



Élan Vital
Montessori School

Toddler Class Policies



Élan Vital Montessori School

7518 Highland Road Baton Rouge, LA 70808 (225)767-6620 www.elanvitalmontessori.org

List of Policies Posted

Please find the following postings in the Elan Vital Toddler Classroom. These postings will be updated as needed.

- A. Daily Schedule
- B. School Calendar
- C. Hours of Operation
- D. Lunch Calendar
- E. Emergency Phone Numbers
 - a. Fire
 - b. Police
 - c. Poison control
 - d. Child protective services
 - e. School address
- F. Prohibits
 - a. Alcohol
 - b. Tobacco
 - c. Firearms
- G. Sleep position
- H. Safety Box



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Child Abuse and Neglect Policy

DCFS Child Protection hotline: **1-855-4LA-KIDS**

The goal of this policy is to ensure that Elan Vital employees partner together to ensure the safety and wellbeing of children. This Policy also addresses the duties under the mandatory reporting laws and the timely and professional investigation of allegations of abuse and neglect. This Policy provides a guideline in coordinating the obligations and roles of each of the parties. This guideline will be supplemented with continued training in order that all partners develop the best procedures to ensure the protection of our children.

I. ABUSED AND NEGLECTED CHILD REPORTING ACT

The responsibility of all school personnel to report child abuse and neglect is mandated by law.

II. IDENTIFICATION OF MANDATORY REPORTERS

A. Definitions:

The law defines mandatory reporters as those professionals who may work with children in the course of their professional duties. Every teacher and teacher's aide clearly falls within this definition. In the school environment, the following individuals are also included as mandatory reporters: Paid, full-time, part-time, volunteer or substitute school personnel, principals, school counselors, assistant principals, deans, truant officers, school psychologists, staff of before and after school programs, custodians, lunch room monitors, school bus drivers, school librarians and assistants to the librarians, school resource officers and law enforcement officers assigned to the school, school athletic coaches or intramural coaches or assistant to the coaches and trainers.

III. REPORTING OBLIGATIONS

All school personnel must immediately contact the department of children and family services when they have reasonable cause to suspect that a child who is under the age of eighteen and known to them in their professional capacity has been abused or neglected or is in danger of being abused or neglected – physically, sexually or through neglect – and that a caregiver, or person in a position of trust and authority over them, committed the harm or should have taken steps to protect the child from harm. Child abuse and neglect reports are made by calling the DCFS hotline at **1-855-4LA-KIDS**. In making the hotline report, all school personnel shall provide any and all information requested by DCFS.



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- All mandated reporters have the obligation to make the Hotline call. The mandated reporter with the most direct knowledge of the suspected abuse should be the one to make the hotline call.
- The mandated reporter must follow any applicable guidelines regarding the making and documenting of any report. However, under no circumstances shall any person in charge of a school facility or school district or his/her designated agent to whom such notification has been made, exercise any control, restraint, modification or other change in the report or the forwarding of such report to DCFS.
- The mandated reporter or Elan Vital should not notify the alleged perpetrator of the child abuse or neglect that a report of has been made, or that there is a pending investigation unless compelling reasons exist to do so.
- The law does not require a mandated reporter or the School District to notify the child's parent or guardian of a report of abuse or neglect. In considering whether notice to a parent should be made, Elan Vital district shall consider the child's safety and any directives by DCFS and law enforcement investigating the report.

IV. WHEN A REPORT MUST BE MADE

When there is reasonable cause to suspect that a child is abused – physically or sexually – or is neglected:

- A. Abused child is a child whose parent or immediate family member, or any individual residing in the same home as the child, or a paramour of the child's parent, or any person responsible for the child's welfare, who:
 - a. inflicts, causes to be inflicted, or allows to be inflicted upon such child physical injury, by other than accidental means, which causes death, disfigurement, impairment of physical or emotional health, or loss or impairment of any bodily function;
 - b. creates a substantial risk of physical injury to a child by other than accidental means which would be likely to cause death, disfigurement, impairment of physical or emotional health, or loss or impairment of any bodily function;
 - c. commits, or allows to be committed, any sex offense against such child, including acts of vaginal, oral, or anal sex; fondling a child or having the child touch the person sexually;
 - d. commits, or allows to be committed, an act or acts of torture upon a child;
 - e. inflicts excessive corporal punishment;
 - f. commits or allows to be committed the offense of female genital mutilation against the child; or
 - g. causes an illegal controlled substance to be sold, transferred, distributed, or given to a child.
- B. Neglected child is a child who is deprived of adequate food, shelter, clothing, or necessary medical care by a parent or caregiver. Neglect can also occur when an adult fails to provide adequate supervision of a child as when a child is left either unsupervised or in the care of someone unable to supervise the child. A child will not be considered neglected or abused solely



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because the child is not attending school. Nor shall a child be considered neglected or abused for the sole reason that the child's parent or caregiver depends upon spiritual means through prayer alone for the treatment or cure of disease.

