



Parent Handbook

Contents

Montessori Pedagogy.....	4
Program Statement	6
Behaviour Management	9
Monitoring Compliance and Contraventions.....	10
Licensed Age Groups	11
Programs Offered for 2019 / 2020	11
Hours of Operation	11
School Closures and Holidays	11
Admissions	12
Wait List	13
Attendance & Absence	13
Arrival & Departure Procedures	14
Releasing a Child	14
Late Pick-Up Policy.....	15
Program Developments	15
Daily Programs	15
Outdoor Play	17
Anaphylactic Policy.....	17
Nutrition.....	18
Daily Health Check	18
Illness Policy.....	19
Administration of Medication.....	20
Individualized Plans for Children with Medical Needs	20
Injury Reports - Medical Incident Reports	21
Incident Reports	21
Smoke-Free.....	21
Serious Occurrences Notification Posting	21
Children's Rest Period.....	21
Child Guidance & Prohibited Practices	22
Discharge Policy	23

Contents

Reporting Abuse or Suspected Abuse 23

Conflict of Interest & Confidentiality/ Non-disclosure..... 24

Supervision of Volunteers & Students..... 24

Emergency Management..... 24

Parent Involvement..... 26

Parent Issues & Concerns 26

Fees Information 28

Withdrawal Policy..... 28

COVID-19 Policy and Procedure..... 28

Handbook Consent Form..... 29

Please also refer to **COVID-19 Supplemental Handbook**

Montessori Pedagogy

The system of education known as the Montessori Method was developed by Dr. Maria Montessori as a result of years of research and observation of children and how they learn.

Dr. Montessori concluded that between the ages of 0-6 years of age, a child possesses an amazing ability to absorb knowledge more quickly and effortlessly than later in life - **the absorbent mind**. Critical to understanding the learning capacity of a child is to understand the significance of sensitive periods for early learning. At key points in a young child's life, he or she is intensely fascinated by or capable of learning specific skills more than in any other time in their life. Once these periods of learning pass, they may never return. This finding makes it necessary to expose children to learning as early as possible introducing them to new concepts and in the development of a curriculum suited to their personal interest, stage of development, physical, emotional and intellectual needs - **the needs of the whole child**.

The Montessori method **respects the unique qualities and personalities of each individual** which dictates what they are ready to learn and when. Each Montessori classroom is equipped to accommodate the multiple levels of all of its students. Lessons are presented individually, in small or large groups only introduced when a child demonstrates the interest or readiness, at which time a child will instinctively select or willingly choose their work. In this way, **the Montessori child is set up for success invariably promoting positive self esteem**.

*"The first essential for the child's development is concentration.
The child who concentrates is immensely happy."*

Dr. Maria Montessori

Dr. Montessori's research examined how children respond to their environment. The young child's **natural inclination to touch and experience their world in a tactile manner** explains why the world famous Montessori apparatus has such fascinating appeal to a child. For each lesson to be taught there is an appropriate piece of apparatus which is made of natural substances such as wood - beautiful to the eye, and designed to entice the child to engage in **learning through the senses**. The progression of learning starting from a concrete level brilliantly assists children to grasp concepts through their own active rather than a passive effort. Once each concept is understood, the child makes the seamless transition to an abstract level of learning.

"Never help a child with a task at which they feel they can succeed"

Dr. Maria Montessori

The goal of Montessori education is to help the child become **independent**. The classroom activity aims at providing opportunities for the child to do things for themselves and to choose their own work. Given the opportunity, a young child will proclaim "I can do it" and as a result of their own effort will benefit from an increase in self esteem and confidence inspiring further achievement.

Understanding that all children will instinctively be motivated to learn and explore if the setting is appropriately designed and equipped to accommodate their individual interests and abilities, the Montessori classroom is known

Montessori Pedagogy cont.

as **the prepared environment**. It is designed with child sized furniture to facilitate the child's independence and freedom of movement.

To address the notion that children are **naturally drawn to work and not play**, Montessori activities include practical life tasks such as those one would do in a kitchen, baking real food, cleaning actual furniture, washing windows etc. and become part of the young child's daily work activity. The pride resulting from real work motivates the child toward **greater achievement and a sense of accomplishment**.

At the **Toddler Level**, the Program has four main curriculum areas: Practical Life (self-help skills), Sensorial, Language and Culture. There is a focus on Social Adaptation, Memory Development, Spoken Language Development, Sense of security and safety at school and the feelings of Achievement, Autonomy, Independence and Confidence. Toddlers are also introduced to our Specialist Program at the Upper Toddler Level.

The CASA Curriculum is divided into five categories: Practical Life, Sensorial, Language, Math and Culture. Each lesson is presented to a child in such a manner as to cater to his or her natural inclination toward order and organization. Children learn to organize and tidy their workspace which develops their sense of responsibility while promoting respect for one's environment through cleanliness, order and an understanding of the relationship between the child and the environment. Children are exposed to our intensive Art Program including Mandarin and French in CASA 3.

At the **Elementary** Levels, students are encouraged to be intellectual thinkers. There is a focus on Academic standards while allowing each student to progress at their own pace. The Elementary Program is a six year program divided into two, three-year cycles. There are clearly defined expectations for each Elementary level that follow Montessori philosophy, the Ministry of Education guidelines are acknowledged as a minimum course of study. As in CASA, students work through the Montessori materials, though these are now more complex and age-appropriate. The curriculum encompasses Language, Math, Geometry, Physical Geography, Cultural Geography, History, Botany, Zoology, Matter and Astronomy. The Elementary work frequently involves research, discussion and large-scale projects. Integrated studies allow students to make responsible choices for themselves and discover how to contribute positively to the world and those around them. Their morals and values are nurtured with an emphasis on self-discipline and responsibility. The learning environment allows for the strengthening and refinement of social interactions as students learn to consider their own actions, to resolve their own conflicts peacefully and to use the group process for planning and problem solving. Our students have individual work plans to allow them to use time effectively and make appropriate choices. The Arts Program at these levels is intensive, with multiple classes per week of single disciplines. Students participate in presentations and examinations. The French Program includes daily classes and the Mandarin Program is scheduled twice a week.

Program Statement

This Program Statement is provided to current and prospective parents of children/students at Enquiring Minds Montessori. It describes goals and approaches used in our Programs. Consistent with the requirements of the **Child Care Early Years Act, 2014**- Enquiring Minds Montessori supports Ontario's Pedagogy and the vision for the Early Years through continuous learning from the following documents:

- **How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years, 2014**
- **Absorbant Minds**
- **The Secret of Childhood**
- **Advanced Montessori Method 1 & 2**

Setting high academic expectations for all children coupled with high standards for teaching and learning is what drives our work every single day, and for which supportive systems for both students and teachers are built. We strive to provide each child/student with -

- A sense of belonging in connection with others and a feeling of contribution to their world.
- A support network in their development of a sense of self, health, and well-being.
- Encouragement as active and engaged learner who explores the world with body, mind, and senses.
- Recognition as capable communicator who expresses himself or herself in many ways.
- The opportunity to explore Art as a means of further self-expression.

Enquiring Minds Montessori recognizes each child is a unique individual who brings his or her own abilities to the program and deserves the encouragement and space to try new things, explore new ideas and develop their own unique creativity.

