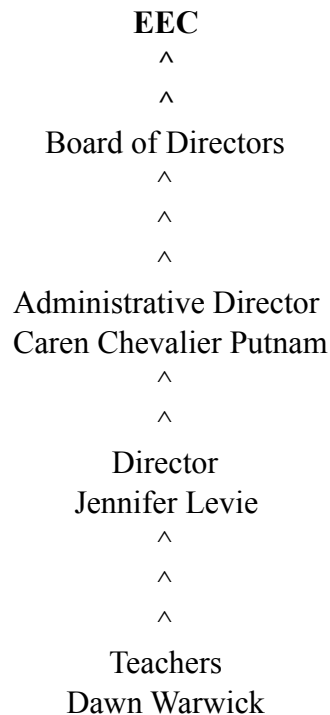


# **Weymouth Montessori Pre-School Parent Handbook**

## WEYMOUTH MONTESSORI SCHOOL HIERARCHY



Weymouth Montessori Pre-School (Weymouth Montessori) is licensed by EEC (Early Education and Care). EEC may be contacted at 120 Hancock Street, Suite 120S, Quincy MA, 02169 and 617-472-2881 for program history.

### **Mission Statement**

The mission of Weymouth Montessori is to prepare learning environments for children between the ages of 2.9 and 6 years, that will aid in their natural development.

This includes:

- creating environments where trust, respect, responsibility, community and cooperation can flourish;
- nurturing the social, emotional, and cognitive developmental needs for each child individually;
- respecting the rights of children as independent beings;
- providing a place where children are heard and given the opportunity for self-expression;
- creating challenging and safe environments;
- giving each child the tools necessary for him/her to realize his/her full potential.

### **Statement of Nondiscrimination**

Weymouth Montessori admits children of any sex, race, color, and religious affiliation, national or ethnic origin. It does not discriminate on the basis of political beliefs, parental marital status or

sexual orientation, disability, or toileting status. It does not discriminate in the administration of its educational and employment policies.

## ENROLLMENT

### Admissions Procedure

Parents interested in receiving information about Weymouth Montessori may call the school at (781) 337-9920. Upon request, the Administrative Director will mail written information to parents, including the school's statement of purpose, information about Montessori philosophy, and tuition rates.

Parents may then make an appointment with the Administrative Director to visit the school during its hours of operation. This is an opportunity for the parents to observe the teachers and children, as well as to obtain more information about the school, including administrative and operational details. Weymouth Montessori may discuss the child's developmental history with his or her parents at this time, as well. An admission application will be filled out during the visit.

A follow-up visit with the child may then be scheduled. This allows the parents and the teachers to observe the child and his or her interactions with the teachers, children and environment. Letters of acceptance are mailed out beginning April 15, along with a contract that must be signed and returned along with a deposit that is applied towards tuition.

The Weymouth Montessori program is a three-year program; we encourage enrolling children at three years of age (2.9 is the youngest eligible age) in order to experience the maximum effect of a Montessori education. To that extent, we will consider applications from families with three-year-old children first and then four and five year olds.

Children attending Weymouth Montessori will be given preference in enrollment to the Meeting House Montessori Elementary program in Braintree.

### Re-enrolling

In order for Weymouth Montessori to effectively prepare for each new school year, the school must have a reasonably accurate number of students who will be enrolled. Qualified teachers need to be hired, classrooms need to be configured and the facilities must be prepared in order to be ready for the students in September. Accordingly, Weymouth Montessori begins its enrollment procedure during February of the preceding school year and attempts to complete enrollment by May.

Re-enrolling students and their siblings have priority when qualified enrollment contracts are submitted and accepted with the applicable deposit by February 1. After February 1, Weymouth Montessori will begin to accept qualified enrollment contracts from other applicants. School applications are accepted without regard to race, color, ethnic origin, or religion.

## Enrollment Forms

To comply with state requirements, all enrollment forms must be complete and on file in the office before a child begins school. The health form must be completed and signed by your pediatrician within 30 days of your child's start date. These records and forms are kept in your child's file and must be updated yearly; you will receive a reminder each year.

The Enrollment forms include the following:

- Face sheet
- Developmental History (must be completed annually)
- First Aid/Emergency Hospital
- Transportation Plan
- Child Authorization and Release Form
- Authorization to apply nonprescription medication
- Authorization for emergency medical treatment
- Authorization and release
- Individual Health Care Plan
- Physical exam
- Immunizations
- Lead test
- Oral Health Form
- ParentREACH Form

## THE SCHOOL YEAR

### First day of School and Phase-in

Pre-primary children are “phased-in” at the beginning of school in order to provide a period of time for adjustment to their new situation. This phase-in is primarily for the benefit of new children. For the first few days, the new children attend and gradually increasing the amount of time in the classroom until they are ready for the entire morning. Parents are invited to spend class time with their child for this first week. This is optional and not required.

The phase-in schedule will be reviewed at the New Parent Orientation, which takes place before school begins.

### The School Day

7:30-8:20 AM	Before school care
8:20-8:30 AM	Morning Preschool and Full Day drop-off
11:20-11:30	Morning Preschool dismissal and pick up
11:45 AM	Lunch
12:30 PM	Nap for Full day children under 5/Afternoon Preschool
3:00 PM	End of school day
3:00 PM	After-school care begins
4:00 PM	End of After-school care

## Tuition Schedule

Please refer to Tuition Schedule document.