Reasonable Cause

A credible report of suspected child abuse or neglect must be reported to DCFS. In the context of the Act, "reasonable cause" is synonymous with a credible suspicion. Once the School District suspects or should suspect that a child may be abused or neglected, it shall call the DCFS Hotline and no further investigation should be conducted by the School District. DCFS is assigned the authority and discretion to substantiate the accuracy of all reports of suspected child abuse or neglect. The Reporter may consider the following in determining whether reasonable cause of child abuse or neglect exists: (NOTE: These are suggested factors to consider and this list is not intended to be exclusive.) Use an objective/reasonable person test. A reporter should not consider personal opinions of either the alleged abuser or the alleged child victim in determining whether reasonable cause or credible suspicion of child abuse or neglect exists.

1. Has the child been harmed or been at risk of harm?
2. Have you observed evidence of damage to the child? e.g. bruises, cuts, hunger, poor hygiene.
3. Always report statements made by a child regarding sexual misconduct.
4. Report credible evidence even if the child denies any abuse or neglect.
5. Are the communications given by the child consistent with what you observe; is the statement plausible?
6. Consider past suspicious incidents or the frequency of signs of abuse or neglect.
7. Sexual abuse to be reported under the Act includes intentional touching and fondling of any part of a child under 18.
8. Err on the side of caution. The concept of the Act is to encourage people to report bad acts committed on children.
9. Make a report even if the child is now over 18 and the statute of limitations may have run, especially if the alleged abuser continues to have contact with children in a professional setting or other children remain at risk.

V. INVESTIGATIONS

The investigation of any report of child abuse or neglect shall be undertaken by those who possess specialized experience, training, authority and discretion to determine whether suspected abuse or neglect of a child actually occurred. Elan Vital may initially undertake to determine the credibility of any "rumor" of abuse or neglect. Elan Vital shall not conduct or cause to be conducted on their behalf an independent investigation to determine whether reasonable cause exists or whether such abuse or neglect actually occurred before reporting the matter to the Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services.



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The investigation into the accuracy of any report of child abuse or neglect shall be conducted by DCFS and, where necessary, the East Baton Rouge Parish District Attorney and the local police. Elan Vital Montessori School may conduct a disciplinary investigation of its personnel based on a report of child abuse or neglect. Elan Vital Montessori School shall cooperate with DCFS and law enforcement in their investigation of all reports of abuse or neglect. Elan Vital shall not impede any investigation being conducted by the Department and law enforcement. DCFS and local law enforcement shall conduct their investigations in a manner that minimizes disruption of the school day. Elan Vital Montessori School shall provide the Louisiana Department of Children and Family Service investigators reasonable access to the suspected victim of child abuse or neglect for the purpose of conducting an interview. Elan Vital Montessori School and the Police Department shall enter into all necessary reciprocal reporting agreements.

VI. RIGHTS OF MANDATED REPORTERS

All rights of the mandated reporters of the School District as allowed in any collective bargaining agreements, including their right to legal representation, shall apply, except to the extent inconsistent with the Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act and this Policy. The individual policy of Elan Vital Montessori School may require notices to the administrator or director of any report made by their Employee under the Act. However, no policy may be implemented which is inconsistent with the Act or with this Policy.

Mandated reporters are entitled to immunity for any report of child abuse or neglect under the Act as long as the report is made in good faith. However, any failure of a mandated reporter to make a report may be subject to criminal prosecution, license suspension or revocation and civil liability.



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Non-Discrimination Policy

Élan Vital Montessori School admits students of any race, color, gender, national, or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, national, or ethnic origin in employment or in its administration of its educational policies, admission policies, financial aid programs, athletics, or other school administered programs. Admission decisions are based upon the space available and an evaluation of the suitability of EVM for each student.



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Admission Policy

REQUIRED ADMISSION FORMS

Upon your decision to enroll your student at Élan Vital Montessori, you will be asked to complete the following forms. Completion of these signed forms is required prior to your child's first day of attendance:

- Tuition Contract
- Enrollment/ Health Packet
- Immunization Records

Your child's records are not shared unless you sign a release stating that Élan Vital has permission to share the information with another school. While we strive to have open communication between members of teaching teams and the administration, information about children is not shared with a person who has no legitimate need for knowing. When initiating a conversation, you may state that the matter is to be kept confidential within the teaching team and administration. Consultants or educational diagnosticians requesting teacher evaluations will be mailed, faxed, or emailed directly to the person requesting information.