Our Program Goal is to -

- ***Providing a Safe, Supportive Environment:*** In accordance with the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 and Ontario Regulation 137/15, Enquiring Minds Montessori is compliant with the policies and procedures requirements for a licensed Child Care and registered Independent School facility. Key policies include Playground Safety, Anaphylactic, Sanitary Practices, Sleep Supervision, Serious Occurrence, Medication administration, Staff Training and Development, Supervision of Volunteers and Students, Criminal Reference and VSC Check, Fire Safety Procedure and Evacuation Procedures. A summary of these policies, procedures and processes are also listed on our website. Children are monitored daily through their personal development. The School Director and Head of Class meet on a weekly basis to review the policies, procedures and individual child's plans as required. Our monthly staff meetings update the staff on any changes in regulations, reviews policies and procedure as well as staff compliancy reviews. Temp staff, students and volunteers will review and sign off on the Program statement before interacting with our children. Enquiring Minds is also seeking accreditation with CCMA as a further commitment to both Students Parents/Guardians and Staff. Maintaining an open line of communications with Parents/Guardians is key to ensuring a cohesive and supportive environment. Enquiring Minds provides an up-to-date Communication Board, located by our main entrance; weekly notifications through "On The Move" newsletter; monthly Parent workshops; in-class observations, as well as Parent/Teacher Conferences; all to keep Parents/Guardians active in their child's personal growth.
- ***Recognizing Each Child is Unique:*** Enquiring Minds Montessori is committed to creating an environment that promotes inclusion and equality for all children/students. Every child/student grows and learns at their own pace. It is our responsibility to create a nurturing environment where the needs of the individual are met. We will provide individualized plans for each child/student in the program and these will be documented daily and reviewed weekly.

Program Statement cont.

This will culminate into a documented Annual Progress Review for each child/student. Children/students will support each other through group activities and by taking on leadership roles. Parents are encouraged to participate in class observations and parent enrichment workshops that are aimed at exploring the child's environment and developing a greater understanding of the activities and their own child's development. In accordance with Ontario Regulation 137/15 48, Enquiring Minds Montessori does not permit the use of corporal punishment of the child/student, deliberate use of hard or degrading measures that would humiliate the child or undermine his or her self-respect. Further, the School does not permit the deprivation of basic needs of the child/student including food, shelter, clothing or bedding, the locking of exits of the School for the purpose of confining the child/student or using a locked or lockable room or structure to confine the child, if he or she has been separated from other children/students.

- ***Building on the Power of Positive Interaction:*** Growth in children occurs not only through individual exercises, but also through the interaction with other children/students. It is our responsibility to create an environment where children/students can positively interact with each other, allowing them to build self-confidence, learn to communicate, and make lasting friendships. While many activities are individual, Specialty activities promote group interaction through the Arts. Morning assembly encourages children/students to speak freely and circle activities create a forum to interaction based on our Aboriginal studies.
- ***Create Opportunity for Exploration, Play and Inquiry:*** At Enquiring Minds Montessori, we rejoice in the basic tenet of Montessori: children want to learn naturally. We believe that even the youngest child delights in mastering how the world works. Maria Montessori was an educator who put an emphasis on independence, freedom within limits, and respect for a child's natural psychological, physical, and social development. Montessori education is fundamentally a model of human development, and an educational approach based on that model. The model has two basic principles. First, children engage in psychological self-construction by means of interaction with their environments. Second, children, especially under the age of six, have an innate path of psychological development. Based on her observations, Montessori believed that children who are at liberty to choose and act freely within an environment prepared according to her model, would act spontaneously for optimal development. This is also the optimum in child initiated and adult supported experiences. The Montessori learning environment is also an inclusive one. We plan for and create positive learning environments within our Learning Spaces. This allows for each child's/student's learning and development to be supported.
- ***Promoting a Diverse Curriculum:*** The curriculum at Enquiring Minds is Montessori Pedagogy at the Toddler, CASA, Lower Elementary and Upper Elementary School levels. Areas of study include introductory to in depth study in Practical Life, Sensorial, Language, Math, Geometry, Geography, History and Sciences. Children/students also participate in Gross Motor Skills activities, Imaginative Play, Outdoor play and intensive Arts activities. Visual Arts, Performing Arts including Movement and Instrumental Music, Dramatic Arts and Vocal are scheduled twice a week. Mandarin and French classes are also included of the curriculum, with French classes scheduled daily. There is also opportunity for Quiet time for those children that are still in transition with napping in our lower School. For older children quiet time activities usually include reading by themselves or with a friend. Mealtime and snack time occurs throughout the day at timed intervals that allow the optimum in the child's wellbeing. Outdoor activities are also planned throughout the year and complement themed study units.
- ***Ensuring That Learning Extends Beyond the Classroom:*** The development of children is not limited to the Learning Space, but instead extends to the world beyond. At Enquiring Minds Montessori, Casa and Elementary children participate in monthly excursions to educational venues around the GTA. These excursions are topics of discussion

Program Statement cont.

prior to leaving the Learning Space to allow inquiry and discovery to flourish. A reflection of each excursion is also a part of the curriculum. Further, we invite guests into our educational space from throughout the community. On a monthly basis, Special Guests are invited into the Learning Space to meet with children in a more intimate surrounding. Children/students are exposed to 'hands on' as well as one-on-one learning with our guests.

Embracing Local Community Partners into Learning: Enquiring Minds Montessori is committed to involving local community partners and to engaging those partners in supporting the children, families and staff. Our community partners include the Toronto Fire Department, Toronto Police Service, Toronto Public Health and Toronto Children's Services. Annually representatives from each of the above groups interact with children/students through visits and workshops. Topics of our workshops include Fire Safety in the Home, 9-1-1 for Kids, Immunization Information. The Montessori is also involved with TD – Children Read Campaign and Samaritan's Purse. Enquiring Minds staff attend monthly meetings with our partners to keep up to date on new regulations and initiatives.

- ***Encouraging Parental Involvement in Learning:*** Parental engagement is an integral part of a child's learning, both in and outside the Learning Space. It is our responsibility to ensure that parents are provided the opportunity to discuss and take part in their child's growth, through class observations, monthly workshops and parent-teacher conferences. Information is also posted on our Parent Communication Board as well as "On The Move", our weekly newsletter. The fulfillment of this statement is dependent on the trust and understanding we continue to earn, from the Parents/Guardians of our children/students. This is only possible through open communications. The child's/student's journey is ultimately left up to the discretion of the Parent/Guardian. It is our responsibility to provide them with all the information they require to make the best choices for their children.
- ***Document and review the impact of strategies on children and their families:*** Observation of the whole child/student is an important part of understanding how they develop. The Director and Head of Class meet weekly and monthly to review curriculum objectives as well as individual progress of children/students. A yearly review of the curriculum provides opportunity to streamline areas of study and critique learning objective to provide a dynamic course of study for children/students. Staff participation in professional development, opens opportunity for new and innovated approaches to curriculum and the overall wellbeing of the child/student. Our core values reflect a commitment to provide students with personalized support in a variety of ways. Our responsibility is to address the needs of the whole-child. A child's sense of belonging is a key component of emotional and social wellness at school. This approach also helps to instill within our student body a sense of personal pride and love of learning and our school community.

Our Team

Our team of professionals include Ontario Registered Teachers and Registered Early Childhood Educators as well as AMI and MACTE designation. They are responsible for developing and implementing planned and responsive programs in accordance with Montessori Pedagogy. With the assistance of our Teacher Aides, our team work together to ensure your child's needs will be met while they are in our care.

All staff in the facility have current Standard First Aid and Infant/Child CPR Certification, current Police and Vulnerable Sector Checks as well as current Food Handlers Certification. Each person on our team receives training and development on an on-going basis.

Behaviour Management

The developing relationship between children/students and the teaching staff at Enquiring Minds Montessori is integral to ensuring the children/students feel safe, secure and nurtured in their environment. All staff will follow our core values of caring, honesty, inclusiveness, respect and responsibility. They will ensure that every child/student develops a sense of belonging as well as develop a positive sense of self, health and wellbeing. Staff also acknowledge that they are active and engaged learners who explore their world with body, mind and senses and are capable communicators able to express themselves in many ways. To this end, the staff will support children and students in developing strategies to remain calm and to regulate their emotions while recognizing the affects of their actions on others. This is in keeping with our Behaviour Management Policy and aligns with Ontario Regulation 137/15 under the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014. With the best interest of the child/student and their individuality always in focus, Staff will -

- *Present Positive Reinforcement Redirect:* If the behaviour continues, the staff shall redirect the child/student to an alternate activity.
- *Resolve/Reason:* In an appropriate voice, explain in simple language the inappropriateness of the behaviour displayed.
- *Natural Consequences:* Create an opportunity for problem-solving with follow through with natural consequences.
- *Do Not Reward Inappropriate Behaviour*
- *Remove:* If the behaviour continues, the child/student shall be removed from the situation for a limited supervised period. The time that they are removed depends on the age of the child. Removing a child/student and using "Quiet Time" as a time of reflection.

