



Lilac

Montessori

A Wildflower School

Parent Handbook

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

● Welcome and Introduction	5
○ Mission Statement	
○ Organization	
○ Wildflower Schools Affiliation	
○ Our School Commitments	
○ Family Commitments	
○ Our Commitment to Diversity	
○ Right to Revise	
● Our Programs	8
○ Toddler/Pre-Primary Community	
○ Primary	
○ Daily Schedules	
○ Daily Routine	
○ Toddler/Pre-Primary Routine	
○ Primary Routine	
○ Schedule for New Students	
○ Nap and Restime	
○ Toileting and Diaper Changing	
● Meals, Snack Time, Food Allergies	14
○ Lunch Guidelines	
○ Snacks	
○ Food Allergy and Anaphylactic Allergy Policy	
● Daily Procedures	15
○ Arrival and Late Drop-Off Policy	
○ Dismissal, Extended Day Pick-up and Late Pick-Up	
○ Sign-In/Out	
○ Authorized Pick-up	
○ Cell Phone Free Zone	
○ Transportation Policy	
○ Extended Care	
○ Enrichment Programs	
○ Field Trips	
○ Absences from School	
○ Toys and Sharing	
○ Clothing	
○ Extra Clothes	
● Communication Policy	17
○ Time Sensitive Communication	
○ Transparent Classroom	

○ Newsletters	
○ Children’s Cubbies	
○ Website and Social Media	
○ Parent (Guardian) Conferences	
○ Direct Parent Communication about Child Concerns	
○ Staff Grievances or Concerns	
○ Change of Contact Information	
● Family Involvement and Donations	20
○ Family Participation Hours	
○ Website and Direct Donations	
● Celebrations	21
○ Birthdays	
○ Cultural Celebrations	
● Discipline Policy	21
○ Disciplinary Procedures	
○ Suspension and Termination	
○ Mandated Reporters	
● Health and Safety	23
○ Illness Policy	
○ Sick Child Protocol	
○ Returning to School	
○ Special Circumstances	
■ Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease	
■ Head lice	
○ Medication	
○ Topical Products	
○ Minor Injury Protocol	
○ Emergency and Severe Injuries	
○ Daily Health Checks	
○ Vaccinations and Immunizations	
○ Incidental Medical Services	
● Emergency Preparedness	25
○ Emergency and Disaster Plan	
○ Lockdown	
● Tuition and Payment Policies	27
○ Payment Policies	
○ Payments and Deposits	
○ Tuition Assistance	

● Parent Community	28
○ Knowledge Sharing and Networking	
○ Parent Education	
○ Inter-Family Concerns and Conflicts	
● Calendar, School Closures, and Professional Development Days	30
○ School Yearly Calendar	
○ Professional Development Days and Early Closures	
● Admissions, Enrollment Documentation, and Licensing Compliance	31
○ Enrollment Documentation	
○ Licensing Compliance	
○ Inter-Family Concerns and Conflicts	
● Photography and Videography	32
● Handbook Acknowledgement	33

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Dear Lilac Families,

Welcome to Lilac Montessori, the first Wildflower school in our community. We are thrilled to have you as part of our community and are excited to offer an authentic Montessori curriculum that fosters your child's holistic development.

At Lilac Montessori, we are committed to creating an intentionally diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment where every child can thrive. We value transparency, respect, trust, and open communication in our relationships with families, and we are grateful for the support and response we have received from our community.

As you embark on this journey with us, we encourage you to familiarize yourself with our program and policies outlined in this handbook. It will provide valuable guidance and assist you in understanding the educational approach we follow at Lilac Montessori. We appreciate your belief in our vision and values, and we look forward to working together as a team to nurture your child's independence, academics, emotional well-being, and physical development.

Thank you for entrusting us with your child's education and for joining us on this exciting adventure. Should you have any questions or need further assistance, please do not hesitate to reach out to us. We are here to support you and your family.

With deep appreciation,

Brittany Keegan and Heather Zolzer
Heads of School
Lilac Montessori
www.lilacmontessori.org

Mission Statement

At Lilac Montessori, our mission is to create a vibrant and inclusive community that celebrates diversity and fosters connections. We are dedicated to nurturing children and empowering them to explore the world, discover their true selves, and build meaningful relationships with others. Our commitment to authentic Montessori education forms the foundation of our approach.

We firmly believe in the power of collaboration between educators and parents. We strive to establish strong partnerships with families, supporting them in their journey of raising thriving and healthy children. Through scholarships and parent education programs, we aim to provide valuable resources and guidance to our community.

We envision a nurturing and healthy environment where children can flourish academically, socially, and emotionally. We value family engagement and recognize the significant role parents play in their child's development. By working together, we create a supportive community that uplifts and empowers each individual.

Join us at Lilac Montessori as we embark on this transformative journey, empowering children to become confident, compassionate, and independent learners who make positive contributions to our global society. Together, let's cultivate a love for learning and a deep sense of belonging. "Connecting Children, Empowering Community."

Organization

Lilac Montessori is proud to be a nonprofit organization and a part of the Wildflower Network of schools. Our commitment to providing a high-quality Montessori education is rooted in our mission to support children's development and create a nurturing learning environment.

As a nonprofit organization, our Employer Identification Number is 92-2876493. This signifies our dedication to transparency and accountability in our operations.

Lilac Montessori is led by our passionate Heads of School and Co-Founding Teacher Leaders, Brittany Keegan and Heather Zolzer. With their expertise and dedication, they ensure the implementation of the Montessori philosophy and the well-being of our students.

We are also grateful to have a dedicated Board of Trustees who provide guidance and support to our school.

Together, we strive to create a fulfilling and enriching educational experience for all our students at Lilac Montessori.

Wildflower Schools Affiliation

Lilac Montessori is a member of the Wildflower Network of Schools, an innovative, open-source approach to Montessori learning. As part of this network, Lilac Montessori seeks to support a diverse mix of children, teachers, and parents on the unfolding journey toward fulfilling their potential. Our aim is to be an experiment in a new learning environment that is accessible to all families, that prioritizes and emphasizes deep parent engagement, and blurs the boundaries between scientists and teachers, between schools and the neighborhoods around them.

Our School Commitments

Lilac Montessori is dedicated to creating an environment where joyful learning is nurtured at every stage of development. We believe that education is a lifelong journey that begins at birth, and our Montessori approach embraces the inherent joy of learning.

Authenticity is at the core of our Montessori methodology and environment. Our lead teachers have undergone accredited Montessori training by the Association Montessori Internationale (AMI), ensuring that they possess the knowledge and expertise to create a prepared environment and facilitate multi-age classrooms. These elements contribute to an optimal learning environment for our students.

We strongly value the partnership between parents and the school. We recognize that education happens both at home and at school, and it is through collaboration and open communication between families and educators that children receive the best possible education.

Connecting with nature and the outdoors is a fundamental aspect of our philosophy. We believe that fostering a deep connection with the natural world aligns with Montessori principles and instills a sense of environmental responsibility in our students.

Diversity and equity are deeply rooted in our values. A Montessori education prepares children for the global community, where they learn to embrace and appreciate diverse backgrounds, cultures, and ideas. At Lilac Montessori, we actively welcome and seek to recruit families from various racial, ethnic, and economic backgrounds, as well as LGBTQ+ families. We are proud to be a school that celebrates and supports all types of families.

We are committed to providing a high-quality Toddler and Primary program that is accessible to families across all income levels. We recognize the manifold individual and community benefits that result from high-quality early education. To ensure access for medium and low-income families, we will establish a scholarship fund and collaborate with government programs at Lilac Montessori. Affordability is a priority for us, and it requires the support of fundraising and volunteer efforts. We ask all families and friends of the school to contribute to our community in supportive ways. At Lilac Montessori, we are passionate about creating a nurturing and inclusive environment where children can thrive, discover their potential, and become compassionate members of society. Together, we can make a meaningful difference in the lives of our students and our community.

