

Greenwood Montessori School 

# Family Handbook



Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s):

Greetings, and welcome to Greenwood Montessori School. Here your child will be immersed in a peaceful, innovative and educational environment that will challenge, intrigue and delight, while developing intellectual, social and physical growth.

As Greenwood Montessori School embarks on another school year, it is necessary that our daily policies, guidelines and procedures be communicated in a clear and concise manner. Your handbook has been prepared for this purpose and is required reading for all parents and staff. You will find this guide to be very helpful as we work together to maintain an organized and vibrant school. Should you have any questions as you read through the Handbook, or if you happen to find any errors herein, please email us. **Once you have read the Handbook, please sign the Family Handbook Acknowledgement page at the end (must be signed by both parents/guardians in a two-parent/guardian family) and return the Acknowledgment Page to the School by the date indicated.**

We seek to partner with you in carrying out the work of Maria Montessori, as well as God's design for your children, and we look forward to an exciting year working with your wonderful children!

With Joy!

Brenda Medeiros, Owner/Director

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*Greenwood Montessori School welcomes children of all racial, cultural, religious and economic backgrounds and does not discriminate on the basis of such in its admissions, educational, hiring or school policies.*

## ***Our Mission***

Greenwood Montessori School is intent on nurturing the whole child, giving equal value to their social, emotional, academic and spiritual development, as they grow in age, wisdom and grace. It is a mission of the heart, equipping young children to become the best version of themselves, in all of these dimensions. We encourage an atmosphere of trust, kindness and respect and endeavor to nurture each child's independence, love of learning, and positive sense of self and others. Greenwood Montessori School is a non-denominational Christian community that aims to foster competent, responsible, adaptive citizens who are life-long learners and problem-solvers. In addition, we seek to help children gain an understanding of God, according to their curiosity and needs, and to see their important role both in the classroom and in the world. We do so through the use of books, activities and classroom conversation, with the understanding and acknowledgment of, and respect for, the diverse beliefs of the class as a whole. We welcome children of all racial, cultural, religious and economic backgrounds and do not discriminate on the basis of such in our admissions process. We believe in the importance of parental involvement in support of children's development and learning and are, therefore, open to suggestions, new ideas and continual growth.

## ***Educational Philosophy***

Greenwood Montessori School was established on the belief that children between birth and 6 years of age develop physically, intellectually, emotionally and socially at a rate that will never again be duplicated in their lifetime. Our educational philosophy is based on the work of Dr. Maria Montessori (1870-1952), an Italian physician and educator, who saw the early years of life as crucial to the future growth and development of the individual. In her writings, Dr. Montessori frequently compared the young mind to a sponge, literally absorbing information from their environment. She discovered that children go through "sensitive periods", where they exhibit an inner drive to understand certain concepts. It is the teacher's role to detect these sensitive periods and prepare the environment for each child's learning. It is the teacher's role to detect these "periods" and prepare the environment for learning. Children have a natural curiosity and will learn new concepts through concrete, hands-on activities. Play is children's work and one of the most effective teachers. We integrate child-centered programs that allow the child choices of activities and the decision of whether to work alone or with others. A central tenant of our philosophy is that "all children belong." We believe that diversity is to be valued and that every child is entitled to respect, dignity, equal rights under the law and opportunities for fulfillment within our School and the community. Through teamwork, parent/teacher collaboration, co-planning, relevant professional development and the use of community resources, we are committed to providing an inclusive environment for children with special needs and/or disabilities. In some cases, this may require the presence of an individual from an outside agency to assist a child with disabilities in our classroom when they are in attendance. The School reserves the right to make such a request when it feels an individual/aide at the School is necessary for the success of the child and/or the class as a whole.

## ***Licensing***

Greenwood Montessori School is licensed by the Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families and the Rhode Island Department of Education, and full compliance with their Regulations is required. *Many, if not most, of the policies adapted by our School are mandated by one or both of these agencies.* At least annually, the School is randomly inspected and approved by one or both of these agencies to ensure that we are in compliance with the Regulations. If we are not in compliance, we are cited for any infringement(s) and given a specific time frame for correction. *Please bear this in mind in familiarizing yourself and complying with the policies of our School.*

## ***Child Abuse & Neglect***

As part of the hiring process, all staff is screened through a State Child Abuse and Neglect Tracking System (CANTS) to determine if there is anything in their background that would disqualify them from employment with young children. In addition, in accordance with State law, staff members are required to report any suspicion and/or allegation that a child may be the victim of child abuse and/or neglect.