We believe that every situation can be used as a teaching moment. When dealing with undesirable behaviour, staff speak with each child at their level, and calmly discuss the behaviour and help the child learn new strategies to deal with frustrating situations and their emotions. Rather than focusing on negative behaviour, which only reinforces the undesired behaviour, we strive to focus on the positive behaviours a child displays and encourage them to express their emotions in an acceptable way.

Prohibited Methods of Behaviour Management

- Corporal punishment of a child/student
- Deliberate, harsh or degrading measures that would humiliate a child or undermine their self-respect.
- Deprivation of a child's/student's basic needs, including food, shelter, clothing or bedding.
- Lock or permit the child to be locked for the purpose of confining the child/student
- Using a locked or lockable room or structure for the purpose of confining a child

Behaviour Management cont.

The monitoring of behavioural situations is confidential. When a child/student engages in inappropriate activity, a clear warning will be given to the child/student. A repetition of the inappropriate behaviour will result in further discussion of the behaviour and this warning will be monitored in the Learning Space Daily Log. A third reoccurrence of any inappropriate behaviour will result in the processing of a Behaviour Incident Report by the Head of Class. This report will initiate a phone call with the parent/guardian by the teacher to open a dialogue regarding a support plan for the child/student. A copy of the Behaviour Report will be made available to the parents/guardians within 24 hours of the phone call. In the event of multiple Behaviour Incident Reports, a meeting with the Head of Class, Director and parent/guardian will be arranged as a further opportunity to explore options to assist the child/student. Where behaviours have become unsafe to the child/student, other students in the class and staff, the Director may suggest removing the child/student from the environment for a period of time or indefinitely.

We believe that every situation can be used as a teaching moment. We also believe that a well-balanced program incorporating a balance between stimulating and quiet time, is conducive to learning and appropriate behaviour.

When dealing with undesirable behaviour, staff speak with each child at their level, and calmly discuss the behaviour and help the child learn new strategies to deal with frustrating situations and their emotions. Rather than focusing on negative behaviour, which only reinforces the undesired behaviour, we strive to focus on the positive behaviours a child displays and encourage them to express their emotions in an acceptable way.

Monitoring Compliance and Contraventions

To help ensure staff, volunteers and students are in compliance with the established policies and procedures of Enquiring Minds Montessori, the Director will observe and monitor staff on a monthly basis and complete a Staff Compliance Review Form. The Director will also meet individually with each staff member to review the form, discuss areas of non-compliance (when required) and provide support for enrichment and personal development. This policy is in alignment with Ontario Regulation 137/15 under the Child Care and Early Years Act 2014.

Licensed Age Groups

Currently, Enquiring Minds Montessori has **the licensed capacity** to accommodate the following age groups;

1. 14 Toddler(14 months – 30 months) - Our Ratio is 1:5 during indoor and outdoor programming time
2. 48 CASA (30 months to 6 years) - Our Ratio is 1:8 during indoor and outdoor programming time
3. Unlimited Elementary Students - Our Ratio is 1:16 during indoor and outdoor programming time

The copy of the license is posted on the Parent Communication Board next to the CASA 1 Learning Space. Application is being made to open two new CASA Learning Spaces

Programs Offered for 2019/2020

Enquiring Minds Montessori offers the following Programs -

1. Toddler Program - 18 month-cycle Program
2. CASA Program - 3 year-cycle Program
3. Lower Elementary - 3 year-cycle Program
4. Upper Elementary - 3 year-cycle Program

Hours of Operation

Our general hours of operation are from 8:00 to 18:00, Monday to Friday.

The School Office follows reduced hours during holiday periods and Early Dismissal Days from 8:00 to 17:00. Please check the School Calendar, for these dates, at this link: <http://enquiringmindsmontessori.ca/calendar/>

When Evening Events are scheduled, the School Office Hours are extended from 8:00 to 20:00

School Closures and Holidays

Enquiring Minds Montessori provides Academic (September to June) and Calendar (September to August)

Programs for all age groups. Additionally, please refer to the School Calendar at this link:

<http://enquiringmindsmontessori.ca/calendar/> for all facility closure over the seasonal holidays and March Break, as well as for any Early Dismissal.

Please note the following **Statutory Holiday** closures -

Labour Day	Thanksgiving	Christmas Day	Boxing Day
New Year's Day	Family Day	Good Friday	Easter Monday
Victoria Day	Canada Day	Civic Holiday	

For **Early Dismissal** - Please refer to the School Calendar

For **Professional Activity Days** - Please refer to the School Calendar

Admissions

Visit Enquiring Minds Montessori

Tours are available weekly by appointment only. Tours generally last an hour. Up to four families may attend any one tour. For inquiries, please contact the School Administrator at **416-298-9388**

Admission Process

1. Submit an Application

- Application Forms can be requested on our website OR upon completion of a facility Tour. Send the complete package to the School Administrator via email / mail
Email: enquiringminds@studio24.com.bz
- Payment of \$125 non-refundable application fee.
- **Application acceptance is contingent on the provision of the child's current Immunization Records.** A copy of the child's Immunization Records must accompany the Application Form to progress the Admissions process
- Parents of children who object to immunization due to religious/conscience or medical reasons must complete a standardized ministry approved form. Ministry approved forms for religious/conscience objections must be completed by a "commissioner for taking affidavits" (i.e. notarized). Medical exemption forms must be completed by a doctor or nurse practitioner.

[Statement of Conscience or Religious Belief](#) / [Statement of Medical Exemption](#)

2. Child/Student Observation and Application Interview

- Parents/Guardians, the Head of Class and the School Administrator will have the opportunity to meet prior to acceptance of the program.
- The Child/Student will take part in a 15 minute Observation with the Head of Class.
- Following this, an Application Interview between the Head of Class and the Parents/Guardians will be scheduled.
- Further, a Meeting with the School Director will be set up as part of the Admission Process. After this meeting, the School Administrator will contact the Parents/Guardians within 48 hours.
- Upon acceptance into the program, parents will receive a contract from the School Administrator.

3. Sign the Contract

- Parents will be given up to 2 weeks to review the contract and send back a signed copy to the School Administrator enquiringminds@studio24.com.bz
- At this time a Deposit of 10% of the School Fees* will be required. Additionally, the Tuition Payment Schedule will also be confirmed with the School Administrator.

4. Meeting with the Director

At least a week prior to the child's start date, a meeting with the School Director will be arranged. This is a "Welcome Meeting". This is also opportunity to -

- Review The Parent Handbook and answer any questions Parents/Guardians may have. At this time the Parent Handbook Acknowledgment Form will be signed.
- Ensure that all forms and plans are complete, documentation has been collected and emergency contact information and permission forms have been gathered.
- A copy of Child Custody Agreement papers, if applicable, are required at this time. In case of custody disputes, we cannot refuse a parent access to his/her own child unless we have on file a copy of the court order stating that the parent in question may not have access to the child. Please keep this in mind if you are requesting that we deny access to a parent.
- Finally, to orientate Parents/Guardians with any questions they may have regarding school life at Enquiring Minds Montessori.

Wait List

Families may be added to a wait list due to limited availability in the program and are accepted into the program on first-come, first-served basis. **Enquiring Minds Montessori** will not charge or collect a fee or deposit for the placement of a child on a Wait List for the admission of an insecure spot.

The Wait List priorities will go to families who currently have a child enrolled at Enquiring Minds, children of Enquiring Minds staff and Alumni, children currently enrolled in London School of Dance - Full Time Program; and then onto the general Wait List on a first-come first-served basis until all available spaces are filled.

