



little paws  
MONTESSORI

Parent Handbook 2022-2023

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### **I. Introduction**

#### Mission Statement

Our Montessori program considers the emotional, intellectual, physical, and social development of the total child by addressing the uniqueness of each in a nurturing, emotionally secure and academically excellent environment.

We create a warm and enriching early childhood environment that promotes learning through hands-on experience, and opportunities for multi-sensory exploration and discovery.

## Philosophy & Program Goals

As a Montessori school, we use the philosophy developed by Dr. Maria Montessori to help children develop to their fullest potential. We want to educate the whole child, meaning we promote growth in all areas of a child's development: academic, social, emotional, and physical. A key to the Montessori Method is the belief that every child has an inner desire to learn, and we work to cultivate that desire so that each child has a true joy in learning and a lifelong interest to do so.

The teacher's job begins with setting up an environment that draws the child in; they do this by ensuring the environment is beautiful and well-prepared, and by having items available that fit what each child needs developmentally. The teacher does not instruct in the traditional sense of the word, but more accurately guides each individual in her care.

The Little Paws Montessori classroom comprises 5 main areas. Each teacher at Little Paws Montessori has been trained according to AMS standards in these areas. Feel free to direct any Montessori-related questions toward any of us. We love to nerd out over Maria and her amazing method! We also have a veritable LIBRARY of Montessori books and binders and training literature in

the office we would love to share with you at anytime. There are hundreds of lessons in the Montessori universe, separated by binder per category below. Each lesson includes its own specific age, category, prerequisites, materials, presentations, points of interest, control of error, direct aims, indirect aims, additional exercises, extensions, and associated language terms. All of these lessons are available to parents in the office via our AMS Montessori binders. Ask to check these out anytime!

The **Practical Life** area is equipped with familiar items that invite the child's interest. Speaking to children's sense of order and independence, these materials coordinate physical moments, refine hand-eye coordination, sharpen fine and gross motor control, develop concentration, and encourage social relationships through the Grace and Courtesy exercises. Early examples: buttoning a shirt, water pouring, flower arranging, assembling a flashlight, nuts and bolts, bead stringing, tonging, clothespin work, blowing one's nose, sweeping, setting the table, greeting a friend, care of animals. Later examples: snack prep and serving, addressing a letter, sewing, working with money, washing and folding, tying shoes, woodworking.

The **Sensorial** materials enable the child to explore and

identify, compare and contrast, recognize similarities and differences and classify sensory impressions in relation to size, color, temperature, texture, scent, taste, pitch, and more. Early examples: pink tower, brown stair, geometric solids, smelling bottles, color boxes, mystery bag. Later examples: binomial and trinomial cube, constructive triangles, color gradations and mixing, patterns and sequencing.

Montessori **Math** nurtures the mind through the manipulation of materials with the goal of understanding concepts concretely through self-discovery rather than memorization. Math materials allow the child to physically hold a quantity, feel the dimensions, and associate the corresponding symbol. Later, by combining the quantities, separating them into categories, counting them, and comparing them, they comprehend the basic operations of arithmetic. Early examples: sandpaper numerals, cards and counters, teen/tens/hundred boards, memory game. Later examples: decimal system work, addition/subtraction games (bank, stamp, and snake), addition/subtraction charts, fraction work, bead work, even vs. odd, counting by 2s/3s/etc.

**Language** includes the development of expressive (writing and speech), interpretive (reading), and

receptive (listening) language. This is achieved through a series of sequential materials, specifically designed to, through a natural process of maturation, transition the child from the mechanical execution to the abstract interpretation of language. Early examples: sandpaper letters, letter sound boxes, introduction to the moveable alphabet, letter tracing. Later examples: pink/blue/green reading series, writing, word games, story telling.

Cultural activities expose the child to the basics in **Geography, History, and Sciences**. Early examples: continent boxes, 3 part cultural cards, space/planet works, sink or float work, volcano work. Later examples: life cycle of different plants and animals, labeling the parts of different plants and animals, map making, continent-specific projects, and classifications of living things (vertebrate/invertebrate, carnivore/herbivore/omnivore, mammals vs reptiles, etc).