TUITION RATES AND SCHOOL FEES

Your tuition rate will be verified at the time of student admission and is documented on the registration form. School and extended day hours are calculated into tuition rates beginning each school year in August. Tuition rates are revised each November for the next new school year. Please direct all payment questions to the school Director.

PAYMENT PLANS

Parents are required to pay for the time their child/children are scheduled to be in school and/or Extended Care. Payment is required for reserved space regardless of attendance. Payment is due in advance and payment must be received prior to service. Payment plans are selected at the time of registration.

MONTHLY PAYMENT OPTION

Tuition is due on the 1st of every month for services of that month. All families are expected to keep their accounts current. Tuition payment will not be accepted in the School office but shall be made through the Smart Tuition site on a monthly basis or by automated bank draft.

HOLIDAYS, VACATIONS, AND SCHOOL BREAKS



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- Fees are not reduced during months that have holidays. Our rates include allowances for all holidays, including winter and spring break.
- You will be required to pay 100% of your regular rate while you are on vacation. Your class placement and enrollment are continuous while you are on vacation.
- These breaks are outlined on the school calendar yearly. Consult this year's calendar for specific dates. Our School Program is closed during these dates. School breaks are calculated into the tuition cost and no tuition credit or discount is given for these dates.

PAYMENT PENALTIES

- There will be a charge of \$25.00 for any NSF checks plus any bank costs incurred by Élan Vital Montessori. Cash payment is required for returned checks. We reserve the right to place accounts on a cash only basis after the second NSF check.
- You will be billed \$1.00 per minute for the first late pickup from school after 3:15 p.m. or Extended Care after 5:30 p.m. within 30 days. The second late pickup will be billed at the rate of \$2.00 per minute. Late pickups commencing with the third occurrence must be addressed directly with the School Director.

WITHDRAWAL POLICY

On the date that the school's designee signs the enrollment contract, the parents or legal guardian becomes responsible for the full tuition for the 2012–2013 school year, as liquidated damages, even if the student never actually attends the school, the student withdraws, or for any other reason fails to continue attendance for the 180-day school year, unless withdrawal is requested by the school. An exit interview will also be requested.

Please contact the school office to settle all financial arrangements when withdrawing a student. Once withdrawn, Élan Vital Montessori will fill the space vacated with a new incoming student or an advancing student. Families withdrawing from Élan Vital Montessori with the intention of avoiding payment for an extended family vacation or other personal reasons, will not be re-admitted to Élan Vital Montessori, as this behavior undermines the educational process and disturbs the class structure. Élan Vital Montessori follows an academic year, August to June.

TERMINATION OF CONTRACTS BY SCHOOL

The following are conditions that will cause school day or extended care services to be terminated:

- Continual late payments or continual late pick-ups (more than three within a one month period)
- Child behavioral problems deterring successful school experiences
- Disrespect of the school day or extended care setting, policies, and staff
- Sporadic attendance
- Consistently arriving after 8:30 am and disturbing the educational process



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Disclosure of Information Policy

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All personal information regarding any incident reports will be kept confidential. Élan Vital Montessori School will not provide your child's name if any minor or major incidents incur to other families. All Faculty and Board Members shall keep any and all information confidential and shall disclose such information only in response to an investigation conducted by the School Administration, Board, or a Grievance Committee appointed by the Board, or in response to a proper request made during legal proceedings regarding such matter.



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Parental Access Policy

Classroom Observations

Parents are encouraged to make appointments to observe their child's class during the school year. First observations should be scheduled after the beginning of October to allow students to "normalize" and feel comfortable with observers in the classroom.

It is the parent's responsibility to coordinate with the office to schedule observations at least 24 hours prior to the time of the observation. Please call the school's office at (225) 767-6620 to schedule. Most observations are scheduled for mornings, preferably Tuesdays, Wednesdays, or Thursdays. Every effort will be made to accommodate parental schedules. Most observers stay about 30 minutes.

When you arrive at the school for an observation, please check in at the office and you will be given some basic observation guidelines. All classroom observers sit in the room on chairs provided by the teacher. Observers should watch the students work, but refrain from active participation.

