping with the Minnesota Department of Health's immunization law.

It is also important to communicate to the school information regarding health conditions that may affect your child during the school day, such as asthma and food and beverage allergies. This information will be communicated to all staff persons involved with your child during the day.

## **MEDICATION PERMISSION**

Prescription and/or non-prescription (over-the-counter) medications will NOT be administered to the child without the written consent or instructions from **both** the physician/nurse practitioner and the parent/guardian on the *Medication Authorization/Administration Record form*. **Do not send your child's medication in his or her lunchbox.**

- **NON-PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS** (fever reducing medication, cold/allergy, sunscreen, insect repellent, chapstick, skin lotions, first aid creams, etc.) must be in the manufacturer's original container, which includes written dosage instructions. The administration of non-prescription medications shall be limited for a specific child for each specific episode of illness. Use of the Medication Permission form and written instructions from the physician/nurse practitioner are required. **Fever reducing medication for symptoms of illness or after the administration of immunizations also requires a physician's order and a completed *Medication Authorization/Administration Record form*. Parent/Guardian is to give as many doses at home as possible.**
- **PRESCRIPTION MEDICATIONS** must be kept in its original container, have a legible prescription label stating the child's name, prescribing physician, and written instructions before the medication will be administered.

The following procedure must be followed before a Sunny Hollow Montessori staff person administers prescription and/or non-prescription medications to a child:

- The medication must be given to a Sunny Hollow Montessori staff member along with the completed *Medication Authorization/Administration Record form* and written instructions from the child's physician/nurse practitioner.
- Medications must be kept in their original container labeled with the child's name and legible instructions.
- The Sunny Hollow Montessori staff person will administer the medication as instructed by the physician/nurse practitioner and document their name, date, and time the medication was dispensed to the child. The record is available to the parent or guardian and maintained in the child's file.
- Any unused portion of the medication will be returned to the child's parent or guardian or destroyed as instructed by the parent or guardian on the *Medication Authorization/Administration Record form*.

## **ILLNESSES AND CONTAGIOUS DISEASES**

The Minnesota Department of Health continues to warn us about the potential for a pandemic outbreak of the H1N1 virus. While the H1N1 virus has been moderate in severity, there is the potential that a widespread outbreak could cause schools to close.

As with most illnesses, MDH reports that the best way to prevent getting and transmitting the flu is to wash hands frequently and cover your cough and sneeze with a tissue and discard the tissue immediately. MDH recommends that all families make preparations at home so that you have an adequate supply of over the counter medication and fluids if you or your child is sick and home for a week or so.

The school will be tracking illness symptoms as recommended by MDH. If your child is ill, please follow the absence reporting procedures.

Please keep your child home if he/she has:

- a reportable illness (mumps, measles, etc.)
- a contagious disease (strep throat, chicken pox, head lice, ring worm, etc.)
- conjunctivitis (pink eye) or pus draining from the eye
- temperature of 100 degree Fahrenheit or higher of undiagnosed origin before fever reducing medication is given,
- vomiting or diarrhea
- unexplained lethargy
- significant respiratory distress where it is difficult for the child to participate in program activities with reasonable comfort
- an undiagnosed rash or rash attributable to a contagious illness or condition
- had antibiotics administered for less than 24 hours.
- not been treated by a physician for an exposed wound requiring stitches.

Parents or guardians are required to inform Sunny Hollow Montessori within 24 hours, exclusive of weekends and holidays, when a child is diagnosed as having a contagious reportable disease (i.e. chicken pox, lice, ringworm, etc.). Sunny Hollow Montessori will notify parents or guardians of exposed children within 24 hours of receiving the information. Notification is posted on the wall near the Office door.

**If you child has been prescribed antibiotics for a contagious illness, he/she needs to be on the antibiotic for 24 hours before returning to school.**

**Your child should be symptom-free for 24 hours before returning to school. For example, if your child has experienced a fever or vomiting or diarrhea, the child should not return to school until 24 hours after the fever has broken (without medication) or the vomiting or diarrhea has stopped. Please observe these rules to minimize the spread of illness within the school.**

If a child becomes ill while at Sunny Hollow Montessori, the parent or guardian will be immediately notified and **is expected to pick up the child**. The child will be isolated from other children and rest under the supervision of a staff person until the parent or guardian arrives. The child should not return to school until 24 hours after symptoms disappear or antibiotics are administered.

