



Victoria Montessori Preschool Parent Handbook

Contact Details

Victoria Montessori Preschool
323 Skinner St.
Victoria, BC
V9A 3B5
e-mail: victoriamontessori@shaw.ca
website: victoriamontessori.com
phone: 250.380.0534

School Hours:

Monday to Friday

Montessori Classes	8:00 – 3:00
Learn through Play Program	3:00 – 5:00

General Policies and Procedures

Arrivals and Departures

Children will be greeted between 8:00 – 8:30 by a Directress. You are asked to make sure that your child is dropped off and picked up on time, as late arrivals are a disruption to the class routine. Being picked up on time is important for your child's sense of security. We appreciate your cooperation in this matter. To accommodate the Learn through Play program and provide an easy transition, children who are registered for the Montessori program are required to be picked up at 3:00. Those students who stay for the Learn through Play program may be picked up between the hours of 3:00 – 5:00.

You are asked to let the Directress know by a note if someone other than yourselves will be picking up your child.

Please telephone the school if you are running late to pick up your child.

Parents are not permitted to wait outside the classroom during school hours as you are likely to be seen by the children and this causes a distraction. Please drop off your child at the gate, say goodbye and leave promptly.

Clothing and other items to bring to school

- Children's clothing should be loose, comfortable and able to be handled easily by the child when using the toilet or changing into spare clothes.
- Indoor shoes, which are kept in the child's cubby area, should be light and comfortable.
- Outdoor shoes should be practical for running and jumping.
- A clearly labeled full change of clothes will be kept in your child's storage bin at school.
- Please provide a labeled sun hat for outdoor activities.
- The children are expected to come to school with sunscreen already applied. If your child remains at school until 5:00 sunscreen will be reapplied for late afternoon outdoor play.

Food

- Please provide a healthy, nutritious lunch in reusable containers. All children are supervised during lunch and any uneaten food goes back home so that parents can monitor their child's intake.
- Drinking water is available at all times. Please provide a glass to remain at school for your child's daily use.

Bringing belongings into the classroom

- Cut flowers are welcome in the classroom any time. The children use the flowers for an exercise in flower arranging to beautify their environment.
- Children are welcome to bring items into the classroom for language discussions for example, shells, seeds, nests, books, etc.
- Children are asked to leave their toys and treasured personal possessions at home.

Taking materials home

- Occasionally, children will return home with something that belongs to the classroom. Even the oddest shaped piece of wood could be important, as it could be a country from a puzzle map or a piece from the pink tower, so please return to the directress.
- In a Montessori school you may find that your child does not have much, or even any paperwork to take home, since many activities that your child completes do not involve paper. The work is done with specially designed hands-on Montessori materials. Much of the paperwork is an extension of a material or a final record of an idea. It is the process of learning that the child goes through that is important, not the finished product. The children take work home daily; however, it is always the child's choice to take work home, give it to a friend or leave it at school.

Changes in behaviour

Please let your child's Directress know of any significant change in behaviour or circumstances at home. Common causes of childhood distress include parents being away from home, parent illness, moving to a new house, or death of a pet.

The home environment

The child's home is the most important learning environment. It is suggested that parents incorporate the goals and attitudes of the Montessori philosophy into life at home, for example, offering the child the opportunity to develop skills by helping around the house, taking responsibility for their own dressing, feeding themselves, or packing up their toys are a few simple ways this can be nurtured. Older children can assist with dinner preparation, clear away dishes, help with the laundry and make their beds.

Keeping informed

- The school will always inform the parents in advance of any upcoming events by e-mail.

Messages and Phone calls

- If you need to reach a Directress while class is in session, please leave your name and telephone number as the call will go directly to voice mail. Messages are picked up periodically during the day and a Directress will return your call as soon as possible.

School calendar

- The school will provide you with a calendar to inform you of holidays and school closures. Please inform the Directress if your child will be absent from school.