Conferences

Conferences are held two times a year as stated on the school calendar. A conference sign up schedule will be emailed two weeks prior to the conference dates so that parents can schedule a time that is mutually acceptable. At the conferences, parents will receive a progress report that provides a framework for conversation so that parents may get a clear picture of their child's social, emotional, and academic growth and development at our school. Conferences will be offered for all students two times yearly, in order to maintain a healthy learning relationship between the teacher, student, and family. If you have scheduling conflicts, please speak directly with your child's teacher so alternative arrangements may be made.

Reading Volunteers or Special Activity Volunteers

Parents are invited to share a special talent, activity, lessons or books they may have to offer. Examples of talents include but are not limited to: playing an instrument, helping with an art project, sharing about an occupation or culture, and sharing about any special interest you may have. Parents are also invited to come read to their child's class. Please contact your child's teacher via e-mail to schedule a date and time.

Parent Association

Elan Vital Montessori School has a Parent Association that focuses on community building to support the school. Please contact this year's Parent Association Coordinator or the Parent Association Liaison if you would like to get involved.



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Parent Education Seminars

Elan Vital Montessori School holds Parent Education Nights multiple times a year. These nights are provided by Elan Vital staff to help our student's families better understand a Montessori education and what the students in the classroom are working on. Please refer to this year's school calendar for dates.



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Behavior Management Policy

“To let the child do as he likes when he has not yet developed any powers of control is to betray the idea of freedom.” – Maria Montessori

At Élan Vital Montessori School, it is important that the child clearly understands the rules and possible consequences for violating rules. Through nurturing and sensitivity, we hope to prepare them to function as social assets rather than as social liabilities. With this in mind, it is important that this understanding is reflected in methods of discipline used at home and school.

Our approach is to lead the child towards self-discipline. We avoid spending unnecessary time responding and reacting to behavior problems. Another quote by Maria Montessori is, “The undisciplined child enters into discipline by working in the company of others; not by being told he is naughty.” Discipline is, therefore, a learning experience and less a punitive experience if appropriately dealt with.

In the Montessori class, a child’s opinion is respected and the child is asked to share his or her view. Children want to follow the rules if the adult clearly defines the rules and then invites the child to assume responsibility for his or her behavior. Assuming responsibility for behavior is to understand and accept the consequences for violating rules. Children whose rights are violated by physical harm are asked to report this problem to the nearest adult rather than hit back. This instills the practice of following legal procedures we adults must follow as we seek help from law officials when our rights are violated.

DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES AND POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES

First Offense

- The teacher explains or reviews class and school rules and warns of possible consequences.

Second Offense

- The teacher communicates the problem to the parents through verbal or written communication.

Third Offense

- The teacher communicates the issue with the director and the parents and schedules a conference with the parents.

Fourth Offense

- The teacher sends the child to the office and the child is sent home. You will be notified immediately and will be expected to pick up your child within an hour.
- Fighting and/ or violence against others may lead to out-of-school suspension.



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Computer Practices Policy

There will be no lessons involving computers in Elan Vital Montessori School's Toddler Classroom.

Programs, Movies and Video Game Policy

The Toddler Class does not watch any programs or movies. There are no video games at Elan Vital Montessori School.

Electronic Device Policy

The Toddler Teachers are supplied with an iPad for the school year. The students in the toddler class do not use the iPad. The teachers use it to take pictures of the children for weekly updates, record keeping in the MRX program, educational music and classical music during rest time. These are the only reasons the iPad is used. Personal use of the iPad during school hours is strictly prohibited.



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Shoe Policy

Sometimes the children in the Toddler Classroom enjoy taking their shoes off. When they do, teachers peacefully redirect them to put them back on. We will also offer to help them and show them to do it themselves. We will not force a child to keep their shoes on.



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Medication Policy

Elan Vital Montessori School will not give oral or topical prescription or over the counter medication without a written doctors prescription to administer form signed by a legal guardian. Medications must be in the original container and have the medication information sheet from your pharmacist. The container must have the child's full name, name of medication, dosage, time to be administered, route of administration, and date of expiration. A detailed record will be kept by the school office of any medication administered by staff. EVM staff will only administer medications per the doctors written directions.

At the end of each school year in May, all medications will be sent home. Parents must resubmit both the doctors note and the permission to administer medication form with the medication at the beginning of the next school year.



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Signing Students In and Out Policy

Elan Vital Montessori School staff sign in students by documenting who drops the child off and at what time. Staff members will also sign children out in the same manner as above as they leave for the day.

Children who are dropped off later than 8:15am are considered tardy. The child must then be walked into school and the guardians must sign them in on the late arrival form in the office.

