

Parent Handbook 2023-2024



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SKYRIDGE
MONTESSORI



Welcome to Skyridge Montessori!

Dear Families,

From all of us at Skyridge Montessori, we want to extend the warmest welcome to the 2023-2024 school year!

To ensure our community has an enjoyable, successful, and collaborative experience, we have prepared a handbook, outlining the school's procedures and policies.

This handbook helps us create and maintain a positive and safe learning environment, where we can work together to achieve the same goal of providing each child the opportunity to develop to their fullest potential, in a safe, loving, and affirming environment.

Please to read this handbook carefully and ensure you clearly understand our procedures and policies.

We look forward to a wonderful year, full of growth, knowledge, and inspiration!

Catrin & Chrissy

VISION, MISSION & VALUES

Vision

Unleash the full potential of each child.

Mission

As a school community we embrace Montessori principles and practices to cultivate engaged global citizens who lead, collaborate and innovate.

Values

Individuality. We value what makes each of our children unique. We help to build each student's independence, confidence and self-awareness through individualized learning and our commitment to their academic, physical, social and emotional development.

Integrity. We value excellence in learning through our adherence to the Montessori principles and standards. From the handshake at the door, to the prepared environment and high-quality faculty, our students experience a nurturing and challenging environment in which to explore their potential.

Community. We value our small community feel and a school culture that is welcoming, caring, and safe. Our commitment to creating a peaceful and compassionate world helps us to build trustworthy, collaborative and respectful relationships both within our school and with the broader community.

Growth. We value curiosity, creativity and a growth mindset so that we remain a leader in Montessori education. Our students, their families, faculty and staff feel motivated and empowered to continuously learn and grow.

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EDUCATION PHILOSOPHY

Curriculum & Governing Best Practices

Our education philosophy is based on the principles and standards of Montessori best practices.

In addition to the Montessori curriculum, our teachers base their lesson planning and assessment on Early Childhood Education and the BC Ministry of Education Curriculum performance standards to ensure students receive the full spectrum of learning that adheres to provincial requirements.

Although the BC Ministry curriculum is met, the delivery of the curriculum, through the Montessori approach, may look different compared to a traditional setting.

Our faculty work closely with parents to establish a strong working relationship to ensure a positive learning experience. Through collaboration, our goal is to create cohesiveness, consistency and a continuum between home and school.

Our parent information evenings, child/parent evenings and regular conferences offer parents the opportunity to learn more about the Montessori method and about their child's progress.

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CALENDAR, DROP OFF & PICK UP PROCEDURES

School Calendar

Add link

New! School Hours for all Programs

Building Hours: 8:00 am – 5:00 pm
Classroom Hours: 8:30 am – 3:30 pm

Drop Off

Drop off time: 8:15am to 8:30 am

As the morning is a very busy time, please make your goodbyes as quick as possible. Ensure that your child arrives to school on time. Children arriving late may miss out on planned activities and may disrupt the classroom's morning routine or work cycle.

Pick Up

Pick-up time: 3:15pm to 3:30 pm

Pick up at the roundabout. The parking lot is busy at drop off and pick up and it is important to keep the traffic moving efficiently and safely.

Early Pick ups/ Late Pick-up Fee

If you need to pick up your child early, please email admin@skyridgemontessori.ca by 12pm at the latest to ensure instructions are effective. Office Hours: 8:30am – 4:00pm
You can wait for your child in the reception area of the school or pick them up directly from their classroom.

After 3:40 pm, parents will be charged the aftercare drop-in fee of \$20. Parents will be billed the following month for total late fees.

Approved Adults (Casa only)/ Self Dismissal (Lower, Upper Elementary & Adolescent)

Your child will only be released to 'approved adults' listed on your registration form. Students in Lower, Upper and Adolescent may self-dismiss and it is the parents responsibility to ensure dismissal plans are communicated directly with your child.

AFTERCARE INFORMATION, HOURS REGISTRATION & FEES

NEW ALL CASA- Grade 4

Aftercare General Information

The [aftercare program](#) is offered for the convenience of parents. We ask parents participating in the program for their cooperation and to be punctual with pick up.

Parents wanting to use this service regularly will need to register to secure a spot. A snack will be provided daily. Drop-in will be available for a flat fee if space permits.

After Care Hours – NEW HOURS FOR 2023/2024

3:15pm - 4:30pm

Pick up: 4:15pm – 4:30pm

Aftercare Registration & Payment

- You must register your child for the program and select the days of the week (minimum 2 days/week) you need care.
- Space is reserved on a first come, first served basis.
- Monthly fees must be paid on the 1st to maintain your space.
- One month's (30 days) written notice is required to change your aftercare registration.

Aftercare Fees

Below are the monthly aftercare fees.

Time	NEW Daily Rate	Drop In
3:15pm-4:30pm	\$10 a day (min. 2 days a week)	\$20 (flat fee)

Aftercare Drop In

Drop in is allowed at a flat fee of \$20/day, via e-transfer. Call the school or email admin@skyridgemontessori.ca to reserve a drop in space.

