

Montessori School of Cheyenne

Where exploration fosters a love of learning!

Parent Handbook



5926 Townsend Pl.

Cheyenne, WY 82009

www.montessorischoolofcheyenne.org

Office: 307-635-2012

Private Parent Line: 307-632-8875

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PHILOSOPHY/MISSION STATEMENT

Montessori School of Cheyenne is dedicated to nurturing each child in a loving, caring, and enriched environment. Our mission is to foster respect for others, nature, and self while cultivating an intrinsic love of learning. We are a vibrant community of children, parents, families, and highly qualified staff united by the Montessori philosophy, which emphasizes open communication, trust, and mutual support.

Our philosophy is rooted in the teachings of Dr. Maria Montessori, emphasizing that each child is an independent spirit deserving of nurturing and respect. We believe that every child should develop at their own pace using Montessori materials. The role of the teacher is to guide and encourage, presenting lessons while allowing the child the freedom to explore and experience life. Our teachers create a safe, beautiful, and stimulating environment to support this growth.

SCHOOL HOURS

MSC hours are 7:00 AM–5:30 PM Monday through Friday.

Students are requested to be **at school by 8:30 a.m.** This ensures that they will be in class for group lessons presented and quality time spent with the Montessori materials.

Parents are always welcome to visit the school to observe their children. There are observation windows looking into each classroom.

If you are running late, you need to notify the school so we are aware as we do not offer over-night care. A \$1.00 late pickup fee will be charged for every minute after 5:30 p.m. that a parent has not picked up their child. **Please be aware that any child left past closing without notification is subject to reporting to the Department of Family Services.**

We are a member school through the American Montessori Society and licensed through the WY Department of Family Services.

Find more information at:

www.amshq.org

www.dfs.wyo.gov



When new staff are hired they are sometimes put on a variance through DFS. This means we are still waiting on specific items to be returned. Fingerprints, Out of state Central registry, and Wyoming Registry. These staff are never left alone with children.

Behavior Steps

Redirection will be our first step in trying to calm the student and try to transition them to a different activity. If the behavior continues or escalates, the following steps will be taken:

1. The lead teacher and/or assistant teacher will attempt to redirect the child.
2. The child will be sent to talk to one of our office staff and/or may be provided one-on-one time, which may help calm the child and/or redirect their focus.
3. A parent or guardian will be called for further assistance;
4. Teachers and administration will collaborate with parents and engage available community resources to address challenging behaviors.
5. The child may be sent home.
6. A meeting will be scheduled and a behavior plan will be enforced, based on the behavior rubric.
7. The child may be removed from the school permanently if behavior does not improve.

As a school, we have the goal of providing an environment that promotes self-directed learning and discovery. We have an obligation to require respect. If a child or parent is repeatedly disruptive and disrespectful to the point of hindering our school's mission, we reserve the right to withdraw your child from MSC.

When we have followed steps 1-6 above, but extreme behavior that places your child or any other child at risk continues, your child may be asked to leave the school permanently.

BEHAVIOR POLICY

Montessori School of Cheyenne expects its children to follow three simple rules at all times, all of which revolve around the concept of respect:

1. Authorities (administrators, teachers, assistants) are to be respected. This means that children are to follow the leader's instructions when asked to do something or not to do something.
2. Other children are to be respected. This rule has two implications. First, children will keep their hands, feet, and objects to themselves. No hitting, kicking, poking with anything, etc. Second, children will respect and, therefore, not interfere with each other's work and each other's opportunity to learn.
3. School materials are to be respected and used in the proper manner.

Behavioral Rubric

Four (4) - Exceeds Expectations

- Initiates behavior changes in self
- Helps others resolve conflicts
- Models appropriate behavior for others
- Complies with requests from adults

Three (3) - Meets Expectations

- Works independently
- Works quietly
- Is respectful
- Responds when asked to do something
- Is able to work out conflicts
- Is able to change behavior when requested

Two (2) - Working to Meet Expectations

- Works with an adult present
- Behaves acceptably on line when close to an adult
- Is able to change behavior when requested while adult is close

One (1) - Does Not Meet Expectations

- Is unable to change behavior when requested
- Disrupts class either vocally or physically
- Uses inappropriate language
- Disrupts line or other's work
- Is rude to adults or children
- Is a danger physically to self or others

TUITION AND FEES

TODDLER PROGRAM (Full Day 12 months-3 years old)

5 full days: \$1,170 per month*

PRIMARY PROGRAM (ages 3-6 years old)

Full-Time: \$945 per month*

Part-Time (up to 25 hours/week) : \$845 per month*

Mornings or full days requested for consistency and learning purposes.