## **Enrollment Requirements**

- must be 18 months for Toddlers, 3 years of age for preschool; and 5 years of age for Kindergarten by September 1st of the enrolling year or at the time of enrollment;
- evidence of a physical exam not more than six months prior to enrollment and up-to-date immunizations (**including evidence of a lead screening**);
- must be toilet trained (Primary Class)

### ***The Child***

As part of the Montessori classroom, children of mixed ages and abilities work together. This permits individual development, discourages competition and allows the children to help one another. A child may choose whatever activity suits a particular stage of his/her development or interest. S/he progresses from that point at a self-designated pace and pattern. Children may work at a task uninterrupted for as long as they wish, provided they do not disturb others. They may work alone, in small groups or in a large group. While they are not required to work together, the non-competitive atmosphere of the class encourages easy social relationships.

### ***The Teacher***

The teacher works individually or in small groups with the child(ren), introducing materials and giving guidance where needed. The teacher's primary task of careful observation of each child is essential in determining needs so as to prepare the environment for growth. This method of teaching is indirect, in that the teacher neither imposes on the child as in direct teaching, nor abandons the child as in non-directive, permissive teaching. Rather, cues are taken from the child, providing appropriate challenges when the child indicates readiness. "Follow the Child" is our motto, and this approach helps the child to feel success with a minimum of frustration.

### ***Parental Involvement/Family Engagement***

Parents and other family members are welcome to become part of our classroom community and participate in our Parent Resource Group. We believe you are a vital part of our program and that without your participation your child's early school experience will not be maximized. Studies consistently show that when schools, families and communities work together, everyone benefits, especially your children. We strongly support a community/family-friendly school environment that invites your involvement/participation and collaboration between administration, staff, parents and other family members in your child's education and overall early childhood experience. Throughout your child's time here, there will be a variety of ways for you to be active in his/her early childhood journey, including but not limited to, coming in to read a favorite book or story, make a craft or cook with us, share your talents, vocation and/or culture/heritage, chaperone a field trip, etc. We encourage your ongoing participation in both written and verbal communication between school and home and are open to your suggestions of other ideas/events of interest to you in the following areas:

- home-school connection opportunities;
- parent orientation/education workshops;
- parent meetings/agenda items; and
- social events

At least annually, a school-wide program assessment will be conducted, where parents will have an opportunity to:

- assess and evaluate the program as a whole, including policies/procedures and staff performance;
- collaborate with administration and relevant staff in reviewing our Mission Statement and Educational Philosophy;
- redefine parental involvement/family engagement opportunities and identify parent strengths/resources;
- provide suggestions on enhancing the physical environment, both indoor and outdoor;
- suggest fundraising ideas and implementation; and
- identify strategies for improvement and/or further growth of the program.

## Communication

Ongoing, mutual and timely communication between parents, staff and administration is essential to the smooth operation of our School. We understand that communication styles may differ, and we endeavor to take that into consideration when deciding how best to forward information. We welcome your suggestions as to how we can communicate more effectively to ensure that all information sent is read and responded to, if applicable, by the dates requested. Please refer to the following guidelines with respect to communication:

- **Educational/Classroom Matters** - should be directed via email to Miss Brenda for the Primary Class or Miss Kristina the Toddler Class. These include: class events/activities, curriculum, newsletters, snack calendar, field trips, children's behaviors/progress, as well as absences, late arrivals and pickups. Staff members have their phones with them at all times and are alerted when they receive emails, so it is best to contact them this way regarding any of the above. Please refrain from text messaging staff members unless you are unable to reach us by email. Staff emails can be found on the Family Directory, which is distributed at the initial Parent Orientation Meeting.
- **Administrative Matters** – any questions regarding required paperwork, regulations, tuitions/contracts/billing, registration/re-registration, changes in children's schedules, school calendar, administrative policies, staff concerns, etc. should be directed to Miss Brenda at [gmschool.com](http://gmschool.com).

Parents/other involved family members are encouraged to become members of our Parent Resource Group, designed to provide input and support on program decision-making including, but not limited to, all of the above-mentioned areas. We are committed to this collaboration with families and, as such, our staff shall be available to meet with families, at reasonable and mutually-convenient times, to establish goals for your child, to discuss his/her progress, to collaborate and/or meet with any outreach teams, to attend ongoing relevant professional development workshops/courses, and to provide support in other areas to children and families, including those with developmental delays, disabilities or other special needs/circumstances.