**Music, Art, Food, and Movement** are part of the integrated cultural curriculum. Examples: yoga, cooking, dance, Hollywood Academy of Music class with deskbells and xylophones.

Here are some Montessori articles that have inspired or interested us:



From Google to Amazon, How Montessori-Educated Founders Have Changed the World

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/stevedenning/2011/08/02/is-montessori-the-origin-of-google-amazon>

The Montessori Mafia

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/BL-IMB-2034>

What to Know About Montessori Preschools

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/19/parenting/montessori-preschools.html>

How to think like a genius: The Montessori method

<https://www.houstonchronicle.com/local/gray-matters/article/How-to-think-like-a-genius-The-Montessori-method-7966410.php>

Montessori preschool boosts academic results and reduces income-based inequality [https://](https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2017/10/171030084800.htm)

[www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2017/10/171030084800.htm](https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2017/10/171030084800.htm)

Montessori: A Good School Choice for Smart Kids?

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/going-beyond-intelligence/201701/montessori-good-school-choice-smart-kids>

The Pros & Cons of Montessori Education [https://www.rasmussen.edu/degrees/education/blog/pros\\_cons\\_montessori\\_education/](https://www.rasmussen.edu/degrees/education/blog/pros_cons_montessori_education/)

Studies Shed Light on Merits of Montessori Education <https://www.usnews.com/news/national-news/articles/2018-01-02/studies-shed-light-on-merits-of-montessori-education>

Books we LOVE and have tattered with our marginalia:

The Discovery of the Child by Maria Montessori

Theories of Childhood: An Introduction to Dewey, Montessori, Erikson, Piaget & Vygotsky by Carol Mooney

The Joyful Child by Susan Stephenson

Montessori: The Science Behind the Genius by Angeline Lillard

Let Me Do it Myself!: Secrets for Raising a Capable, Confident & Considerate Toddler by Ginny Trierweiler

The Secret of Childhood by Maria Montessori

## II. To Before The First Day

### Paperwork

Please be sure you have submitted signed copies of the following by or on the first day of school: Enrollment Packet, Vaccination Records, Enrollment Contract, COVID Liability Form and Policy, Sick Policy, and Potty Training Form (if applicable). If you have not received any of the above, please reach out to Miss Faith for a copy.

### Quickbooks

Quickbooks is the platform we use to pay tuition and any other invoices. Please look out for your Enrollment/Materials invoice in July and your September tuition invoice in August. Please let us know if you have any questions about the payment system. You will receive monthly Quickbooks tuition invoices via email, unless you have chosen the one-time payment option.

### Seesaw

By popular demand, we are returning to Seesaw for photos and communication this Fall! Seesaw is a wonderful platform that connects teachers, students, and parents. This is where you can go in the first week

for a little peace of mind – to get updates on your little one, what they're up to, and how their day is going! We will use this platform nearly every day of the school year, posting your child's work and quick snapshots or videos we can grab throughout the day. It is private, and only the child's family will be able to see his or her "journal."

Seesaw also offers features like parent/teacher private messaging, school-wide notifications, and the ability for parents to share an idea for a lesson or craft with the teachers. Miss Faith will be inviting you all individually by email to join our private school group.

\*\*Please note for important school-wide notifications, Miss Faith will always also email the mailing list – should you not have immediate access to Seesaw. And of course, throughout the day we are available by call/text, as well. Miss Faith's phone number, 415.254.5422, is the number to use. Secondary phone numbers in case of emergency are Miss Vanessa at 818.284.7728 and Miss Annica at 805.657.0584.

### Cubbies

Here is what you will need to bring for your child's cubby. If possible, please try to find as exact a match as

possible to the below products. We have tried many, many variations on these products over the years, and have concluded these are the most ergonomic for little hands. *Please make sure everything your child brings to school is labeled with his or her name.* We do have extras of some of these items, so please let Miss Faith know if you need any assistance buying these items.