## **Arrivals**

Drop off will take place at the main school door where a teacher will be waiting to greet you and your child. The entrance is at the door located on Nevin Road. Please pull parallel to the sidewalk with your car facing the correct direction. If you are in one of the first three cars, please walk your child down the ramp and to the front door. Please say your “good-bye” outside the door and help your child make the transition from home and school as smooth as possible.

When arriving or departing the school premises, please drive slowly.

The beginning of your child’s day is an important time of adjustment and transition. Arriving at school on time helps to make transition as smooth as possible. All children must arrive at school no later than 8:30 AM for the morning session. If, on occasion, you are unavoidably detained and must arrive after this time, please **do not** enter the school until the first line is finished and the children are choosing activities. If possible, please call the office (781) 337-9920 ahead of time to let us know that you will be late.

Please make every effort to arrive on time. It is not fair to your child or to the other children in the room to have the class disrupted by late arrivals.

## **Departures**

The pick up time for morning session children is between 11:20-11:30 AM. The pick up time for full-day students is at 3:00 PM. The pick up time for after-school children is at 4:00 PM. Please be prompt. A long wait can be traumatic for any child. If you are detained, please call the office (781) 337-9920 as soon as possible. Promptness helps the staff remain on schedules, but more importantly, prevents distress and concern by your child.

A late pick up fee of \$5.00 for every five minutes or part thereof will be charged to parents who arrive after 11:30 AM for morning enrollment, 3:00 PM for full day or 4:00 PM.

You may pick up your half-day or full-day child at the playground entrance (weather permitting).

## **Early Dismissal**

On those occasions when your child needs to be dismissed early, please bring a written and dated note to school and hand it to your child’s teacher. The teacher will have your child ready and waiting for you at the specified time.

## **Attendance**

Consistent attendance is very important for proper progress through the curriculum, as well as for the successful development of your child's social relationships. Parents are urged to allow their children to attend school whenever possible. Parents are responsible for notifying the school office of a child’s absence.



### **School Cancellations**

If school must be canceled due to inclement weather or the occurrence of any other event that could reasonably be expected to cause local schools to close for the day, you will be notified via the ParentReach automated phone announcement system.

## HOLIDAYS

Weymouth Montessori does not celebrate holidays from a religious perspective. During the school year, we chose three significant days of celebration. They are as follows:

### 1. U.N. DAY

In October of each year, children are invited to celebrate their heritage and families on United Nations Day. Children are encouraged to bring in food, clothing or any items that relate specifically to their immediate family or ethnic background. This event is celebrated during the school day and is for students.

### 2. Winter Party

In December of each year, students invite their parents to share in the celebration of the beginning of winter with them. The children will sing songs and read Kindergarten students recite poems for their parents. This event is celebrated after school and immediate family members are invited to attend.

### 3. Graduation/End of Year Celebration

All students invite their families to this small celebration, marking the end of the school year. Children who have been with Weymouth Montessori for three or four years and/or who are transitioning to first grade, may participate in the Graduation ceremony. This event is celebrated after school and family members are invited to attend.

More information about these celebrations will be made available at the appropriate time.

### **The Birthday Celebration**

A birthday is a celebration of life shared by the entire class. The birthday child marks his or her age by holding the globe and moving around a candle (represented the Earth revolving around the sun) as many times as he or she has orbited the sun. During the “Birthday Walk” the other children sing a movement song to celebrate each year and keep count. The child may bring in a special snack to share with the entire class.

A birthday can also be remembered with a donation of a book from the birthday child to the school’s library. Inside the cover of the gift book should be written the child’s name, date of birth, age, and year given to the school. “Birthday presents” to the school may also include trays, baskets, practical life or Montessori materials for the classroom.

If you are planning a party for your child, please remember that invitations may not be distributed at school. We also ask that children do not bring gifts for after-school parties.

### **Birthday Snack**

For birthday celebrations, a child may bring a special snack to share with the class. Muffins, fruit breads, and cupcakes are welcome provided they contain a minimum of non-chocolate frosting and are themselves non-chocolate. Similar foods may be brought for holiday celebrations. Fruits and vegetables, whole grain crackers and muffins are healthy choices for a special snack.

## CLOTHING AND PERSONAL BELONGINGS

The school requires preschool children to keep a complete change of clothing at school for spills or other emergencies. These clothes will be kept in a bag (provided by Weymouth Montessori) where they can be hung on your child's hook.

Please ***label*** the clothing with permanent marker or sewn in tags to help prevent mix-ups. Please replace the spare clothing as your child grows and the seasons change.

Your child will also need a pair of sturdy slippers for wearing inside the classroom. All slippers should be labeled and without characters on them.

On a daily basis, children should wear comfortable clothing, appropriate for both indoor and outdoor activities and rubber soled shoes. To foster independence, parents are encouraged to purchase clothing that the children can easily manipulate.

Except in the case of severe weather, we will spend some part of each day outdoors. Please make sure your child is well equipped with snowsuit and/or snow pants, gloves and/or mittens, hats, boots and raincoats. We do go out during the winter.

Per EEC regulations, drawstrings and/or loose jewelry are not to be worn at school.

Books, nature or science specimens, music cds, and other items of educational interest are welcome for sharing with the class. At the beginning of the year, teachers will inform parents which day of the week will be Sharing Day for your child's class. Please be sure all items are labeled with your child's name.

