



St. Margaret's  
Montessori

**PARENT HANDBOOK**

**St. Margaret's Montessori School Inc.  
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## **INTRODUCTION**

Welcome to St. Margaret's Montessori School's Parent Handbook!

St. Margaret's Montessori School is a non-profit organization started by parents and educators from St. Margaret's Anglican Church who wanted to both help alleviate Winnipeg's child care situation as well as fully utilize the new and beautifully renovated space in the church's basement.

Situated in the heart of Wolseley, in St. Margaret's Anglican Church, St. Margaret's Montessori offers an authentic and affordable Montessori program to residents in the Wolseley, West End and West Broadway communities. The program is unfunded, but we hope to offer privately funded subsidies for low-income families starting September 2020.

## **PHILOSOPHY**

St. Margaret's Montessori School Inc. offers an authentic Montessori program in a loving and caring environment that promotes the intellectual, emotional, physical, social, and spiritual development of children. Through the Montessori program, we allow children to discover a love learning, mutual respect, and care for the environment each at their own developmental pace. Our environment is designed to allow children to work at their own pace and following their own interests using familiar materials in the Practical Life area, scientifically designed materials in the Sensorial area, sensorial and tangible materials in the Math and Language areas.

St. Margaret's Montessori strives to:

- Provide an authentic Montessori curriculum that is unique to each child based on their interest and stage of development
- Model care for the environment and for one another thereby instilling values of mutual respect, honesty, responsibility, and a love of discovery
- Promote the child's own independence and success
- Communicate and work with parents and guardians to put the best interest of the child first

Due to the nature of the Montessori program and environment, mixed ages (from 3-6 years) allow for optimal development. Older children have an opportunity to master materials and present them to the younger children, while the younger children remind the older ones of the rules! Children that remain in the program for the full 3 years have the opportunity to take on a new role each year.

## **ADMINISTRATION**

The school is licensed by Early Learning and Child Care as a Nursery School and will operate from 8am to 12pm for morning session and 1pm to 5pm for afternoon session Monday to Friday. We will operate from September to the end of June every year and will also run a month-long Summer Program. In collaboration with Laura Secord Elementary School, we will also offer a limited number of transportation spots for Nursery and Kindergartener students who attend Laura Secord.

### **Board of Directors Responsibilities**

St. Margaret's Montessori is a non-profit organization. Its' Board of Directors is made up of church members and parent volunteers who work together to manage the organization. Members are actively

involved in the decision-making process of the centre. Serving on the board provides the parents with the opportunity to participate in a democratic process while building, managing, and improving the day care in many areas. The board meets once a month for an evening meeting or Sunday afternoon (no regular meetings in July and August). Board members are legally responsible for governing the corporation and may be liable for misusing or neglecting legal responsibilities. Board members are expected to:

- Govern the corporation with leadership, strategic direction and planning
- Meet the financial and legal obligations of the corporation
- Act honestly and in the best interest of the corporation, due diligence
- State a conflict of interest if there is a difference between the interest of the corporation and personal interests
- Declare a conflict of interest if they stand to benefit financially, directly or indirectly, from the actions of the Board
- Know the By-laws of the corporation
- Attend meetings regularly and be prepared to discuss all items on the agenda
- Review all reports and correspondence from licensing authorities
- Make financial decisions based on knowledge and professional counsel, if appropriate
- Take a leadership role in the formation and implementation of policies for the corporation

## **PROGRAM AREAS AND GOALS**

### **St. Margaret's Montessori Goals**

We are committed to nurturing and educating the complete development of the child. The Montessori program provides a holistic and inclusive approach that considers the uniqueness of each child and promotes their emotional, intellectual, spiritual, physical, and social well-being. We are not educating the child solely for subsequent years in their academic pursuits, but for life!