When a spot is secure, parents will be advised of the start date that is available by email. A 24 hour grace period will be given to respond to the opening - after this time the space will be revoked. Once the space has been accepted by email, parents/guardian will be liable for all payments from the date of availability, even if the child actually begins attending on a later date. Additionally, at this time Parents/Guardians will be required to sign the contract and pay the 10% deposit.

The Wait List will be made in a transparent manner that maintains privacy and confidentiality of the children on the Wait List. The School Administrator will verbally confirm the position of where a family is on the Wait List. Families may request an official letter from the School Administrator, stating their position on the Wait List.

Waiting Times

Due to unpredictable variables, it is not possible for Enquiring Minds to approximate an entry date at the time of inquiry or joining of the Wait List.

Enquiring Minds encourages the wait-listed families to contact the School Administrator prior to the requested start date indicating whether or not they still wish to maintain their spot on the waiting list.

Enquiring Minds understands that plans and situations may change for families. If a family needs to adjust their original requested start date, they are required to send written notice (letter or email) to the School Administrator prior to the original requested start date. These families will still be subjected to the Wait list priority criteria.

Attendance & Absence

All children require attendance by no later than 9:00 A.M.

Parents/guardians are to contact the School Office at 416-298-9938 or email the School Administrator and/or Head of Class and inform in case the child will be absent and remain at home due to an illness/sickness and/or for other reasons. Please SIGN IN at the School Office, if you are arriving past 9:00 AM.

Family Holidays/Vacation

Any families who are going on a vacation and anticipating absence from the program must notify the School Administrator, in writing or email, prior to taking the time off. Please indicate the exact dates your child will be away and will be returning. According to our Fee Policy, there will be no reduction in child care fees.

Arrival Procedures

Upon the daily arrival, the parent/guardian of the child/student must physically accompany the child/student for drop off to the Learning Space or Playground. At this time, parents/guardians will be asked to SIGN IN - the child/student. Parents/Guardians will be asked not to enter the Learning Space/Playground, instead parents/guardians are asked to knock/wait outside the entry to the Learning Space/Playground until they are greeted. The staff members will mark the child/student present with the time of their arrival on the attendance record and perform a visual daily health check for signs and symptoms of communicable diseases. If the child/student shows obvious signs and/or symptoms of a communicable diseases, the staff may ask you to leave with the child/student to obtain a doctor's note stating that he/she is safe to attend School or remain home. Student arriving after 9:00 will SIGN IN at the School Office.

Arrival (and departure) times are critical transition times for both children and parents/guardians. The separation anxiety your child may be experiencing will be lessened over time. As your child becomes more familiar with the environment and rhythm of the day, he/she will arrive feeling more safe and confident.

Departure Procedures

When picking up your child - during Dismissal times, please proceed to the Learning Space/Playground and wait outside the entry until you are greeted by staff. **Please do not enter the Learning Space or Playground.** At this time, parents/guardians will be asked to SIGN OUT - the child/student. Unless otherwise arranged, children will not be released to any person other than those specified on the admissions forms.

Alternate pick up arrangements must be made by the Initial Contact on the child's/student's registration form, through the School Office only. A signed letter of direction including the name of the alternate pick up person must be received to initiate the release of the child. Further, the alternate pick up person must provide photo ID. This will be copied and filed in the child's/student's file. If this information is not presented, the child will not be released. **The School Office handles all 'special' pick ups.**

Releasing A Child

Enquiring Minds Montessori will not release a child to anyone other than the persons listed under the Authorized Persons to Pick Up List in the Application Form. If you are unable to pick up your child and have alternate arrangements, please contact the School Administrator prior to departure time. A signed letter of direction including the name of the alternate pick up person must be received to initiate the release of the child. Further, the alternate pick up person must provide photo ID. This will be copied and filed in the child's/student's file. If this information is not presented, the child will not be released. **The School Office handles all 'special' pick ups.**

We will not release a child to anyone who is not on the Authorized Persons list. You may add or delete people from this list at any time, however changes must always be made in writing with a signature and date in a letter format - for the safety and security of your child.

It is the policy of Enquiring Minds Montessori to uphold the Family Law. Therefore, we are obliged to release a child to either parent unless we have a copy of Custody papers on file. In the event of one parent not being allowed to pick up a child, please inform the office immediately and the appropriate documentation and instructions for pick up must be given to the child care staff.

Late Pick-Up Policy

We acknowledge that occasionally, unforeseen circumstances may occur causing parents/guardians to arrive after the closing time. **Late fee charge will be applied and parents/guardians will be billed according to their lateness.** Our late fee is designed to encourage parents to arrive on time, and is not intended to be utilized as an extended hours of operation option.

In case of late pick-up, the following will apply:

- There is a late charge fee of \$1.00 per minute.
- Please call School Office before 6:00 P.M., at **416-298-9938** if you are going to be late.
- Waiting for a parent when the other children have left can create stress and anxiety for your child. Please ensure children are picked up on time.
- Each time you are late you will be charged the late fee.

In the event of a late pick up without advance notice from the parent, the following Emergency Procedure will be followed:

6:00pm	Staff will call parent
6:15pm	Staff will call emergency contact (if parents cannot be reached)
7:00pm	Staff will call the Children's Aid Society and notify the police (if all of the above cannot be reached)

Program Developments

Our Programs are re-evaluated on an annual basis. Our TODDLER and CASA Programs are re-evaluated regularly to reflect changes within the *Child Care and Early Years Act (CCEYA, 2014)*. These changes are also dependent on the children's developmental needs, individual needs and the needs of the families, as well as, changes made to the program here at Enquiring Minds

Parents are encouraged to discuss any aspects of the program and/or their child's progress through informal or formal interview/meeting with the their Head of Class and/or School Administrator and/or the School Director. Parent's input into the program is always appreciated and welcomed.

Daily Programs

Enquiring Minds Montessori welcomes the opportunity to nurture and support young children of all ages from Toddler Level to Upper Elementary. The Montessori Learning Spaces are peaceful, happy places designed to meet the developmental needs of each child in every stage of life.

Children move freely throughout the environment, choosing activities that interest them, or working with the teacher, individually, or in small groups. New families are warmly welcomed into our community to mutually support the children's growth and development. Each of the child care programs strive to meet the children in age appropriate ways based on Dr. Montessori's system of education.

The Toddler Learning Space

The Montessori Learning Space for toddlers safely supports your child's drive to do things alone, developing confidence and a sense of competence. The environment is language-rich, with adults using proper nomenclature rather than baby talk so that the children are exposed to and develop a broad vocabulary. A range of books allows children to explore on their own or read aloud with an adult.

In this learning environment, children work independently, observe others, explore freely, and express their curiosity and creativity. A self-care area fosters toilet awareness and independence in maintaining personal hygiene (such as learning how to wipe one's nose and wash hands independently)

Daily Programs cont.

The low tables and chairs enable the child to help prepare, serve, eat and clean up their snacks and meals. The curriculum includes Language, Mathematics, Science, Practical Life, Sensorial, Visual Arts, Music and Movement.

Our TODDLER and Pre-CASA Program is for ages 14 months to 36 months. Our Program begins at 8:15 AM and ends at 4:30 PM.

The CASA Learning Space

At the CASA Level, the child is presented with a calm, orderly prepared environment that cultivates cognitive, physical, social and emotional needs. The carefully prepared environment is designed to take advantage of the child's sensitive years, those times when there is a readiness to learn specific skills. Our rich Learning Spaces are full of hundreds of Montessori materials that facilitate the progression from concrete to abstract learning while gaining confidence and independence. They are designed to put children at ease by giving them freedom in a safe place to socialize, grow, and learn. Children learn from our diverse community and from varied perspectives. From this they develop friendships on commonality and soon become role models demonstrating confidence, respect, leadership skills and tolerance.

The CASA Learning Space provides our children with a greater opportunity to mature their social, ethical, and emotional development with their peers. This stage is essential in enhancing necessary skills for a happy productive adult life.

The CASA Curriculum consists of many learning areas including: Practical Life, Sensorial, Mathematics, Language Arts, Geography, History, Culture, Mandarin (using the AIM program), French - CASA 3 (using the AIM program), Science - Botany and Zoology, Instrumental Music, Vocal, Visual Arts and Movement - Acrobatics, Tap and Ballroom.