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HOUSEKEEPING ITEMS

Clothing, Personal Items & Lost and Found

We encourage students to wear comfortable, practical clothing with sensible indoor and outdoor shoes. Please ensure your child is dressed appropriately for every activity of the Montessori environment, both indoors and outdoors.

Younger students should always have a spare change of clothes at school, including pants, tops, socks, and underwear.

Clearly mark your child's name on any personal items and clothing brought to school.

- Lost and Found is located at the front of the school

Lunch & Refreshments

Lunch is not provided by the school. We ask parents and students to pack a healthy, nutritional, and *litter-less* lunches.

Lunch bags and containers should be clearly labelled with your child's name. A microwave is available if a lunch needs to be warmed up.

We are an allergy-aware school. Specific guidelines will be communicated by your classroom teacher.

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School Functions

Parents will be informed of special events and functions in the school (classroom events, school concerts, etc.) through our weekly newsletter. We welcome parents to participate in these events and volunteer throughout the year.

Birthday Celebrations

We encourage you to participate in celebrating your child's birthday at school through the Classroom Wishlist Program.

The Classroom Wishlist Program is a wonderful way to celebrate your child's birthday. By donating a book or material to Skyridge Montessori, in your child's name, you will honour your child on their birthday, help teach the joy of giving as well as receiving, and help expand our resources with quality materials.

If you choose to participate, contact admin@skyridgemontessori.ca for your child's classroom wishlist.

Going Outs/Outdoor Education

The students may go on supervised nature walks and outings within the community. These may be scheduled or spontaneous.

Parents were asked to sign a general permission at the time of registration.

Please notify the school if you require early pick up, as your child may be on an outing that day.

Cell Phone & Other Communication Devices Guidelines

Students may bring communication devices (cell phones, Smart Watches, laptops, etc.) to school, but they must be put on 'Silent' and must remain in their backpack for the duration of the day. If a student does not abide by these guidelines, the communication device will be put safely in the office until the end of the day.

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COMMUNICATION

Notice Absence from School

Notices of absence from school **must** be communicated by email to admin@skyridgemontessori.ca and to the classroom teacher. It is the parents' responsibility to inform the school of absences due to sickness or holidays.

Please go to page 13 for more details on school absences related to illness.

Regular Communication Channels

Most of our communications to parents will be via email or [Transparent Classroom](#). Please ensure the school has your most current email address and check your junk mail to mark our communications as 'safe' going forward.

We highly encourage parents to read our weekly newsletter (emailed on Fridays) to stay up to date on school information.

Classroom teachers will email families, as needed, with information specific to their class.

- Website: www.skyridgemontessori.ca
- Transparent Classroom: www.transparentclassroom.com

Transparent Classroom

Transparent Classroom (TC) is the online record keeping tool we use to maintain classroom records and communicate with families. Teachers maintain lesson records and parents can login 24/7 to see any forms that need signing. Login details will be communicated to new families at the beginning of the school year. If you have any questions about TC please contact Chrissy at Chrissy@skyridgemontessori.ca.

MyEd BC

The school also uses MyEd for contact information and attendance, as mandated by the Ministry of Education.

Family Contact Information

The school requires a record of each parents' current contact information. Changes in any contact information needs to be emailed to admin@skyridgemontessori.ca. At the begin of each school year, a form will be sent home to be reviewed, updated and return to school as needed.

Contacting Teachers

If you wish to speak to a teacher or communicate anything during or outside of school hours, please email the teacher directly for an appointment. The teacher will reply within 24 hours. Please be mindful of our regular operating hours, as our staff may only have an opportunity to respond at the end of the school day.

Teachers and Assistants should NOT be contacted via text message or cell phone regarding school business at any time.

Classroom staff are focused on the care of the children and are instructed to leave their cell phones off or out of regular view during work hours. Supporting our efforts to focus on the children is appreciated.

Fall Conference (Casa)

You will have an opportunity to touch base with your teacher, typically in November, to discuss how your child is settling into their classroom environment.

Reports & Conferences (Kindergarten to Grade 9)

Three progress reports will be distributed throughout the year to demonstrate your child's progress as well as report on the BC Ministry of Education Core Competencies/Practical Life.

Parent-teacher conferences are held twice a year.

You are welcome to ask for a conference with your child's class teacher at any time during the year. These conferences are held to address any specific concerns you may have with regards to your child and their progress. Please email your child's teacher to book an appointment.

Please be assured, your child's teacher will contact you for a conference if there are concerns.

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VOLUNTEERING

Volunteering

Volunteering is a fundamental component of our school community and culture.

- All families are encouraged to participate and must have a Criminal Record Check and Driver's Abstract (if transporting students) on file at the school.
- The school and your classroom teacher will occasionally send requests for volunteers to help with tasks such as:
 - Material-making
 - Field trip supervision
 - Odd jobs around the classroom/school
 - Taking care of school pets over holidays
 - Sharing an area of expertise or a cultural tradition with students

School Community Groups

Parent Advisory Council (PAC)

Our PAC, consisting of current parents, works closely with the school administration, teachers and Board to support the school community in a variety of ways. Please contact the PAC directly at montessoripac@gmail.com.