-Cubby Bin, measuring 1ft cubed, example: [https://www.amazon.com/dp/B09BCZJ2WV/ref=sspa\\_dk\\_detail\\_2](https://www.amazon.com/dp/B09BCZJ2WV/ref=sspa_dk_detail_2)

-Indoor Slippers with rubber bottoms, that are easy to put on and take off, example: <https://www.amazon.com/Beeliss-Toddler-Slippers-Cartoon-Crochet/dp/B0753WD2RP/m>

-Nap Mat, that can be easily rolled and velcroed, example: <https://www.amazon.com/Wildkin-Nap-Mat-this-World/dp/B004FM7VOW>

-Lunchbox (waterproof and closable with zipper or easy clasp) and Water Bottle -- both of which your child can theoretically (with our help and practice, first, of course, if needed!) operate themselves. I.e. not a lunchbox you, as an adult, struggle to open and close.

examples:

[https://www.amazon.com/Bentgo-Kids-Prints-Unicorn-5-Compartment/dp/B07QZ4CRP3/ref=sr\\_1\\_6](https://www.amazon.com/Bentgo-Kids-Prints-Unicorn-5-Compartment/dp/B07QZ4CRP3/ref=sr_1_6)

[https://www.amazon.com/CamelBak-Kids-Water-Bottle-Unicorns/dp/B015DK94R6/ref=sr\\_1\\_3](https://www.amazon.com/CamelBak-Kids-Water-Bottle-Unicorns/dp/B015DK94R6/ref=sr_1_3)

-Backpack that easily fits lunchbox, water bottle, a change of clothes, and any artwork/Show & Share extras, example:

[https://www.amazon.com/dp/B08CS46L52/ref=redir\\_mobile\\_desktop](https://www.amazon.com/dp/B08CS46L52/ref=redir_mobile_desktop)

-Outdoor shoes your child can easily learn to put on and take off themselves. We change our shoes twice a day. Teachers will always help a child take off and put on their shoes, but please do not bring a child in lace up shoes if he or she has not yet learned how to tie them. Please do not bring your child in shoes you yourself struggle to remove or put on them. This can set children up for frustration and a lack of independence in the classroom. examples:

[https://www.amazon.com/dp/B09T8VZJGQ/ref=sspa\\_dk\\_detail\\_6](https://www.amazon.com/dp/B09T8VZJGQ/ref=sspa_dk_detail_6)

<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B08913GC78/>

[ref=sspa\\_dk\\_detail\\_4](#)

Any sandals should be closed-toe, examples:

[https://www.amazon.com/dp/B08CS6ZLND/ref=sspa\\_dk\\_detail\\_0](https://www.amazon.com/dp/B08CS6ZLND/ref=sspa_dk_detail_0)

[https://www.amazon.com/dp/B07LCQLFSJ/ref=sspa\\_dk\\_detail\\_6](https://www.amazon.com/dp/B07LCQLFSJ/ref=sspa_dk_detail_6)

-3-4 change of clothes for potty trained friends, 8-10 for potty training friends

-Sweater or jacket in case it gets chilly

-Wide brimmed hat or baseball hat

-4-5 child-sized face masks

-Sunscreen, should you want us to re-apply it before going outside in the afternoon

-2 weeks supply of diapers and wet wipes for potty-training friends

One last reminder to \*PLEASE LABEL ALL CLOTHES AND BELONGINGS.\* Thank you so much!!

### Earthquake Kits

The school maintains a three-day emergency supply of food, water, and first aid equipment in sealed containers, to provide for all children and staff. We also have packed backpacks ready to go for any evacuation emergencies. While we supply the necessary items, we encourage parents to feel free to bring a small supply of items for your child such as non-perishable snacks that they will enjoy, a small flashlight, and a bottle of water. A special comfort item from home that will not be missed while it is stored is appreciated.

### Transitions

An essential part of our job as teachers is easing your child's transition from home into the school environment. No matter what their personality, this is a huge change, and we want them to feel safe, loved, and supported every step of the way! Here are a few things we do to ensure your child feels as comfortable as possible in this (understandably!) confusing time.