Our CASA Program is for ages 3 years old to 6 years old. Our Program begins at 8:15AM and ends at 4:30PM.

The ELEMENTARY Learning Space

Our ELEMENTARY Program is individually catered to each student and is filled with hands on activities that cultivate tenacious learners. The students are welcoming and continue to gain independence by demonstrating care of self, others and their work. Our child centered program allows the student to develop at a tempo that is right for them. Each student's pace and spurts of inspiration is anticipated and further challenged by the teacher. The student is guided and mentored by other children who have mastery of the task and then given the same opportunity to mentor. This process along with the teacher's monitoring and tracking each child's progress not only ensures academic success but mastery in critical milestones.

The program develops a global perspective which nurtures exploration of our natural and social environment, with emphasizing critical thinking, problem solving and research skill development. Students expand their knowledge in a wide range of academic subjects; building on skills and social abilities that they developed in the primary learning spaces. Their interests now soar into all areas of learning, and our Learning Space reflects this exciting new stage of development.

Every student's progress is monitored daily using Transparent Classroom. Teachers set daily, weekly and monthly plans as semester goals. Transparent Classroom allows Parents/Guardians to follow their child's progress. We use many benchmarks to ensure our children are more than ready for the next step. Student's progress is mapped in measurable increments using the challenging expectation goals set by the teachers as they work towards exceeding Ontario Ministry benchmarks. Further, each child is administered a CTBS (Canadian Testing of Basic Skills) and not an EQAO (Education Quality Accountability) test.

Daily Programs cont.

We choose the CTBS testing method because it is Canada wide and uses more international standards. But most importantly it is a fair and equitable assessment as it is marked and scored by a computer. EQAO testing can be subjective as the child's answer is left to the interpreter and is susceptible human error and or emotions.

Great Lessons

Each year, our work in the ELEMENTARY Program begins with five important stories, called the "Great Lessons". These stories dramatize known facts about the universe and the progression of human civilization. Through dramatic stories, experiments, charts, time lines and illustrations we center the students' interests by helping them create a picture of the whole universe at work. From here, our Learning Space opens up to endless possibilities as students follow their own particular interests with a large measure of freedom. This unit of study forms the backbone that integrates our daily curriculum. The Great Lessons are part of what Dr. Montessori called "cosmic education". This is the child's gradual discovery of how all things on earth in the past, present and future are interrelated. Through this work, the students develop a greater global vision of their world.

The ELEMENTARY Curriculum consists of Language, Mathematics, Geometry, History, Geography, Science, Coding and Robotics, Mandarin (using the AIM program), French (using the AIM program), Instrumental Music, Vocal, Visual Arts and Movement - Acrobatics, Tap and Ballroom.

Our ELEMENTARY Program is for ages 6 years old - 12 years old. The students must be 6 years old by December 31 of the Elementary 1 year. Our Program begins at 8:15 AM and ends at 4:30 PM.

Outdoor Play

As required by the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA)* - all children who are attending full day programs are required to have an outdoor play period as a part of the program for at least 2 hours each day, weather permitting, or unless a physician or parent of the child advises otherwise in writing. All children benefit from time spent outside playing and exploring where they are able to connect with the natural world.

Children will be kept indoors on heavy rain days, and in cases of extreme heat or cold. Please ensure your child is provided proper clothing during the winter time. (Snow pants, snow boots, scarf, mittens/gloves, socks, hats, etc.) The playground is inspected daily by the program staff, monthly by the supervisor and yearly by a third party agency. All equipment meets C.S.A standards. Parents must provide sunscreen for their child during the summer.

Anaphylactic Policy

Definition Anaphylaxis: Refers to a serious allergic reaction which can be life-threatening. This allergy may be related to food, insect stings, medicine, latex, etc.

The Anaphylactic Policy is intended to help support the needs of a child/student with a severe allergy and provide information on Anaphylaxis awareness to parents, staff, students and visitors at the School. Upon application and/or registration, parents/guardians must list any/all allergies and their reactions and in case of an Anaphylactic allergy, children must have their allergy medication available at school such as EpiPens or other asthma medications including puffers. Based on the type of allergy indicated in the child's file, special consideration and procedures will be followed to ensure that an allergic reaction is avoided.

Anaphylactic Policy cont.

Strategy to reduce the risk of exposure:

All food allergies and intolerances/sensitivity are posted in every Learning Space, serving areas, the kitchen and any other places which children/students may be present. The allergies are also listed in the Emergency Child Detail Sheet - which are kept in the binder in all Learning Spaces. All staff must review and be aware of the allergies of all children in the School. To reduce the risk of exposure to anaphylactic causative agents that may produce anaphylactic reaction, certain items may not enter the School (i.e. food items containing peanuts/nuts, Shell Fish, latex gloves, etc.) including the child's/student's Learning Space.

Anaphylactic causative agents may include: peanuts, products containing nuts, latex, chemicals, insect bites

In case of medicines that can cause an Anaphylactic reactions such a penicillin, all medications must be prescribed by a doctor with the child's name and the original label, and stored in a locked container to avoid exposure to other children whom the medication is not prescribed.

Enquiring Minds Montessori require two sets of EpiPen to be available for School use. One will be stored in the Learning Space emergency fanny pack worn by the Class Head and the second will be stored and kept in our School's Office. It is parent/guardian's responsibility to provide the school with EpiPen and replace the ones that are expired prior to the expiry date. All School Faculty staff including students and volunteers review the Anaphylactic Action Plan for each child with Anaphylaxis. The Anaphylactic Action Plan is devised with the input of the parent and or child's physician. The parent/guardian must train the Head of Class and School Administrator on the Action Plan. The Head of Class will train the School staff on each child's plan. This plan gets reviewed annually or when notable changes are made.

We do not permit food from home, including home-made baked goods or dishes. Foods that are brought into the School must be from an **"approved source - listing all ingredients clearly on the label and not containing peanut or traces of tree-nuts"**.

Nutrition

Enquiring Minds Montessori is a *Nut-Aware* environment.

Children are served healthy lunches catered by Healthy Kids. Children are served daily, two healthy snacks, morning and afternoon, and a nutritious mid-day meal. Menus are posted on the main Communication Board located beside CASA Learning Space 1. Lunch menus are rotated every month throughout the year and reviewed as needed to meet the appetites and dietary needs/restrictions of the children.

For the safety of the children with allergies, **we do not allow children to bring food of any type** to School. We will not serve or allow parents to bring in any home-made goods. All food served at the School must have all ingredients listed or prepared by a certified/recognized company having Public Health Inspections, and clearly stating "contains no nuts" sign. Any type of cooking, baking or preparation of the morning snacks will be performed by the staff with a valid food handlers certificate. A copy of our menu is available to parents upon request.

Daily Health Check

To ensure and maintain an environment conducive to good health, a Daily Health Check is made by program staff upon the child's arrival. All staff conducting daily health check are to be looking for signs or symptoms of communicable diseases. In case of signs or symptoms of communicable diseases detected, the program staff may ask the parent/guardian to take the child home or advise to see a doctor.

Illness Policy

Once a child begins attending School, and comes in contact with many other children, it is quite common for them to experience sickness. Illnesses tend to decrease as your child builds up immunity. Enquiring Minds Montessori reserves the right to request a Doctor's note prior to a child's return to School in appropriate situations. If your child is away for 5 or more consecutive days, a Doctor's note with a Safe-to-return Date Form OR Doctor's Note, will be expected.

For any child with a fever over **100.4°F (38°C)**, the School will contact the Parents to advise them of the situation. The School will monitor the child for the next hour. If the child's temperature is still over **100.4°F (38°C)**, the School will contact the Parents again and ask to have the child pick up within one hour.

If any child has diarrhea, vomiting, extreme cold symptoms, communicable disease or other obvious illness will be isolated with a staff member until the parent or emergency contact arrives to pick up the child within one hour.