## Arrival Time

The School is open Monday-Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. **Arrival time for the Primary Class** is anywhere between 8:30-9:00 a.m. The children will begin their day on the Playground, weather permitting. Parents should drop their children off at the Playground gate. A teacher will have the sign-in sheet at the gate for parents to sign their children in. **For safety purposes, please do not park along the playground fence when arriving**, so as to avoid moving vehicles near the gate entrance area. *Additionally, parents should lead their children to the sidewalk in front of the parked cars and proceed to the playground, rather than walking behind parked cars to the playground. In inclement weather, or if we are not on the Playground for any other reason, students/parents should enter the building through the second door* and proceed to the hallway for sign-in. Once inside the hallway, parents should sign their children in, say goodbye, exit back through the classroom where you entered and meet your child(ren) at the Waving Door. A teacher will then assist your children with their arrival "duties" (i.e., choosing a job, putting slippers on, etc.). *Primary students arriving late should check to see if the class is still on the playground. If not, they should come to the entrance door, where a teacher will have the parent sign their children in and say goodbye at the door, after which the children will be guided through the arrival duties by the teacher.* **Arrival time for the Toddler Class** is 8:45. The Toddlers begin their day inside. Toddler parents should enter the building through the Toddler Entrance (third door), sign your children in and say goodbye at the door.

Please understand that late arrivals may cause a disruption in our schedule, disturbances to your child and to the other children and may also deprive your child of some very important information meant to facilitate his/her learning. If class is already in session, any parent arriving late and needing assistance beyond signing-in will be directed to the Administrator if she is available.

## **Signing In & Out**

All children must be accompanied by an adult when entering and exiting the building. DCYF regulations require that each child be signed in and out every day s/he is in attendance on the sign-in/out sheet provided, with the parent/guardian *signing their full names rather than initials*. Please email your child's teacher, or leave a message at 739-1191, if s/he will not be in School on any given day. **Please note:** *for safety purposes, no child is allowed out of the building without being accompanied by an adult and, upon arrival/departure, should not climb on the retaining walls and/or swing on the handrails. This is for the safety of your children.*

## **Dismissal Authorization**

There is space provided on our enrollment form to name four (4) persons authorized to pick your child up. Many parents choose only to name themselves. This is acceptable; however, under no circumstances will we release your child to anyone other than you if you have not indicated other authorized persons on your enrollment form. Upon enrollment, each family is issued a Dismissal Authorization Card. At the beginning of the year, you *may* be asked to show this card before we release your child. If you wish to authorize the dismissal of your child to any person listed on your enrollment form, you must let the School know ***in writing on the sign-in sheet*** (preferably), or by telephone. If by telephone, the School may ask you to state your Dismissal ID number as proof of identification and may ask for a full description of the person picking up. *Persons picking up for the first time must bring a license for us to copy for your child's file.* ***In cases of court-ordered child custody arrangements or restraining orders, the School must have the court documentation on file. Without such, we are obligated to allow the release of a child to his/her natural parent, if proper identification is presented, even if s/he is not on the forms and/or we have been told otherwise.*** If you are calling in a duress situation (someone is forcing you to make the call), please call in the release of your child with an incorrect dismissal authorization number. We will immediately notify the police that there is a problem. ***If any of the above procedures is not followed, we will not release your child until you can be reached by telephone, and you will be responsible for any late pick-up fees.***

## **Early Arrival/Late Pick-Up Fee**

Licensing permits only a certain number of children in attendance at any one time, and we staff our programs accordingly. Our staffing is determined based upon information received from all parents upon registration and/or re-registration. Random requests for additional time may or may not be granted, at the School's discretion. Late pick-ups cause a great inconvenience to the staff, as they have their own children or grandchildren to attend to after school. *Any parent dropping off before and/or picking up after their child's scheduled class time or after the 3:00 closing time will be asked to sign an early arrival/late pickup form and will be charged an additional fee of \$10.00 per 15-minute interval or any part of a 15-minute interval, which will be invoiced the following month. Additionally, any parent or other adult who arrives prior to the school's opening will be asked to stay with their child(ren) until our scheduled opening time.*

## **Transitioning Into/Out of School**

Every effort is made to help both children and parents transition into our School as smoothly as possible. Families are generally given at least one opportunity to visit the School and/or attend an Open House/Orientation prior to the first day of school and are provided with documentation that includes helpful tips for acclimating into the School environment and routines. Consistency in routines is paramount to the child's success in feeling comfortable in the early weeks of school. Approximately six weeks into the school year, a Building Bridges questionnaire is distributed, giving parents an opportunity to provide feedback and/or voice any praise and/or concerns regarding the start to the school year. Families whose children have reached the end of their journey at our School are provided with information, upon request, regarding future program options, including opportunities to connect with former families who have previously moved on.