St. Margaret's Montessori strives to:

- Provide an authentic Montessori curriculum that is unique to each child based on their interest and stage of development
- Model care for the environment and for one another thereby instilling values of mutual respect, honesty, responsibility, and a love of discovery
- Promote the child's own independence and success
- Communicate and work with parents and guardians to put the best interest of the child first

### **Areas in Montessori**

#### *Practical Life Area*

In Montessori, Practical Life is the most important area in the environment and it is the first to be introduced because the activities (such as The Dressing Frames, Pouring from Jug to Glass, and Sweeping) are familiar. This familiarity will assist the children in adapting to the new environment. The Practical Life area also allows the children to work on their control and coordination of movement including the refinement and inhibition of movement which allows the child to be successful in all areas as they work with the materials. These foundational skills from the Practical Life area also include Grace

and Courtesy (such as how to pass by someone, how to say thank you, how to interrupt) which are modelled by staff; they also allow the children to become independent and take care of themselves, those around them, and their environment.

### *Sensorial Area*

It is within the Sensorial area that the children are able to be a junior scientist. It is within this area that the child begins to develop his own senses and his own process of discovery. A huge advantage of the Sensorial area of the environment is that the Sensorial materials (such as the Pink Tower, Sound Boxes, and Colour Boxes) are in their purest form. The materials have been distilled from the world of abstraction (and distraction) and isolated both to highlight particular aspects of the materials, and also the senses with which the children engage – the children are receiving the concrete information – the greatest foundation upon which to later build abstractions. Children learn to discriminate and refine their senses by sequencing, categorizing, and ordering.

### *Language*

Language acquisition is the child's most remarkable achievement. While the Montessori environment has a specific area for language, language materials and lessons permeate every area. Through speaking, writing, and reading, the child develops their language throughout the environment. Their vocabulary is enriched (with activities such as the Classified Cards and by speaking with their peers), their writing prepared sensorially (with Sandpaper Letters), and their love of reading is fostered both in stories and by beginning with phonetic pronunciation.

### *Math*

The Math area of the environment, as in all other areas of the environment, moves from the concrete to the abstract. Materials such as the Number Rods, Bead Cabinet, and Snake Game can be seen, touched, and manipulated giving the children a sensorial experience before introducing the symbols. Math is even less tangible than other abstract concepts (such as colours) in the everyday environment so the concrete experience is even more important (the colour green can be seen, but the number "3" is not as apparent). It is important that the children receive this concrete experience as the foundation on which to build because even if they can say 1, 2, 3, 4... it does not mean that they actually know what these symbols represent. The Math area allows for this solid foundation.

### *Cultural*

Because Practical Life, Sensorial, Language, and Math appear in every culture, the Cultural materials are built into every area. The Puzzle Maps, Geography Folders, Practical Life materials (such as Using Chopsticks), and Classified Cards all provide an opportunity for the children to make a connection to their global family.

### *Music*

Our music area provides the children an opportunity to try different instruments such as the Piano, Bells, or Rain Sticks. Music can also be heard by various children who sing while they work and during our meeting times when we sing a variety of songs with participation and actions.

## Super Heroes, Weapons, and Toys from Home

We do not allow for toys from home as these toys can often be distracting, lost, or broken. If toys from home make it to school, we will simply remind the children that these toys must remain in their backpack. If the toy persists on making its way into the classroom it will be taken to be given to the guardians at pick up.

If children speak about weapons and violence in the class, we will speak with children about weapons and why it is that we need to be careful in talking about such things and what care people must employ when using weapons (such as police officers, or weapons for hunting). While children may speak about such things within appropriate parameters, violence and weapons will not be allowed in the classroom in any form and children will be informed about this in these conversations.

## Daily Program

St. Margaret's Montessori will be open from 8:00 to 5:00pm and will run as outlined in our daily schedule. Due to the nature of our program, we are only able to offer a half-days, which means that our curriculum will remain consistent throughout the year to ensure that children feel comfortable and well-adapted to their new surroundings. The majority of the materials will remain the same as children become familiar with them and learn to master them. We will mark the change of seasons by highlighting books that reflect the season we are in, changing our décor (including some material on the shelves as well as pictures on our walls), and singing seasonal songs and stories. When possible, we will also try to provide seasonal food for snack such as a variety of apples in the fall, strawberries in the spring, warm apple cider or hot chocolate in the winter, etc.