Please ensure that your emergency contact information is kept up to date including all phone numbers. An Illness Report will be filled out by the Head of Class. The parents/ guardians will be required to review the Illness Report, sign acknowledgment of the illness and take a photo of the Report upon release of the child.

Your child must be 24 hours fever, vomiting or diarrhea free (symptom free) before returning to School. If your child returns with the symptoms again, the Head of Class will advise you to keep the child home for 48 hours. If your child is **prescribed antibiotics, the child can return to School 24 hours after the first dose of the medication.** If you feel that your child is unable to participate in the program, both indoors and outdoors (under all kinds of weather), we suggest that you keep them home until they are able to do so. In case of unknown rash, the child will be sent home immediately and a Doctor's note explaining the cause of the rash with the safe-to-return date is required upon the child's return to School.

Please keep your child at home / your child will be sent home if:

- He/she has a fever over 100.4°F (38°C)
- He/she has a heavy nasal discharge and cough (yellow and green in colour)
- He/she has 2 or more cases of diarrhea
- He/she has vomited
- He/she has unknown rash (must come back with Doctor's note stating if the child is safe to come back to School)

Our Illness Policy is developed with guidelines from Toronto Public Health and is designed to protect all children. Your child must be kept home when any of the following occur:

- Fever, Diarrheal Diseases, Scabies, Pneumonia
- Pink Eye, Ringworm, Pinworms, Strep Throat, Norwalk, Fifth Disease, Hand, Foot & Mouth Disease
- Impetigo, vomiting
- Head lice
- Chicken Pox/Measles/Mumps/Whooping Cough/Rubella/ Hep A

Enquiring Minds Montessori follows the guidelines set out by Toronto Public Health regarding procedures for all communicable diseases that may arise periodically. **Enquiring Minds Montessori reserves the right to request a Safe-to-return Date Form OR a Doctor's note, if the child has been away due to an illness for 5 consecutive days or showing symptoms of a reportable/communicable disease.** Please remember we require all children's attendance by no later than 9:00 A.M. In case of absence due to an illness, please contact the Class Head or School Administrator.

Administration of Medication

Only the School Administrator or the Head of Class from each room of the School will administer medication to a child if a Physician prescribes the medication. **The Head of Class is in charge of overseeing all drugs and medication administration.** The medication must be in its original container, as supplied by the Pharmacist with the child's name, the name of the medication, the dosage, duration period, the date of purchase, and instructions for storage and administration clearly labelled. Be assured that medication is stored in a locked box out of the reach of children at all times or refrigerated if required.

We require you to fill the Medication Administration Authorization Form giving us permission to administer the medication at the scheduled times with given dosages. Any reactions the child may have to the medication (that would result in the discontinuation of the medication) must be listed by the parents/guardians on the authorization form. Staff must check that the parents written instructions match any instructions printed on the original container and for expiry dates. Any accidental administration of medication must be recorded and reported to the School, who must then notify a parent of the child and complete a serious occurrence report.

The staff of Enquiring Minds Montessori are not authorized to administer over the counter, non-prescription drugs- such as children's Tylenol, Advil etc., without a note from the Doctor and a medication form signed by the parent/guardian.

If a child has a contagious disease, we will notify you immediately. A Doctor's note will be required before the child with contagious disease will be able to return to the child care.

Individualized Plans for Children with Medical Needs

If a child has an Anaphylactic allergy or a condition that requires medical attention, an individualized plan for children with medical needs will be developed with input from the child's parent/guardian, and the child's physician that includes emergency procedures in respect of the child. Training from a physician or a parent/guardian must be provided to staff (School Administrator and Head of Class) on the procedures to be followed in the event of a child having an Anaphylactic reaction. (Please note all program staff have been trained in Standard First Aid & CPR level C).

All individualized plans must be reviewed and trained with staff, volunteers, and students who are working with the children in the School by the Head of Class. The review of the plan will be made upon the admission of the child to the program and annually thereafter, with staff signing off on each review. The review/training record will be kept in the child's file, and the copy of the individualized plans will be kept in Learning Space Binder for the Program staff.

Injury Reports - Medical Incident Report

Despite close supervision, accidents may occur. If your child is injured at the School, staff will provide immediate first aid. If the situation requires attention beyond basic first aid, we will contact the parent/guardian or the emergency contact person on file. If the parent/guardian/authorized emergency persons cannot be reached, an ambulance (EMS) will be called. The Parent/guardian is responsible for the ambulance fee. If your child experiences a head injury, you will be contacted.

Staff will provide you with a Medical Incident report documenting the accident or injury. A parent/guardian signature is required at the bottom of the form to verify that you were informed of the accident/injury. Parents/guardians are required to take a picture copy of the report.

If your child has an accident or injury at home, please inform the staff when you drop off your child the following day, so we are aware of the incident.

Incident Reports

Any incidents that involves children that raise alarms or concerns for the safety of other children, staff and the child him/herself (whether Behavioural or Medical), or poses a direct negative impact on the Learning Space programming will be recorded. The staff who witnessed the incident will make a written record and submit to the Head of Class for review. Parents/Guardians will be advised accordingly. Parents/Guardians are advised to take a photo copy of the reports.

Smoke-Free

In compliance with the Smoke Free Ontario Act, smoking or the holding of lit tobacco is strictly prohibited in, around and on the school site at all times, whether children are present or not. This includes the parking area and parent/guardians and their guests are asked to refrain from extinguishing and discarding tobacco on the pavement.

Serious Occurrences Notification Posting

Effective November 1, 2011, the Ontario Government introduced a new policy that requires all licensed child care centres to post information about serious occurrences that happen at School. To support increased transparency and access to information, a 'Serious Occurrence Notification Form' must be posted on the Main Communication Board, to be viewed by the parents for 10 business days, within 24 hours of the occurrence.

The Serious Occurrence Notification Form is updated as the Licensee takes additional actions or investigations are completed. The Serious Notification Form is posted for a minimum of 10 business days- and the updated form remains posted for 10 business days from the last update. The Serious Occurrence Notification Form will maintain confidentiality of the parties involved.

The forms will be kept on file for at least 3 years from the date of occurrence, and will be available to current or prospective parents, licensing and municipal children's services staff upon request. Please speak with the School Administrator for more details.

Children's Rest Period

As required under the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA) we provide TODDLERS and CASA children a rest period, in which all children are required to have no more than 2 hours of rest. Our rest period is from 12:30 P.M. to 2:30 P.M. daily. Staff monitors will sit with the children, sing, or comfort them as needed until children fall asleep to ensure a rich sleep experience. Children who are not able to sleep are able to engage in quiet activities in the second half of the rest time in a manner so that the sleeping children are not disrupted. Cots, sheets and blankets are provided by the School. Bedding is laundered daily.

Clothing and Personal Belongings

Please ensure that all your child's belonging have been labelled with their name and last initial. We suggest Mabel's labels. Inquire at the School office for more info. Please also provide us with everything your child requires on a daily basis. This should include diapers, diaper cream, indoor clothing to include an extra pair of underwear, sock or tights and an extra pair of pants or skirt. Outdoor wear should include hats, mitts and scarves as well as sun screen. Unfortunately we are unable to accept soothers, bottles, stuffed toys and blankets.

Child Guidance & Prohibited Practices

We practice positive child guidance strategies. The most effective means of producing more appropriate behaviour is through modeling, explanations, redirection, and presenting alternatives. Some other guidance strategies will include gently inviting the child closer to the proximity of the educator, or perhaps holding the child's hand at his or her request. A child struggling with self-regulation may feel calmer sitting closer to the educator the child had established connection and trust with. Gentle verbal cues can also be used but often may not be necessary. However if used, educators focus on the desirable, positive behaviours, not pointing out and addressing the undesirable behaviour. Our focus is to bring the children to a level at which they understand their own individual needs and are able to express emotions and direct themselves appropriately.