-lots of TLC - hugs if they want them, bunny rabbit



visiting/petting, playing their favorite song and dancing to it - pretty much whatever helps them feel more cozy and happy at school

-re-iterating that "It is ok to be sad. It is ok to cry.

Mommy/Daddy/x always comes back."

-inviting older friends to take their hand if they are comfortable with that, and show them how we play in the garden

-staying busy with games, puzzles, art, and projects

-avoiding any pressure around potty, big new lessons, or anything that makes them feel uncomfortable in these first few days

If your child is starting school for the first time, here is what you will do the first 3 days:

Day 1 - walk to the garden with your child and a teacher, play a little in the playground with any other new friends, then walk into the classroom for work time. As soon as your child is showing any sign of independence, the best thing you can do is walk away and lurk nearby.

Day 2 - walk to the garden with your child, go inside for work time, settle them in and let them get their bearings, and then tell them you are going to get a

coffee down the street/take a call in your car and will be back soon. When they are ready to go home, we will let you know and you can come back and take them home.

Day 3 - walk to the garden with your child, settle them in and then tell them you are going and will pick them up after they are done playing.

(Day 4 - say goodbye at the front gate)

Here are a few things you can do during the first week to help your child have a more comfortable transition:

- Go through the steps of drop off, their day, and pick up with your child before they come in to school. For example, "Henry, do you remember that today you're going to school? Do you know what will happen at school? Here is what will happen. Let's say it together. We will walk up to the Little Paws Gate and have our special hug. Then you will say hello to Miss Faith, take her hand and go to the garden to play in the playground/play games inside. Then I will come pick you up and we will go home together, and do x."

- Do not hover if you can help it. I know how difficult this is! Even if it feels like you are helping your child by

staying when they cry for you, it is actually usually prolonging the inevitable and creating a confusing situation for them. 9 times out of 10, a child stops crying within minutes of their caregiver leaving. Empower your child by trusting them, and make them more comfortable by trusting their teachers to take good care of them. If a child is upset for a prolonged period of time, Miss Faith will certainly let you know so that you can advise or come pick up or comfort your child.

Here are a few things you can do during August to help your child have a more comfortable transition:

- Encourage independence in all areas if you are not already - for example, putting on and taking off their own shoes, throwing away their own trash, sitting in their own grown up chair independently while eating (for toddlers this will come gradually - but any introduction is very helpful)

- Remind your child to use walking feet indoors

- Remind your child to use "indoor voice" indoors

- Teach or remind your child to always say "please" and "thank you" when something is being done for/given to

them

-Start talking about school, and the types of things your child will be doing at school. Check out our website or Yelp for pictures you can show your child of the space, toys, lessons, and teachers.

-Encourage sharing/general respect towards other children and adults.

-Encourage awareness of and respect towards their environment (eg. tidying their room, cleaning up after a meal - again, for toddlers, this will come slowly)

-Encourage verbal rather than physical communication. If your child is prone to push, encourage him or her to ask for "space, please!". If your child begins to cry when they want something, encourage them to ask for it by name.

We will discuss all of our methods at Back to School night further, but above are a few ideas to ease the transition in the first month. This is a two-way street, and we really look forward to hearing more about what works at home for you so that we can better serve your child at school!

### **III. School Year Policies**

#### Fire Drills & Earthquake Procedures

We practice monthly fire drills and quarterly disaster drills including earthquake drills. Our focus is on earthquake and lockdown procedures. Staff are trained on an ongoing basis. A full disaster plan is available on the website and in the cubby room and we encourage you to read it.

If for any reason we need to leave the facility to ensure the safety of the children and staff (fire, building danger, security threat, etc), we have two emergency meeting locations:

1. The lock and key garden of 1347 N Mansfield Ave, the neighboring building directly North of us. This is our default meeting place.
2. Black Canvas Coffee, the coffee shop 2 blocks away at DeLongpre and Highland. This location will only be used if the emergency's threat extends to our neighbor's garden.