Family Commitments

Parents are essential partners in their child's educational journey at Lilac Montessori. We request your commitment to the following principles, which will help create a strong partnership between home and school and foster an environment where your child can thrive:

1. **Timeliness and Consistency:** Please bring your child to school on time and maintain consistent schedules. This contributes greatly to the social life of the classroom and helps establish a sense of routine and stability for your child.
2. **Communication and Engagement:** Stay informed and actively engage with the communications from our staff. This will provide valuable insights into your child's education, daily routine, and upcoming events or activities.

3. Health and Wellness: Follow the protocols outlined in the "health and wellness" section to promote the well-being of your child and the entire school community. This includes keeping your child home when they are sick and notifying the school of any health concerns or special accommodations.

4. Positive Language and Behavior: Children learn by example, so we encourage parents to expose their children to language and behaviors that align with the values we wish to cultivate in them. Creating a positive and respectful environment both at home and at school is beneficial for your child's social and emotional development.

5. Adequate Sleep: Establish a bedtime routine that ensures your child receives the necessary amount of sleep for their age. Sufficient sleep is vital for their overall well-being and supports their ability to fully engage in their learning experiences.

6. Involvement and Contribution: We value your time, skills, and expertise. We invite you to actively participate and contribute to the school community through volunteering, attending parent-teacher meetings and events, and sharing your knowledge or talents. Your involvement enriches the educational experience for all students and strengthens our sense of community.

By committing to these principles, we create a partnership that supports your child's growth, development, and educational journey. Thank you for your dedication and collaboration in creating an exceptional learning community at Lilac Montessori.

Our Commitment to Diversity

Lilac Montessori is a non-profit organization and does not discriminate by race, color, national or ethnic origin, creed, religion, sex, disability, age, marital status, sexual orientation, or status with regard to public assistance. Furthermore, Lilac Montessori admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletics and other school-administered programs.

Right to Revise

As circumstances change, our policies may be updated and Lilac Montessori reserves the right to modify any of our policies and procedures, including those in this Handbook, at any time. We will seek to notify you of such changes by email or other appropriate means. However, such advance notice is not required for changes to be effective.

OUR PROGRAMS

Admission Policy and Pre-Admissions Appraisal for Montessori Program

Lilac Montessori is dedicated to creating an inclusive and diverse learning community, ensuring equal opportunities for all families. Our admission process combines a comprehensive pre-admissions appraisal for our Montessori program, tailored to children ages 18 months - 5 years

of age, with an inclusive admission policy designed to foster a nurturing and stimulating educational experience.

Our admission policy is rooted in principles of open communication, fairness, and a commitment to diversity, ensuring that every child has the opportunity to thrive in our school community. The key components of our admission policy include:

Meeting with the Director or Head of School:

We believe in forming a strong partnership with parents to best understand the unique needs and aspirations of each child. Therefore, we require parents to meet one-on-one with the Director or Head of School before enrolling their child. During this meeting, you will have the opportunity to discuss your child's educational journey, ask questions, and address any concerns you may have.

Age-Appropriate Placement:

Children will be placed in classes according to their age to ensure they are in an environment that aligns with their developmental stage. This approach helps create an optimal learning experience and fosters positive social interactions with peers.

Non-Discrimination Policy:

Lilac Montessori is committed to maintaining an inclusive and diverse educational environment. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or any other protected category in our admission process. All children are welcome and treated with equal respect, and we celebrate the diversity of our student body.

Pre-Admissions Appraisal for Montessori Program:

The pre-admissions appraisal ensures a smooth transition into our Montessori program and encompasses a holistic assessment that evaluates developmental readiness, social and emotional well-being. Our specific emphasis on independence aligns with the Montessori philosophy. The key components of this appraisal include:

Developmental Readiness: We assess a child's readiness for the Montessori environment, focusing on their ability to engage in self-directed activities and their capacity for cooperative learning.

Social and Emotional Well-Being: We consider the child's social and emotional development, looking for signs of adaptability, curiosity, and an inclination to work harmoniously with peers.

Toileting Independence: As an essential component of our program, we evaluate the child's toileting independence. The child should demonstrate a level of readiness for self-managing their toileting needs, although we recognize that support may be needed for younger children.

Parent-Teacher Meeting: Parents and guardians will have the opportunity to meet with our educators to discuss their child's unique needs, educational goals, and any concerns they may have.

Classroom Visit: An optional visit to the Montessori classroom will be arranged for the child to observe and experience the Montessori learning environment.

We aim to create a supportive and conducive learning environment where every child has the opportunity to flourish academically, socially, and emotionally. We look forward to welcoming you and your child to our school.

Toddler/Pre-Primary Community (18 mos - 3)

Our Pre-Primary curriculum is thoughtfully designed to cater specifically to our youngest learners, aged between eighteen months and three years. We believe in a whole child approach, ensuring that every aspect of your child's development is nurtured and supported. Our program places special emphasis on social and emotional growth, practical life skills, toileting, and language development.

In this community, we engage in a wide range of activities that foster growth and development. From baking and singing to practicing independence and responsibility by cleaning up after ourselves and others, setting the table, and engaging in conversations, our young learners develop essential life skills. We also introduce them to letter recognition and support their toilet training journey.

Our program offers a balanced blend of structure and freedom, providing a safe and nurturing environment for our little ones to thrive. Through activities such as gardening, yoga, and play, we foster the development of motor skills, focus, concentration, and social connections. This is where lifelong friendships are formed and cherished.

Primary (3-6)

Our Primary curriculum, specially designed to meet the developmental needs of children aged three to six years. At Lilac Montessori, we tailor our program and curriculum to the individual needs of each child, fostering an environment where every child can thrive in their own unique way. During their time in the Primary classroom, children engage in private and small group lessons facilitated by their AMI-certified guides. By working independently in the four main areas of the classroom, children develop skills for academic success, self-expression, and social interactions. They learn to lead and follow, work and play, and understand the importance of caring for themselves, others, and the world around them. This approach builds essential skills for a well-rounded life, including focus, discipline, academic proficiency, creativity, and social competence.

Our environment and curriculum inspire a lifelong love of learning. We encourage critical thinking, independent problem-solving, and foster a spirit of creative and social cooperation. Through their experiences in our community, children learn the values of self-care, empathy, and responsibility towards others and the world around them.

Daily Schedules

- Toddler/Pre-Primary Academic Day: Monday-Friday 8:15am - 2:45pm
- Primary Academic Day: Monday-Friday 8:00am - 3:00pm
- Extended Day: Monday-Friday 7:30am - 5:30pm

Daily Routine

Lilac Montessori's daily routine may be altered to accommodate for seasonal changes, wet weather, extreme heat, and special events. A consistent routine is crucial for child development but

sometimes we must alter the schedule slightly to accommodate each child's individual eating and sleeping schedule. Spontaneous group times, play times, and brain/motor breaks may occur throughout the day.

Toddler/Pre-Primary Routine

8:15 AM – 8:30 AM: Morning drop off and morning greeting while students ease into the classroom

8:30 AM – 10:15 AM: Montessori Work Period

Children engage in Montessori activities consisting of a balance of individual and group lessons. Lessons revolve around the Montessori curriculum and also include music and art. Children work towards a Three Hour Work Cycle, but this time is often broken into smaller increments during the first months of the school year. Naps are available to younger children who may still need a morning nap. Snack is available to children throughout the morning with a communal group snack being offered prior to outdoor play.

10:15 AM - 10:30 AM - Snack, Transition and Circle Time

10:30 AM – 11:15 AM: Outdoor Morning Playtime

Children engage in outdoor play, weather permitting, or have indoor play. Both indoor and outdoor play is a mixture of structured and free play activities that help children engage in physical fitness that builds strength, burns energy, and promotes balance and gross motor skills.

11:15 AM – 12:15 PM: Transition and Lunch Time

12:15 - half day pick up for transitioning children

12:15 PM – 2:15 PM: Nap Time

Students transition to nap time with stories and soothing music. Children rest for at least 30 minutes and our dreamers who fall asleep are welcome to sleep as long as they need. Children who do not fall asleep engage in quiet, peaceful individual activities.

2:15 PM – 2:45 PM: Group Snack and Afternoon Playtime

Children sit down to a group snack to encourage and reinforce appropriate socialization, conversation and self-feeding in a meal-like atmosphere. When finished, children prepare to leave for the day and finish up their afternoon with a second opportunity for outdoor or indoor play before pick up.