Child Guidance Strategies used by Enquiring Minds Educators and support staff:

- *Present Positive Reinforcement Redirect:* If the behaviour continues, the staff shall redirect the child/student to an alternate activity.
- *Resolve/Reason:* In an appropriate voice, explain in simple language the inappropriateness of the behaviour displayed.
- *Natural Consequences:* Create an opportunity for problem-solving with follow through with natural consequences.
- *Do Not Reward Inappropriate Behaviour*
- *Remove:* If the behaviour continues, the child/student shall be removed from the situation for a limited supervised period. The time that they are removed depends on the age of the child. Removing a child/student and using "Quiet Time" as a time of reflection.

At Enquiring Minds Montessori employees, students, volunteers or anyone interacting with children are prohibited from the following practices under the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014*:

1. Corporal punishment (physical punishment such as hitting, spanking, kicking, heavy pushing, shoving, grabbing, squeezing arms, ears, etc.);
2. Physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a high chair, car seat, stroller or other device for the purposes of discipline or in lieu of supervision, unless the physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing a child from hurting himself, herself, or someone else, and is used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent;
3. Locking the exits of the Centre for the purpose of confining the child, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is required as part of the licensee's Emergency Management policies and procedures or using a locked or lockable room or structure to confine the child if he or she has been separated from other children;
4. Use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or use of derogatory language directed at or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame or frighten the child or undermine his or her self-respect, dignity or self-worth;
5. Depriving the child of basic needs (i.e. food, drink, shelter, clothing, toilet use, sleep and bedding). Food should not be used to discipline children at lunch or snack time; and/or
6. Inflicting any bodily harm on children, including making children eat or drink against their will.

The consequences of engaging in a prohibited policy are outlined in the Enquiring Minds Montessori Serious Occurrence Policy. Corporal punishment and other harmful disciplinary practices are forbidden in order to protect the emotional and physical well-being of children. These practices are never permitted. Children benefit from an affirming approach that encourages positive interactions with other children and with adults, rather than from a negative or punitive approach to managing unwanted behavior.

Discharge Policy

The purpose of the Discharge Policy is to provide a procedure to terminate services where the enrollment of a child/student in a Program is no longer supporting the child/student, the student body and the staff. It is the policy of Enquiring Minds Montessori to make every effort to serve all the children and their families. We work collaboratively with parents, staff and various community partners/ support organizations to meet the individual needs of every child. For a child/student who is undergoing any behaviour changes and or challenges that may require additional support from staff, administration and/or outside agencies for the health, well-being and safety of the child; we will endeavour to assist parents/guardians to find appropriate solutions to resolve issues. Support and guidance through this process may be provided by the Head of Class and/or School Administrator, as well as, the Director. **Where a child's/student's needs are considered more than the School is normally able to offer, it is understood that it is the Parents'/Guardians' responsibility to arrange and meet the cost of extra lessons.** In the event a child is experiencing challenges that may pose a direct threat to the safety of self and/or others, the parent/guardian may be required to withdraw the child from the program. **In this situation the tuition portion of the fees would be refunded upon termination of services.**

The following procedure will be followed when a child's behaviour becomes a safety issue:

1. The initial interview will be an informal meeting between the parent(s)/guardian(s) and Head of Class. At this meeting, parent(s)/guardian(s) will have the opportunity to review any Incident Reports made regarding the child, highlighting the child's social behaviour(s), concerns or threats to safety observed.
2. Support of Therapist may be requested by the Head of Class and/or Director (parental consent required).

In most cases, the above steps will be sufficient. If not, the following course of action will be followed:

1. Written notice for a conference to take place with the Head of Class, Learning Space staff and School Administrator. An Individual Support Plan (ISP) will be developed so that all parties are consistent with the strategies that need to be put in place. The type of supports needed will be determined at this time.
2. The parent/guardians may be asked to provide 'on-call' support or removal of the child from the Learning Space when safety is in question. An Individual Support Plan (ISP) will be developed in order to plan for the child to return to the program.
3. Should the child's needs be deemed by the Head of Class, School Administrator, Director and/or the parent to be beyond the expertise of the staff, recommendation will be made in writing for the parent(s)/guardian(s) to withdraw their child and to enroll the child in an alternate facility where his/her needs may be better addressed.
4. Whenever possible, the parent/guardian will be given sufficient notice to make alternate arrangements. However, in the event that a child's individual needs or behaviour pose a serious threat to the safety of self, and/or others, the parent may be required to immediately withdraw the child from the school at the Director's written request. Depending on the circumstance/situation, Enquiring Minds Montessori will determine the withdrawal date/termination of service date.

Reporting Abuse or Suspected Abuse

Duty to Report

Everyone including parents/guardians of the children enrolled in Enquiring Minds Montessori, are obligated by law to report suspicions and information that a child is suffering or may have suffered abuse to the Children's Aid Society.

If there are reasonable grounds to suspect abuse or neglect, a CAS member can be contacted at 416-924-4646.

Conflict of Interest & Confidentiality/ Non-disclosure

All of our program staff are expected to maintain professionalism within their practices, as well as in relationships with families and children/students of the School, at all times. Staff are prohibited from sharing their personal contact details such as cell phone numbers and emails, to parents/guardians for the purpose of keeping in contact during the Program hours.

Please call the School directly at 416-298-9938 (School Administrator) or email us at: enquiringminds@studio24.com.bz for general inquiries and communication. Otherwise, please email your Head of Class for class communication and CC the School Administrator in the email.

All forms and verbal information regarding our children/students, their families and staff are confidential. Enquiring Minds Montessori and staff cannot disclose any names in the case of an incident between the children, this includes class list. This information must remain in confidence to protect all parties involved.

Further, it is against the School's Code of Conduct and Professionalism Policy for staff to interact/socialize with client parents/guardians and students outside of the School. Any exceptions would require the approval of the School Director.

Supervision of Volunteers & Students

- No child is supervised by a person under 18 years of age.
- Only staff will have direct unsupervised access to children.
- Volunteers and students may not be counted in the staffing ratios.
- Program Statement & Program Statement Implementation Policy, Sanitary Practices Policies, Health and Safety Policies, Fire Safety Policies and Procedures, Anaphylaxis Policy, Behaviour Management Policies, Emergency Protocol, Individualized Plans for Children with Medical Needs, Serious Occurrence Policy, Playground Policy and Guidelines, Volunteer and Students Policy will be reviewed and signed off by the volunteer/student during the mandatory orientation prior to working with the children, and at least annually thereafter.
- Criminal Reference Checks (Vulnerable Sector Screening Check) is required for all volunteers having direct contact with children in the School Programs.
- Parents will be informed if a student has been placed in your child's Learning Space.

Emergency Management

Enquiring Minds Montessori has policies and procedures for various emergency situations including: Fire, Lock Down, Hold & Secure, Bomb Threat, Power Failure, Gas Leak, Tornado, Earthquake, etc. Detailed Fire and Emergency Evacuation plans are in place and posted in all Learning Spaces and a copy made available for every Learning Space Binder.

Our policy is to ensure the health and safety of all children and adults during a situation where immediate action is required. The policy is reviewed with all staff, students and volunteers before they begin interacting with children and annually thereafter. Fire Drills are practiced on a monthly basis. If an emergency situation arises, parents and families will be contacted by phone as soon as the immediate threat has been addressed.

Staff will ensure that the children are kept safe, are accounted for and are supervised at all times during an emergency situation. All directions given by the EMS personnel will be followed, including directions to evacuate to locations different than listed below.

Emergency Management

Emergency Evacuation

In the event of an emergency, parents/guardians will be contacted. If we are unable to contact the parents/guardians, the name given as an emergency contact will be called. In the event of an emergency evacuation procedure, Enquiring Minds Montessori will each go to the their designated emergency evacuation point:

EMERGENCY LOCATION 1	EMERGENCY LOCATION 2
<p style="text-align: center;">Tim Horton's Restaurant 1 William Kitchen Road, Scarborough ON M1P 5B7 416-293-1010</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">McDonald's Restaurant 2021 Kennedy Road, Scarborough ON M1P 2M1 416-335-8853</p>

Emergency Closures- Snow Days & Storms/Extreme Weather

Every attempt will be made to operate as usual on storm days. In the event of a storm developing in the middle of the day, in the best interest of the children and their safety, parents will be contacted to pick up in a timely manner (within an hour). This will allow all children and all staff to get home safely.