We will exit Little Paws with our emergency backpacks - a teacher taking attendance as we leave, and we will walk to our evacuation site all together using our

handled rope.

Parents will be notified by Seesaw, cell phone, and email as soon as possible.

Please feel free to use Miss Faith's cell, which is 415.254.5422. If you are unable to reach her, you may also call Miss Vanessa at 818.284.7728 or Miss Annica at 805.657.0584. Please take a moment to save these numbers in your phone in case you need them.

### "Ouchie" Report Policy

If a child becomes injured or hurts another child (even minorly) while at school, a teacher will write a quick report summarizing what occurred and give to you at pick-up. In the event of a serious incident, you will be notified immediately by phone call.

### Field Trips

We have two field trips per year. They take place on Fridays. Every child is required to have a parent or caregiver accompany them on our field trips and be responsible for their safety. Please take note of the date of these field trips on the calendar.

### Pet Policy

Animals at or visiting Little Paws Montessori are carefully

chosen in regards to care, temperament, health risks, and appropriateness for young children. Before bringing your pet to visit, please provide the teachers a specific date and time, as well as a copy of the pet's vaccination records. Children with allergies to animals will always be accommodated.

### Birthdays

The Montessori birthday circle is a super special occasion that children excitedly await! OK, and teachers, too!! We will celebrate your child's birthday unless directed otherwise by your beliefs. The traditional Montessori celebration involves singing "The Earth moves around the Sun" song during circle time, as your child holds our model of the Earth and revolves around the model of the Sun for as many years as they are turning! You are most welcome to bring pictures of your child at each age for us to incorporate into the circle.

Parents are welcome to drop off a birthday treat to be enjoyed during afternoon snack from 2:45-3 pm, but no refined sugar, please. Take-home goodie bags or other treats are most welcome, but please discuss with Miss Faith before bringing balloons, entertainers, or any other elements that may potentially be disruptive to the environment.

## Parent Involvement

Parent involvement is highly encouraged. We plan parent nights as well as family activities throughout the year. Please feel free to suggest an additional one at any time! We'd love to help organize! We also love how parents join us on field trips. We invite you to schedule a visit should you ever be moved to demonstrate any interesting hobby or talent to the children, as well. Some other fun family activities we organize are our Halloween Carnival, Thanksgiving Feast, "Holidays Around The World" presentations, International Foods Week, and Mother's Day tea. If you would like to come read to the children, you may do that any weekday at 2:40 pm. Please schedule in advance with Miss Faith.

## Parent Conferences

Parent conferences are offered twice a year in the Fall and Spring, although they may be scheduled at any time if a parent has a concern or particular dialogue to pursue. Teachers will observe and record information on children's development. We will share the information with you, learn from your knowledge of your child, and together plan for more opportunities to grow. We will keep your child's information strictly confidential.

## Naps

We believe in the importance of naps for a child's well-



being during these busy days at school. Children under four years old are encouraged to nap; children over four are encouraged to at least try to rest. We provide soft washable pads for all the children to place their napmats on. We send your child's napmats home with you every Friday to be washed and returned Monday.

### Potty Training

Friends at Little Paws should be potty trained when they begin school. That said, we understand some take longer than others to complete the process; not to mention, the new environment can cause some regression! We are here to help you!

We do ask that potty training friends wear regular underwear to school every day, as pull-ups tend to slow the process down considerably and can confuse them a lot. You can expect many loads of laundry for a few weeks, but it's so worth it! Please also give the teachers any information you can about what words you use for the potty at home, so we can be consistent between home and school. We tend to take potty training friends to the bathroom close to every 20 minutes when they are still having accidents, so that could be another good thing to do at home for consistency.

Please discuss a plan for potty training with Miss Faith in

advance of starting at home/school, so we can all be on the same page. Please also read/fill out the LP Potty Training Form.

### Drop-off and Pick-up

We require that each child be escorted to the front gate by an authorized family member, friend, or caregiver, between 8:30 and 9 am. If you cannot drop off by 9 am, you will need to wait until 10:30 am to drop off - when our Montessori work period has ended. When dropping off, the parent (or other person) helps the child until they are visibly in the care of a teacher. The reverse goes for pick-up at 3 pm.