2:45 PM - 3:00 PM: Pick-Up

Primary Routine

8:00 AM – 8:15 AM: Morning drop off and morning greeting while students ease into the classroom

8:15 AM – 11:15 AM: Montessori Work Period

Children engage in Montessori activities that consist of a balance of individual and group lessons. Lessons revolve around the Montessori curriculum and focus on the four main areas of the classroom: math, language, sensorial and practical life. Many of these lessons also incorporate music and art. and also include music and art. Children are encouraged to work towards an uninterrupted Three Hour Work Cycle but the work period is often broken into smaller increments during the first

months of the school year. Snack is available to children throughout the morning with a communal group snack being offered prior to outdoor play.

11:15 AM - 11:30 AM: Snack, Transition and Circle Time

11:30 AM – 12:15 PM: Outdoor Playtime or Lunch Time

Children engage in outdoor play, weather permitting, or have indoor play. Both indoor and outdoor play is a mixture of structured and free play activities that help children engage in physical fitness that builds strength, burns energy, and promotes balance and gross motor skills.

12:15 PM - 1:00 PM: Lunch Time or Outdoor Playtime

1:00 PM – 2:45 PM: Afternoon Montessori Work Period and Nap Time

Our younger Primary students transition to nap time with stories and soothing music and rest for at least 30 minutes and our dreamers who fall asleep are welcome to sleep as long as they need.

Children and older Primary children who do not sleep engage in quiet, peaceful individual activities and more in depth one-on-one lessons with the Primary guide.

2:45 PM – 3:00 PM: Group Snack and Afternoon Playtime

Children sit down to a group snack to encourage and reinforce appropriate socialization, conversation and self-feeding in a meal-like atmosphere. When finished, children prepare to leave for the day and finish up their afternoon with a second opportunity for outdoor or indoor play.

3:00PM-3:15 PM: Afternoon pickup

Daily Schedule for New Students

Before your official start date, both you and your child will receive a warm invitation to visit the classroom, allowing you to become acquainted with the teachers and familiarize yourselves with the environment. During your child's first week at school, we may suggest half-day attendance in order to support their adjustment to the new routine.

Throughout this initial week, your child's guide will provide you with daily updates, keeping you informed of your child's progress. Together with the guide, you will collaboratively decide the timing and manner in which to gradually extend your child's day until they transition to a full-day schedule.

Nap and Rest Time

Children in the Toddler Community will have nap time starting at 12:30pm, while younger children in the Primary class will have nap time beginning at 1:00pm. We generally encourage all children to rest or have quiet time during this period. Older primary children are free to leave their cots and return to classroom work when they feel ready.

Each child will be provided with their own nap cot or mat. Parents are responsible for providing a child-sized blanket and fitted cover sheet. The school will send the blanket and cover sheet home every Friday for laundering and it should be returned clean on the following school day. Prior to the start of school, we will survey parents to gather information about each child's sleeping schedule. In case of accidents, soiled bedding will be sent home the same day for laundering, and parents are expected to bring back the clean items the next morning.

Safe Sleep, Monitoring Guidelines, and Sleeping Equipment for Toddlers Under the Age of 2

At Lilac Montessori, we prioritize the safety and well-being of our youngest learners. To ensure compliance with the California Department of Social Services' Safe Sleep Guidelines for Toddlers under the age of 2, we maintain a Sleep Log for each Toddler under the age of 2.

Monitoring Procedure:

- Toddlers under 2 years old will be checked every 15 minutes during their sleep.
- Monitoring includes observing signs of distress or overheating, such as labored breathing, flushed skin, increased body temperature, restlessness, or any other indications of discomfort.
- The monitoring staff will record the date and time of each 15-minute check and initial for no signs of distress.

Documentation:

All monitoring records will be diligently maintained in the Toddler's file and are readily available for Department review. The documentation includes the following information:

1. Date
2. Toddlers's name
3. Time of each 15-minute check
4. Initials of the staff person who conducted each check.

In our sleeping area, each cot or mat is equipped with a tightly fitted sheet for covering. A small blanket is provided for the child's comfort, parent's may opt to send a blanket from home. We uphold stringent hygiene practices, ensuring that bedding is not shared between different children without prior laundering. Each child's bedding is stored individually to maintain its identity and prevent contact with other children's used bedding. Sheets are washed weekly or when soiled or wet, while blankets are promptly cleaned or replaced if they become soiled. This approach guarantees a clean and safe environment, meeting the highest standards of cleanliness and comfort for our young ones. These measures ensure a safe and secure sleep environment for our infants, fostering peace of mind for both parents and caregivers.

Toileting and Diaper Changing

In our Toddler/Pre-Primary Community, we practice standing diaper changing. Our teachers are trained in this process and there is a designated area in the bathroom for diaper changes. Changing tables are available for children transitioning to standing diaper changing. Hand washing is always an integral part of the bathroom routine, whether it's for using the toilet, changing diapers, or putting on underwear.

We encourage all children to transition to cloth underwear when they are developmentally ready, as it promotes toilet learning. Once the guide of the class and parents agree that the child is ready to begin toilet learning, we will collaborate to support the child in achieving this milestone of independence.

To facilitate the process, we ask parents to provide extra underwear and clothing for their child. If providing extra clothing poses a hardship, please reach out to us at info@lilacmontessori.org for support. Additionally, we offer informational sessions on Toilet Learning as needed, and we have a variety of books and resources available for parents to further support their child's progress.

MEALS, SNACK TIME, FOOD ALLERGIES

Lilac Montessori is dedicated to promoting nutritious and healthy eating habits, and we encourage parents to pack well-rounded lunches for their children. Each day, children will bring lunch from home in a reusable lunch bag that should be labeled with their name. It is important that all containers and lids are easily opened by the child and labeled accordingly, as accessible containers foster confidence and independence.

Lunch Guidelines

To support healthy habits, we ask parents to adhere to the following guidelines:

- Pack nutritious child-sized lunches in environmentally safe containers that your child can easily open and close without assistance.
- Please refrain from including candy, cookies, chocolate, and soda or juice in your child's lunch.
- If your child's lunch requires refrigeration, kindly provide an ice pack in their lunchbox. We do not have the means to cook food but microwave access is sometimes available to re-heat. We recommend using thermos containers to help keep your child's lunch warm when necessary.
- Children will bring home any lunch leftovers, allowing you to stay informed about your child's eating habits throughout the day.

While Lilac Montessori is not a nut-free school, we reserve the right to modify classroom policies to ensure the safety of children with allergies.

Snacks

Daily snacks are available for the children to serve themselves during the school hours as well as during community snack time. All snacks consist of fresh fruits, vegetables, whole grain crackers, etc. Snack menus are posted in the classroom.

Food Allergy and Anaphylactic Allergy Policy

Lilac Montessori recognizes the importance of collaboration between parents/guardians and the school in effectively addressing anaphylactic allergies. We encourage parents to actively participate in keeping us informed about their child's needs and the most effective strategies for managing allergies. It is the responsibility of parents to provide the necessary information and instructions to ensure the child's safety. We will work closely with each family whose child has an anaphylactic allergy to develop a personalized plan that prioritizes the child's well-being.

Our approach to managing severe food allergies is built on prevention, education, and communication. We have established general guidelines that include:

- Promoting frequent and proper hand-washing.
- Regularly cleaning surfaces to prevent cross-contamination.
- Having an Emergency Care Plan for children with severe allergies, provided by a primary care provider or allergist, with parental input.
- Displaying all allergy and important medical information in the staff area.

- Updating the allergy list as needed to ensure awareness of new enrollments or newly discovered allergies.
- Informing all staff, including substitutes, about specific allergens to protect children from exposure.
- Providing appropriate training to all staff members on handling emergency allergic reactions.
- Exercising the right to prohibit any food or material deemed unsafe for the health and well-being of our community.

Managing food allergies successfully requires shared responsibility among the school, families, and students. Education plays a vital role, encompassing the entire school community, including employees, parents, and students. It focuses on preventive strategies, recognizing anaphylaxis symptoms in individual students, and emergency care. We acknowledge that the management of food allergies involves a continuous journey, and our goal is to adopt practical actions to safeguard our young students.

