

# **DeLor Montessori School**

## **PARENT HANDBOOK**

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# DeLor Montessori School

## The Montessori Method

The basic idea in the Montessori philosophy of education is that every child carries unseen within him the man he will become in order to develop his physical, intellectual and spiritual powers to the fullest, he must have freedom, a freedom to be achieved through order and self-discipline. The world of the child is full of signs and sounds, which at first appears chaotic. From this chaos, the child must gradually create order and learn to distinguish among the impressions that assail his senses, slowly but surely gaining mastery of himself and his environment.

Dr. Maria Montessori developed what she called the “prepared environment” which already possesses a certain order and disposes the child to develop at his own speed, according to his own capacities, and in a non-competitive atmosphere in his first school years. “Never let a child risk failure, until he has a reasonable chance of success”, said Dr. Montessori, understanding the necessity for the acquisition of a basic skill before its use in a competitive learning situation. The years between three and six are the years that a child most easily learns the ground rules of the human behavior. These years can be constructively devoted to “normalizing” the child, freeing him through the acquisitions of good manners and habits, to take his place in the culture.

The child who has had the benefit of a Montessori environment is freer at a later age to devote himself more exclusively to the development of his intellectual faculties. The method by which children are taught in the Montessori school might well be called “structural learning”. The structure of Montessori learning involves the use of many materials with which the child may work individually. At every step of his learning, the teaching material is designed to test his understanding and to correct his errors.

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 the reference person and example, and offers the child stimulation. Yet it is the child who learns, who is motivated through the work itself, (not solely by the teacher’s personality), to persist in his chosen task. If

the Montessori child is free to learn, it is because he has acquired from his exposure to both physical and mental order, and “inner discipline”.

This is the core of Dr. Montessori’s educational philosophy. Social adjustment, though it is necessary condition for learning in a schoolroom, is not the purpose of education. Patterns of concentration, initiative and thoroughness established in early childhood, produce a confident and competent learner in later years. Schools have existed historically to teach children to observe, to think, and to judge. Montessori introduces children to the joy of learning at an early age and provides a framework in which intellectual and social discipline go hand in hand.

DeLor Montessori School emphasizes the importance of Montessori insights for children and adults of all ages. Although children may begin their Montessori education at age two, the principles of self-motivation learning apply to all learning experiences. The DeLor Montessori School supports this idea with a complete pre-school and kindergarten curriculum, as well as parent education program so that all ages may benefit from his exceptional method of education.

# DeLor Montessori School

## Tuition Policies

1. There will be no more tuition notices given out. A reminder will be posted, as in the past, on the Sign-In and Sign-Out sheets on the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month.
2. If payment is late by 1 – 3 business days, there shall be a 10% late fee due in addition to the regular tuition payment.
3. If payment is late by 4 – 6 business days, there shall be a 20% late fee due in addition to the regular tuition payment.
4. Payments later than 6 business days past due will incur a late fee and be looked upon as possible grounds for dis-enrollment.
5. A payment will be considered late if made after 6:00 PM on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day that tuition is due.
6. A 30-day notice must be given to the Administrative Director for any changes to the schedule.
7. A 30-day notice must be given to apply your deposit to the last two weeks of attendance.
8. The Registration fee is \$150.00, which includes a Montessori handbook and a School T-shirt. This is a non-refundable fee. If your child dis-enrolls and then returns to the school, these fees are due again.
9. If any account has two (2) items returns from the bank for NSF the only acceptable forms of future payments will be the following: Cashier's Check, Money Order or Cash.
10. An annual tuition increase will be reviewed at the beginning of each school year, to be effective as of January of the new year. If any tuition adjustments need to be made prior to this date, a special notice will be circulated.
11. Pre-registration for Fall takes place in April. Two (2) weeks tuition is due at this time, which is applied to September's tuition. Your child must be enrolled through the Summer Program in order for the September deposit to apply.

# Calendar

DeLor Montessori School is open twelve months a year. The academic year is the second week in September through June. The school will publish its newsletter monthly, giving information on the current events.

## DeLor Montessori School will observe the following holidays:

- Thanksgiving and the day after
- Winter Vacation (December 24<sup>th</sup> at 12:00 noon – January 1<sup>st</sup>)
- New Year's Day
- Memorial Day
- Independence Day
- Labor Day
- President's Day
- Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Other current events and dates will be published in the school newsletter. At the end of the summer session, before the new school year begins we will be CLOSED the last two (2) days of August for repairs and preparation for school to begin.

## Arrival and Departure (Primary – Kindergarten)

Every child who arrives at school must be signed in on the sheets provided in their assigned classroom. Take your child to the room and make contact with the teacher there. If your child arrives after 9:00am please make contact with your child's teacher. We cannot be responsible for any child whose parents have not followed these provisions. If you arrive while the children are on the playground, you must walk your child to the playground and make contact with a teacher. Do not leave them unattended in the building.