Toys, costume jewelry, money, candy, cough drops, chap stick and gum should be left at home or in the car upon arrival.

You may discover tiny cubes, puzzle pieces, beads or other items in your child's pockets or cuffs. Please be sure to return such items to the school.

## HEALTH POLICIES

### Emergency Telephone Numbers

Police/Fire/Ambulance	<b>911</b>	
Poison Control	1-800-222-1222	
South Shore Hospital	781-624-8000	
Designated Adult	Caren Chevalier	781-706-3556
	Jennifer Levie	781-337-9920
Health Care Consultant	Dr. Sandy Eaton	

### Procedures for Medical Emergencies and Illness

All teachers have been trained in First Aid and there will always be an adult on the premises who is trained in CPR. In situations requiring first aid, the first teacher to reach the child will administer first aid. In serious emergency cases, we will contact parents by phone for instructions. If no instructions can be obtained, your child will be transported by ambulance to South Shore Hospital (or if on a field trip, to the nearest hospital). Whenever possible, a teacher will accompany the child. We will continue to attempt to contact parents or other names listed on enrollment forms.

### Procedures for Utilizing First Aid Equipment

The Weymouth Montessori first aid kit is located on the shelf in the office. Its location is marked by a red cross on the front of the container. The first aid kits are stored out of the reach of children but easily accessible in case of emergency.

Portable first aid kits used on field trips will include: First aid supplies, children's emergency contacts and telephone numbers, and change for a pay telephone.

The first aid kit is kept supplied by the Administrative Director. First aid kits will be inspected monthly and supplies will be replaced as needed. Staff should report missing items to the program director.

Staff certified in first aid and in accordance with recommended procedures will use all first aid supplies and/or equipment. All staff must be first aid certified within six (6) months of employment. One staff member certified in CPR must be on the premises during all hours of operation.

### Contents of First Aid Kit

Band-Aids	Scissors
Disposable non-latex gloves	Gauze Roller Bandage
Gauze Pads	Instant Cold Pack
Adhesive Tape	Tweezers
Thermometer	Compress

## **Emergency Preparedness**

The school will remain open using the following procedures;

- A cellular phone is kept on hand in the case of loss of phone service.
- Snacks and food requiring no refrigeration will be stored at all times in the kitchen.
- Back-up lighting generator is functioning.
- If fire detectors are not working, teachers will remain vigilant in the detection and prevention of fire.
- If any of the preceding requirements are not met or the temperature falls below 62 degrees or is above 80 degrees, the school will close for the remainder of the day or until the power is restored.

### In the case of loss of heat:

- The school will remain open unless the temperature inside the building falls or is likely to fall below 62 degrees. If the temperature falls below 62 degrees, the school will close for the day or until heat is restored.

### In the case of loss of water:

- The school shall close in the event of a sudden loss of water. If the school becomes aware of an impending loss of water, the staff will begin to store enough water for use in flushing toilets, hand washing and drinking water.

### In the case of a fire, natural disaster, or situation necessitating the evacuation of the building:

- All children will be transported by bus (Charles Transportation), taxi or private car to the Weymouth Police Station or South Shore Hospital, where parents will be called to pick up their children.

*If the school needs to close due to any of the above situations all parents will be notified by phone. They will then have up to **one hour** to pick up their children.*

## **Plan for the Care of Mildly Ill Children**

Parents are required to pick up ill children within one hour of notification of the mild illness. Ill children are provided with a quiet, restful place within the classroom or in the Administrator's office but not within close proximity to other children. Either a teacher or the Director will remain with the child until the parents arrive. Mildly ill children will be provided comfort, rest, food, drink and appropriate play materials until parents arrive.

## **Individual Health Care Plans**

Upon enrollment into Weymouth Montessori, all parents with a child with a chronic health issue must fill out an Individual Health Care Plan Form. Parents must describe the chronic condition, its symptoms, any medical treatment that may be necessary while in school, the potential side effects of that treatment, and the potential consequences to the child's health if the treatment is not administered. Weymouth Montessori staff may then administer routine, scheduled medication or

treatment to the child with a chronic health condition in accordance with parental consent and a licensed health care practitioners authorization.

In the event of any unanticipated administration of medication or unanticipated treatment for a non-life-threatening condition, the staff will make reasonable attempts to contact the parents prior to treatment or administration of medication. In the case that parents cannot be notified before treatment, staff will attempt to notify them as soon as possible after. The event, treatment and/or medication will be documented in the Medication Log.

In the case of food or chemical allergies, the child's name and allergies will be listed and posted in the office, classroom and kitchen. Weymouth Montessori will make every effort to ensure that the child is not exposed to the allergen including banning all such substances from the classroom or school, if the need arises. A menu of the current weeks snack will be posted in the kitchen and in the office. Weymouth Montessori will provide the child with an alternate snack if an offending food is to be served.

### **Medication Policy**

If a child attends school while on medication, parents must fill out a medication permission form which can be obtained from the office or from a teacher. All medication, whether prescription or over the counter, must be accompanied by a physician's instructions and signature as well as a parent's signature. All medications which are brought to school must be in the containers in which they were originally dispensed and with the original label affixed. Over-the-counter medications must be in the original manufacturers packaging. Physician authorization shall be valid for one year unless revoked earlier.