### **ACCIDENT, INJURY TREATMENT AND REPORTING**

The Sunny Hollow Montessori staff is trained in Red Cross First Aid and CPR procedures. In the event of minor injuries (scratches, abrasions, etc.), first aid procedures will be administered to the child as needed. The injury and first aid procedure administered will be documented and reported to the parent or guardian in writing. In the event of a serious injury, the parent or guardian will be contacted immediately. Every effort will be made to reach parents or guardians in an emergency situation. If the parent or guardian cannot be reached, the school will contact the authorized person(s) or health provider/facility listed on the **Emergency Release Information form**. The school retains the right to contact local paramedics and/or use ambulance transportation as deemed necessary.

# **BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE**

Sunny Hollow Montessori believes that each student, parent or guardian and staff member participates in creating a disciplined environment where all persons are appreciated, feel safe and are free to learn.

The Montessori environment and philosophy encourages choice and freedom within an atmosphere of love and positive guidance which helps the child to create an inner guide and develop their own self discipline. The staff; in coordination with the school administration; are responsible for ensuring implementation of and compliance with the school's behavior standards. Staff expects and appreciates parental support when students experience behavioral issues. Parents or guardians are strongly encouraged to discuss these behavior expectations with their child prior to school admittance.

The guide is responsible for establishing and maintaining a safe, disciplined environment. Each student will be held accountable for his/her behavior in keeping with the Sunny Hollow Montessori community's behavior expectations. These include:

- Maintain a safe and healthy learning environment
- Respect others and oneself
- Respect property

Behaviors that violate Sunny Hollow Montessori's Behavior Standards include, but are not limited to:

- Behavior inconsistent with classroom rules
- Uncooperative behavior
- Disrespectful or hurtful acts towards others
- Inappropriate language
- Being in an unsupervised area

Actions which violate the Behavior Standards are individually addressed with the child and brought to the parent's or guardian's attention. Conflict resolution is used to address discipline concerns. Guides and children explore problem solving and alternative modes of behavior, particularly in conflict situations. Circumstances surrounding the behavior are discussed with the child(ren). The guide and child discuss positive guidance techniques to help the child re-evaluate his/her actions and quiet energies and emotions. Children are taught acceptable alternatives to problem behavior, redirected toward a constructive activity, encouraged to address a wrongful action and receive forgiveness.

Behaviors that are more serious include, but are not limited to:

- Repeated occurrences of inappropriate behavior that violates Behavior Standards. "Repeated occurrences" is defined as requiring a child to be separated from the group five or more times in one week or eight times in two weeks.
- Harassment (repeated, unwelcome verbal or physical conduct which has the purpose and/or effect to intimidate or to create a hostile or offensive learning environment).
- Violent, or assaulting behavior, which jeopardizes the physical safety of other children and/or staff.

- Tampering with an alarm box, smoke/heat detector, or fire extinguisher.
- Theft or vandalism of property.

If a behavior is violent and results in an injury that breaks the skin of another child or an adult, the parents or guardian will be contact to pick up the child. Except in rare circumstances, the child will be invited to rejoin the classroom community the next day.

The following policy and procedure will be implemented if a child's behavior persists, is serious in nature and/or requires increased staff guidance and time:

- The staff will observe and record the child's behavior and staff response;
- Consult with the child's parents or guardian to address the child's unacceptable behavior;
- Develop and implement a behavior guidance plan with parents or guardians, and other staff to alter the behavior immediately, seeking a professional assessment may be recommended when appropriate.
- If the discipline problem becomes serious and/or the unacceptable behavior persists beyond 30 days after implementing a mutually agreed upon behavior guidance plan with the parents or guardian, the child will be dismissed from Sunny Hollow Montessori. Recommendation of dismissal will be made in writing to the parents or guardian.