When the child is being picked up, EVM requires that it must be by an adult, 18 years or older, who is authorized to do so on the enrollment paperwork. Additional persons added to the pick-up list must be submitted by the legal guardian in writing before the sign-out time. Each authorized person picking up a child must bring a valid ID to be photo-copied and entered into the child's file. Adults who are dropping off or picking up students may not be a registered sex offender.



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Lunch

We have a hot lunch program. Please submit your menu to the office with your order. If you choose to send your child's lunch, please note the following:

Container Options:

- Please send a lunch box with an ice pack. We cannot store individual items in our refrigerator.
- Containers should be easy to open, as the students will learn to open the containers themselves.
- EVM will provide placemats, napkins and silverware. In an effort to reduce waste, please send reusable containers.
- Any food that needs to be kept warm needs to be heated in the morning and stored in a thermos. We cannot heat up items.

Drinks Options:

EVM will provide milk and water. We also have drinking vessels. Please do not send any drinks, cups or water bottles.

Food options:

According to the Louisiana Department of Education, Title 28, Bulletin 137, Food and Nutrition:

“Children under age 4 shall not have foods that are implicated in choking incidents. Examples of these food include but are not limited to: whole hot dogs, hot dogs sliced in rounds, raw carrots, whole grapes, hard candy, nuts, seeds, raw peas, hard pretzels, chips, peanuts, popcorn, marshmallows, spoonful of peanut butter, and chunks of meat larger than what can be swallowed whole.”

According to page 16 of the Elan Vital Montessori School Parent Handbook:

Please send a balanced nutritional lunch for your child. Please pack “healthy body” foods. Suggestions include pasta, sandwiches, string cheese, cheese snacks, fruit, yogurt, and vegetables. Do not send lunchables of any kind, go-gurts or any yogurts packaged in this way, candy, soda, cookies, sugared crackers, desserts, punch, Capri Sun, juice boxes or foods with high sugar content. If sent, these items will be returned unopened.

Item Options: sandwich, pasta, quesadilla, cut up chicken, roll ups, apple slices, berries, orange slices, bananas, cut up bell peppers, pickles, broccoli spears, sliced cucumbers, edamame, yogurt cups, granola bars, cheese slices, leftovers



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Staff Members

Elan Vital Montessori School staff will not be eligible to work until they receive Child Care Civil Background Check that deems them eligible for child care purposes.

EVM will not hire someone that is deemed ineligible or indeterminable through the CCCBC system.



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Physical Activity for Students

Weather permitting, Elan Vital Montessori School will encourage students to spend at least one hour of uninterrupted outside play time per day. When the Toddler Students are in their classroom, they will be allowed to choose to work their brains and small motor skills in the work room or they may choose to work on their gross motor skills in the “play” room.

Child care activities will provide for each child’s physical, intellectual, emotional and social development. Activities, both indoors and outdoors, will be appropriate to each child’s developmental stage and age, include active and quiet time, and contain both provider-directed and child-initiated activities.



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Additional policies based on CDC, Dept. of Education and Child Care Guidelines

- Staff will be required to take everyday precautions to prevent the spread of respiratory illnesses. This includes scheduled hand washing, cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched surfaces, avoiding close contact and wearing clean cloth face masks that cover the mouth and nose.
- To maintain proper social distancing strategies, parents and guardians will not be allowed to walk in the gate of the school.
- Parents will be required each day to verbally confirm whether a child has received a fever reducing medication or supplement within the last 24 hours and does not have shortness of breath, sore throat, rash or a cough upon entering EVM's campus.
- Students must disinfect their hands immediately upon arrival. Children's hands will be washed with an antibacterial soap or an alcohol based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol at a minimum of every two hours while on campus.
- Staff will check and document the temperatures of each child and staff member upon entry and at several intervals throughout the day. Any person who has a fever of 100.4°F or above, OR has any other visible signs of illness will not be admitted to the facility. If a student develops symptoms or fevers during the day, the child will be placed in isolation and must be picked up immediately. Staff members will call everyone on the child's pickup list until they reach someone who is available to come pick up the child.
- If a student or staff member tests a confirmed positive for COVID-19 after being on campus, Elan Vital will be required to shut down operations for at least 48 hours. In the first 24 hours, the building will be required to remain empty of people so that the respiratory droplets can settle. The second 24 hours will be utilized to clean and disinfect all surfaces. Elan Vital will resume operations on the day following disinfecting. This policy will be updated as new guidelines are required by the state, the parish, and the department of education.



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Confirmation of Receipt of the Policy Handbook

Please provide written documentation by either signing this page and turning it into the office or by sending a confirmation e-mail to Elan Vital Montessori School's Director's at office@elanvitalmontessori.org

Child's Name

Signature of Parent / Guardian

Date