Time	Work/Activities	
8:00am – 8:30am	Arrive, put away outdoor clothes and shoes	
8:00am – 11:30am	Work with Montessori materials in the environment Including: Practical/Home Life, Sensorial, Math, Language, Geography, Cultural	11:00am – Afternoon L.S. children get ready to go to L.S.
11:30am – 11:45am	Clean-up work and gather for songs and stories	
11:45am – 12:00pm	Get ready for home	
12:00pm – 1:00pm	School Closed	
1:00pm – 1:30pm	Arrive, put away outdoor clothes and shoes	1:00pm – Morning L.S. children get ready and walk to St. Margaret's Montessori
1:00pm – 4:15pm	Work with Montessori materials in the environment Including: Practical/Home Life, Sensorial, Math, Language, Geography, Cultural	
4:15pm – 4:30pm	Clean-up work and gather for songs and stories	
4:30pm – 5:00pm	Get ready for home	

Due to the nature of our Nursery School program, we cannot offer childcare for more than 4 consecutive hours. Parents wishing to enroll their children in both Morning and Afternoon sessions may do so, but must make other child care arrangements from 12:00pm to 1:00pm.

## ***Guidance Policy***

One of the goals of our program is to help each child develop inner self-discipline and direction. As the child interacts with the materials, the staff, and the other children in this prepared environment, they develop respect for themselves, the materials, and other people. In order to help each child achieve this goal, the staff will use the following forms of behaviour management:

*Positive Reinforcement* – By giving the child appropriate positive feedback, the staff will always work to strengthen desirable behaviour.

*Verbal Guidance* – When conflict arises, staff will get the child’s attention by walking over to them, bending down to establish eye contact, and talking to the child in a quiet and calm manner. The staff will use clear, specific, and positive statements that the child can understand to help the child follow the directions or requests. Instead of using the word *don’t* or *no* which can leave the child uncertain, the staff will tell the child *what* is expected and *why*.

*Re-Directing Behaviour* – If verbal guidance alone does not elicit acceptable behaviour from the child, the staff person will redirect the activity or behaviour into a more acceptable form. The child will be told what they can do, and be given helpful choices or suggestions.

*Time-Out* – If verbal guidance or redirecting the child’s behaviour does not result in acceptable behaviour, or if the staff person feels the situation could become harmful, removal of the child from the situation may be necessary. The child may be asked to sit by themselves for a short period of time (2 to 3 minutes) and will be told why they have been separated from the other children. When time is up, the staff person will return to the child, talk about the problem in a clear and concise way, and then help the child return to the group.

*Natural Consequences* – The child is told what will occur if they are not willing to cooperate. Consequences will be consistent at all times and will be stated clearly to the child.

The staff shall not permit, practice, or inflict on the child a) any form of physical punishment (hitting, shaking, spanking) b) any form of verbal or emotional abuse c) denial of physical necessities (shelter, clothing, food, bedding).

Note: Any disapproval that a staff person must express will always focus on the act or behaviour of the child, not on the child. The staff person will always encourage and help the child to express themselves verbally (“It makes me upset when you touch my work”) rather than physically (hitting).

## **PARENTS**

### ***The Parent’s Role***

#### **School Visits**

We would love to show you all that your child does in the classroom; however, we do ask that you schedule visits ahead of time. Visits at the start of a school year are discouraged because it may increase separation anxiety for your child or other children in the classroom. Although St. Margaret’s Montessori has an open door policy, we ask that you respect our learning environment.

### Home to School Transition

The transition from home to school can be very difficult for children and parents. To ease in this transition we recommend that your child gets a full nights rest (10-11 hours if possible). We also recommend attending an open house, or making an appointment with the school for you and your child(ren) to come and meet the teachers and tour the facility. Starting on the first day of school, our policy is to not allow parents into the classroom environment, but to say goodbye to their child at the door. We know that this is often not an easy thing for parents or children to do, but establishing a transitional routine right away is often the best way to assist children in adapting to their new environment and routine.