DAILY PROCEDURES

Arrival and Late Drop-Off Policy

Please make sure to drop off your child within their designated drop-off time. Consistency is integral for your child's success and arriving on time will allow your child to get the most out of our program. This is also a way to show respect and minimize disruption for other students and the teachers in the classroom. Classroom instruction begins immediately after drop-off and late arriving families may be required to wait outside for extended periods until a teacher is able to step away to open the door and greet late arrivals. If you know you will be late, please notify info@lilacmontessori.org or message via the Transparent Classroom.

Dismissal, Extended Day Pick-up and Late Pick-Up

Please make sure to pick up your child within the designated pick-up window for both regular pick-up and extended care. The school provides a 5-minute grace period for pick-up. If your child exceeds their designated time and the grace period, a fee of \$1 per child will be added to your account for every additional minute they remain at school. Consistent tardiness or abuse of the 5-minute grace period could result in additional late fees. If you have an emergency that makes it impossible to pick your child up on time, please call the school at (442) 999-4969.

Sign-In/Out

To comply with licensing requirements, all children must be signed in and out each day using the parent or guardians full legal signature. In case there are siblings, each child has to be signed in/out individually. This procedure is REQUIRED BY LAW to ensure the security of each child. Please make a point of checking in with a Staff member when you drop off your child. Do not allow your child/ren to walk into the building or from the parking lot unaccompanied.

Authorized Pick-Up

To ensure the utmost safety of your child, we follow the following protocols at Lilac Montessori: Authorized Adults - Only registered and authorized adults, whose identification is on file with us, will be allowed to pick up your child. It is the responsibility of parents to inform the school and register any new caregivers who are authorized to pick up their child.

Valid Photo ID - All new caregivers must present a valid photo ID before we release the child to them. This verification process helps maintain a secure environment for everyone.

Authorization for Other Parents - If you would like another child's parent to pick up your child, please ensure that you authorize and register this adult with us.

Please be assured that under no circumstances will Lilac Montessori leave a child unattended or release them to an adult who is not specifically authorized in writing to pick up that child. We prioritize the safety and well-being of every child in our care.

Cell Phone Free Zone

To strengthen and support the emotional connection between the children and their families/caregivers at the sensitive time of drop off and pick up, Lilac Montessori is a cell phone free zone. Families are responsible for sharing this policy with others who come to pick up, drop off or visit with you.

Extended Care

Extended care is available until 5:30pm Monday through Friday. Please make sure to enroll ahead of time as we cannot guarantee availability of last minute available spots.

Transportation Policy

At Lilac Montessori, the well-being and safety of your child remain our paramount concern. In adherence to our commitment to prioritize the safety and well-being of your children, we are unable to provide transportation services. Parents or guardians are requested to arrange and oversee their child's transportation to and from our facility. This policy ensures a focused and secure environment within the premises and helps us maintain a consistent routine for the children.

Enrichment Programs

Enrichment programs, if offered, are scheduled during the afternoon work period or extended care hours at Lilac Montessori. Parents will receive prior notification and will be requested to provide the necessary permissions for their child's participation in these programs.

Field Trips

Field trips at Lilac Montessori offer children invaluable opportunities to engage with the sensory richness of the world and experience the cultural diversity found in Escondido. Some field trips may involve walking to nearby locations, while others may require parents or caregivers to provide transportation by dropping off and picking up their child at the designated site. On occasion, we may also request parental assistance in supervising a field trip. Please be aware that transportation for the children cannot be provided by Lilac Montessori. If parents or guardians wish to arrange alternative transportation plans, such as carpooling for field trips, they must obtain express permission and communicate the details in advance to the Heads of School at Lilac Montessori.

Absences from School

Lilac Montessori is required by the Department of Social Services to keep a daily attendance record for all children. Please notify us of any planned absences at info@lilacmontessori.org. In the event that your child is unable to attend school due to illness or emergency, please notify the school as soon as possible on the day of the absence.

If your child is repeatedly absent for reasons unrelated to health or without prior communication with the school we will schedule a meeting with you to discuss if our program is a good fit for your family.

Toys and Sharing

To promote a sense of freedom and engagement in the classroom activities, we request that children refrain from bringing toys or personal comfort items such as loveys, blankies, or pacifiers. However, we encourage children to bring natural items like rocks or special leaves, cultural artifacts from their own or other countries, family photo albums, or special books (excluding those containing violence, ninjas, talking animals, or TV-related content) to share with the Teacher Leaders. Please ensure that any items brought for sharing are labeled with your child's name. It's important to note that Lilac Montessori cannot be held responsible for any damage or loss of items brought for sharing. Please remember that personal toys from home are not permitted at school.

Clothing

We strongly believe in encouraging children's independence and self-expression, which extends to clothing choices. We encourage parents to allow children to choose their own clothes, keeping in mind a few practical considerations. It is important that the clothes are comfortable, easy to put on and take off without or with minimal assistance, and suitable for the weather conditions. Children should be able to freely engage in activities such as climbing, running, and participating in messy activities if they wish to do so. We recommend allocating extra time in the morning routine to allow your child to practice and develop their dressing skills at home. Our focus is to create a nurturing environment where children can explore, learn, and engage in age-appropriate activities comfortably.

While we value individuality and seek to foster a respectful and focused atmosphere that enhances the educational experience for all, it is important to ensure that attire does not cause distractions for other students. Please note that costumes or dress-up clothing, as well as accessories such as jewelry, watches, headbands, head bows, purses, and other similar items, are not allowed.

Extra Clothes

Each child should bring an extra pair of shoes and two extra sets of clothes to keep in the classroom. Children who are still having occasional accidents will need more changes. Please label all the items with your child's name.

COMMUNICATION POLICY

Clear communication is vital for a strong partnership between Lilac Montessori and our families. We use a variety of platforms to communicate so please ensure we have your accurate email address(es) on file, and regularly check your email for essential updates. Your active participation helps us create a supportive and nurturing environment for your child.

Time Sensitive Communication

During arrival and dismissal times, we request that conversations be limited to general and informal topics, allowing for focused transitions and the teacher's full attention on the children. While brief inquiries can be made during pick-up and drop-off times, please understand that these are busy moments, and we may not be able to provide immediate or detailed answers to your questions.

For specific and time-sensitive information such as changes in pick-up arrangements or medication-related details, we encourage you to email us at info@lilacmontessori.org by 6:00pm the previous day. You may also call 442-999-4969 and leave a message.

Transparent Classroom

To ensure effective communication and keep parents well-informed about their child's progress and classroom activities, we have implemented Transparent Classroom—an online platform dedicated to transparent and collaborative parent-teacher communication.

Through Transparent Classroom, parents can conveniently access real-time updates, such as daily reports, photos, and observations, documenting their child's learning journey. This enables parents to stay informed about their child's accomplishments, milestones, and areas of focus, fostering active participation in their educational experience.

Moreover, Transparent Classroom facilitates direct communication between parents and teachers. You can easily reach out to your child's teacher to ask questions, share insights, or discuss any concerns you may have. This open line of communication nurtures a strong partnership between parents and teachers, promoting a supportive and collaborative learning environment for your child.

We highly encourage all parents to actively engage with Transparent Classroom, as it serves as a valuable tool for staying connected, gaining a comprehensive understanding of your child's progress, and actively participating in their Montessori education. Together, we can work hand in hand to support your child's growth, development, and overall success here at Lilac Montessori.

Newsletters

We understand that life can be busy, but staying informed and engaged with school communications is a shared responsibility. By actively reading our newsletters, you can stay up-to-date with the latest news and actively participate in your child's educational journey.

Children's Cubbies

In our classrooms at Lilac Montessori, each child has their own cubby for personal belongings and work materials. These cubbies are exclusively for the children, and they have the autonomy to decide when they are ready to take their work home. It is a space where they can store and organize their materials independently. We encourage children to take ownership of their learning and make choices regarding their work.