## **GENERAL POLICIES**

### ***ANIMAL POLICY***

Caring for an animal provides a valuable learning opportunity for children. Sunny Hollow Montessori permits the presence of small animals (e.g. fish, gerbils, birds) in the classrooms. Notify the office if your child has an allergy or respiratory condition that would restrict the presence of fur or feather bearing animals in the classrooms.

### ***BATHROOM HYGIENE***

Children admitted to the Children's House at Sunny Hollow Montessori need to be toilet trained before the start of school in the fall. During times of transition and new situations, it is not uncommon for children to need more encouragement in this area. Please let your child's guide know about your child's development in this area as soon as possible. She/he will be able to give suggestions as to how to help your child learn toileting. (Independent toileting consists of carrying out all aspects, e.g., going, wiping, clothes management).

**Please do not send your child to school in either a diaper or Pull-Up. These items are not allowed in our environment by state guidelines.**

If problems with independent toileting become an extraordinary burden on our staff, or causes significant disruption in the classroom as determined by the guide, a meeting will be called to address possible solutions.

It is our full intention to recognize and sustain the individual needs of your child in this critical step of development. Your assistance and acknowledgement of our desire to do so will only ensure a positive, successful experience for your child.

### ***BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS***

Birthdays are an important part of a child's life. Each child's birthday or half birthday if it occurs in the summer is celebrated at Sunny Hollow Montessori. Birthday celebrations vary from classroom to classroom. Your child's guide will contact you prior to your child's birthday to discuss celebration opportunities that are consistent and appropriate in a Montessori environment.

### ***CALENDAR***

Sunny Hollow Montessori sets the school calendar each year in the summer. An annual school calendar is distributed to parents and guardians before the beginning of the school year and can be found on our website, [www.sunnyhollow.com](http://www.sunnyhollow.com). Reminders of events will be distributed electronically and will hold the most up to date information.

Sunny Hollow makes every effort to minimize changes to the schedule after publication. Some circumstances may require a change in calendar dates. Families will be notified of calendar changes as quickly as possible.

### ***CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT***

Minnesota law requires educators (and all adults) to report suspected physical abuse, sexual abuse or neglect of children to the local welfare agency, local police department or county sheriff. Any staff member who knows of or has reason to believe a child is being neglected or abused must report the

situation to the proper authorities immediately. Please see the Department of Human Services document at the end of this handbook for more information on child abuse/neglect reporting.

### ***CLASSROOM PLACEMENT***

Our goal, in determining classroom placement, is to provide an age and gender **balance** in each Montessori environment. The older students serve as role models and tutors for the younger students, and in the process, gain confidence in their abilities and self esteem. The younger ones watch the older ones, and in the process gain a clear vision of what's expected of them, and have the benefit of working with and learning from their peers as well as from the Head Guide. Thus class placement is determined by matching the skills and needs of the individual with the skills and needs of the learning community.

Children are grouped in Montessori environments for a 3 to 4 year period in the Children's House and a six year period in the Elementary program. Because the composition of a Montessori learning community is selected carefully, children are not usually transferred to another Montessori environment unless the Head Guide determines a classroom transfer is needed.

If you strong feelings about the needs of your child and his or her placement, please articulate in writing the characteristics and needs of your child that you would like considered in placing your child, along with the specific request you are making. These written requests should be sent to the office as early as possible, and no later than May 15 of the registering year.

### ***CLASSROOM VOLUNTEERS/SUBSTITUTES***

Occasionally, staff may ask parent/guardian volunteers to work in their classroom. An orientation meeting will be held in the fall. All parents and guardians who want to volunteer are expected to attend one of the orientation sessions so they are prepared for work in the classroom. Parents who plan to volunteer in the classroom will be asked to complete a background check through the Department of Human Services each year. Parent volunteers are asked to maintain confidentiality regarding personal information about children and families.

### ***CLOSINGS***

Sunny Hollow Montessori Board of Trustees recognizes the importance of operating our programs with minimal closings per year. Careful consideration is given before establishing our annual school calendar which is distributed to parents at the beginning of the academic year. As a tenant of the Temple of Aaron, we are obligated by our lease agreement to vacate the building on the Jewish High Holy Days of Rosh Hoshannah and Yom Kippur, which usually occur early in the school year.