### ***Parent Involvement***

An open invitation is extended to all our parents to volunteer during the school year. Parents are invited to participant in the following ways:

- Fundraising and Event planning
- Assisting with field trips to the library/park
- Being on the Board of Directors
- Attending Parent Teacher Interviews and Info Nights
- Reading to and with the children
- Material donations (eg. Art supplies, snacks, etc.)

**Volunteers who will have interaction with students, are required to provide the school with a valid police check.**

### **Parent Information**

#### Parent/Teacher Interviews

Parent/Teacher Interviews will occur twice during the year, during spring and fall of the school year. The first Interview will be a direct discussion between the teachers and parents about the what the child is interested in working on during the school day, any concerns that the teacher or parents may have, and where the child is at in regards to the various areas such as Language and Math.

#### Speaking with Teachers

If parents need to voice any concerns with a teacher directly, they must make an appointment to do so. Teachers have a lot to do while the program is running and a lot of children to monitor so they respectfully ask that you arrange a meeting ahead of time outside of the school day to meet or discuss the concern.

### **Personal Belongings**

Each child will be provided with space to keep their personal belongings in during their attendance at the centre. Clothing guidelines are in place to respect the health, hygiene, personal and cultural beliefs of all families using our centre. In the event that we go outside, or during transportation, we will be outside in all weather conditions (except extreme cold/heat).

## Clothing

One full set of extra clothes (of your choice) should be left in the child's backpack. Indoor shoes are required (and we recommend shoes that are comfortable and easy enough to get back on if they come off). In regards to clothing:

1. It is recommended that children be dressed in comfortable casual clothing that allows freedom of movement.
2. In case of soiling of clothing, each child requires a full change of clothing (including socks/underwear) be available each day. Should a child not have an adequate change of clothing, they will be given a clean pair of the school's extra clothing, which must be washed and returned to the school asap.
3. Suitable outdoor footwear is required to be worn. Flip-flops/crocs do not work well for running and when small pebbles, gravel, or mulch is present.
4. Children must be sent with a hat, sunscreen and any other protective accessories to reduce the risk of sun exposure.

Your child will need to have the following items clearly marked with the child's name and left at the center at all times. Soiled items need to be replaced immediately and will be sent home in plastic bags:

1. Sneakers/slippers for indoor use.
2. Box/package of diapers, wipes, cream (if required)
3. Appropriate outdoor clothing (according to season) ie: Splash pants, snow pants, swimsuits, etc.
4. Weather appropriate footwear (i.e. sneakers, rubber boots, winter boots, etc.) Please ensure your child's personal belongings are labeled to prevent loss. In addition, we ask that you please leave your child's toys at home. Guns, fighting toys, or any toys promoting violence and/or destruction will not be permitted at the Centre.
5. St. Margaret's Montessori School is not responsible for lost or stolen items.

## **REGISTRATION POLICIES**

### ***Hours of Operation***

St. Margaret's Montessori is open Monday to Friday, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm.

\*Please note: If the scheduled holiday falls on a weekend St. Margaret's Montessori will be closed the next school day following the holiday.

If you plan on keeping your child home for the day, or to be late, please let the centre know. We are very concerned when children are absent for any reason.

### **Morning Program**

Doors open at 8:00am  
Drop-off until 9:15am (outside doors locked at 9:15am)

Doors open at 11:15am  
Pick-up until 12:00pm (outside doors locked at 12:05pm)

Afternoon Program

Doors open at 12:50pm  
Drop-off until 1:15pm (outside doors locked at 1:15pm)

Doors open at 4:30pm  
Pick-up until 5:00pm (outside doors locked at 5:05pm)

*If your child is going to be late or absent, please give us as much notice as possible.*

Stat Holidays and School Closures

We are closed for all recognized Statutory, Provincial, and General Holidays. We are closed for two weeks during Christmas Break, one week during Spring Break and during the months of July and August. If enrolment demands are significant we will offer camps during spring and summer breaks at an additional cost.