Weymouth Montessori staff may not administer any medication contrary to the directions on the original container, unless so authorized in writing by the child's licensed health care practitioner. Any medications without clear instructions on the container must be administered in accordance with a written physician or pharmacist's descriptive order. Weymouth Montessori staff is not allowed to administer the first dose of any medication to a child.

Weymouth Montessori will maintain a written record of the administration of any medication, prescription or non-prescription, for each child which includes the time date, dosage and staff signature. The completed form will be placed in the child's file.

All medications are stored out of reach of children in either the Administrative Director's office or the refrigerator in the kitchen. Emergency medications will be readily available for use by staff.

All unused, discontinued or outdated medication will be returned to the parent. Returned medications will be documented in the child's record. When returning medication to parents is not possible or practical, medication will be destroyed in accordance with the policies of the Department of Public Health, Drug Control Program. Destruction will be recorded by the director.

In the case of a child requiring a topical medication during the school day, the parent will be informed at pick-up.

Staff will be evaluated annually to determine ability to administer medication and to follow the medication administration procedures.

### **Prevention of Abuse and Neglect**

Weymouth Montessori will protect the children from abuse and neglect while in the program's care and custody. All Weymouth Montessori staff are mandated reporters and shall report suspected child abuse or neglect. The staff will report the suspected abuse or neglect to the Administrative Director, who will immediately report to the Department of Social Services.

Weymouth Montessori will immediately notify the Department of Early Education and Care when a 51A has been filed alleging abuse or neglect of a child while in the care of the program or during a program related activity. If a parent, teacher or child alleges misconduct against an employee of Weymouth Montessori, the employee will be suspended with pay and not allowed near the school until The Department of Social Services investigation is completed and such further time as the Department of Early Education and Care requires. If the allegation is determined to be false, the employee will be resumed to their previous position. If the allegation is determined to be founded, the employee will be terminated immediately.

Weymouth Montessori shall cooperate with all investigations of abuse and neglect, including identifying parents of children currently or previously enrolled in the school; providing consent for disclosure to the Department of Early Education and Care, and allowing EEC to disclose information to, any person and/or agency. The EEC may specify as necessary to the investigation of all allegations and protection of children.



## INJURY PREVENTION

Weymouth Montessori will monitor the environment daily to remove or repair any hazard which may cause injury. Weymouth Montessori does not allow smoking at any time anywhere on the school grounds. Weymouth Montessori will keep liquids, foods and appliances that are or can become hot enough to burn, out of reach of children. Weymouth Montessori will keep all toxic substances used for cleaning, etc... on a high shelf. All medications will be stored high on the office shelf. No poisonous plants will be allowed inside the school. Any matches, sharp objects or other hazardous objects will be kept out of reach in a secure place (office closet). Any use of a substance that may impair an educator's alertness, judgement or ability to care for children during operating hours is prohibited.

### Plan for Managing Infectious Disease

1. All staff are trained regarding infectious disease control. When children exhibit any symptoms of illness, they are monitored by staff. If symptoms persist or more symptoms develop, a parent will be notified. Ill children will be separated from other children whenever possible. They will be kept comfortable and restful while waiting for their parents to arrive. Parents are expected to arrive as soon as possible or within one hour of notification.
2. Parents are required to pick up children exhibiting any of the following symptoms:
  - a. Temperature of 100 or higher
  - b. One or more episodes of vomiting
  - c. One or more episodes of diarrhea
  - d. Persistent cough or wheezing
  - e. Appearance of unknown illness or complaint
  - f. Acute fatigue
  - g. Any untreated contagious disease
  - h. Physical or behavioral problems which prohibit full participation in school activities
  - i. Symptoms or behaviors that require one-to-one care
3. Children with a mild illness may attend school, a mild symptoms are:
  - a. headache not related to fever
  - b. clear runny nose
  - c. dry cough not related to fever
4. Weymouth Montessori's "Ill Children Policy" includes the exclusion of children with communicable diseases. These diseases include but are not limited to: chicken pox, German measles, mumps, lice, impetigo, hepatitis, mononucleosis, conjunctivitis, pinworms, and scabies. Children with these diseases are required to stay at home for the duration of the illness or until they are determined by a physician to no longer be contagious.
5. Upon notification that a child attending the school has a contagious disease, the administrative director will provide parents with all relevant information including a description of the disease, symptoms, method of transmission and incubation period.

6. Parents may not bring a child to our school for the following reasons:
  - a. Vomiting or diarrhea within 24 hours of arriving at school.
  - b. Any untreated excludable communicable disease
  - c. Severe coughing
  - d. Untreated strep throat (required 24 hour antibiotic treatment)
  - e. Temperature of 100 or higher within the last 24 hours
  - f. Untreated rash with unknown cause

Children with these symptoms or illnesses should be kept at home until they are symptom free, fever free and on medication (if prescribed) for at least 24 hours.

6. Staff and children wash hands with liquid soap or disposable towels; before and after water play, before eating or handling food, after toileting/diapering, after contact with bodily fluids.

## INFECTION CONTROL

Weymouth Montessori will ensure that staff and children wash their hands with liquid soap and running water using friction. Hands shall be dried with disposable towels. Staff and children will wash their hands at least at the following times;

1. Before and after water play
2. Before eating or handling food
3. After toileting or diapering
4. After coming into contact with bodily fluids or discharges (including sneezes, coughing)
5. After handling caged animals or their equipment

In addition, staff must wash their hands:

1. Before and after administration of medication
2. After performing cleaning tasks, handling trash or using cleaning products.