## **The Program**

The Montessori philosophy contains specific themes based on the learning behaviors of children. They include:

- the prepared environment, which provides exploratory activity for varying developmental levels;
- multi-year and multi-age classroom of children 3-6 years of age;
- independence in learning with guidance from the teacher to ensure cooperative learning, which offers opportunities for peer teaching, both spontaneous and guided, and an overall mastery of curriculum goals;
- the development of grace and courtesy, which teaches children to feel respect and empathy for the ideas and rights of others.
- 

## **The Curriculum**

The curriculum is based on a holistic approach to learning, encompassing the following areas:

- practical life activities (motor and social);
- sensory skills (training of the five senses);
- academic skills (math, reading, writing, geography and science); and
- movement, music and art are closely integrated into classroom activities.

## **Field Trips**

Field trips are an important part of our curriculum. There is no definitive number of field trips scheduled per year, and we may or may not take them. They are scheduled according to what options are available to coincide with our areas of study and their cost-effectiveness. Due to teacher participation in field trips, any parent not wishing his/her child to join the class on a field trip must keep the child home from school that day. Sufficient advance notice is given prior to field trips, and a permission slip will be distributed prior to each field trip, giving your permission for your child to attend. When financially possible, we will hire a bus to transport us to our field trip destination. State law mandates that children must be 3 years of age to ride a bus. Any child not yet 3 may attend but will need to be transported by a parent or other adult. Teachers are not permitted to transport students in their own cars. The student fees for field trips are included in your annual tuition. Chaperones will be requested based on the number needed and will be selected on a first-come/first served basis. Chaperone/other adult/sibling fees, if applicable, are not included in your tuition and must be paid prior to the trip by the due date indicated at the time. We may or may not be able to accommodate siblings on field trips and will notify you at the time of each trip. There will be a half-day dismissal (12:00) on field trip days, as well as on days where there are other special events.

## **Clothing**

It is recommended that children be dressed in washable, comfortable clothing. *Please do not send your child to school in special and/or expensive clothing, outerwear or shoes, as we simply cannot guarantee that they will not become soiled and/or damaged.* Water activities, sand play, art and occasional bathroom accidents necessitate the need for each child to have one or more changes of clothes on hand at school.

## **Personal Belongings**

All children must have at least one change of (weather appropriate) clothing to be stored at school. **All clothing to be kept at school (including underwear) should be labeled with the child's name.** Such clothing will be stored in individual bags on each child's hook in the hallway. *Because of space limitations children should not bring backpacks or other bags to school; school bags will be used transport any resting gear home each week for laundering.* Paperwork, art work and/or other items will be sent home from school once a week in each student's folder. **Toys must be left at home or in the car,** as they tend to encourage children to leave the classroom with other friends and enter the hallway without a teacher's knowledge. Resting children may bring one (1) small, soft security item for rest time **to be kept at school with their other resting gear.**



## **Nutrition: Lunches & Snack**

**\*\*Very Important:**

**Any food allergy or restriction must be brought to the School's attention prior to the start of the school year.\*\***

**All children should be eating breakfast at home.** Children registered beyond 12:00 are required to bring a nutritious, trashless (when possible) lunch. Your child has his/her own cup at school with water available all day. If you wish to send in a drink for lunch, please do so in a reusable container—no juice boxes please. *Candy, soda and gum will not be served to any child if included in his/her lunch.* There is no room in the refrigerator for children's lunches; therefore, **all lunches should be in a lunch box and should include an ice-pack or other means of keeping the food cold.**

Here are some planning ideas for lunch we hope will be helpful:

- **Your child's lunch should be prepared so it is ready for them to eat** (apples/oranges peeled, etc. if that is the way s/he enjoys them). Please do not send in lunches that require lengthy teacher preparation. We are happy to heat food up for them; **heatables must come to school in a glass or other microwave-safe container.** Since we do not refrigerate lunches, a small ice pack added to the lunch box assures that proper temperature is maintained to keep the foods safe.
- Children usually find raw vegetables fun to eat. They have more vitamins than cooked vegetables.
- Children usually like cheese and crackers for lunch. If possible, you could also send a small thermal container of soup.
- Fresh fruit such as bananas, apple wedges or peach halves can be dipped in citrus juice to prevent them from turning brown.
- Desserts should be kept simple. Try fruit, raisins, puddings or a plain cookie. A piece of fruit costs no more and usually less than potato chips, corn chips and other "junk" foods. Candy, soda and/or gum found in a child's lunch box will be returned for the child to consume at home.