*A limited number of part-time spots may be available, please email the school to inquire.*

**Parent Billing and Fees**

The 2020 fees for January to June (inclusive) are as follows:

<b>St. Margaret's Montessori Program (2.5-6 years)</b>			
<b>Program Fees per Month</b>		<b>Transportation Fees per Month Payable to Laura Secord</b>	
\$400	5 Half Day Mornings ( <b>8am to 12pm</b> )	\$40	Drop off for Afternoon Kindergarten/Nursery School (Please note there are a maximum of 10 spots available)
\$400	5 Half Day Afternoons ( <b>1:00pm to 5:00pm</b> )	\$40	Pick up for Morning Kindergarten/Nursery School (Please note there are a maximum of 10 spots available)
\$700	5 Full Days ( <b>8am to 12pm &amp; 1pm to 5pm</b> )*		

\* Due to the nature of our program, we cannot offer child care for more than 4 consecutive hours. Parents wishing to enroll their children in both Morning and Afternoon sessions may do so, but must make other child care arrangements from 12:00pm to 1:00pm.

## Snack & Supply Fees

\$60	Annual Snack & Supply Fee (per child/year adjusted for January to June)
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Fees are payable by e-transfer and must be paid by the first of every month! Late fees will be accepted within 5 days from the 1<sup>st</sup>, but will be subject to an additional \$20 fee.

In the case of noncompliance of payments of fees; the Director will consider what course of action will be taken on an individual-family basis to be invoked at any time. The Director reserves the right to revoke any and all privileges and services rendered; if the family does not comply with the course of action proposed by the school and Director/Site Manager. The Director reserves the right to collect past due funds through small claims court, collection agencies and any such means. All expenses and fees will be charged to the family.

In the event that a child has to be withdrawn from St. Margaret's Montessori School Inc., the following steps must be taken:

- A minimum of **one calendar months' notice** must be provided in writing or emailed to the Directors or the Administrative Assistant at [info@stmargaretsmontessori.ca](mailto:info@stmargaretsmontessori.ca)
- Child's last day of attendance at school must coincide with the final date that is stated on the written notice.
- No tuition refunds will be given after March 1st of the current school year
- Any family intending on withdrawing a currently registered child between June 15th and September 2nd will still be required to give one calendar months' notice. The school will refund any previously paid tuition fees minus the early withdrawal (early withdrawal is the total of one month's regular registration) fee cheque is the same amount as registration for one calendar month. Any school office closures will be identified by email.

### **Late Fees**

Late fees will apply after the closing time. The cost is \$1.00 per minute. This money will be payable to the teacher staying late with your child. Please make every effort to arrive on time.

If for some reason your child has not been picked up by pick up time and we are unable to contact you, we will try contacting your emergency contact list in the order in which they have been provided. If none of your emergency contacts can be reached, we will contact Child and Family Services as a next step.

### **Attendance**

We offer no allowance for sick or vacation leave. Our financial survival depends on optimum enrolment at all times.

### ***Discharge/Withdrawal Policy***

If there are any issues that are brought to our attention by our staff, parents/guardians or by your child, a meeting will be scheduled to address the concerns. The meeting will involve the owner, necessary staff members, and the parent/guardians. The concern(s) will be clearly noted and discussed throughout the meeting. Some examples may include: failure to adhere to our centre's policies, late payment, behavioural problems etc. Potential solutions will be determined in a non-judgmental manner. A plan will be designed to solve the issue(s) and a second meeting will be arranged to reassess the situation after a week has passed. If the issue(s) is still not resolved to the satisfaction of everyone involved. A 1-week written notice of termination of services will be issued if it is determined that withdrawing the child(ren) from the program is necessary.

We require a minimum of 2 weeks written notice prior to withdrawing your child from our care. Even if your child does not attend our centre during that two weeks time, payment is still required for the two weeks.