***Holidays, vacations, and closures are included in the monthly tuition rates and will not be prorated.**

ALL TUITION IS DUE ON THE FIFTH OF EACH MONTH. If tuition is not paid by the 15th of each month (unless prior arrangements have been made with the Director), a \$25 late fee will be assessed. Questions regarding tuition should be addressed to the Director or Assistant Director. Tuition is subject to increase up to 5% annually per Board resolution and notification of parents. Adjustments are based on cost of living.

ANNUAL ENROLLMENT FEE

Each family will be charged an annual enrollment fee of \$100.00. The fee will be paid at the time of enrollment and then each spring and is a nonrefundable deposit for the following fall. We ask each family to commit each spring for the subsequent year after initial enrollment.

ANNUAL SUPPLY FEE

MSC requires a supply fee at the beginning of each school year of \$440 with an option to pay \$37 monthly. This deposit is due September 1st. This fee is not refundable and covers the cost of school supplies for the year. Each additional child requires a deposit of \$60, with the option to pay \$5 monthly.

OVERDUE TUITION

Should tuition payments become overdue into the next month, your child will forfeit his/her enrollment spot. Your account will then be turned over to a collection agency, and the parent or guardian whose signature appears on the contract will be responsible for all collection and/or attorney fees.

DFS and Stride subsidies are typically a month behind. Late fees do not apply unless balance is more than 2 months past due.

REQUIREMENTS AND RULES

Admission

The Director or Board of Directors reserves the right to deny admission of any child to the Montessori School of Cheyenne. MSC does not provide care to children under the age of 12 months. MSC does not allow siblings to be in the same classroom together. We believe they are individuals and need to form their own social relationships separately. Please see the Director if you have questions.

Montessori School of Cheyenne does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, ethnicity, ancestry, religion, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, age, marital status, socioeconomic status, or any other characteristic protected by law in any of its programs, activities, or employment practices.

Immunizations

Our school requires that you provide proof of up-to-date immunizations prior to admission of your child to school. Immunizations are required to be kept current. Please see the office for exemption forms, if needed.

Attendance

Attendance records are kept on all children. There is no refund for children who are ill, for absences, or for vacations. Please notify MSC if your child will be absent, arriving late, or needs to be picked up for an appointment.

Termination of Enrollment

The Director or Board of Directors reserves the right to withdraw a child's placement in the school. In the event a child's placement is terminated prior to the end of the month, the balance of the month's tuition shall be returned. In the event the family decides to leave the school, we require a two-week notice or no balance will be returned.

Release of Children

Please note that we can only release children to authorized parties listed on your child's record form or in Brightwheel (You have access to update this at any time). We require notice in advance and photo identification if anyone other than you will pick up your child.

Broken Material Policy

If a work or item that is property of MSC is purposefully broken by a child, MSC will reach out to the parents informing them of the incident and parents may be required to cover the replacement fee.

Animals and Pets

Our school is pet free for the safety of our children and staff with allergies, with the exception of fish or crustaceans in tanks.

The following exclusions must be followed per DFS rules:

1. Any child who cannot participate in a regular child care program due to discomfort, injury, or other symptoms of illness may be refused care by the provider.
2. A facility serving well children may not admit a child who has the illness/symptoms specified as follows:
 - a. Diarrhea, when it is:
 1. Due to disease spread by fecal contamination or when the child is under the care of a physician
 2. Accompanied by evidence of dehydration or fluid loss, identified by sunken eyes or poor skin elasticity
 3. Accompanied by abnormal stools with blood/mucous
 4. Accompanied by a history of poor intake or unusual drowsiness
 5. Continued beyond three or four days unless the child is under the supervision of a physician with written documentation that it is safe to readmit the child for care
 - b. Severe pain or discomfort
 - c. One or more episodes of acute vomiting within a period of 24 hours
 - d. Difficult or rapid breathing
 - e. Yellowish eyes or skin
 - f. Sore throat with a fever or severe coughing
 - g. Untreated head lice
 - h. Untreated scabies
 - i. Children suspected of being in contagious stages of chicken pox, pertussis, measles, mumps, rubella, or diphtheria
 - j. Skin rashes, excluding diaper rash, lasting more than a day
3. Children with the following symptoms should be excluded from school unless they are under the care of a physician, and the physician has approved in writing their return to school.
 - a. Skin rashes, not diaper rash, lasting more than a day
 - b. swollen joints or visibly enlarged lymph nodes
 - c. Elevated oral temperatures
 - d. Blood in urine
4. Other conditions may be determined by the Director on an individual basis.

We will call you when a temperature is above 100 degrees.

Our staff will notify you if your child needs to be picked up due to illness. We realize that this causes an inconvenience for you. However, we believe removal of sick children is necessary for the continued well-being of ALL MSC children and staff.

SICK POLICY

While we make every effort to keep the children safe through supervision, minor injuries are inevitable. Minor “boo-boos” will be taken care of at school and an injury report filled out. Please sign the form and we will keep it in your child's file.

If an injury requires immediate attention, we will call 911 and you will be notified immediately. If necessary, your child will be taken to the nearest hospital by ambulance or MSC bus. If you cannot be reached, we will contact the emergency contact person listed on your child's information form. Please note that most of our staff is certified in Infant/Child CPR and First Aid.

We provide a well-child program! For the safety and protection of all the children in our care, we follow the recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics. We request that you do not place your child in our care if they display any of the following symptoms:

- a. Fever in the last 24 hours
- b. Diarrhea or vomiting in the last 24 hours
- c. Pink Eye or other eye infections
- d. Severe sore throat (other than allergy related)
- e. Colored nasal discharge
- f. Skin rashes other than diaper rash
- g. Lice
- h. Any communicable diseases

Children are required to remain out of school for the standard suggested time for all contagious illnesses—24 hours from beginning an antibiotic or 24 hours fever free without the aid of any medicines.

Additionally, we are not medically staffed and, therefore, do not have staff to clean up small children with severe diarrhea or vomiting, even if it is of non-contagious origins, or to care for convalescing children. We ask that children with these conditions not attend in order to prevent any illness from spreading to the other children.

If you suspect your child may have strep throat, contact your physician or City/County Health Unit for a throat culture. Please see the Sick Child Policy section regarding exclusion from care.

*Our staff follow the same sick policy as the children.

Field Trips and Transportation

The school attempts to offer out-of-school field trips when possible. These trips expand your child's experiences and provide a welcome addition to in-school learning. Since we realize that children mature at different rates, the staff will determine which children are of an appropriate behavior level to attend field trips. Parents may be asked to attend field trips and provide supervision for their children. Occasionally, there may be an admission charge or other cost for a field trip that is not included in your child's tuition. Parent authorization is required prior to transportation. Toddlers do not go on field trips, other than occasional walks in the neighborhood.

MSC has passenger busses used exclusively for school transportation and field trips. Each seat has a five point harness and a lap belt, enabling children 3 and up to travel safely. All of our 21+ drivers are licensed and insured through the Montessori School of Cheyenne. First aid kits are available on each bus. Current attendance and staff to child ratios are maintained at all times, including during transportation and on fieldtrips. Boundaries are established upon arrival at a field trip location.

Sunscreen

Parents should apply an appropriate waterproof sunscreen to their children before school. The staff will reapply it throughout the day as needed. We supply generic sunscreen. If you wish for your child to use a different sunscreen, we ask that it be provided and labeled with your child's name.

Extra Clothes

Please keep an extra change of weather appropriate clothes in your child's size, labeled with your child's name, at school at all times. Accidents happen and your child will feel more comfortable if he/she has his/her own clothing to change into including socks and shoes. We also ask that children wear shorts or leggings under dresses so they are covered and modest while sitting cross-legged and playing outside.