On occasions your child may be unhappy when you leave. We understand how hard it is to say goo-bye to a child who is crying, but in almost all cases the child quickly learns to cope with your departure and stops crying within a few minutes. Our staff is always able to provide those few extra minutes of attention an unhappy child needs to ease him or her into a new school day. When picking up your child, you must sign out on the sheets provided. Allow enough time for your child to put away any materials he or she is using and collect personal items such as a coat, lunch pail, papers, etc.

## Health / Medication (All Classes)

Non-prescription medications may be administered at school only with written permission for the child's doctor. After administering medication, the teacher will initial the form. Prescription medications are administered only once a day, at lunchtime. If your child requires medication more than once during the day, you are welcome to come and administer it yourself. Children who exhibit any symptoms of illness such as an elevated temperature, nausea, body aches, headache, etc. must not be brought to school. It is the prerogative of the child's teacher to refuse admission of any child who is in his / her opinion showing symptoms of any sort of illness. If your child becomes ill while at school, you will be notified and must pick him / her up immediately. We have an isolation area for children who become ill, but no provisions for their long-term care. On occasions you may wish your child to remain indoors during outside time because of sniffles, etc. Since our schedule and staffing do not provide for a teacher to remain inside all day with a single child, alternative arrangements of childcare will need to be made for that day.

## Parent Involvement (All Classes)

Parental involvement is a necessary and vital part of DeLor Montessori School. Your participation can be in the form of driving on a study trip, providing refreshments for a class party, volunteering to share your special hobby with a small group. There are as many possibilities as there are parents. We request that each family donate eight (8) hours during the term of the school year. In lieu of volunteering this time, a special fee of \$4.00 per hour will be charged. A volunteer list has been included in your enrollment package. Please contact your child's head teacher as to when your services can be utilized.

## Field Trips (Primary - Kindergarten)

Field trips are schedule by each individual teacher, on the basis of curriculum and class needs. Frequent walks are taken in the immediate neighborhood. A consent form must be signed prior to each field trip planned in order for a child to participate.

## Eligibility (All Classes)

DeLor Montessori School accepts students between the ages of 8 months through 6 years. The school admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities made available to students at DeLor Montessori. The school does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies and programs.

## Parent Responsibility for Current Information (All Classes)

It is your responsibility to keep the school informed as to any change in home address, work phone numbers, emergency phone numbers or person's authorized to pick up your child. The school cannot be responsible for notifying you in the event of an emergency if we do not have current information.

## Clothing (Primary - Kindergarten)

When choosing clothing for school, consider both daily activities and your child's comfort. Children are bound to get dirty during the course of a busy day. Tempera paints, sand piles and grass mounds all take their toll. A child who is told "don't get dirty" is inhibited about participating in activities that may be messy, thus limiting his or her experience.

Clothing should be easily washable and appropriate for school. For safety on the playground all children are required to wear socks and closed toe shoes. Slip on

shoes is a hazard. Shoes must tie, velcro or buckle. Long dresses are constricting are not allowed. Boots are difficult for the children to remove and put on by themselves, this we discourage wearing them. Think of the water and choosing clothing. Layers such as sweaters, jackets, long-sleeved shirts and cotton t-shirts are good choices. Girls are most comfortable in pants when the days are cool; if a dress is a must, have your daughter wear tights.

Finally, choose clothing that your child can easily manipulate. Overalls are cute, but buttons and clasps are next to impossible for most children to work by themselves. Pants with elastic waistbands are an excellent choice, as are pullover shirts. Be sure EVERY ITEM your child wears to school is labeled with his or her name. Each child should have available a complete change of clothing, also labeled.

## Vacation Credit (All Classes)

After your child has been enrolled in DeLor Montessori School for a one-year period, you will be eligible for a vacation discount as stated below. The first week of vacation will be a full tuition, the second, third, and fourth weeks of consecutive vacation will be at ½ tuition. This vacation discount will be limited to a maximum of four weeks per calendar year.

## Toys (Primary-Kindergarten)

Toys, games, balls, cars, etc., are disruptive when brought to school. These items are NOT ALLOWED and will be sent home with parents.

## Lunches & Snacks (Primary-Kindergarten)

DeLor Montessori School will provide 2 daily snacks consisting of fruit juices, crackers, fruit, raisins and other healthy foods. Each child, who is at school between noon and 1:00 p.m., will need a lunch. We do have a milk program, which we provide for all full-time students. If you do not wish your child drinking milk, please send along a drink with lunch also. Send foods that are already prepared: We have not facilities for

cooking portions of your child's lunch. If you wish for a food to be warmed up, please send it in a plastic container (Metal cannot be microwaved). We're interested in good food for healthy bodies; candy and gum are not allowed. In order to make lunchtime easier for your child, send items he or she can manage easily. Fruit such, as oranges should be cut in sections before being packed, provide a plastic spoon if a utensil is necessary.