Health and Emergency

- Please make sure that all medical information regarding your child is up to date.
- Children with a contagious illness must not attend school until the infectious /recovery period has passed. Inform the school of any infectious illness your child may have. The school also requests that if your child shows symptoms of an illness, due to fever/flu, he or she does not attend school, as these illnesses spread quickly to other children.
- If you or your child is sick, please keep your child home and let the school know. Your child must be fever/vomit-free for 24 hours before returning to school. Your child must stay home for 24 hours after any vaccination in case she/he experiences side effects.
- Please be diligent about keeping your child home with runny nose, sore throat, persistent cough, or other cold and flu symptoms. We appreciate this as we all try to keep our school environment healthy and safe.

- Please inform the school (e-mail or phone call) before the start of class if your child will be absent due to an illness or other reasons.
- The school will notify the parents promptly if a child becomes ill during school hours and we kindly request that the child is collected immediately.
- Parents are required to fill out a permission form with the name of medication, dose etc, that have been prescribed by a doctor for children who require medication to be administered at school.
- In the event of an emergency medical treatment needed for a child, the school will promptly notify parents and if necessary, the doctor listed on the child's emergency medical authorization form will be contacted.
- Payment of all medical treatment is the responsibility of the child's parent/guardian.
- The children will practice fire and earthquake drills, so they are prepared in the event of an emergency.

Vaccinations

Inoculations are the parent's choice and responsibility, but in the case of an outbreak of an infectious illness those children who have not been inoculated may be required to remain at home for the duration of the outbreak.

Birthdays

You are welcome to bring a nutritious snack/treat to share with the class. You may also like to donate a book in your child's name to our beautiful library.

Observations and Evaluations

In Montessori, the Directress observes each child's social, emotional, intellectual and physical development. Detailed records are kept of all concepts presented to each student, all materials practiced and all concepts understood by the child.

Conferences and Parent Observations

- Parents will have the opportunity once a year to observe the classroom during a work cycle. This will be followed by parents/teacher interviews to answer questions, discuss your child and the environment. Both parents are encouraged to attend.
- The parents and Directress may request a conference at any time if there are matters of concern to be discussed.
- If parents wish to speak to the Directress about their child, an appointment will be booked so that the concern can be discussed in private without their child present.

Montessori Educational Evenings

Parents' understanding of the Montessori methods and principles assists in the development of their child. There will be occasional educational evenings to discuss particular aspects of child development and Montessori. All parents are encouraged to attend to assist directly and constructively in the progress of their child. We also encourage parents to read literature about the Montessori approach to supplement their understanding of the educational method.

Active Play

Active play helps to promote healthy growth and development and supports body control and movement. Active play can help build strong bones and muscles, improve balance, coordination and assists with the development of gross motor and fine motor skills. Active play also helps to promote children's confidence, improves concentration and thinking and learning skills and provides opportunity to develop social skill and make friends. At Victoria Montessori, the children go outside for active play after lunch and weather permitting stay outside until either 3pm or 5pm. Also, depending on the energy of the children, we will choose to go outside during the morning period.

- There is no screen time (TV, computer, electronic games) at Victoria Montessori.

Active play includes:

- Use of climbing structure – use of balance skills.
- Gross motor skills such as running, tag, jumping, hopping, skipping and other supervised games and activities.
- The use of coordination skills: games with ball.
- Children also have the opportunity to playhouse, build with lego, do various art projects, use of a large sand box and many more play activities. Most activities are un-facilitated and free play.
- Children also practice yoga outdoors.

Positive Guidance Techniques used in the classroom

Physical:

- Offer help based on the individual child's needs
- Demonstrate or model the desired behaviour or skill
- Lead the child by the hand to give direction, reassurance, or assistance
- Gently hold the child by his/her shoulder when necessary to protect the child or others
- Remove the child from the scene to help him/her relax and regain composure
- Use no punishment that is meant to hurt or humiliate the child
- Get down to the child's eye level and use meaningful gestures

Verbal:

- Speak to the child at her/his eye level
- Use short sentences
- Use positive directions, telling the child what to do instead of what not to do
- Give no more than two directions at a time, preferably only one
- Give only the directions the child really needs and avoid being overly directive and bossy
- Make it clear whether the child has a choice or not. Avoid the use of “okay” at the end of the direction
- When a child exhibits a positive or negative behaviour, avoid stating whether the child is “good” or “bad”
- Identify when a child is having difficulty conveying messages verbally or physically, and give appropriate assistance and/or reassurance