#### **Emergency Closings**

In the event of an unforeseen emergency (e.g. broken pipes, etc.) parents will be contacted by phone if Montessori classes will be closed. It is imperative that all parents provide the school with up-to-date emergency phone information.

#### **Weather Conditions**

There are times (especially during our Minnesota winters) when school is closed due to weather conditions. Emergency school closings due to inclement or severe weather will be announced as early as possible on local media. Your family may wish to sign up with the KARE 11 web notification. A message will also be posted on the school's voice mail, whenever possible. If the St. Paul Public Schools are closed it is very likely that Sunny Hollow Montessori will also be closed.

It sometimes happens that inclement weather causes school or after school programs to close early. Again, it's likely that we will close early if the St. Paul Public Schools close. All parents and guardians will be called to pick up their children or make arrangements for their safe transport home. It is the parent or guardian's responsibility to be alert to current or imminent weather, and make arrangements for alternate childcare and transportation to that caregiver if the parent is unavailable.

### ***CUSTODY ISSUES***

Custody issues should be reported to the office via the Custody Issues form. Sunny Hollow will follow the custody and visitation arrangement described in court documents. If there is a disagreement between parents on the interpretation of the court document, it will be the parents' responsibility to obtain clarification from the court. Parents are asked to work out the custody issue outside of the school environment.

### ***DAMAGE TO PROPERTY***

Sunny Hollow Montessori takes pride in our school environment, the classroom materials and our playground area. If a student intentionally damages Sunny Hollow Montessori property or materials, the parents will be immediately notified of the circumstances surrounding the event, and parents will be responsible for damages incurred due to the child's actions.

### ***DIRECTORY***

Sunny Hollow Montessori publishes a school directory which contains the student's name, parent's name, address, and telephone number. The directory is useful in facilitating car pooling or arranging play dates. Parents are asked to indicate their willingness to be included in the school directory by checking the appropriate box on the Application for Registration and Enrollment Agreement. Information contained in the directory is confidential and not to be used for solicitation purposes. Use of this school directory is restricted to personal communications among those listed and to permitted uses by Sunny Hollow Montessori School. Use of the information for any other purpose is prohibited, including but not limited to commercial, private, or political mailings. Such misuse violates the copyright and constitutes misappropriation of the property of Sunny Hollow Montessori.

### ***EMERGENCY DRILLS***

Sunny Hollow Montessori recognizes the importance of fire drills and complies with the Minnesota Uniform Fire Code. Emergency exit and procedure information is posted in each room. All staff has been trained in evacuation procedures and monitor regular fire drills.

Sunny Hollow Montessori has regular tornado drills between April and October and complies with state and local regulations and procedures. Each classroom reports to a designated location in the building during a tornado drill. Staff and students are trained in the proper protective posture.

Other emergency drills are conducted during the school year as required or recommended for safety planning purposes.

### ***FACILITY***

Sunny Hollow Montessori adheres to Minnesota's licensing requirements and reports to the Department of Human Services, Division of Licensing, (651) 296-3971. Sunny Hollow Montessori carries \$1,000,000 Comprehensive General Liability Insurance.

Sunny Hollow Montessori currently rents its space from the Temple of Aaron. Any issues regarding the use of space, environmental concerns, building access questions, etc. must be first communicated

and directed to the Sunny Hollow Montessori Head of School. The Head of School will, in turn, meet with the Temple of Aaron to discuss the concern and mutually agree to a solution.

### ***FAMILY SOCIAL EVENTS***

Sunny Hollow Montessori hosts a variety of family social events, such as Fall Festival, Winter Program and Fun Fair, throughout the year. These events all help build community within the school and help create our own Sunny Hollow Montessori culture. Information regarding each of the events will be sent out as the occasion nears.