## Classroom Management (All Classes)

Our method of classroom management is based on respect. Respect for the students and respect for the teachers. In a situation where everyone feels secure is knowing their feelings and opinions are acknowledged in a positive manner, behavior problems are minimal. There are few classroom rules, but each is an integral part of the environment. Each child may choose what work he or she would like to do, as long as that choice does not interfere with the choice of another child. For example, Robert is building the Pink Tower. Kim would also like to do this job. Until Robert has finished and replaced the cubes on their stand, Kim may not touch or in any way disturb Robert's work. She has demonstrated respect for this choice. Each child may work with any piece of material in the environment as long as they wish, provided the child is using the material in a constructive manner. In demonstrating respect for the materials, they must be constructively and with care. We stress whispering voices and walking feet indoors, thus making our classrooms a pleasant learning environment. A child who is experiencing difficulties within the classroom is asked to take a "time-out" where he or she can relax and discuss the matter with the teacher. We focus on the behavior as unacceptable while reassuring the child that we care about them and the reasons behind the behavior.

When at all possible the children handle their own conflicts. Instead of stepping in and deciding on a solution for the children involved, the teacher acts as a mediator. She asks questions in order to allow the children to verbalize their opinions and feelings about what has happened. The children are responsible for helping a child that they have hurt. A child who knocks another down is responsible for helping the other child up and brushed them off. A child who has disturbed another's is responsible for putting it back. A child who has hurt another child's feelings is responsible for making amends. You can expect immediate contact with your child's teacher if a problem is reoccurring. We strive to work with parts in order to make school a pleasant experience for your child.

## Releases (All Classes)

We do not release your child to anyone whose name does not appear on the pick-up authorization. Please send a note if someone new will be picking up your child. If you have custody and the other parent is not allowed to see or pick up the child, we must have a copy of the restraining order before we can refuse the request.

## Program (Primary - Kindergarten)

Within a flexible schedule designed by each teacher, your child will experience 2 hours of work with the Montessori materials, ½ hour of outside time and ½ hour of large group activity during a 3 hour period. Children who are enrolled in an after lunch session will have an additional work time with the materials as well as experience with creative movement. Please contact your child's teacher for specific details. Day care hours are spent engaged in play with educational toys, art activities and stories. We stress these hours as a time to relax, to pretend and to experience play with special friends.

## Absences (All Classes)

If your child is going to absent, please contact the school. If you anticipate a period of extended absence, notify the Director. An extended, unexplained absence or non-payment of tuition can result in dis-enrollment. Any child dis-enrolled will be placed at the bottom of the waiting list and must pay the new student enrollment fee upon re-enrollment. Extended absences are handled individually.

## Birthdays (Primary - Kindergarten)

Birthdays are celebrated at DeLor Montessori as days marking the children's development. Please send picture of representative times of your child's life that we

may borrow to discuss their growth. The children may host their own parties by bringing nutritious snacks to prepare and serve. It has been tradition at DeLor Montessori for the birthday child to give a book to the school. This is not mandatory, but the children really seem to enjoy it.

## Emergency Procedures (All Classes)

Fire drills are held once a month in accordance with the school's schedule. The disaster evacuation plan is posted near each exit for your reference.

## Staff (All Classes)

DeLor Montessori School is staffed by a highly qualified group of teachers and aides. Teachers must hold a diploma from a recognized Montessori teacher training center, in addition to college work in Early Childhood Education. Aides are college students gaining practical experience with young children while working on classroom credits. In all instances, your child's teacher is the person to contact should you have a question or concern. If such matters are still unresolved, a Joint teacher-parent-direct conference will be arranged.

## Acceptance of Policies (All Classes)

When your enrollment package is complete and registration fee has been received, you will receive one (1) copy of this handbook. In receiving this handbook and acknowledging the same by your signature, you agree to the policies and procedures contained within for the duration of your child's enrollment at DeLor Montessori School. Any changes in this document will be delivered to all patrons and will be effective as of the date issued.

## Telephone Usage (All Classes)

Phone calls to members of the teaching staff are best made before 9:00am Noon-1:00pm, and after 3:00pm. Messages may be left on the answering machine at (408) 773-0200 during class time. Please do not make phone calls to students except in matters of extreme emergency. The Administrative Director is in the office from 8:30am-4:30pm for your convenience.

## Withdrawal (All Classes)

A one- (1) month notice is required if your child is to be withdrawn from the school. This notice must be in writing and given to your child's teacher. If the month's written notice is not given, you will be required to pay tuition for that period of time. At this time, your deposit may be applied.

## Termination (All Classes)

"DeLor Montessori" reserves the right to refuse and / or terminate enrollment for non-compliance with our policies and procedures. A two- (2) week notification will be given prior to termination.