### ***Guardianship***

In the event of parental separation, the parent or guardian will inform St. Margaret's Montessori School of the custody and access arrangement.

### ***Suspected Intoxication/Drug Abuse***

The Center is required to release the child to the parent/guardian even if they appear intoxicated or otherwise incapable of caring for the child; however, if staff suspect that a parent/guardian is intoxicated, we will speak with the parent/guardian and recommend that they find alternative transportation if they are driving. We will also offer to call emergency contact for the parent/guardian. If the parent/guardian decides to drive the child away from the centre, staff are obligated to contact the police as well as Child and Family services to report the suspected intoxication. Late fees will apply.

### ***Confidentiality***

Our staff, Board of Directors, parents, and volunteers are expected to keep all written and verbal information regarding the school, students, and staff strictly confidential. Confidentiality laws bind staff that does not allow them to discuss children in the program with anyone other than their own parents. Gossip about other parents and children can be very destructive and tends to create larger problems. We ask parents/guardians to respect this request and not to put staff in an awkward position by asking about other children in the program.

If it is necessary, and with the parent's/guardian's/caregiver's permission, for a staff person to use electronic devices to photograph or video tape children, the data must be downloaded onto the Center's computer and immediately deleted from the staff person's device.

Information about staff, children, parents/guardians/caregivers and the Center (including photos or videos) must not be posted on personal web space, any social networking site (blogs, Facebook, Myspace, Twitter, etc.) any public networking or file sharing site (Photobucket, Flickr, You Tube, etc.) or any other type of internet website.

Staff, board members, and volunteers must not accept children as "friends" or "buddies" when using social networking sites.

### ***Nursery and Kindergarten***

Kindergarten and Nursery children enrolled in St. Margaret's Montessori will walk with the staff to transport children between Laura Secord Elementary School and St. Margaret's Montessori. Parents are required to complete and sign a transportation agreement form that includes the details of the transportation arrangements. Private vehicles will never be used to transport children. During transportation, children will be closely supervised. Attendance will be checked before and after children depart from St. Margaret's Montessori or the school. Parents will be provided with a copy of the Transportation Policy which will be reviewed with them if transportation is required. Parents must inform the child's school of transportation arrangements. The Transportation Agreement will be renewed each school year.

### ***Field Trips***

**Field trips are only for children 4 to 6 years old.** St. Margaret's Montessori School will advise parents at least 24 hours in advance of field trips by sending a permission letter home. Permission letters will clearly outline date, time, destination, travel, cost and purpose of the field trip and contain a detachable portion that must be signed and returned to the school. Available funds permitting, field trips will be subsidized by the school and the remaining portion of the fee will be presented to parents in the permission letter. Volunteers will be invited to attend field trips.

### **Permission for Outings**

At the beginning of the school year, parents will be requested to sign a letter granting permission for students to participate in local excursions in the neighborhood. This will include visits to local parks and playgrounds.

### ***Transportation***

Kindergarten and Nursery children enrolled in St. Margaret's Montessori will walk with the staff to transport children between Laura Secord school and St. Margaret's Montessori. Parents are required to complete and sign a transportation agreement form that includes the details of the transportation arrangements. Private vehicles will never be used to transport children. During transportation, children will be closely supervised. Attendance will be checked before and after children depart from St. Margaret's Montessori or the school. Parents will be provided with a copy of the Transportation Policy which will be reviewed with them if transportation is required. Parents must inform the child's school of transportation arrangements. The Transportation Agreement will be renewed each school year. There is no additional fee for transporting children between the school and centre.

### ***Responsibility for Children***

Before dropping off at Laura Secord, St. Margaret's Montessori is responsible for the children from the time they are signed into the centre to the time they are dropped off at Laura Secord, when the school becomes responsible for the children. The staff will stay at the school until the children go inside their classroom. Before leaving the school, a St. Margaret's Montessori staff member will inform a supervisor at the school that the children have arrived. After school, St. Margaret's Montessori is responsible for

the children from the time they are picked up from their classroom to the time they are signed out by a parent/guardian when picked up at the centre.