Facilities used for hand washing after diapering or toileting must be separate from facilities and areas used for food preparation and food service. Weymouth Montessori will ensure that equipment, materials, items or surfaces (including floors, walls and clothing used for dramatic play) are washed with soap and water and disinfected as needed to maintain a sanitary environment. All floors used by children must be swept and/or vacuumed daily. All eating surfaces must be washed and disinfected before and after each use.

Where applicable, the following items, equipment and surfaces will be washed and disinfected after each use:

1. Diapering surfaces
2. Mops used for cleaning bodily fluids
3. Thermometers
4. Water tables and water play equipment

Toys mouthed by children must be set aside and stored after each use and may not be used by another child until they are washed and disinfected.

The following items must be monitored for cleanliness and washed and disinfected at least daily:

1. Toilets and toilet seats
2. Containers, including lids, used to hold soiled diapers
3. Sinks and sink faucets
4. Drinking fountains
5. Play tables
6. Washcloths and towels

Mats, blankets and mops used for cleaning will be washed and disinfected at least weekly. The disinfectant solution used to disinfect child care items, equipment and surfaces will be a commercially prepared disinfectant that has been registered as a sanitizing solution by the

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Registration by the EPA will be indicated on the product label. Commercially prepared solutions must be used in accordance with manufacturer's directions. All disinfectant solutions will be stored in accordance with manufacturer's instructions and in a secure place out of the reach of children.

Weymouth Montessori provides disposable non-latex gloves to be used for the clean-up of blood and bodily fluids. The affected area will be disinfected. Used gloves and any other materials containing blood or other bodily fluids will be thrown away in a lined, covered container. Weymouth Montessori will ensure that educators wash their hands thoroughly with soap and water after cleaning up the contaminated area. Contaminated clothing will be sealed in a plastic container or bag, labeled with the child's name and returned to the parent at the end of the day. Weymouth Montessori will ensure that when individual towels or washcloths are used for any purpose, they are stored open to the air and not touching each other.

### **Oral Health Program**

Children enrolled in a Full day program at Weymouth Montessori may elect to brush their teeth after lunch. Participation is not mandatory and parents may sign a non-participation form if you do not wish your child to participate. If your child will be brushing their teeth at school, please send a toothbrush to school. Toothbrushes should be plain without characters. The toothbrushes will be kept in a sanitary labeled container. Teachers will inform parents if the need for a new toothbrush arises.

### **Mandated Reporters of Child Abuse and Neglect**

All staff and educators are mandated reporters and must, by law, report suspected child abuse and neglect to the Department of Children and Family Services.

## NUTRITION

**All staff is trained in USDA's Nutritional Guidelines, which includes choking hazards.**

### Snack

Each family will be assigned a few weeks (one week at a time) during the school year to provide healthy and nutritious snacks for their child's classroom. A bag will be sent home the preceding Thursday, to be returned on Monday with the snacks for the entire week. Donated snack should consist of fresh fruits or vegetables and whole grain crackers. Your child will serve snack to his or her classmates during that week.

### Lunch

Lunches are supplied by the parent and should be packed (using reusable containers whenever possible) in a lunch box that is clearly labeled with the child's name. Foods should not require refrigeration or heating. A healthful beverage (milk, juice or water) should accompany the lunch, as well as whatever utensils are required to eat the food. No candy (including cough drops), gum, chocolate or soda will be allowed. Unless otherwise requested, we will send all uneaten food home in your child's lunch box.

Suggested foods for lunch include:

- Sandwiches (jelly, cold cuts, cheese, turkey or chicken)
- Yogurt (packed in a thermos or on an ice pack)
- Soup and noodles (packed in a thermos)
- Fresh fruit (sliced and peeled if needed)
- Fresh vegetables (carrots, cucumbers, peppers, cherry tomatoes, etc.)
- Cheese and crackers
- Granola bars (without chocolate or marshmallow chips)
- Dinner leftovers
- 100% Real fruit juice

Overly processed foods or foods containing large amounts of sugar, salt, or oils are best avoided. We encourage parents to provide wholesome lunches, and to include your child in the planning and packaging of his or her own lunch.

## **FAMILY INVOLVEMENT INFORMATION**

The General Laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts mandate to the Department of Early Education and Care, the legal responsibility of promulgating and enforcing rules and regulations governing the operation of family child care, small group and school age and large group and school age child care.

These regulations, 606 CMR 7.00, establish standards for operation of family child care, small group and school age and large group and school age child care programs in the Commonwealth. The regulations require certain things of licensees in regard to their work with families. A summary of the required parent information, rights, and responsibilities are identified below.

### **Family Involvement**

The following 606 CMR 7.08 requirements apply to all programs, including family child care, small group and school age and large group and school age child care. Additional requirements for small group and school age and large group and school age child care are found at 606 CMR 7.08(10).

Weymouth Montessori must support and encourage a partnership with and the involvement of parents in the early education and care of their children.

### **Parent Communication**

Weymouth Montessori supports several mechanisms for and encourages ongoing communication with parents. The school will find alternative means to communicate effectively with families whose primary language is not English or who require other communication methods.