A fruit or vegetable snack will be provided by the School during the month of September. Prior to October, we will provide you with a reusable snack bag for you to bring in your child's own snack. Due to increased food allergies/restrictions and questionable ingredients in process/package foods, only fruits and vegetables are allowed for snack at school. Individual serving cups (i.e. applesauce, peaches, etc.) and fruit/vegetable pouches are permitted.

## **Parent/Teacher Conferences & Child Assessment**

Parent/Teacher Conferences in the Primary Class are held twice during the school year, in November/December and April/May. **There is no school on Parent/Teacher Conference days.** If, at any *other* time you wish to have a parent/teacher conference, please make your request known to your child's teacher with sufficient advance notice, and a conference will be scheduled at a mutually-convenient time. Please appreciate that your child's teacher is managing and caring for a group of children, and avoid entering into "mini-conferences" with your child's teacher at arrival and dismissal times. On a weekly basis, we will be sending home your child's "Week at a Glance" folder (primary class) which may include any artwork and/or written work your child has done during that week. Every effort will be made to email a brief weekly "report", which may include pictures of children (those authorized to be photographed) engaged in their work throughout the week. Child Assessment will be done on an ongoing basis, and reports will be generated in conjunction with Parent/Teacher conferences. A Daily Report is prepared for children enrolled in the Toddler Class.

## **Behavior Management Plan**

The teacher and/or assistant shall be a guide rather than a disciplinarian. Good discipline is not merely punishment or enforcement of rules. It is caring enough about children to provide good, clear guidelines for their protection. A well-organized, attractive environment shall foster interest and cooperation in the children and thus reduce problems. Our classroom Ground Rules are "Be Kind, Be Gentle, Be Safe." We use a positive approach to behavior management that centers on providing consistency, setting limits and praising children's favorable behavior. With guidance from the teacher, the children are taught methods of peer problem solving which enable them to solve their own conflicts with classmates. When necessary, diversion and redirection can often prevent disruptive and/or harmful situations. Such a temporary pause in activities tends to calm the child and is usually a sufficient positive action. This method is also very effective in orienting the child to greater respect for others. Separation from the group is used as a last resort.

### **Birthdays**

We believe that all children should be treated equally; therefore, we celebrate birthdays in the same manner for each child. The Birthday Celebration includes singing "Happy Birthday" in sign language, a "walk around the sun" and the passing of a "sharing feather", whereby the children can relay any special wishes they may have for the birthday child. Due to the recent changes in our Snack Procedures, we no longer send home requests for or serve special birthday snacks.

### **Quiet Time**

Children will be given a period of time throughout the day for quiet/resting time. Cots are available at school, and children staying beyond lunch will need to bring a sleeping bag or blanket and a small pillow (if desired) that can be left at school each week. Additionally, children may bring one (1) small, soft security item for rest time, to be kept at school. All items must be labeled and will be sent home each week for laundering in a bag provided by the School. *This is a regulation designed to limit the spread of germs and one that helps us to easily identify each child's sleeping bag/pillow to ensure that each child is only using his/her own resting gear.* Children who do not sleep may, after a brief period of rest, have an opportunity to work for the remainder of rest time.

### **Outdoor Playtime**

At Greenwood Montessori School, we feel that outdoor play is a very important part of the "whole day". For this reason, we make every effort to go outside in all weather above 32 degrees except in the rain or other extreme weather conditions. Children should be dressed accordingly. **Additionally, in the early Fall and early/late Spring, children should arrive at school wearing sunscreen.** *Please do not apply sunscreen inside the School, as it damages the floor.* **Please note: all children will go outside, even if they do not have the appropriate clothing or do not have sunscreen applied.** We have been assured by our consulting physician that it is not necessary for children to remain indoors because of a cold or an ear infection. They need the fresh air and exercise. If you feel your child is too sick to go outside, then s/he should remain at home.

### **Illness**

A child with a common cold will be accepted into school *provided the child's temperature is normal and any discharge from the nose does not have a color.* A child who appears ill, has a temperature of 100 degrees or more orally, has diarrhea or has vomited or is vomiting, must be picked up from school. Every effort should be made to have the sick child picked up within one-half hour of the initial phone call. A child who is picked up from school due to contagious illness will receive a note in his/her cubby indicating that s/he cannot return to school the following day. **State regulations require that a child be free from fever, diarrhea or vomiting for at least a 24-hour period before coming to or returning to school.** If a child has conjunctivitis/pink eye, s/he must be on medication at home until all eye discharge has subsided. This may take 24-48 hours, and a physician's note is required in order for the child to return to school. A child with an unusual or suspicious skin rash must be seen by a physician and cleared for school.