Website and Social Media

Our website is a way to spread the word about your children's school. General information and upcoming events can be found there as well as ways to help or volunteer. We ask our families to spread the word! You may also follow us on Instagram and Facebook.

www.lilacmontessori.org

Parent (Guardian) Conferences

We prioritize open and effective communication between parents and teachers to support each child's development and educational experience. To facilitate this, we conduct formal Parent/Teacher conferences twice a year, typically scheduled in December and May. These conferences provide a valuable opportunity for parents to engage in discussions with the teachers regarding their child's progress and experiences at school.

We consider these conferences to be a crucial aspect of a child's development, and we expect every parent and/or primary caregiver to attend. Conferences can be conducted in person during office hours or via video conference at a scheduled time, offering flexibility and convenience for all parties involved. One week prior to the conference week, sign-up times will be made available, and we encourage parents to refer to the school calendar for the exact dates.

During each conference, approximately 20 minutes will be allocated to discuss the child's development, achievements, challenges, and any other relevant topics. This dedicated time allows for personalized and focused conversations that contribute to the child's overall growth and well-being.

Direct Parent Communication about Child Concerns

We place a high value on maintaining open and frequent communication with our families. We believe that a collaborative and communicative relationship between the school and families allows us to better serve the child.

If you have a concern that needs a more comprehensive discussion, we recommend scheduling a meeting with your Teacher Leader. You may reach out via email or phone during office hours to find a mutually convenient time. By setting up a dedicated meeting, you'll have the opportunity to provide specific information and engage in a meaningful conversation towards finding a mutually acceptable solution.

To ensure timely and regular communication, we request that you promptly notify the school of any changes to your contact information, including new email addresses, cell phone numbers, or emergency contacts.

Staff Grievances or Concerns

If you have concerns about a staff member's communication or behavior, we encourage you to directly communicate with that staff member to clarify any misunderstandings or express your perspective. Often, open dialogue can lead to a better understanding and resolution of the issue. If, after this step, the problem remains unresolved to your satisfaction, you may contact a Head of School who can assist you in addressing the matter. If your grievance is in regards to a specific Head of School, you may reach out to info@lilacmontessori.org for instructions on how to address your grievance with the Board.

Change of Contact Information

We prioritize maintaining up-to-date records to ensure efficient communication with families and prompt response to children's needs. To facilitate this, we request that you notify the school at

info@lilacmontessori.org of any changes in your home address, email address, telephone number, or marital status. It is also important to promptly inform us of any updates to the contact information of your child's emergency contact(s) or authorized pick-up people. By keeping our files current, we can provide the best possible support and ensure effective communication between school and home.

FAMILY INVOLVEMENT AND DONATIONS

We deeply value the involvement of parents in our school community. When families and staff work together, we can ensure that every child receives the care and support they need to reach their full potential. We greatly appreciate the support of parents and guardians as we strive to fulfill our role as educators. Research consistently shows that parent involvement plays a crucial role in a child's education, surpassing even factors such as economic class and parental education. At Lilac Montessori, we recognize the significant impact that active parent participation can have on a child's academic success and overall development.

Family Participation Hours

To promote and encourage parent involvement, we ask each family to contribute their time and efforts to a school endeavor each year. **We request that each family participate in 15 hours per school year of Family Participation Hours.** This initiative aims to foster a strong sense of community and collaboration among our families. There are numerous ways to fulfill these hours, such as participating in parent education and community-building events, supporting new families, assisting with the planning of community events and fundraisers, sharing family or cultural traditions, assisting with classroom materials maintenance and repairs, contributing to outdoor gardens and spaces, volunteering as enrichment program coaches, and providing specific skills or tools that benefit the school. The volunteer hours can be allocated to tasks such as classroom assistance, material preparation, clerical work, light maintenance and cleaning, and more. We offer a variety of opportunities for Family Participation Hours, and you can discuss available options with the Head(s) of School. Additionally, some tasks may be completed at home if preferred. We will provide a list of tasks and a sign-up system to help you track your family's volunteer hours. Your participation is greatly valued and contributes to the success of our school community.

If you have a profession or skills that could benefit the school, we invite you to consider donating your services as part of your contribution. Please reach out to the school to discuss how your expertise can be utilized.

Website and Direct Donations

We have streamlined online donation processes to make it convenient for you to support our school via our website. We encourage you to share our school website with your friends and family, as your endorsement can help us expand our support network and make a positive impact in our community. We deeply appreciate all types of donations, and if your family has a specific type of contribution in mind, we encourage you to reach out to the school to discuss it further. We invite you to visit and "like" our school's Facebook page and connect with us on other social media platforms. It's a great way to stay updated on school news, events, and important announcements. Please note that Lilac Montessori is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, making your donations tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law. Your generosity plays a vital role in sustaining and enhancing our educational programs. Thank you for your support!

CELEBRATIONS

Birthdays

We celebrate each child's birthday through a special ritual called the "Walk around the Sun," which is rooted in Montessori principles. During this celebration, all children gather together in a group, and a candle representing the Sun is placed at the center of the ellipse. The birthday child is invited to carry our classroom globe around the candle, symbolizing the number of orbits the Earth has made around the Sun since their birth. As the child walks, the teacher shares significant milestones and moments from each year of their life. To make this celebration memorable, we request that you provide photos, family stories, and other details about your child's journey in the week leading up to their birthday. We also welcome parents to join us in the classroom for a brief period on their child's special day. Please coordinate the timing and any items you wish to bring with your child's teacher in advance.

In the spirit of fostering inclusivity and respect for all children, we ask that private party invitations not be distributed at school unless every student in your child's class is invited. Excluding some children from the celebration can create feelings of exclusion and contradicts our values of diversity and inclusion. If you have any questions or concerns regarding social situations related to birthdays, please don't hesitate to reach out to us. We are here to assist you and ensure that every child feels valued and included.

Cultural Celebrations

We believe in fostering a rich and inclusive environment at Lilac Montessori, where every child's cultural heritage is celebrated and embraced. As part of our commitment to diversity, we encourage parents and families to actively participate in the recognition and celebration of cultural holidays throughout the year. We believe that by engaging in these festivities together, our children will gain a deeper understanding and appreciation for different cultures, traditions, and perspectives. Through these experiences, we aim to broaden their horizons, nurture their curiosity, and promote empathy and respect for others. We welcome parents to share their unique cultural traditions, stories, and experiences with our school community, as it enriches the educational journey of all our students. Together, we can create an inclusive and vibrant learning environment that empowers our children to explore, learn, and grow while embracing the rich tapestry of our diverse world.

DISCIPLINE POLICY AND MANDATED REPORTING

Montessori philosophy emphasizes discipline through guiding children's interests and modeling behaviors by adults. In a Montessori prepared environment, children are granted the freedom to choose their own work, supported by trained teachers (guides) who understand that self-discipline comes from within. Children learn that freedom is accompanied by respect, responsibilities, and natural consequences. We encourage the use of kind words and provide a Peace Table for conflict resolution.

It is strictly prohibited for faculty or staff to employ any form of physical punishment, psychological abuse, or coercion while helping children understand classroom rules and community norms.

Disciplinary Procedures:

To ensure an educational environment that is safe and free from disruption, we follow the following disciplinary procedures:

1. Redirect: Children exhibiting mildly to moderately inappropriate behaviors will be redirected to more positive and constructive activities.
2. Positive Discipline Philosophy: We implement the Positive Discipline philosophy developed by Dr. Jane Nelsen.
3. Parent Conferences: Two parent conferences are scheduled each school year, but additional appointments may be arranged as needed by both parents or Heads of School.
4. Situations Requiring Immediate Action: If a child displays behaviors that are deemed dangerous or excessively disruptive, the Head(s) of School may contact the child's parent/guardian to request immediate pick-up.

Please note that in all disciplinary situations, our staff engages in discussions with the child to help them understand the reasons behind the disciplinary action and to foster the development of their ability to control their actions.

Suspension and Termination

Lilac Montessori is committed to fostering a diverse community of families who align with our mission, vision, and values. However, we acknowledge that unforeseen circumstances may arise that hinder a positive involvement within the community. While our aim is to provide an appropriate environment and support for every child and family, persistent and disruptive behaviors from either children or parents may result in the suspension or termination of your child's enrollment at Lilac Montessori. Nevertheless, we are dedicated to assisting families in addressing and resolving disciplinary and behavioral concerns before resorting to suspension or termination.