### ***FIELD TRIP EXCEEDING ONE MILE***

For every planned field trip in excess of one mile from the Sunny Hollow Montessori premises, a notice will be sent home describing the event with a space for the parent's signature. **NO CHILD WILL BE PERMITTED TO PARTICIPATE WITHOUT A SIGNED FORM;** oral or telephone approval is not acceptable. Some field trips may require parents to pay a nominal activity fee. The fee amount will be included on the field trip permission form. Sunny Hollow Montessori **DOES NOT** carry non-owner car insurance.

### ***GOING OUT***

Going out is an important part of the Montessori curriculum for children in the elementary program. Parents must sign an agreement at the start of the year in order for their children to participate in going out. With the recent adoption of a booster seat law, parents of children under 8 or over eight and under 4'9" in height must provide a booster seat for the going out. Parents or guardians who volunteer to drive for going out will be asked to participate in a background check through the Department of Human Services and will be asked to demonstrate adequate insurance coverage. For more information, please contact the school office.

### ***GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE***

If you have a concern about any aspect of our Montessori programs, we ask that you follow this procedure:

1. Communicate personally with your Head Guide. We encourage you to voice your opinions frankly and constructively. The staff member will respond in a timely manner.
2. If you are not satisfied with the response, please contact the Head of School. If possible and appropriate, a meeting will be arranged for you, the Guide and the Head of School together.
3. If your concern is of an administrative nature or relates to a school policy issue, please speak to the Head of School.
4. In all cases, if you are not satisfied with the response, the grievance can be forwarded to the President of the Board of Trustees, in writing. The Board will respond within 15 working days.

### ***KEY CARD / SECURE ENTRANCE***

Sunny Hollow Montessori is equipped with a security system. Exterior doors remain locked at all times during operating hours. Each family will be issued two key cards that will unlock the door. The cards are radio controlled and can activate the mechanism without being removed from a purse or wallet. They will not demagnetize credit cards. Sunny Hollow Montessori also has an intercom system that is located to the right of the front entry door for visitors and delivery people. Remember

our security system is only as good as the people who use it. Please keep your cards in a safe place and be conscientious of who is following you through the door. If you do not know the person, do not let that person in the building.

Lost cards must be reported immediately to the Sunny Hollow Montessori office staff so that the card key can be deactivated. Replacement cards can be purchased for \$15.00. All cards are the property of Sunny Hollow Montessori and are to be returned to the office upon termination of enrollment at Sunny Hollow. You will be charged \$15.00 per card if the cards issued to your family are not returned.

All visitors or maintenance workers must first visit the office and sign in. If a Sunny Hollow Montessori staff member does not recognize an individual, the individual is questioned immediately. The staff will follow a confidential emergency procedure if there are any signs of danger to the children or staff.

### ***LOCKERS***

A locker will be assigned to each Children's House child. Everything your child brings to school (backpack, extra clothing, winter boots, etc.) **MUST FIT** into their locker. Their extra set of "labeled" clothing may be stored on the top shelf inside the locker. Fire Regulations state that nothing can be left outside the locker on the floor or top of the locker.

### ***LOST AND FOUND***

The school's lost and found is located by the front doors. Students and parents may check for missing items at their convenience. Items will be displayed several times during the year in conjunction with events that bring parents into the building such as Orientation, Conferences, Welcoming Wednesdays, etc. Unclaimed items will be given to local clothing shelves throughout the year. The office will make every effort to notify the parent community before donations are made.

### ***NAP AND REST PROCEDURE***

Sunny Hollow Montessori has a quiet area designated for rest for Children's House students. Children whose parents have indicated that their child naps daily, will be offered a nap in the afternoon. Following with Montessori philosophy, napping will be encouraged however not required. The goal is for each child to learn to self regulate and respond to their personal need for rest.

### ***OBSERVATIONS***

Observation is the cornerstone of the Montessori method. Scientific observations by Dr. Maria Montessori allowed her to discover the true nature of the child. Observation of the children is the most important role of the trained adult in the prepared environment. Only by careful observation can the adult appreciate the development of the young child. It is via this continued observation that the Montessori method survives and evolves.

The Guides welcome observers and we appreciate parent interest and participation in the children's education.