## **Administration of Medication**

Neither prescribed nor non-prescribed medications shall be administered to a child at school without written order of a licensed physician. For prescription medicine, the label on the original container is sufficient notice; a written note by the licensed physician is required for non-prescription medicine. All **prescription** medicine must be registered with the office and must be accompanied by a Medical Release form provided by the office. No medicine may remain in a child's cubby, lunch box or other container. Medication that does not require refrigeration shall be stored in the medicine tray located in a cabinet. All medications shall be administered by the Administrator or his/her designee and witnessed by another staff member. No medication, whether prescribed or authorized by a physician, will be administered on an "as-needed" basis except in an emergent situation, such as an allergic reaction or spiked fever from febrile seizure and, in those cases, only when we have prior knowledge of the condition and a physician's note acknowledging it and authorizing treatment for that specific condition. Children with allergies must have an epi-pen at school with them on each day of attendance, along with their doctor's order for it.

## **Communicable Diseases**

Children with the following conditions must be excluded from school for the specified times. A note from the child's physician is required to return to school:

*Head Lice* – children with head lice must be treated by their physician or a lice treatment facility; in either case, a note from the physician is required to return to school.

*Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)* – from the first symptoms until 24-48 hours after the start of antibiotic treatment. All eye drainage must no longer be present for the child to attend school.

*Chicken Pox* – for six (6) days after rash appears. Additionally, in the event of one or more cases of chicken pox reported to the School, any child who has not been vaccinated or has not had the disease is susceptible and must be excluded from school for as long as there is a risk for disease or until s/he is vaccinated. Unvaccinated children may return to school two (2) weeks after the onset of rash in the last case of reported chicken pox.

*Mumps* – until all glandular swelling has disappeared.

*German Measles* – for seven (7) days after rash appears. Contacts who have had the disease or measles vaccination may attend school at the discretion of the attending physician.

*Scarlet Fever* – from the first symptoms until 48 hours after the start of adequate treatment. Contacts may attend school at the physician's discretion.

*Scarlatina & Strep Throat* – same as Scarlet Fever.

*Infectious Hepatitis* – for the first two weeks of illness, at least. Intimate contacts who receive medication may attend school.

*Whooping Cough* – from the first symptoms until 21 days after the beginning of whoop. Contacts who have not been immunized or have not had the disease should be excluded for two (2) weeks.

**Please note:** if a severe cold/flu epidemic breaks out, the School, at the direction of the Department of Health or other governing body, or at its own discretion, may be closed for a period of time until the infectious period has past.

## **Inclement Weather**

We will **generally** follow the Warwick Public Schools with respect to school closings, delays and/or early dismissals. **However, we have our own school calendar, and we do make our own delay/closing announcements.** In questionable weather, please watch your local TV stations for our announcement. In the case of early dismissal, parents of children already at school will be notified by telephone of any early closings. Additionally, all families are strongly encouraged to sign up to receive a text message and/or email of our closing announcements. You can do this by logging onto any one of the local TV stations' websites ([www.turonto10.com](http://www.turonto10.com), [www.wpri.com](http://www.wpri.com) or [www.abc6.com](http://www.abc6.com)), click on "to have school closings text alerts sent to phone or email," and enter the required information. Once you have signed up, you will automatically be notified via text and/or email of any closing alerts we have posted. This requirement is for your benefit, to ensure that you do not arrive at School only to find that we are closed. Please note: We do not make up snow days, and there is no credit for absences for any reason, vacations, holidays or closings/delays/dismissals due to inclement weather, natural disasters, an illness outbreak in children and/or staff, or any other reason that warrants a school closing. Days cannot be substituted, and missed days cannot be made up.