A note on separation anxiety at drop-off: this is, of course, a complex issue. We are here to help. But in order to keep the morning environment consistent for the children whose parents have already left, we ask that you say your goodbye outside the door or garden gate --and then try your best to transition your child into the arms of a teacher. It can be very difficult at first, but we have found that it becomes much trickier and more distressing to the child when a parent lingers for too long a time. Again, we are here to help, and make this process as cozy and positive as possible.

## Classroom Environment

A Montessori classroom environment is kept peaceful so as not to disturb the children at work. We teach respect and we encourage the children to treat their environment with respect.

With this in mind, we ask parents to help us uphold this policy at all times when visiting the school. If arriving at school after class has started at 9 am, we ask that all adults are quiet and respectful to the other children, and approach through the back door so as not to interrupt the lessons in the front room. Thank you so much.

## Belongings

One last reminder to please take a few minutes to mark you child's clothing and belongings with their name. This will aid our teachers in daily operation as well as ensure your belongings get home with your child!

## Absences

Please let Miss Faith know on Seesaw or by text/email if your child will be absent. It is helpful for us to know if your child will not be coming to school.

## Sick Policy

Children who are not physically well won't fare well in a

learning environment. They also may be contagious and pass their illness on to other children, teachers, and members of the community. Please find our detailed Sick Policy separately attached for you to sign.

### Medications

We understand that children will occasionally need to take medicine (such as antibiotics) at school. Any medications given to the child will be at Miss Faith's discretion, and must be in the original (prescription) container, with the physician's instructions on it.

A parent's signature is required to authorize us to administer prescription medication. Please ask Miss Faith to provide the medication form for you to fill out.

A physician's signature is not required for these non-prescription medicines: antihistamines, cough medicine, decongestants, anti-itching cream, diaper ointments, powders, and sun screens. However, parents must fill out the authorization form, and non-prescription medicine must also be in its original container.

A written physician's permission is required for other non-prescription medicines not on the authorized list. We are not authorized to administer herbs or vitamins

without a prescription.

All children must have up-to-date vaccination records on file by their first day of attendance.

### Medical Emergencies

Our procedure for life threatening emergencies is as follows:

- Immediately call 911 and 323.361.2120 for an ambulance to Children's Hospital Emergency Room
- Administer First Aid and/or CPR as appropriate
- Notify parents or guardians
- Transport child to Children's Hospital as appropriate (see hospital details below)
- Document emergency and file in child's file

In case of illness or accident, it is necessary for us to know where you may be reached at all times. Please keep a current list of emergency contact information on record with us at all times.

Our local hospital is Children's Hospital of Los Angeles (located 1 mile from our facility).

The address is:

Children's Hospital Los Angeles  
4650 Sunset Blvd, Los Angeles, CA 90027

Emergency Call Phone: 323-361-2120

Regular Phone: 323-660-2450

From their website:

Our division treats more than 88,000 infants, children and adolescents who need emergency care each year. The emergency department is a designated level I pediatric trauma critical care center and pediatric critical care center. Children with severe illness or critical injury are treated by our emergency department. Children with non-life threatening illnesses or injuries are cared for in lower acuity areas.

As a Level I Pediatric Trauma Center, we are one of 12 hospitals in the nation providing the highest level of emergency care for children. Our specialized trauma team consists of emergency and critical care physicians, surgeons and ancillary personnel. The nursing team is comprised of caring and experienced nurses with a passion for treating children.

We are also designated as a pediatric critical care center, a designation signifying the ability to provide emergency and critical care for ill and injured patients from infancy through adolescence.

### Cleaning and Disinfecting

At Little Paws, we clean and sanitize the classroom work and surfaces throughout the day. Hand washing is mandatory when entering the classroom in the morning, coming in from outside, before meals, and after restroom trips. Cleaning products are stored in a locked closet or high cabinet.