- Observations are schedule starting in November. We allow the children at least two months in the environment before coming to observe. This gives children time to build their community and become confident and comfortable.
- Arrange observations in advance with the school office.

- As with all visits, please check in at the office first; you will be led to the environment.
- To help make your observation fruitful and enjoyable, be objective, as unobtrusive as possible, patient and humble.

During your observation visit at Sunny Hollow Montessori, we ask your cooperation to avoid interaction with the children so their work is not disrupted. Remain in the observer's chair. The children will respect this as your place. The rest of the environment belongs to them! Avoid interaction with the guides. We suggest you write down your comments or questions and discuss them with a guide after your classroom visit.

### ***VISITING THE SCHOOL***

Parents are welcome to visit the school at any time during our hours of operation. All visitors to the school are required to check in with the school office upon arrival. To preserve the classroom experience for your child and the other children in the classroom, we ask that those interested in visiting the classroom schedule an observation. Please refer to the Observation section of this handbook for more information on this enriching experience.

**Alumni students** may visit their previous Montessori classroom by making arrangements with the Sunny Hollow Montessori guide via the office.

### ***PARENT EDUCATION NIGHTS***

The Sunny Hollow Montessori staff strongly emphasizes the importance of educating our parents and guardians on the Montessori Method of education. We invite **ALL** parents and guardians to participate in an adult-only Welcome Back and Information evening at the beginning of the school year as well as various parent education opportunities during the year. When parents encourage their child's independence and responsibility at home, the child experiences a consistency in principles and allows their growth and development both at school and at home. We encourage all parents to attend these informative educational sessions. Communication at the beginning of the year will provide information on topics and dates for these parent education evenings. Sunny Hollow also conducts several parent education evenings throughout the school year on various topic related to Montessori education. Again, all parents are encouraged to attend these evenings.

### ***PARENT/GUIDE COMMUNICATION***

Enrolling your child in Sunny Hollow Montessori begins a relationship--a creative partnership. Your involvement in your child's education gives her/him security and supports our efforts to provide an extraordinary learning experience. Our staff is available to respond to questions from parents or guardians, and to act as a resource and support to them. Sunny Hollow Montessori presents opportunities throughout the year for parent education. Regular, private communication with your child's guide is highly encouraged. Please contact the school office immediately if a non-custodial parent is **NOT** to be notified of your child's progress.

#### **Parent Communication Form**

Parent "Communication" Forms are an important part of the parents' communication with the staff. If there are any changes in your child's schedule, concerns, etc., please use this form to inform the Sunny Hollow Staff. Forms are located in the entrance foyer as well as the office window. Please leave the completed form at the office.

#### **Parent Conferences**

Two conferences are offered to parents during the school year. Specific dates are presented each year and a sign up sheet is posted.

### **Parent Consultation**

Sunny Hollow Montessori Guides are available before and after class time to consult with parents if necessary. Please use the “Parent Communication” form to request a day and time with your child’s guide.

### **Special Needs Evaluation**

If a faculty member is concerned about a child's academic, physical, social or emotional well-being, they will consult with the parents to discuss the options, one of which may be seeking professional assessment.

### **Written Evaluation**

A written evaluation of your child's progress is completed each year. Your child’s progress will be discussed during spring conferences and a copy of the written evaluation will be mailed to you at the end of the school year. A copy will also be retained with your child's records.

### ***PESTICIDES***

In accordance with Minnesota Statute 123.B.575, **Parents Right to Know Act**, all parents, guardians and employees are advised that an estimated schedule of applications of pesticides is available in the school’s office for review or copying. In addition, any parent or guardian who wishes to be notified of any variation from this schedule may be notified by providing five self-addressed, stamped envelopes to the school to be used throughout the year for mailing purposes. The schedule and subsequent notices apply only to pesticides in toxicity categories I, II, or III as classified by the United States Environmental Protection Agency, or a restricted-use pesticide as designated by federal law.

### ***SCHOOL COMMUNICATION***

School communication to parents occurs in a variety of ways including, emails, bulletin board announcements, weekly “News and Notes” and via the easel in the front entrance. Information on upcoming school events, classroom activities, administrative policies and helpful parent tips will be provided in these parent communications. Please review these communications to keep up to date on the activities at Sunny Hollow.