## **Holidays & Vacations**

Greenwood Montessori School **generally** follows the Warwick Public School calendar. *Greenwood Montessori School also has at least one scheduled Teacher Development Day during the year (typically in March). Any scheduled day(s) will be listed on the school calendar, but the School reserves the right to close additional days as needed for Montessori training or other professional development opportunities that may arise after the school calendar has been distributed. Additionally, on Field Trip days, or other special event days (i.e. Winter Wonderland, Mother's Day Tea, etc.), the school-day will have an early dismissal at 12:00 (or at the time the event ends). The Toddler Class may have one or two additional closings due to our use of the Church's classroom space if the Church has a need for that space during school hours. Every effort will be made to notify Toddler families well in advance of any such closings.* Please familiarize yourself with our calendar and keep it in a central place in your home so that there is no confusion as to when school is open or closed. When any legal holiday falls on a Sunday, the day following it is a full legal holiday, and the school will be closed.

### **Holidays:**

Labor Day (September)

Thanksgiving (November)

Good Friday (March/April)

Columbus Day (October)

Martin Luther King Day (January)

Memorial Day (May)

Veteran's Day (November)

President's Day (February)

### **Recesses & School Vacations:**

Thanksgiving Day and the day after

December (1-2 weeks, includes New Year's Day)

Winter (February) Vacation

Spring (April) Vacation

## **Financial Policies**

The **Financial Policies, Fees and Tuition** schedule is distributed at the time of initial registration and with each subsequent re-registration. Tuition and payment schedules are established annually by the Director and the School's Financial Planner. Greenwood Montessori School cannot accept a re-registration for any child until any and all outstanding financial obligations have been met. In such cases, the child will not be re-admitted to the school for the following academic year unless arrangements have been made with the Director regarding payment of the overdue amount.

### **Registration, Deposit & Fees**

*Registration/Re-Registration Fee:* A **\$50** non-refundable **Registration Fee** is due at the time of initial registration, and with each subsequent re-registration or sibling registration, for each child being registered. Re-Registration occurs in January of each year for the following academic year to give current families enrollment preference for their eligible child and/or sibling, prior to registration opening up to the public.

*Deposit:* A **\$500** non-refundable **Deposit** is due at the time of initial registration, and with each subsequent re-registration, for each child being registered. This Deposit secures your child's spot at the time of initial registration, re-registration or sibling registration and is deducted from your annual tuition.

*General/Materials/Supply Fee:* A **\$200** non-refundable **General/Materials/Supply (GMS) Fee** is due at the time of initial registration, and with each subsequent re-registration or sibling registration, for each child being registered. The GMS Fee is used to offset the cost of any field trips, in-house enrichment programs and classroom materials and supplies and is forfeited if a child is withdrawn or terminated for any reason at any time after registration or re-registration. ***If the payment of this fee at the time of registration or re-registration presents a financial hardship, the GMS Fee can be divided equally among your payment installments.*** For enrollment after September of the academic year, this fee will be pro-rated.

***Please Note:*** One check may be written for the Registration Fee, Deposit and Activity/Material Fee. ***The Deposit and Fees are forfeited if a child is withdrawn or terminated for any reason at any time after registration or re-registration.***

### ***Tuition Payment Options***

Three tuition payment options are available, as follows:

#### **Option A**

*Annual Payment Option:* annual tuition due **July 1st** for the academic year beginning in September.

#### **Option B**

*Semi-Annual Option:* 50% of annual tuition due **July 1st**; remaining 50% due **January 1st**.

#### **Option C**

*Monthly Payment Option (12-month payment schedule):* payable in 12 equal monthly installments from **July 1st – June 1st**.

***Please note:*** annual tuition for families enrolling after the month of September and choosing the monthly payment option will be prorated, and the balance will be paid in equal monthly installments over the number of months remaining in the school regardless of how many weeks there are in each month.

### ***Other Financial Information***

*Cash, Checks or PayPal* are accepted forms of payment. Please note: there is an approximate 3% fee for payments made via PayPal, for which families are responsible.

*Sibling Discount:* a 10% discount is calculated on the **lowest** sibling rate.

*Late Payment/Returned Check Fees:* All tuition is due **on or before** the dates indicated above. A late payment fee of **\$25.00** will be assessed. If payment is not received within one week of the due date, the child cannot return to school until full payment, together with applicable late fees, is made. *After two late payments, the School may require your bank's information to auto-draw the funds from your account.* There will be a minimum \$30 fee on checks returned; if the School incurs other fees as a result of a returned check, the family will also be responsible for those additional fees. After two returned checks, only cash payments will be accepted for the student to remain in the program.

*Forfeit of Tuition/Fees:* At any point after registration and/or re-registration, if a child is withdrawn by his/her family **for any reason whatsoever**, or terminated for sufficient cause, **as determined by the School**, all tuition/deposits/fees previously paid are forfeited by the family.