Children will be the responsibility of the centre once they have been signed in and the responsibility of the parent/guardian once they have been signed out.

### ***Supervision***

Children will always be directly supervised while outside. Children will be supervised within school ratios (1:10). In the Montessori environment, children work individually with the materials, during this time supervision is indirect though children will be visible by staff at all times.

## **HEALTH AND SAFETY**

### ***Accidents & Illnesses***

It is not unusual to expect sniffles, colds, or the flu during the school year. If your child will not be attending school due to illness (or for any other reason), please call or email the school before the start of day. It is better to miss one day than to prolong an illness, or risk spreading germs to others. A few symptoms which may be reason to keep your child at home are as follows: runny nose, persistent cough, and glassy eyes. For contagious diseases/conditions such as colds and chicken pox, please keep your child at home to speed their recovery and to avoid an epidemic.

If any child is identified as having a communicable disease, the following procedures will occur: The parent or emergency contact will be called to pick up the child immediately.

Should symptoms or sickness develop while the child is at school, the Director/Site Manager will have the parents or guardians contacted. Public Health Guidelines are followed where applicable.

If your child's temperature reaches 38C or the child develops symptoms for another illness/disease, the parent/guardian will be contacted and asked to pick-up the child as soon as possible. If the parent is unable to come within 30-45 minutes, parents are asked to make arrangements to have an alternate caregiver pick-up the sick child.

Should a child require hospitalization, an ambulance will be called and a teacher will accompany the child. Parents (or other emergency contacts) will be contacted. Any expenses incurred, including ambulance fee are the responsibility of the parents.

Should any child require transportation to a hospital via ambulance, the cost of ambulance will be the sole responsibility of the parent/guardian.

### ***Medication***

A Medication Form must be signed and completed by the parent/guardian if any medication is to be administered at school. All medications must be clearly labelled and in the original dispenser supplied by the doctor and/or pharmacy or original packaging for over-the-counter medications. Staff will sign and date the form for each dosage administered. Medications will be stored in a secure location within the

school and will not be kept in a child's lunch bag or backpack. All medications must be handed to a teacher at the beginning of your child's day. If the child has any allergies, the teachers must be notified in writing of the child's condition and possible reaction.

### ***Toilet Training, Bottles and Soothers***

St. Margaret's Montessori accepts children who are toilet-trained, or at the very least, working on toilet training. Parents are asked to let staff know where children are at when it comes to using the toilet so that we can pay extra attention and support the child in this training by discretely asking them if they need to use the toilet OR having them on a schedule where they are reminded to try using the toilet at specific times. Staff will work closely with parents/guardians. Be prepared to provide extra clothing during this time. We do not give rewards nor do we give negative feedback if some children need more support.

Bottles and soothers are not allowed at the centre.

### ***Emergency Evacuation Procedures***

In the event of an emergency, staff will follow our emergency procedures within our Code of Conduct. In case of an evacuation, staff will ask children to leave their work and to line up at the appropriate exit door. Staff will take attendance to make sure everyone is accounted for before leading the children out of the centre. Children and staff will gather at their meeting point just outside the centre. Once gathered outside, attendance will be taken again. If children and staff are not able to re-enter the centre, they will proceed to the place of safety (Old Grace Housing Co-op on Arlington) and contact parents/guardians from there.

Fire drills will occur once a month in both morning and afternoons.

### ***Nutrition***

Snack will be provided during mornings and afternoons from 8:00am to 11:00am, snack is self-serve, but children will be shown how to collect their own snacks and reminded if needed. Weekly snack menus will be available on the bulletin board in the coatroom. Snack is consistent with Canada's Food Guide and we offer both Oat and Dairy milk as well as water. This is a NUT FREE environment, please do not send any nut products into the school. If food is found to contain nuts, it will be confiscated and sent home.