As we prioritize a safe and supportive environment for everyone in our community, if a child's behavior poses a risk or danger to themselves, classmates, or staff, we will contact their parents or guardians and require immediate pick-up from school. We understand that our school and staff may not have the necessary resources or training to address specific behavioral issues that a child may exhibit, and we recognize that it may indicate that Lilac Montessori is not the best fit for your family. Lilac Montessori, in collaboration with the School Board, reserves the right, at its discretion, to discontinue a student's enrollment at any time without prior notice, following the terms outlined in your enrollment contract and the policies detailed in this Parent Handbook.

Mandated Reporters

In compliance with California's Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting Act (CANRA), all staff members at Lilac Montessori are mandated reporters and have a legal obligation to report any suspected cases of child abuse. Furthermore, the safety of our students is our utmost priority, and we will not release a child to anyone whom we believe poses an immediate threat to their well-being. If such a situation arises, we will promptly report the suspected threat to the relevant authorities and make alternative arrangements for the child's pick-up by contacting individuals listed on the child's authorized pick-up list.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

At Lilac Montessori, we prioritize the health and wellness of our community. We have implemented the following health and wellness policies in accordance with the regulations and guidelines of the specific time. Please note that these policies are subject to change as we adapt to evolving regulations and best practices. We appreciate the cooperation and understanding of our community in promoting the health and wellness of all individuals at Lilac Montessori.

Illness Policy

To maintain a healthy environment for our entire community, it is important that we work together. We request parents to keep their child at home if they exhibit any of the following symptoms:

- Fever of 99.9°F or higher
- Undetermined rash and untreated skin ailments
- Persistent cough
- Persistent runny nose
- Head lice
- Sore throat
- Diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Earache
- Severe pain or discomfort
- Enlarged lymph nodes
- Yellow eyes or jaundiced skin
- Red eyes with discharge
- Blood in urine or stool
- Unusual lethargy

Please note that this list may be updated to meet COVID and county safety guidelines. Parents will be informed of any changes or additions.

Sick Child Protocol

Children who are unwell are not able to thrive in a learning environment and may pose a risk of contagion to others. It is essential that children receive proper rest and care before returning to school. If your child becomes ill during school hours, we will provide a safe separate area until a parent or caregiver can pick them up within 60 minutes. In the event that we are unable to reach you, we will contact the emergency contacts listed on your form for the pickup of your sick child. If a serious illness or injury occurs, we will promptly contact 911 and ensure your child is transported to the nearest hospital.

Parents should inform the school if their child has a contagious disease. In accordance with state law, we are obligated to inform other parents in the classroom when a contagious illness is diagnosed (confidentiality will be protected). Children with a contagious illness will not be allowed to return to school without a physician's written note. The note should confirm that a medical assessment was performed by a physician or a medical professional under a physician's supervision and clearly state that the child's symptoms or illness do not pose a risk to the child or others at the school.

As a school, we are committed to preventing illness by making hand washing an essential part of each day. Children are encouraged to wash their hands after using the bathroom or being changed, before and after meals, before setting the table or preparing food, after playing outside, and when their hands appear or smell dirty.

Returning to School

Children taking antibiotics can return to school 24 hours after their first intake. In other situations, children should be symptom-free without the use of suppressants for 24 hours, or they should present a physician's note confirming that they pose no risk to themselves or others before returning to school.

Special circumstance

Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease (HFMD)

A child diagnosed with hand, foot and mouth disease will be excluded from school until the child has been fever-free for 24 hours and all blisters have dried.

Head Lice

If a child is diagnosed with head lice, we ask parents to ensure their child does not attend school until they have completed lice treatment and removed all lice and nits from their hair. Children with head lice will be excluded from school until no lice are found on their head, and if head lice are discovered during school hours, the child will be sent home immediately. Once appropriate treatment has been administered, children with head lice or nits may return to school.

Medication

All medication, whether prescribed or over-the-counter, is strongly encouraged to be administered at home. However, in rare circumstances where medication must be given at school for the safety of the child, Lilac Montessori strictly follows the medication guidelines established by the Department of Social Services. Prior approval from a teacher leader via a completed Medication Authorization Form is required for any medications to be administered at school. The medication must be in its original packaging and clearly labeled with the child's first and last name. Prescription medication should be accompanied by a note from the physician, and the label must include the pharmacy name, child's full name, dosage instructions, physician's name, and physician's phone number. For each new medication brought to school, a new form must be completed. Expired medication will be returned to the parent or guardian during pick-up or drop-off, and it is the responsibility of the parent to provide new medication as needed. Children are not permitted to carry prescribed or over-the-counter medication with them.

Topical Products

Included in your enrollment package is a "Topical Products" form, which authorizes the application of diaper cream, lotions, ointments, and/or lip balm. Please ensure that any topical products you provide are labeled with your child's name and date, and in their original packaging. It is important to update this form if you introduce any new products.

At Lilac Montessori, we apply parent-supplied sunscreen to children; during the summer months, when sun exposure is more frequent, sunscreen may be applied more regularly. We encourage

parents to apply sunscreen to their child in the morning before drop-off to ensure adequate sun protection. Your child's well-being is our priority, and we appreciate your cooperation in keeping them safe from harmful UV rays.

Minor Injury Protocol

At Lilac Montessori, minor injuries like scratches and bruises are common as children engage in various activities. We provide basic first aid for these injuries and allow the child to continue participating. If an incident involves direct interaction between children, we complete a short written note to address any concerns. Our staff is trained to assist children in these situations, ensuring their safety and well-being.

For injuries affecting the head or neck, we will call you to inform you. If your child bumps their head, we'll check if you're comfortable with them resting and offer you the option to visit or pick up. Serious injuries requiring medical attention will prompt us to contact you immediately.

Emergency and Severe Injuries

In the case of an immediate medical emergency, our top priority is to ensure the child receives prompt medical care. We will make immediate contact with the parents or guardians, and will continue our efforts until we reach them. In the event of a life-threatening emergency, our school follows a specific protocol:

- We will immediately dial 911 for emergency assistance.
- Our staff members are trained to administer appropriate first aid and CPR.
- The parents or guardians will be promptly notified.
- If necessary, we will arrange for transportation to the hospital.
- A detailed account of the emergency will be documented and kept in the child's folder.

It is essential to keep your Emergency Contact Information up to date to facilitate effective communication in such situations. By enrolling your child in Lilac Montessori, you acknowledge and consent to the potential risks associated with attending school.

Daily Health Checks

Per the State of California Title 22 Division 12, Section 101226.1 of the Department of Social Services Community Care Licensing Division, it is required that upon arrival at the school, the student should be immediately presented to a staff member. The staff member will conduct a brief health check to identify any potential concerns regarding the child's health that may necessitate their exclusion from school. If the child displays symptoms of illness, they will not be admitted to school that day. Conversely, if the staff determines that the child does not exhibit obvious signs of illness, they will be accepted into school for the day, and the person responsible for bringing the child to school should proceed to sign them in.

Vaccinations and Immunizations

In accordance with Senate Bill No. 277, mandated by the State of California, it is a requirement for all children enrolling in the Lilac Montessori program to provide valid proof of the necessary immunizations prior to admission. The specific immunization requirements can be found in the State of California Title 22 Division 12, Section 101220.1 of the Department of Social Services Community Care Licensing Division. It is essential that all children remain up to date with their

vaccinations throughout their enrollment at Lilac Montessori. Parents are responsible for providing updated immunization records whenever their child receives a new vaccine. Compliance with state regulations necessitates that the school keeps updated immunization records on file throughout the school year.

Incidental Medical Services

Lilac Montessori's Incidental Medical Services (IMS) adhere to Health and Safety Code Section 1596.750 and California Code of Regulations, Title 22. The policy ensures that IMS, including the handling of prescription and non-prescription medications, is implemented when needed, following outlined procedures. Medication administration, specifically during school hours, requires written requests from the child's physician and parent/guardian, submitted with a Routing or Referral form. The Medication Administration form, completed by both parties, is the basis for activating IMS. The plan involves SOP Health/Nutrition Services generating a care plan, providing necessary training, and ensuring secure medication storage. All staff receive intermittent healthcare training, and medication administration is documented, with regular checks for expired medications. The plan includes administering inhaled medication, EpiPen use, and carrying out medical orders, following specific protocols and compliance measures. If your child is in need of IMS, reach out to the Head of School for further information.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Emergency and Disaster Plan

At Lilac Montessori, the safety and well-being of our students, faculty, and staff is of utmost importance. We have established an Emergency and Disaster Plan to ensure preparedness and effective response in the event of a major disaster. Our plan covers various aspects, including facility readiness, staff training, evacuation procedures, and communication with parents.