Each child has a folder located in the front entry hall. Folders are grouped by Children’s House and then alphabetized by the child’s last name. It is important that parents check their child's folder daily for pertinent school information. Please keep in mind that these folders are for official SHM communication to families only.

Personal communications between families must utilize U.S. Mail, telephone or email. Each family will be given a school directory in the fall containing contact information. Please contact the office if you would like to receive duplicate copies of information for a non-custodial parent.

### ***PARENT/GUARDIAN PARTICIPATION***

Dr. Montessori meant for the prepared Children’s House environment of the classroom to be a supplement, not a substitute, for the home environment. She recognized that parents and guardians are the main educators for their children and that we are in a partnership with parents and guardians. Therefore, it is essential that we share a relationship of mutual respect for one another. It is our

responsibility to communicate openly and honestly with parents so that we can work together to meet the needs of the children.

Children have the very important task of self-construction. It is the adult's responsibility to prepare an environment for the children that meets their needs for movement, order, constructive work, repetition, and concentration so that this self-construction can take place under the best circumstances.

We want to provide parents and guardians with meaningful ways to participate and help out with the environments, while always being respectful of the important work being carried out by the children. We must not interfere with the independence, work cycles, and presentations going on in the environment. Some of the ways in which parent can be helpful include:

- Assisting with the care of the environments
- Material making
- Preparation for celebrations
- Helping out on fieldtrips
- Sharing your special interests or talents during a collective
- Observing the children at work
- Attending conferences
- Celebrating your child's birthday in the environment
- Attending and participating in fundraisers
- Attending Parent Education Events

### ***PERSONAL ITEMS REQUIRED***

Students are expected to be dressed in comfortable, weather appropriate clothing. In the case of young children, clothing (including undergarments) should allow their independence in using bathroom facilities. We provide each child with a labeled space to store their personal belongings while at school. At the beginning of the academic year, individual guides will notify parents if additional items are required.

### **ALL ITEMS BROUGHT TO SUNNY HOLLOW MONTESSORI MUST BE CLEARLY LABELED WITH YOUR CHILD'S FIRST AND LAST NAME!**

**All students of the Children's Houses are required to bring:**

- **a complete change of clothing\*** (pants, shirt, two pair of undergarments and socks) clearly LABELED with your child's name and placed in a LABELED ZIPLOCK bag,
- **weather appropriate clothing** including jacket, snow pants, water-repellent mittens/gloves, hat or scarf, boots and extra socks. During the winter months, extra mittens and socks are helpful.
- **a recent 3 X 5 or 4 X 6 photograph of your child.** This photo will be laminated and placed on his/her locker.
- **a pair of comfortable PLAIN rubber-soled slippers** (e.g. canvas slip-on shoes from Target, house slippers) LABELED with your child's name. The slippers will be kept in your child's locker and worn daily during the year. The purpose of changing their shoes when they arrive at school is threefold; to encourage their independence to put on and take off their own shoes (and eventually boots!), provide a relaxed and comfortable feeling for them, and wearing unsoiled slippers helps to keep their classroom floors clean. Please refrain from buying slippers/shoes with cartoon or violent characters.

**\*Extra clothing should be checked periodically to make sure it is seasonally appropriate.**

### **Children's House Full Day Students**

- All of the items mentioned under "All Students".
- Younger students should bring a second set of clothes (in case they have more than one accident during the day.)
- Younger students may bring a **SMALL** blanket (no sleeping bags) **OR** pillow (couch size) for rest time. These items **MUST BE** kept in a **LABELED** cloth bag. NOTE: Department of Human Licensing requires that your child's nap/rest articles be washed weekly to meet their standards for health support. Nap/Rest items should be taken home on Friday and returned the following Monday.
- **A LABELED SOFT SHELL lunch box or LABELED disposable lunch bag.** DO NOT send your child's lunch in a hard-shell container because it does not provide adequate ventilation in the refrigerator. LABEL small food containers in their lunch boxes. Please send containers that your child can open and re-seal independently.