Nap

Your child will nap in the early afternoon until the staff and the parents determine that the child can maintain in our program without a nap. This is a very individual matter and, therefore, we do not determine the need to nap solely by the child's age.

Nappers need a blanket and pillow or a nap roll for sleeping. Nap rolls can be purchased at www.wildkins.com or www.amazon.com. Please put your child's name on each item. These items will be in each child's classroom on Friday to be taken home for washing. It is important that weekly washing be done in hot water with liquid bleach in order to kill germs.

Swimming and Wading pools

During the summer, children use a small wading pool (under 1 ft of water) with direct supervision of staff for water days outside. The wading pools are cleaned and disinfected after each use. With parent authorization. Summer Elementary students attend swim lessons and are directly supervised by a life guard. Staff to child ratios are maintained at all times.

GUIDELINES AND INFORMATION

Emergency Policies and Procedures can be found in our Emergency Handbook. This is available in the office and on Brightwheel.

Lunch Guidelines

Each family will provide lunch for their own child(ren). We will provide a morning and an afternoon snack as well as milk at lunch. Please follow these guidelines:

- ◆ Provide a clean lunch box with your child's name on it.
- ◆ **Include a frozen cold pack in the lunch bag if perishable food is in it. This is a Health Department regulation. We will not store lunches in the school refrigerator.**
- ◆ Candy, sweet treats, and soft drinks will not be allowed in lunch boxes and will be returned home.
- ◆ Please send small servings of a variety of foods. You can use small plastic containers or baggies and thermos bottles for warm food. Example: 1/2 sandwich, fresh fruit, fresh veggies, and yogurt. Occasionally, leftovers from last night's supper, such as a small piece of meat or mac and cheese, a small salad, and fruit cup are also options.

We will microwave food if needed. Pyrex glass is the best choice for microwaving. We do not discriminate in the serving of snack items according to the U. S. Department of Agriculture. "In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited in discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.)" To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W, Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call (202)720-5964 (voice or TDD).

Allergies and Special needs

An individualized care plan will be developed upon enrollment of a child with allergies or special health considerations.

Rest and Good Diet

Rest and proper diet are very important for your child. Our staff can provide suggestions in these areas if necessary. Children also need a good breakfast each morning in order to do their best work.

Birthdays

We celebrate birthdays with a simple Montessori ceremony. Several days before your child's birthday, we will send a letter home about treats, pictures, etc. for your child's celebration. If you are having a party for your child, we ask you to mail all invitations and thank you notes OR invite everyone in the class. This will help eliminate hurt feelings for those not included in the party. If you need addresses or phone numbers, please check with the office.

Disallowed and Discouraged Items

We promote a healthy and safety, including healthy eating, at the Montessori School of Cheyenne, and we are also cognizant of maintaining a safe and clean area for your children. Children may not bring soda pop or gum to the school. We also discourage your child from bringing toys to school, because we cannot be responsible for loss or damage to these treasures and they often create conflict. However, one stuffed animal may be sent with each child for comfort at nap time if your child naps.

No weapons are allowed into the facility or onto the school building grounds unless it is a function of employment (e.g., law enforcement) or otherwise allowed by applicable law.

Snow Days

Inclement weather/snow days are days when Laramie County School District #1 and/or state/government offices are closed. The final decision to open or close the school will rest with the Director, and will be based on the ability for staff to safely get to and from the school. Parents should be aware that even if the school is open, staffing and programming may be seriously limited and, therefore, we request that parents who are home from work voluntarily keep their children home, if possible.

Additionally, the opening of the school may be delayed if roads are such that staff arrival is delayed. **Closures of the school will be announced on CBS Channel 5, through parent emails, Brightwheel and on our Facebook page.** No refunds will be given for days or portion of days when the school is closed due to inclement weather or other unforeseen circumstances. If schools and offices close early due to weather, parents are asked to pick up their children as soon as possible so that our staff and children can get home safely.