During the school year a schedule of upcoming events as well as information about classroom activities will be published in a newsletter and calendar. Newsletters, tuition billing and other written communications will be distributed via teachers at drop off and pick up times. Early each fall, the school will distribute a list of students and parents names, addresses and telephone numbers. If you do not wish to have this information published, please inform the office.

If English is not the primary language of the family, Weymouth Montessori will work with the family to establish a means of communication including using english-speaking family members for interpreting purposes.

### **Parent Input**

Weymouth Montessori is open to parental input, which may include, but need not be limited to a suggestion box and individual or group parent meetings.

### **Parent Visits**

Parents are welcome to drop in and observe at any time during the day. You may observe in the classroom if it is not disruptive to your child or the other children. If it is disruptive, you may

observe through the classroom door window. Please follow the “Visitor Observation” guidelines in the back of this handbook to maximize the benefits of your observation.

Other visitors to the classroom during school hours are also welcome. Please obtain advance approval from the classroom teacher.

### **Parent /Teacher Conferences**

Conferences are held twice yearly, once in the late fall and once in the late spring. These meetings are an opportunity to discuss the progress in growth and development of the children. All parents are required to attend these conferences. Dates for the conferences will be shown on the school calendar. An email will be sent out prior to the conference date, allowing parents to select a time slot. If you would like to schedule other appointments to discuss your child’s progress, please call the school or speak with your child’s teacher to set up an appointment.

### **Volunteers**

WMP does not use volunteers in the classroom.

## SCHOOL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### Child Guidance

Children will be redirected in their behavior based on their developmental ability and cognitive understanding. Each child will be given guidance with regard to being more self aware and to exercise self control with his/her problem solving. This will include using a strategy called "Peer Problem Solving" in which the teacher acts as guide and mediator for the children's issues. This includes a process in which a teacher will implement the following steps: 1) "What happened?" Children address the issue of "what happened?" with the teacher as moderator. 2) Each child will get the opportunity to "tell each other" about the situation. A rebuttal period follows. 3) Once the children have discussed the problem the teacher begins the process of including the children to help come up with solutions as to; "How can we resolve this?" 4) As a resolution is determined and agreed upon by the students, the teacher makes sure that each child feels he/she has been heard and that all parties agree to a solution. 5) "Can we continue to be friendly?" The children are encouraged to remember and use their newly found resolution and move forward in a positive way with their relationship. Through this method, children will be taking ownership of their problems as well as the resolutions to these problems. This also helps children understand that their voice will be heard during conflicts and that their opinions and ideas for resolutions matter. This methodology will be implemented and used consistently by all staff.

When a child is acting physically aggressive, the child will be removed from the situation to give them an opportunity for respite and calm. Once the child has regained composure, the above problem solving methodology will be used.

At the onset of the school year, the children are encouraged to help reinforce the ground rules of the classroom. The students will be included to help create new ground rules that will help make the classroom a more positive experience as well as give them ownership of their learning setting.

Our philosophy of discipline is based on the understanding of discipline as a positive, internally motivating force. This force, when allowed and encouraged to develop within a child, is one of the single most important means that child has towards making appropriate, peaceful and healthful decisions in his or her life, both now and in the future. Our discipline procedures are therefore designed to encourage and assist children in developing their own internal discipline.

Staff members are responsible for providing children with information about the choices that are available to them, both in general and in specific situations. Staff members are also responsible for creating an environment and a relationship with children which provide consistency, firmness, love, and clearly stated limits. The consistency and the clearly stated limits provide the information the child needs to make appropriate choices. The love and firmness provide safety and support for making those choices.



In most cases, when a child is acting inappropriate, she either does not know of an appropriate alternative or is in need of attention. In the first case, a teacher can offer information, i.e., give the child choices for appropriate alternatives and, if useful, explain to the child why these choices are more helpful or appropriate.

In the case of a child asking for attention through inappropriate behavior, the teacher should acknowledge the child's need and try to meet it without rewarding the child for inappropriate behavior. This is best done by offering alternatives (redirecting) and/or giving verbal explanations, making a clear distinction between the child and the action. ("Pushing is not O.K. here.") Then, if possible, the teacher should try to help the children involved problem solve a resolution to the issue using themselves as mediators for both children

If a child's behavior is becoming disruptive or upsetting for other children, the child will be removed from the group of children to another part of the room but will not be isolated. In situations where a child is repeating unacceptable behavior over and over, privileges are withdrawn. These privileges should be related to the inappropriate behavior; for instance, a child who continues to throw sand at another child may not use the sandbox again until the next day. Food or outdoor play may not be withdrawn.

The following actions are not acceptable staff behavior when disciplining a child.

1. No child shall be subjected to humiliation and /or any form of verbal abuse such as yelling, screaming or using threatening tones of voice.
2. Physical force of any kind is not acceptable under any circumstances except when a child needs to be lifted up or otherwise removed from an uncontrollable situation (when a child is putting himself or herself in immediate danger or hurting or about to hurt another child or adult). Unacceptable physical force includes spanking, slapping, shaking, hitting, pinching, squeezing, picking up a child and setting them down forcefully. Whenever possible, a teacher should not touch a child if he or she is feeling angry with the child. A teacher who is disciplining a child should first make every effort to be in control of his or her own feelings. This leads to more effective and positive discipline.
3. "Bargaining" is not an acceptable form of discipline.
4. No child shall be punished for soiling, wetting, or not using the toilet.
5. Food shall not be withheld for punishment for behavior. Children will not be force fed.
6. Outdoor play privileges shall not be withheld as punishment for behavior.