The classrooms are prepared environments designed to encourage independence and creative learning for the children. We ask your cooperation in leaving toys, coloring books and action figures at home.

If your child's clothes become soiled while at Sunny Hollow Montessori, a staff person will complete and place a "*Clothes Change Report*" in your child's folder. Circumstances and the location of the soiled clothing are described on the *Clothes Change Report*. **Please make sure you replenish your child's supply of extra clothes!**

### ***PICTURES***

Individual and classroom pictures are taken in the fall by a professional, on-sight photographer. Various photo packages are offered and picture orders are prepaid by parents and guardians.

### ***SCHOOL RECORDS***

Parents or legal guardians may ask to review the contents of any records or data collected on or for their child. The Registrar will not release a student's records without written consent of the parents or guardians.

### ***TRANSPORTATION***

Transportation to and from school is the parent's or guardian's responsibility. The school provides a directory to facilitate car pooling. Parking is available in the rear parking lot. Transportation for field trips in excess of one mile is arranged with a private bus company or the public transit system.

**THIS HANDBOOK MAY BE REVISED AT ANY TIME. SUNNY HOLLOW WILL NOTIFY YOU OF THE CHANGE. VISIT [www.sunnyhollow.com/parents\\_page.html](http://www.sunnyhollow.com/parents_page.html) FOR THE PARENT HANDBOOK.**



## Mandated Reporting Policy for Child Care Programs

### Who should report child abuse and neglect?

- Any person may voluntarily report abuse or neglect.
- If you work with children in a licensed facility, you are legally required or mandated to report and cannot shift the responsibility of reporting to your supervisor or to anyone else at your licensed facility. If you know or have reason to believe a child is being or has been neglected or physically or sexually abused within the preceding three years you must immediately (within 24 hours) make a report to an outside agency.

### Where to report

- If you know or suspect that a child is in immediate danger, call 911.
- All reports concerning suspected abuse or neglect of children occurring in a licensed facility should be made to the Minnesota Department of Human Services, Licensing Division's Maltreatment Intake line at (651) 297-4123.
- Reports regarding incidents of suspected abuse or neglect of children occurring within a family or in the community should be made to the local county social services agency at 651-291-6795 or local law enforcement at 911.
- If your report does not involve possible abuse or neglect, but does involve possible violations of Minnesota Statutes or Rules that govern the facility, call the Department of Human Services, Licensing Division, at (651) 296-3971.

### What to report

- Definitions of maltreatment are contained in the Reporting of Maltreatment of Minors Act (Minnesota Statutes, Section 626.556) and should be attached to this policy.
- A report to any of the above agencies should contain enough information to identify the child involved, any persons responsible for the abuse or neglect (if known), and the nature and extent of the maltreatment and/or possible licensing violations. For reports concerning suspected abuse or neglect occurring within a licensed facility, the report should include any actions taken by the facility in response to the incident.
- An oral report of suspected abuse or neglect made to one of the above agencies by a mandated reporter must be followed by a written report to the same agency within 72 hours, exclusive of weekends and holidays.

### Retaliation prohibited

An employer of any mandated reporter shall not retaliate against the mandated reporter for reports made in good faith or against a child with respect to whom the report is made. The Reporting of Maltreatment of Minors Act contains specific provisions regarding civil actions that can be initiated by mandated reporters who believe that retaliation has occurred.

### Failure to report

A mandated reporter who knows or has reason to believe a child is or has been neglected or physically or sexually abused and fails to report is guilty of a misdemeanor. In addition, a mandated reporter who fails to report maltreatment that is found to be serious or recurring maltreatment may be disqualified from employment in positions allowing direct contact with persons receiving services from programs licensed by the Department of Human Services and by the Minnesota Department of Health, and unlicensed personal care provider organizations.

The reporting policies and procedures must be provided to parents of all children at the time of enrollment in the child care program and must be made available upon request. The Division of Licensing recommends that parents with children currently enrolled in your child care program are informed of the development of the reporting policies and procedures, and provide them with an opportunity to request the information.