### Toys/Show & Share

We try to have children only bring items from home for Show & Share on Fridays, or to keep in their cubby for nap times. We have found that in certain instances the use of personal items has also helped with transitioning, arrivals, etc. Based on this, we are open to discussion about bringing a special item at drop off. \*Please\* discuss with Miss Faith beforehand. Please do not wait until drop off at the front gate to ask a teacher if a child may bring in a toy.

We do Show & Share on Fridays. If your child would like to participate, they may bring an item that relates to our weekly theme. The theme will be posted the Friday prior on Seesaw.

### Lunch & Snacks

We ask parents to provide lunch for the school day. We provide morning and afternoon snack.

Per the Department of Early Learning, each of our snacks must contain at least 2 out of the following:

- a milk product (such as milk, cottage cheese, yogurt, cheese)
- a meat or meat alternative (such as meat, legumes, beans, egg)
- a grain product (such as cereal, bagel, rice cake or bread)
- fruit or vegetable

We serve cold, filtered water at every snack-time.

Good nutrition is an important element in our overall program. Please pack adequate amounts of protein, which plays an important role in your child's growth and stamina throughout the day, and please keep sugar items to a minimum. We do not allow soda or gum at our center, and a recent California state law requires we do not serve a child more than one juice per day.

Need ideas of what to bring? Here are some suggestions:

- fresh or dried fruits (apples, bananas, grapes, kiwi, oranges, plums, berries)
- fresh vegetables (carrots, celery, cucumber,



- broccoli, green beans, tomatoes
- sandwiches (turkey, ham, salami, roast beef, tuna, egg salad, etc)
  - cheese (string, cubes, slices, cottage, cream)
  - beans and rice
  - mixed nuts (we will keep you updated on any allergies, but so far there is none for this school year)
  - chicken lettuce wrap
  - yogurt
  - crackers with hummus
  - green salad
  - soup, mac and cheese, or pasta leftovers

### Licensing

Little Paws Montessori is licensed by the State of California, facility #198020948. We meet all health and safety standards required by the California State Department of Social and Health Services. There are regular health and fire inspections, and our license is renewed as required.

We recognize, value, and promote diversity. It is the policy of Little Paws Montessori that no person shall be subjected to discrimination because of race, gender, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, religion, creed, marital status, or disabled status. Little

Paws Montessori acknowledges and protects the rights of children, families, and staff to their own culture and to the customs, beliefs, and practices that comprise that culture.

### Insurance

Little Paws Montessori carries full insurance coverage including liability and accident policies.

### Behavior Policy

Goals: We will work in partnership with parents to develop independently thinking children who:

- respect themselves and others
- feel a sense of belonging
- contribute to their community in their own way and with joy and pride
- accept and include diverse people
- solve problems peacefully

Philosophy: We strive to produce a safe and secure environment for the entire school community. We promote the child's rights to develop as an individual through making mistakes and learning from them. Our discipline policies are designed to never punish the child, but rather to help the child grow into a respectful and responsible individual who is capable of making

the best decisions for themselves and their environment.

Methods: We prepare a child-centered, calm, and interesting environment with child-centered activities. We will always respect the child. We will model and actively teach social skills: how to share, take turns, ask for things, communicate, etc. We teachers are also human and make mistakes, too. We will be sure to point out our own mistakes, too, and discuss how we can make better choices the next time around ourselves. We encourage parents to do this, too! It can be nice for the children to realize they are not alone in sometimes having a tough time making the best choices.

Children will learn to solve problems through respectful discussion and negotiation. We will give the children appropriate positive attention for positive behavior. We will never inflict pain, humiliate, frighten, or shame any child.

We will deal with inappropriate behavior through respectful reminders, re-directing of energy, ignoring when appropriate, cool offs, and solution-oriented natural or logical consequences. The first month of school we will all make rules for our community together. From there, we will make it clear that anyone

who does not follow these rules is perfectly free to do so, but may have the consequence of not being able to participate in certain community activities as a result. We want the children to know that almost any choice they make is perfectly acceptable; while also understanding that every choice may have a consequence.