To familiarize our students with emergency procedures, we conduct regular fire and earthquake drills. Children are guided on how to respond and what actions to take during such situations. In the event of an emergency, our staff will remain with the children until authorized adults can safely pick them up. We have designated temporary relocation sites, which will be communicated to parents and/or authorized adults through postings at the entrance of the school. Rest assured, we prioritize the safety of your child and will only release them to authorized individuals.

As part of our preparedness measures, we have pre-purchased three days' worth of food, water, survival blankets, and other necessary supplies for each child. Additionally, all our staff members are trained in first aid and CPR. In the event of a disaster, children will remain within the school grounds unless directed otherwise by civil defense authorities. Any necessary relocation information will be prominently displayed throughout the school grounds.

To specifically address the potential impact of an earthquake, we have implemented the following precautions:

- We are prepared to provide shelter and care for enrolled children for up to two days, equipped with emergency supplies like water, food, and first aid.
- We conduct regular earthquake, fire, and lockdown drills based on Red Cross recommendations, ensuring that both staff and children are well-prepared to respond quickly and safely.

- All staff members are certified in CPR and first aid.
- Appliances and large bookshelves are secured for earthquake safety where applicable.
- We maintain up-to-date emergency contact information for each student as part of our emergency kit. It is essential for parents to notify the school of any changes to ensure accuracy.
- Our staff is trained to provide physical and emotional support to children during a disaster. Our goal is to create an environment where children can feel calm, occupied, and loved, even in challenging circumstances.

We are committed to maintaining a safe and secure environment for everyone at Lilac Montessori and strive to ensure preparedness in the face of potential natural disasters.

Lockdown

The safety and security of our students, staff, and anyone present on school property is of utmost importance. We have established a comprehensive protective procedure to ensure the well-being of everyone in the event of a potential threat, whether it be an emergency, hazardous chemical situation, or possible criminal activity on or near the school premises.

During a school lockdown, our staff is trained to promptly implement safety measures. All exterior and interior doors will be locked to prevent unauthorized individuals from entering and to maintain a secure environment for our students. It is crucial to note that during a lockdown, no one, including parents, will be allowed to enter or exit the building until an "all clear" signal is given by one of the Head(s) of School or local authorities. This strict restriction is in place to prioritize the safety and security of all individuals within the school.

Whenever possible and practical, the Head(s) of School will send a message to parents to inform them of the situation and provide any relevant information. She will also provide periodic updates to parents as the situation unfolds. Once the lockdown is lifted and the threat has been neutralized, parents will receive an "all clear" notification. We understand that receiving a lockdown message can be concerning for parents, but we urge you to stay calm and avoid putting yourself at higher risk by attempting to come to the school. Our highest priority is ensuring the safety of the children, and we will maintain open communication with you, providing updates and complete transparency throughout the situation. Rest assured, we will inform you as soon as the potential threat has passed.

By implementing these lockdown procedures and maintaining effective communication channels, we strive to create a secure environment where all members of our community can feel safe and protected.

TUITION, AND PAYMENT POLICIES

We are committed to making educational opportunities accessible to families in our community, irrespective of their financial circumstances. To achieve this goal, we offer and plan to accept tuition assistance programs. We believe that every child deserves the chance to receive a quality education,

and we aim to ensure that at least two-thirds of our families receive some form of financial support over time.

Payment Policies

Lilac Montessori is a nonprofit organization and it is essential for us to meet our monthly operating expenses in order to provide the highest quality education for every child enrolled. Lilac Montessori reserves the right to make prospective changes in the following policies at any time. Any changes, including tuition or childcare fee increases, shall be enacted only upon written notice to parents.

Payments and Deposits

Tuition fees may vary for each family depending on the amount of financial aid they receive. Families are required to make equal monthly installments for the duration of the 10-month academic year. Additionally, families have the option to enroll and participate in the summer camp program. While the specific details of the summer camp programming are typically established during the preceding winter semester, we anticipate that the camp hours will be similar to those of the regular school year.

Billing for each installment period is always done on the 20th of the prior month. The full tuition installment is due each month at the time of billing, regardless of the number of days in the month, your child's start date, or your child's attendance. If you join Lilac Montessori mid-year, your first tuition installment will be due in the month you join.

Timely tuition payments are essential for the smooth operation and well-being of our school. We understand that unexpected financial difficulties can sometimes arise, which may affect your ability to pay tuition by the specified due date (1st of the month). In such cases, we request that you reach out to the Head(s) of School to discuss your situation. We are committed to working with our families to find suitable solutions during challenging times.

Please be aware that a late fee of \$50.00 per week may be applied to accounts that consistently make late payments. Timely submission of tuition payments is crucial for the effective functioning of the school and to ensure uninterrupted educational services for all students.

Thank you for your cooperation in adhering to the payment schedule, as it allows us to continue providing an exceptional educational experience for your child and the entire community at Lilac Montessori.

Tuition Assistance

We understand that the cost of education can be a significant barrier for many families, and our commitment to tuition assistance reflects our belief in providing equal opportunities for all. By offering financial support programs, we strive to create a diverse and inclusive learning environment where children from various backgrounds can thrive and reach their full potential.

If you are interested in learning more about our tuition assistance programs or would like to inquire about eligibility and the application process, we encourage you to reach out to our administration. We are dedicated to working with families to explore the available options and find a solution that best meets their needs. We believe that financial constraints should not hinder a child's access to a

quality education. We are committed to fostering an inclusive community that values diversity and supports families in their educational journey.

PARENT COMMUNITY

Our parent community aims to be a welcoming one - and we welcome you! We have been brought together based on our desire to contribute peace and impact to the world through our children and families. Our community takes great pride in the fact that we operate as a village, with each family interested in what is best for all children, the community, and the school as a whole, rather than only our own child or family. If you are new to the group, we encourage you to introduce yourself and your family, exchange contact information with those you meet over time, as well as say good-bye when the time comes. Sometimes there will be dissension as well as shared interests within our community. Here are guidelines that encourage respectful parent communications among Lilac Montessori families as we navigate our relationships with one another.

Knowledge Sharing and Networking

We value the exchange of knowledge and ideas within our community. We encourage families to share information, tips, and resources in a thoughtful, non-judgmental, and transparent manner that aligns with the Montessori philosophy.

You are welcome to share various topics such as recipes, do-it-yourself tips, parenting and education tips, as well as career and investment opportunities. However, we ask that you carefully consider the information you are promoting and how you are promoting it, ensuring that it supports the spirit of an inclusive school culture.

Inclusivity is an important aspect of our community, and we strive to create an environment where everyone feels respected and valued. When sharing information, we encourage you to consider diverse perspectives, promote understanding, and foster a sense of unity among our families.

By being mindful of the content and manner in which you share information, you contribute to maintaining an inclusive school culture where all members of our community can thrive and benefit from the knowledge and experiences shared.

Parent Education

We understand the importance of working collaboratively with parents to ensure the holistic development of each child. We believe in supporting your commitment to your child by providing valuable information about our school, the Wildflower Principles, and the Montessori approach to education and parenting.

As part of this commitment, we require parents to attend Parent Enrichment events. These events serve as a platform for us to discuss Montessori principles and approaches to parenting. By participating in these events, parents gain insights and knowledge that enable them to create a consistent and seamless environment for their child, aligning both the school and home experiences to support their child's growth and development.

Parent Enrichment events may consist of various activities such as staff demonstrations, information sharing, and parent discussions. We encourage families to make an effort to attend as

many parenting enrichment opportunities as possible throughout the year. These events not only provide valuable information but also foster a sense of community among our families.