### **Transition Plan Policy**

1. When Weymouth Montessori students finish their education and are ready to transition to a new school, staff will ease the transition by having conversations "on line" which will include all children in the discussion about future plans. The teachers will encourage parents to have the student visit the new school as well. At the end of the school year, Weymouth

Montessori holds a “Graduation” ceremony in an effort to celebrate the students achievements and say goodbye to all their friends and teachers.

2. When a student enrolls with an IEP or during the course of his/her education receives an IEP, the Lead Teacher will meet with the parents to discuss how the school will work to meet the need of the child related to the IEP.
3. When students transition from the classroom to outdoor play ,they first gather on line. The teacher plays a music box to indicate the end of work period, the children clean up and come to sit on line. After all students are assembled, the children are invited to get their outdoor clothing and get dressed. When each child is ready, the teacher calls the students to line up. When all students are lined up, one teacher leads the students while the other teacher is in the rear of the line. When it is time to come in from the playground, the teacher claps her hands and all the students line up at the fence. When all students are assembled, the teachers again lead the children into the building, one at the front and one in the rear. Teachers conduct a head count of children when entering and exiting building.

### **Field Trips**

Field trips may sometimes be a part of the Weymouth Montessori program. Each trip will be publicized well ahead of time and parents will be required to sign a written permission slip in order for the child to participate. Depending upon the destination, transportation for these trips may involve the MBTA, school buses, and walking. In most cases, parents will be asked to participate in order to increase the adult/child ratio. A first aid kit, as well as emergency information for each child will be taken on every trip.

### **Transportation**

Parents are solely responsible for transporting their children to and from school. If parents wish someone other than themselves to transport children from school, the parent must provide the names on the students permission form. If a parent wants a student to be picked up by anyone other than the persons listed on the school form, the parent must provide the school a signed note specifying the day and the person whom they are authorizing to do so.

Teachers and staff of Weymouth Montessori are not allowed to transport students in their personal cars.

### **Confidentiality of Family Information**

All EEC child care and placement licensing regulations contain provisions that protect the information contained in children’s records from unauthorized use and from disclosure to anyone not directly involved in implementing the child’s program without written consent of the child’s parents. The intent of these regulations is to protect the privacy of children and families.

Therefore, early education and care and child placement programs and their staff may not distribute, share or discuss information (including photographs or other images) about children and families in

their care by any means, whether written or verbal, using any medium, including but not limited to telephone, e-mail or electronic text, without the expressed written permission of the child's parents or pursuant to a court order. Images of children, whether or not they are identified by name, as well as personal information related to children and their families, may not be posted on the publicly accessible portions of "Facebook", "My Space", or any other similar online directory, social utility or networking website under any circumstances. However, images of children and personal information related to children and families may be shared on the restricted, private portions of such websites, only with the written permission of the child's parents.

Early education and care and child placement program staff may not discuss children and families in their care with anyone not directly involved in implementing the child's program, including but not limited to other parents in the program, and may not distribute copies of information in a child's record without the expressed written permission of the parents or pursuant to a court order.

### **Grievances**

Any grievance or problem involving the school or teachers at Weymouth Montessori should be handled in the following manner:

1. The teacher involved should always be made aware of the problem.
2. The Educational Director should also be made aware of the problem. If the problem is solved by the teacher and the parent/guardian to the satisfaction of both, discussion ends at this level. However, if an agreement is not reached, the parties involved have the option of discussing the point of contention with the Educational Director.
3. If the problem is still not resolved, the parties involved would again have the option of taking their formal complaint to the Administrative Director and/or The Department of Early Education and Care as WMS licensing authority.
4. The last venue for solving a complaint would be for the parent/guardian to address a meeting of the Board of Directors. They would make a final decision as to the outcome of the problem.

Note: If any of the steps listed above are not followed in the order shown, the first person hearing the grievance or problem is responsible for redirecting the process.

## **PLAN FOR REFERRAL SERVICES AND TERMINATION**

Weymouth Montessori shall use the following procedures for referring parents to the appropriate social, mental, educational, vision, hearing and medical services for their child, should the school feel that an assessment for such additional services would benefit the child.

### **Referral Process**

Whenever any staff member is concerned about a child's development or behavior and feel that further evaluation should be done, they should report it to the child's classroom lead teacher, who will review concerns with the Educational Director.

If the Educational Director agrees, the lead teacher is requested to complete an observation report and review the child's record prior to making referral.

The administrator will maintain a list of current referral resources in the community for children in need of social, mental health, educational or medical services. Weymouth Montessori will contact any local agencies regarding services.

### **Referral Meeting with Parents**

The director schedules a meeting with parents to notify them of the schools concern and prepares a current list of possible referral services. At the meeting, the director will provide the parent with a written statement including the reason for recommending the referral, a brief summary of the schools observations related to the referral and any efforts the school may have made to accommodate the child's needs.

The director will offer assistance to the child's parents in making the referral. Parents should be encouraged to call or request in writing an evaluation. If parents need extra support, the school may with written parental consent, contact the referral agency for them.

The director will inform the child's parents of the availability of services and their right to appeal, under Chapter 766.