Medication

If your child is required to take medication while at MSC, you must sign a medication form provided by your child's teacher. Medicines are kept in a locked cabinet in your child's classroom. If they need to be refrigerated, place them in the lock box in the refrigerator. All medicines must be labeled with the child's name, the dosage amount, and be in the original container. We will do our best to give your child his/her medicine at the proper time; however, it is sometimes very difficult to give it at the exact time needed. If it is important that your child receive medicine at an exact time, please make sure you can administer it yourself.

If your child is sick, please remember that he or she needs to be fever free without the aid of any medicines for 24 hours. Children also need to be free from vomiting and diarrhea for 24 hours before returning to school. We need your help in preventing the spread of contagious illnesses. We all miss fewer days when sick children are kept home until they are not contagious. We really appreciate your compliance with this policy.

Parent/Teacher Communication

Our school continues the work done by the parent. The goal of both the parent and the staff is to give our children the ability to be happy, responsible human beings.

Our staff strives to guide the children in as gentle a manner as possible, hoping that the children will mimic this gentle behavior. Our staff is available to suggest parent follow through at home to continue this more gentle form of discipline. When used consistently at home and school, this often can lead to a child who wishes to be well-behaved and who responds to non-violent guidance. **Respect for all is so vitally important.**

In turn, we ask that parents be respectful to the children and the staff during class time. Please observe that if the Head Teacher is giving a lesson to a child when you bring your child into the classroom, please do not interrupt. Please refer to the Assistant or leave a message with the Director or Assistant Director.

Please also note that our children's resting/nap time is from 1:00-3:00, and we ask that visitations be limited during this time.

If you would like to speak to your child's teacher you can reach them by:

1. Email
2. Brightwheel
3. Phone
4. Scheduled Meeting/ Observation

Parent/Teacher Conferences

In the Fall, a Check-In will occur and is a quick meeting to discuss your child and the year ahead. MSC is closed one day in April for Spring Conferences. This is an opportunity to meet with your child's teacher and discuss progress and/or concerns. Parents and teachers should remain in contact at other times as concerns and questions arise.

Volunteering

As a not for profit, MSC has an annual supply fee. Parents are encouraged, but not required, to volunteer as a member of our school community.

Work options and requests will be sent through email and Brightwheel. If you have special abilities or talents, please notify the Director. Your time and talents are very valuable to us!

Parent Education

We offer parent education workshops, trainings, and materials from time to time. Please check newsletters and flyers for dates and times. Also, we have a variety of materials available for check-out. Please notify the office if you would like to borrow something. We have a new parent orientation training that is offered online. Each family will be sent an invitation through email within a month of enrollment. There is also a Kindergarten meeting in early spring for those considering what to do for their child's Kindergarten year.

Staff

Our staff is well trained and has been selected because of the Director's belief that they can provide a quality learning environment for our children. If you are concerned by the actions or behavior of a staff member, the Director should be notified. A list of current staff members, Administration, and Board of Directors is available upon request.

Board of Directors

Our Board of Directors is the governing and policy making body of the school, together with the Director and Assistant Director. The members of the Board of Directors are parents of current or previously enrolled children and are elected by the parents of children attending MSC. These elected members establish the school's long range planning, oversee operations, approve the annual budget, provide support to school projects, and provide support to the staff. All Board meeting information will be posted on our website and all parents are invited and encouraged to attend. Board Meeting Agenda and reports are emailed out on the day of the meeting. Elections for open Board positions will be held at the Annual Parent Meeting in the Fall.

Complaint Procedure

If you have any concerns or complaints, please see the Director immediately. We will make every effort to solve any problems. If you wish, you may also speak to a member of the Board of Directors.

Board Email: Boardmsc@googlegroups.com

DFS Licensing and Complaints

Visit the Wyoming Department of Family Services view licensing rules, file a complaint, and review complaint/compliance or violation history. You can also call our local DFS licensors.

DFS Website: dfs.wyo.gov

Child Care Page: <https://findchildcarewy.org>

Local Licensors: **Kathy Geringer: 307-322-6539**

Ariel Schmitzer: 307-777-517

Michelle Lala: 307-777-5151

Child Abuse/Neglect

As a childcare provider, we are obligated by law to recognize and report any evidence of child abuse or neglect of any kind.

Liability Insurance

Montessori School of Cheyenne carries liability insurance.