### ***Birthday Celebrations/Invitations:***

Our special way of celebrating a child's Birthday is to implement the Montessori activity referred to as The Birthday Walk. The child's teacher will provide the parent with a Birthday Walk notice. The parent will be asked to provide pictures from birth to the child's current age, and to provide a short write-up of the child's milestones and interests. The teacher will display the pictures in the classroom on the day determined for the child's Birthday Walk.

In place of sending in Birthday treats, we ask that parents donate a new book for their child's classroom with their child's name and birthdate written on the inside cover of the book. We will read the book during our Birthday Walk. This is a fun way to build the children's library and it provides the children

with the opportunity to mark their special day with a souvenir they can all enjoy for months or years to come.

### **Birthday Party Invitations**

During the school year we understand you may want to invite some of your child's friends to a birthday party. We think this is a wonderful idea! We are happy to assist by handing out the invitations you provide. This ensures that parents discretely receive the invitations and consideration is granted to the feelings of the children who may not be invited to a given party.

### ***Nap/Rest Time***

As the children are not in the centre for longer than 4 hours, there is no nap time scheduled; however, there is a rest area with pillows and a blanket for children who would like to rest. There are a variety of activities which allow children to be part of the classroom in a peaceful and tranquil way (eg. Listening to audio books, watching classroom pets).

### ***No Smoking***

There is no smoking allowed on the premises or within 50 feet of the entrances.

### **THE OFFICE AND PARKING**

Parents are encouraged to walk/bike their children to school when possible, but parking is available in the loading zone along Westminster next to the elevator entrance.

### **FORMS**

#### ***Authorization***

No one is allowed to pick up a child unless given verbal and written consent from the parent/guardian. Alternates must also present photo identification at pick-up.

#### ***Medical Consent Form***

In the event that a child's parent cannot be reached, the emergency contacts from the child's information listed on the child's medical form will be called.

#### ***Permission for Outings***

At the beginning of the school year, parents will be requested to sign a letter granting permission for students to participate in local excursions in the neighborhood. This will include visits to local parks and playgrounds. Outings will be done on foot, but occasionally students will visit the library by bus, the school will give a minimum of 24 hours' notice.

### ***Child Information Records***

Child Information Records must be completed by all parents as outlined in the Best Practices Licensing Manual for Centres and Nursery Schools.

### ***Preschool Health Record***

Parents must fill out the registration form which includes family health number, personal health number and doctor's name and number. If your child has life-threatening allergies, there will be a separate Anaphylaxis form to fill out. Parents are NOT required to indicate whether or not their child has been vaccinated, but the school will inform parents if there is an outbreak of communicable disease (eg. Mumps, measles).

### ***Parent's Permission to give Medication to a Child***

A Medication Form must be signed and completed by the parent/guardian if any medication is to be administered at school. All medications must be clearly labelled and in the original dispenser supplied by the doctor and/or pharmacy or original packaging for over-the-counter medications. Staff will sign and date the form for each dosage administered. Medications will be stored in a secure location within the school and will not be kept in a child's lunch bag or backpack. All medications must be handed to a teacher at the beginning of your child's day. If the child has any allergies, the teachers must be notified in writing of the child's condition and possible reaction.

### ***Parent Agreement***

Parents must sign and return the Registration and Child Information forms (including Transportation).

### ***Indirect Supervision***

In some instances children will be supervised indirectly, this includes when they use the washrooms on the main floor. As the area is divided up into four spaces, sometimes children may be in one of the spaces, but the room is constructed in such a way that teachers can easily move themselves to see where children are at all times.

### ***Photography and Videotaping***

St. Margaret's Montessori requires signed permission from parents/guardians to photograph/videotape their child which would only be used for the purposes of the school such as putting a picture on a cubby, or using one in our newsletter.

If at any time a picture/videotape of your child is required for purposes other than the school's use, a separate picture release form will be sent home for approval.

### ***Transportation Forms***

Parents whose children are part of the Transportation to or from Laura Secord, must complete and submit a transportation agreement with St. Margaret's Montessori as well as the required forms from Laura Secord.