### **Follow-up to the Referral**

The director will, with parental permission, contact the agency or service provider who evaluated the child for consultation and assistance in meeting the child's needs at the school. If it is determined that the child is not in need of services from this agency, or is ineligible to receive services, the school shall review the child's progress at the school every three months to determine if another referral is necessary.

### **Record of Referrals**

The director will maintain a written record of any referrals, including the parent conference and results. A referral checklist will be kept in the child's file.

### **Provisional period**

Students enrolled in Weymouth Montessori for the first time will be given a six week trial period. The student may be removed from the school program if Weymouth Montessori feels that it is not or cannot meet the child's needs. A meeting with the director, teacher and parents will be held to discuss the problem. Parents will be given referral information directly related to the issue. Documentation will be taken of all attempts to resolve the issue(s).

### **Termination**

Weymouth Montessori will work with parents in order to avoid termination whenever possible. When Weymouth Montessori and the parent cannot come to a mutually agreeable solution the following procedures will be used for terminating a child from the school:

A child may be terminated from the school under the following circumstances;

- The health and safety of the child at the school cannot be assured
- The child's development needs are not being met at the school
- Tuition is past due by 60 days
- The child is excessively late at drop off or pick up
- Irreconcilable differences between the parent and school concerning philosophy of education
- Habitual violation of school policy

Parents will be notified in writing and at a face to face meeting when possible, about the circumstances including the reasons for termination. A copy of this letter will be kept in the child's record.

The director will inform parents of the availability of information and referral for other services through Community Care for Kids (Quincy). The director will offer suggestions for other programs that may be more suitable for the family.

When any child is terminated from the school whether initiated by the school or the parents, the lead teacher will prepare the child for termination from the school in a manner consistent with the child's ability to understand. The teacher should talk with the child and the other children about the departing child and simple reasons for the departure.

### **Prevention of Abuse and Neglect**

Weymouth Montessori will protect the children from abuse and neglect while in the programs care and custody. All Weymouth Montessori staff are mandated reporters and shall report suspected child abuse or neglect. The staff will report the suspected abuse or neglect to the Administrative Director. The Administrative Director will immediately report to the Department of Social Services.

Weymouth Montessori will immediately notify the Department of Early Education and Care when a 51A has been filed alleging abuse or neglect of a child while in the care of the program or during a program related activity. If a parent, teacher or child alleges misconduct against an employee of

Weymouth Montessori, the employee will be suspended with pay and not allowed near the school until the Department of Social Services investigation is completed and such further time as the Department of Early Education and Care requires. If the allegation is determined to be false, the employee will be resumed to their previous position. If the allegation is determined to be founded the employee will be terminated immediately.

Weymouth Montessori shall cooperate with all investigations of abuse and neglect, including identifying parents of children currently or previously enrolled in the school; providing consent for disclosure to the Department of Early Education and Care from, and allowing EEC to disclose information to, any person and/or agency the EEC may specify as necessary to the investigation of all allegations and protection of children.

### **Tuition Payment Obligation**

A signed enrollment contract constitutes a legally binding agreement between the parties. The parents obligation to pay the tuition in accordance with the terms of the contract is absolute. In the event that the parents of a student fail to honor their tuition payments in a timely manner, the student may (at the sole discretion of the Administrative Director) be suspended from school during the period while the nonpayment continues. The Administrative Director will make every effort to work with the parents to rectify the situation or make arrangements for a mutually agreeable plan for payment.

No reduction of tuition shall be made by reason of a student's absence from school due to vacation or short-term illness.

### **Tuition Payments**

The non-refundable enrollment fee is deducted from the total tuition.

WMS offers two tuition payment options:

1. Total tuition paid on or before August 1.
2. Enrollment in the WMS Tuition Payment Plan

### **Refund of Tuition or Cancellation of Obligation**

Under exceptional circumstances, the Administrative Director can release parents from the full demands of their obligation to pay tuition.

Some of the circumstances from which the Administrative Director may infer good cause include the following:

- The development or discovery of an illness or a physical or mental disability which, in the opinion of a qualified medical practitioner: (i) causes the student to be unable to participate in the normal activities of the school, or (ii) is likely to cause an unreasonable risk of harm to either the student or his or her classmates if the student continues to attend the school.

- The relocation of the family to an area beyond a reasonable commuting distance from the school.
- The development of a severe and sudden financial loss to the parents, such as might result from the parents' loss of their jobs or their becoming disabled by severe illness or injury.

## GUIDELINES FOR OBSERVATION

1. Please stay seated and still in order not to distract the children. If you wish to change your vantage point or observe other areas of the classroom, please feel free to move your chair to another location in the room.
2. Do not initiate conversation with the children. If, however, a child begins to speak to you, answer as briefly as possible. If the child seems persistent in starting a conversation, one good way to end it is to say that you have your work to do and they have their work and you should both go back to doing it.
3. Observe the whole classroom rather than just your specific child since your presence will typically cause a change in your child's behavior.
4. Please bring a paper and pencil so you can jot down any questions you might have.
5. When you leave the classroom, please leave as quietly as possible.
6. If possible, try to meet afterwards with the Administrative Director or the Educational Director to discuss your observation and questions.
7. For a more satisfying and enlightening observation, attend the parent seminar.

Observe the following:

- Different types of work
- Changes in work
- Concentration
- Attention span
- Role of the teacher:
  - as observer
  - as director/directress
- Role of the environment
- Reality vs. fantasy
- Social interaction
- Control of error
- Ground rules