The following are a list of the only unacceptable "choices" at Little Paws:

- physical abuse or injury of another student or staffmember at Little Paws
- invalidation or emotional bullying of any kind
- damaging the belongings of other friends

Intervention: Whenever a child continues to hurt others physically or emotionally or destroy their property, we will conference with the parents to cooperatively work out suitable behavior goals for the child and techniques to help him or her improve in these areas. We will also implement a timetable to evaluate progress. Parents will take a child home in case of repeated hurting of other children and staff.

Disenrollment: Disenrollment is extremely rare, but would be used when, despite the best efforts of the parents and staff, a child's behavior continues to:

- threaten the safety of children or staff
- result in the destruction of property

- seriously and regularly interfere with the ability of classmates to learn and play

### Religion

We do not disseminate any religious teachings in the classroom. Like most secular schools, we employ philosophies from many cultures and beliefs. A statement such as "some people believe" would accompany any remarks concerning religious beliefs.

We do encourage parents and staff to share their celebration of meaningful religious or cultural holidays with us in an age-appropriate manner. We believe an open sharing of such customs and beliefs expands the children's understanding of the world. It is also a way to learn acceptance and appreciation for other people's beliefs and differences.

Nothing that we would do at the school is meant to supersede or interfere with your own personal teachings. The foundation laid in your home is by far the strongest basis for your child's religious growth. If you feel your child is confused by a school discussion, we encourage you to reinforce our statement of "some people believe...".

### Child Abuse/Neglect

We are obligated by law to report any suspicion of child abuse or neglect to Child Protective Services.

Please visit <https://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/ss/ap/childabusereportingguide.asp> to read the Mandated Reporter identification and reporting guidelines.

### Wildfire or other emergency closures

We will make every attempt to stay open and service you. However, in the case of an unforeseen threat or emergency in the area, please check Seesaw (or be sure push notifications are turned on), email, and phone. These are the primary ways we will notify you of school closures, late starts, etc. In these instances, please respond with confirmation of receipt of the news.

### Covid-19 Protocols

A Covid policy form will be sent to you prior to your arrival at the school; you must sign before we can allow your child inside. Sorry, no exceptions.

Please do not come to school if you, your children, or anyone you have been in contact with has experienced the following:

cough

shortness of breath or difficulty breathing  
chills  
muscle pain/ body aches  
fatigue  
headache  
sore throat  
runny or stuffy nose  
loss of taste or smell  
diarrhea  
vomiting  
feeling feverish or a measured temperature of 100  
degrees Fahrenheit  
known close contact with a person who is confirmed or  
suspected to have COVID-19

We reserve the right to ask you to come back another  
time, and we will if we see any of the above signs.

Every child and teacher **MUST** have a mask available at  
school. If there is a suspected or confirmed exposure at  
school, we may decide to wear masks. We do not  
currently require masks in any other event, but please let  
us know if you would like your child to wear one. If you  
expect your child to wear his or her mask at all times  
during the day (except while eating, drinking, and  
napping) -- you must provide a mask that does not fall  
off easily. We cannot guarantee your child will be

wearing a mask all day, but we will do our best. Please label every mask your child brings to school.

Every child and teacher must be tested for Covid-19 weekly and present a negative result to Miss Faith until further notice. We conduct PCR testing every Tuesday and Friday at school, but if you prefer you may test your child elsewhere.

Temperature checks will be administered if a child is showing any signs of sickness.

Children will wash or sanitize their hands with a teacher upon entering and leaving the school, before snack and meal times, and before and after play.

Pick up will be at 3 pm so that teachers will have the rest of the day to sanitize all materials used.

Children who become sick at school will be isolated in the office, and will need to be picked up within 30 minutes of Miss Faith's call.

Your safety and the safety of our teachers is our number one priority. We know it can be an inconvenience to adjust to all these new protocols, but we must do everything to ensure everyone's safety by following the



California Health Authority guidelines.

#### **IV. Signatures**

I hereby declare that I have read and understood the above Little Paws Montessori policies and guidelines, and that I agree to all the terms.

Signature of Parent: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Parent: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_