By actively engaging in these parenting enrichment opportunities, we can work together as a team to provide the best possible educational experience for your child. We value the partnership between parents and the school, and we strive to empower and support families in their parenting journey.

Inter-Family Concerns and Conflicts

We prioritize open communication and collaboration among parents, staff, and the school community. If you have any concerns about a child or family, we encourage you to reach out directly to the school. We are here to partner with you and provide guidance to ensure the best interests of all the children, families, and the community.

When concerns arise, our commitment is to be responsive and address them fairly, working towards a resolution while maintaining privacy and confidentiality for all members of our community, including the children. We ask that you refrain from contacting another family regarding a child who is not your own without guidance from the school. By directly contacting the school, you enable us to handle concerns in a professional and confidential manner, focusing on the well-being and development of the children.

While we acknowledge that some complaints may involve serious or distressing incidents, we request that all parties involved approach the process with courtesy and respect. Maintaining a constructive and cooperative atmosphere is important in order to effectively address the concerns.

CALENDAR, SCHOOL CLOSURES, AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT DAYS

We prioritize the professional development of our staff members, recognizing its importance in providing high-quality care and education. We offer comprehensive training on an annual basis and upon hiring, covering various essential areas in compliance with California child care licensing requirements.

Our staff receives training on crucial policies and procedures that are fundamental to creating a safe and nurturing environment for the children under our care. This includes mandated reporting, health and safety procedures, risk reduction plans, behavior guidance policies, health policies, and proper documentation of emergencies and accidents. Beyond meeting licensing requirements, we are committed to fostering the growth of our staff in Montessori education. We facilitate opportunities for professional development, such as attending annual refresher courses.

By investing in the ongoing development of our staff, we ensure that they possess the necessary knowledge and skills to deliver the highest quality Montessori education and care for your child.

We have put the utmost care into developing a school calendar that meets the needs of both our families and staff. We understand the importance of finding a balance between accommodating the schedules of our families and providing opportunities for staff development. Our aim is to create a

school calendar that strikes a harmonious equilibrium, allowing us to prioritize the well-being and growth of both our students and our dedicated staff members.

School Yearly Calendar

To access the most up-to-date School Yearly Calendar, please visit our website at **www.lilacmontessori.org**. You will find the calendar listed there, along with a link to the Google Calendar for your convenience. Additionally, you may find the school calendar attached to the end of this document.

Professional Development Days and Early Closures

Our staff members actively participate in designated Professional Development Days, during which they engage in intensive training sessions that cover various aspects of the classroom curriculum and other topics relevant to early education. These training sessions are instrumental in equipping our staff with the knowledge and skills needed to deliver a high-quality Montessori education. It is important to understand that on Professional Development Days, regular school sessions will not be held, as our staff will be fully engaged in these training and development activities.

Furthermore, we have a few afternoons when we close early to facilitate all-staff meetings. These meetings allow our team to come together, collaborate, and discuss important matters. By closing early on these afternoons, we prioritize the effectiveness of these meetings and ensure that our staff can actively participate and contribute.

We understand that these schedule adjustments may impact families, and we appreciate your understanding and support in prioritizing the professional growth and development of our staff.

ADMISSIONS, ENROLLMENT DOCUMENTATION AND LICENSING COMPLIANCE

We have a non-discriminatory admissions policy that ensures equal opportunities for all applicants. We believe in providing a fair and transparent admissions process. Applications are filled out through our Transparent Classroom system, which allows for an open and streamlined application experience. We welcome and value diversity in our school community and strive to create an inclusive environment for all students and families.

Understanding the anticipation families may experience while awaiting their admissions status, we prioritize timely and efficient communication. Within a period of two weeks, we strive to notify families about their admissions status including acceptance and wait-list status. This prompt notification enables families to plan accordingly and ensures a seamless transition into our school community. We genuinely value your time and are dedicated to keeping you informed throughout the admissions process.

Enrollment Documentation

To ensure compliance with licensing requirements upon enrollment, we request parents to complete specific licensing documents. These forms are crucial for maintaining accurate and comprehensive records for your child. It is important to promptly return the completed forms along with the Enrollment Contract. The Enrollment Contract will be directly sent to you electronically through Transparent Classroom, while all other forms will be sent via email. If you do not have access to a printer, please reach out to info@lilacmontessori.org to arrange for hard copies.

Please note that failure to submit the necessary forms in a timely manner may result in a delay in your child's enrollment at our school. We appreciate your cooperation in completing and returning these documents as they play a vital role in ensuring the proper enrollment and record-keeping processes.

The required licensing documents include:

1. LIC 700 - Identification and Emergency Information - Child Care Centers
2. LIC 702 - Child's Preadmission Health History - Parents' Report
3. LIC 701 - Child's Preadmission Health Evaluation (if not enrolled in a public or private elementary school) - Physician's Report
4. LIC 627 - Consent for Medical Treatment
5. Written statement or physician's statement regarding exemption from medical assessment, immunizations, and treatment based on religious faith or medical indication
6. Current Admission Agreement with authorized signature(s)
7. LIC 622 - Centrally Stored Medication and Destruction Record (if applicable)
8. Documentation of unusual behavior, signs of illness, or special needs
9. LIC 624 - Unusual Incident/Injury Report
10. Signed and dated receipt of LIC 995 - Notification of Parents' Rights
11. Receipts, signed and dated, for LIC 613A - Personal Rights - Community Care Facilities, Child Care Facilities
12. Acknowledgment of receipt of licensing reports (LIC 9224), if applicable

These documents are securely maintained in each student's file and may be subject to review by state licensing and regulatory bodies to ensure compliance with regulations and standards.

We appreciate your cooperation in completing these necessary licensing documents, as they contribute to maintaining a safe and compliant environment for all children at Lilac Montessori.

Licensing Compliance

Lilac Montessori recognizes that state licensing and regulatory bodies have the authority to conduct inspections of our facility at any time. These agencies are permitted to audit children's files and the school's records without requiring consent. Furthermore, they have the right to interview children and teachers if deemed necessary.

PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEOGRAPHY

We believe in documenting and celebrating the experiences of our students as part of our research mission and parent communication. Consequently, children at our school may be regularly photographed, filmed, or otherwise documented. Rest assured that these images and recordings are treated confidentially and used solely to support noninvasive research conducted by the school and its agents. Additionally, these artifacts may be utilized for outreach and marketing efforts.

By enrolling your child at our school, you provide consent for your child to be photographed and/or filmed, waiving any right to approve the final product or accompanying copy. This enables us to capture and share moments within our community. Teachers may use photographs and videos

taken in the classroom for internal communication, such as newsletters, as well as for marketing, outreach, teacher observation, and record-keeping purposes.

We request that parents refrain from sharing images or videos of children who are not their own on social media without the permission of the other child's parent or guardian. Respecting the privacy and consent of all families within our community is of utmost importance to us.

Please note that permission to use children's pictures/videos is requested as part of the enrollment application, and Lilac Montessori cannot be held responsible for photos/videos posted on social media by others.

We deeply value the trust you place in us to capture and share these special moments. Rest assured that we are committed to upholding privacy and handling the documentation of your child's experiences with care and respect.

HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This handbook contains important information regarding policies, rules, procedures and Lilac Montessori culture. We hope this document serves as a clear guidance for parents, as well as a tool to facilitate communication, support and clear expectations to families who have enrolled or are considering enrolling in our school.

Receiving and reading this handbook is also a crucial part to meet state requirements and your contract agreement. As a part of your student's enrollment, please acknowledge the following statement and submit the corresponding form in your student's Transparent Classroom account from where you have received this handbook.

I have received and read a copy of the Lilac Montessori Parent Handbook. I agree with the Montessori method of education, the policies and requirements described in this document, as well as the culture and values of the school. I understand the policies and procedures may change if the administration considers this necessary, and that if this happens, the school will offer the parents an updated version of this handbook.

We are deeply grateful for all that we have learned as educators as well as from successful Montessori environments around the world that have shared knowledge with us that has helped us create this document.

We are also very grateful for you, and every family, and our collective commitment to your child's best development. We hope that you, too, are pleased with the community and environment the school has to offer for your child and family. And of course, please contact at any time with questions you may have at info@lilacmontessori.org.