The PAC provides essential funding for our enrichment programs and those extra special materials in the classroom. **The best way you can support our PAC is by purchasing grocery cards.** [Learn more here>>](#)

Board of Directors

The Board of Directors is a volunteer group of parents, alumni parents and other community members who govern the administration of our school. This small, but dynamic group are always interested in welcoming new members or collaborating with parents on specific projects and initiatives. Please contact them directly at board@skyridgemontessori.ca

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ILLNESS

Illness

Children ill from a fever, vomiting or diarrhea **may not come to school until the fever has passed or vomiting or diarrhea has stopped for at least 24 hrs.**

Aspirin or Tylenol of any kind (Tempera, Tylenol, etc.) **will not** be administered by the school for your child's cold or flu like symptoms. If your child requires aspirin or Tylenol for fever, colds or flu then they are too ill to be at school.

If your child develops a fever, diarrhea or vomiting during the school day, you will be called to take your child home.

Children who are too ill to cope with a full school day (outdoor play, group activities, etc.) should not return until their health has improved.

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IMMUNIZATION & MEDICAL CARE

Children Who are Not Immunized

Vancouver Coastal Health and the Ministry of Education now requires all schools to have updated immunization information for students. If your child is not immunized, you will need to sign a form stating that no immunization records will be provided.

If an outbreak occurs in the community, your child may be asked to stay at home for up to 21 days or until outbreak has ended, as per Vancouver Coastal Health guidelines.

[Immunization Waiver Form >>](#)

Medical Emergencies & First Aid

Parents must ensure that the school is in possession of their child's Care Card Number. If a medical emergency arises, as a result of an accident at school, the emergency will be referred to the nearest hospital and any transport will be in a hospital ambulance only. We will contact the child's parents at the first available opportunity, although we will not delay emergency treatment to your child if we are unable to contact a parent. There may be instances where we cannot contact a parent; we will then attempt to contact emergency contacts, listed in Transparent Classroom. Therefore, it is important that Transparent Classroom is always up to date.

The school maintains a fully equipped First Aid Kit. Multiple members of our staff hold CPR and First Aid Certificates.

Administration of Medication

Please review [Policy 404](#) for full details regarding administration of medication.

Medication will only be administered to your child under the following conditions:

- All medicine must be prescribed by a doctor and have your child's name on it.
- No expired medicine will be given.
- Medication must be handed to the teacher by the parent/guardian.
- Unauthorized medication found in a child's possession will be removed and locked away.

Parents will need to sign a form, giving the school permission to medicate your child.

[Administration of Medication Form>>](#)

Management of Allergies & Anaphylaxis

Allergen-aware Environment

We are committed to providing a level of care to ensure the safety and well-being of students with a known risk of anaphylaxis/life-threatening allergies. Given the severe consequences of anaphylaxis, it is necessary for parents, school staff and the school community to share in the responsibility to provide a safe environment.

While it is impossible to eliminate all potential allergens from the school environment, strategies to minimize risk, including identification of individuals at-risk, recognition of symptoms, potential triggers and regulations around emergency response are essential for creating a safe environment. It should be noted that any food, non-food item or scent could trigger an anaphylactic reaction.

If your child has anaphylaxis, please complete the form linked below.

[Anaphylaxis Emergency Plan Form>>](#)

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SCHOOL FEES & REFUND POLICY

Tuition Fees & Payment Policy

The school will review the tuition fee structure annually and establish rates for the following school year.

Our tuition schedule runs August 1st through April 1st.

Tuition fees can be paid monthly, or in full. Those paying monthly must provide the administration office post-dated cheques for the full year or pay by e-transfer on the 1st of the month.

In January, families who will be returning for the next school year will be asked to complete a re-enrolment form and provide a one-month tuition deposit, to be applied to May of the following year's tuition. **This deposit is non-refundable.**

Supplies & Enrichment Fee – New K – Grade 9

Families must pay a Supplies and Enrichment fee of \$200 by September 30th. This fee will go towards:

- Classroom supplies and materials (\$100)
- Camp Summit day trip (\$50)
- Two enrichment activities (\$50)

Withdrawal & Refund Policy

A child enrolled is expected to attend through to the end of the school year and parents should fully understand the annual financial obligation.

At least three month's written withdrawal notice must be given to the school, with notice provided the first day of the month. Notice provided after the first day of the month will be considered effective as of the first day of the next month.

Your annual tuition deposit is non-refundable.

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BOARD POLICIES & FORMS

Board Policies

The Board recently completed a policy review process, with all board-level policies now available on the website. The policies provide clear direction in the following areas:

- Board Governance
- Human Resources
- Education Program
- Students
- Parent & Community Relations
- Business Procedures
- Facilities & Equipment

[View Board policies >>](#)

Forms

[Immunization Waiver Form](#)

[Administration of Medication Form](#)

[Anaphylaxis Emergency Plan](#)