*Other:* Greenwood Montessori School does not make up days due to inclement weather, and there is no credit for absences for any reason, vacations, holidays or closings/delays/dismissals due to inclement weather, natural disasters, an illness outbreak in children and/or staff, or any other reason that the School deems that a closing is necessary. Days cannot be substituted, and missed days cannot be made up.

### ***Destruction of Materials or Other School Property***

The beautiful materials purchased to support the Montessori philosophy and environment are costly. As part of the early discussions regarding classroom ground rules, the children are taught that the classroom belongs to them and that they are therefore responsible for the safe and appropriate handling of all things in the environment, including one another, the plants, furniture and materials. If, at any time, a child uses a Montessori material in an inappropriate and/or destructive manner resulting in the material no longer being complete, safe and/or suitable for their use, the child's parents will be responsible for replacing that material. We have many resources for materials, and we endeavor to purchase high quality materials at the most affordable price. In such cases where a family must replace a material, we will do our best to find a replacement of the same quality at the lowest possible price.

### ***Referral/Termination Policy***

#### ***Referral Policy***

Greenwood Montessori School will make every effort to work with families of children displaying challenging behavior, developmental delays and/or emotional issues. If a child presents challenging behavior, staff will (1) observe the child; (2) identify events, activities, interactions and other factors that trigger and/or contribute to the challenging behavior; (3) use this information to assist the child when possible; (4) work together with families on behalf of their child; and (5) support families in recommending outside resources and/or accessing services, when necessary. If referral is recommended, a meeting will be scheduled with the parents, at which time a written statement will be provided indicating the reason for the referral recommendation, along with a brief summary of the Program's observations related to the referral and any efforts the Program may have made to accommodate the child's needs.

#### ***Termination Policy***

A child may be terminated from the program if that child exhibits repeated or patterned behavior that puts him or herself, other children or teacher(s) at risk, if such behavior, based on the teachers' observations, shows no promise of decreasing. Termination may also take place for nonpayment of tuition, and/or non-compliance with the policies of the School. Parents will be made aware of any inappropriate, aggressive, hurtful or extremely disruptive behavior and/or disregard for school policies, and all attempts will be made to resolve any issues prior to termination. Some behaviors may warrant an immediate "time off". These behaviors may include, but are not limited to: hitting, biting, kicking, uncontrolled running in or destruction/disruption of the classroom, yelling, swearing, throwing work and/or not respecting the work of other children. The parents will be notified that their child must be picked up if these behaviors are extreme in nature, show no sign of decreasing and/or necessitate the need for a teacher to be away from the rest of the class in constant supervision with the child exhibiting the behavior. From time to time, in rare instances, it may be determined by the School that a Montessori environment is simply not suitable for a particular child and/or family. In such instances, Greenwood Montessori School reserves the right to terminate that child/family based on their observations of such.

## ***Principles for Reconciliation***

### **Nothing Should Divide Us**

*...we who have a passing mark on the future of the world,  
must have the same heart,  
must have compassion for one another,  
must have respect for one another,  
must understand that though we have differences,  
we all want the same things.  
Nothing should divide us.*

Susan Polish Schutz

This is a most helpful principle to follow when handling complaints, and it is one of our guiding principles at Greenwood Montessori School. Children, parents, teachers and administration are all asked to follow this principle. Gossip, slander and/or intimidation at the School do not promote harmony and unity and are discouraged. Questions, complaints and/or concerns should always be handled courteously, politely and promptly, endeavoring to first settle the issue with the person or persons directly involved. In light of this, *please use the following procedures for handling a complaint:*

- A parent with a concern and/or complaint about a child and/or another parent should speak directly with that child's parent with whom they have the concern and/or complaint, in the spirit of reconciliation. If a suitable resolution cannot be reached in this manner, the School may become involved.
- A parent with a concern and/or complaint about the Administrator or a Teacher should call the School to arrange to meet with the Administrator and/or the Teacher, in the spirit of reconciliation.
- A teacher with a concern and/or complaint about a child or a parent will speak with the Administrator and together they will arrange to speak directly with the child's parent or the parent with whom s/he has a concern and/or complaint.

**Remember:** the children's needs must be met at all times; therefore, handling of complaints should be done outside of classroom time. If an issue is brought to a teacher's attention during class time, unless it poses a threat to the children in attendance, the staff or the School, the teacher will let you know when s/he can speak to you outside of class time. **Please note:** if an issue is brought to our attention that does not involve us or does not pose a threat to the children in attendance, the staff or the School, it will be channeled appropriately to the individual(s) involved.