Enquiring Minds Montessori adheres to the same snow days closure policies and procedures as the TDSB.

When the School is closed due to inclement weather conditions, all other events in the school scheduled that day are canceled as well. A 'snow day' decision is not made lightly, knowing the difficulty parents face to find proper childcare for their children on such short notice. We understand the impact school closures have on families where both parents are working outside the home. However, it is a safety concern for children, parents and staff when driving may become risky, and that is when a 'snow day' is announced.

The decision to close the School facility will be determined by 7:00 A.M. All parents and staff are sent an email regarding the closure. In the case of a Snow Day or closure due to inclement weather, the School will not be offering any reimbursements of fees.

Power Outages

Enquiring Minds Montessori will not open if there is no power. If there is a power outage prior to the service hour (7:30 A.M.), the local power supplier will be contacted to see how long before power can be restored. If power is not going to be restored within one hour or said to be unknown, the School will not open for that day. All families will be notified about the closure due to a power outage by phone or email.

If there is a power outage during operating hours, it will be categorized as either, a short-term or a long-term power outage. A Short-term power outage is considered to be less than 2 hours, while a long-term power outage is deemed as 2 hours or more. In the case of a short-term power outage, depending on the time, routine and programming needs of the day, the School may open for a full day of operation. However, basic access to clean water, toileting, temperature and food/snacks have to be available, and children's safety will be considered as first priority in the decision making process of keeping the School open or closed for the day.

In case of long-term power outages expected to last for more than 2 hours, the School will announce an early closure. Parents/guardians will be contacted via email and/or phone to pick up the children within an hour or less. If the parent cannot be reached, the emergency person listed will be contacted. In the case of an emergency closure, the School will not be offering any reimbursements of fees.

Emergency Management cont.

Fire Drill & Lock Down

Fire Drills are conducted monthly and Lock Down drills are annually in accordance with the guidelines set out by the local Fire Chief. Children are assured of their safety and handled with care. Fire Drills are not always announced and a complete evacuation of the building is required.

Parent Involvement

Parents and Faculty staff members work together to support the growth and development of the children in our Programs. Parents are encouraged to attend Parent Workshops and Lecture, Assemblies, Presentations and Celebrations.

Parent Workshops are held throughout the year and provide enrichment opportunities in Montessori learning as well as opportunities to discuss parenting issues and challenges. These are an integral part of the program and one or both parents are invited to attend.

Parent Issues & Concerns

Enquiring Minds Montessori works closely with families and educators as role models reflecting warmth, consideration and respectfulness. It is our aim to provide an atmosphere in which children and families feel comfortable and are engaged in ongoing communication about the program and their child(ren). Enquiring Minds values differences in beliefs and opinions. Despite our best efforts, parent issues and concerns may arise and any issues or concerns brought forward are taken seriously. If families have any issues or concerns, they may address them with the Head of Class or a School Administrator, verbally or in writing. Enquiring Minds will attend to the issue or concern at the time it is raised or arrange a meeting with parents within five business days. We will work together to address the issue and concern to come to a resolution.

All issues and concerns will be dealt with in a confidential manner and every effort will be made to protect the privacy of parents/guardians, children, staff, students, and volunteers, except when information must be disclosed for legal reasons (e.g. to the Ministry of Education, College of Early Childhood Educators, law enforcement authorities or a Children's Aid Society). Harassment and discrimination will not be tolerated from any party. Investigations of issues and concerns will be fair, impartial and respectful to all parties involved. Where parents/guardians are not satisfied with the response or outcome of an issue or concern by the Head of Class or School Administrator, they may raise the issue or concern verbally or in writing to the School Director.

Nature of Issue of Concern	Steps for Parent and/or Guardian to Report Issue/Concern
<p>Program Related & Student/Volunteer- Related Eg: Daily schedule, sleep arrangements, toilet training, indoor/ outdoor program activities, feeding arrangements, child conflicts etc.</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to - the Head of Class and/or - the School Administrator; if the Head of Class is not able to successfully address concerns</p>
<p>General or Operations Related Eg: child care fees, hours of operations, staffing, menus, etc. School Administrator enquiringminds@studio24.com.bz 416-298-9938 School Director - Kristen Hamilton kehamilton1@gmail.com 416-298-9938</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to - the School Administrator or Director Administrator</p> <p>All issues or concerns about the conduct of students and/or volunteers that puts a child's health, safety, and well-being at risk should be reported to the Head of Class as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.</p>

Parent Issues & Concerns

Nature of Issue of Concern	Steps for Parent and/or Guardian to Report Issue/Concern
<p>Staff conduct / Head of Class / School Administrator - Conduct Related School Director - Kristen Hamilton kehamilton1@gmail.com 416-298-9938</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the individual directly and/or - the School Administrator - the Director <p>All issues or concerns about the conduct of staff etc. that puts a child's health, safety, and well-being at risk should be reported to the Director as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.</p>
<p><u>Steps for Staff and/or Licensee in Responding to issue/ concerns</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - address the issue/concern at the time it is raised Or - Arrange for a meeting with the parents/guardian within 24 hours. <p>Document the issue/ concerns in detail. Documentation should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the date and times the issue/concern was received; - the name of the person who received the issue/concern. - the name of the person reporting the issue/concern. - the details of the issue/concern; and - any steps taken to resolve the issue/concern and/or information given to the parent/guardian regarding next steps or referral. <p>Provide contact information for the appropriate person if the person being notified is unable to address the matter.</p> <p>Ensure the investigation of the issue/concern is initiated by the appropriate party within 24 hours or as soon as reasonably possible thereafter. Document reasons for delays in writings.</p> <p>Provide a resolution or outcome to the parent(s)/ guardian(s) who raised the issue/concern.</p>
<p>Issues or concerns related to compliance with requirements set out in the CCEYA, 2014 and Ontario Regulation 137/15 should be reported to the Ministry of Education's Child Care Quality Assurance and Licensing Branch;</p>	<p>Ministry of Education, Licensing Child Care Help Desk Childcare_ontario@ontario.ca 1-800-510-5333</p>
<p>Issues/concerns may be reported to other relevant regulatory bodies (local Public Health Department, Ministry of Environment, Ministry or Labour, Fire Department, College of ECE, Ontario College of Teachers, College of Social Worker Etc.)</p>	<p>Contact relevant regulatory bodies. e.g) <i>Toronto Public Health</i> <i>College of Early Childhood Educators</i> <i>Ministry of Labour</i> <i>Ministry of Environment</i></p>

Fees

Payment Options

Refer to the individual Tuition Forms for each Program.

NSF

Parents/Guardians will be charged \$25.00 processing fee for NSF or declined payments.

Refunds

Fees will **not** be refunded for Statutory, Civic Holidays, Emergency Closures, Professional Activity Days, Professional Development Days or any absent days due to vacation or illness.

Tuition and Student Fees are reviewed annually and are subject to change each year (effective September 1st)

Withdrawal Policy

Withdrawal Policy

All withdrawals require written notice to the School Administrator.

If written notice of withdrawal is received:

- Before the 60th calendar day after the student's start date and the student's last day of school is before the 60th calendar day, then 35% of the annual School Fees is due. The application fee is non-refundable.
- After the 60th calendar day and before 120th calendar day after the student's start date and the student's last day of school is before the 120th calendar day, then 60% of the annual School Fees is due. The application fee is non-refundable.
- After the 120th calendar day after the student started school, then 100% of the School Fees is due. The application fee is non-refundable.

Please note that calendar days include all holidays and weekends.

When a child is enrolled with Enquiring minds Montessori, a place is held for the full school year. No adjustment in School Fees will be made for short term absences. Families must notify the enrollment office in writing of their intent to withdraw prior to the student's last day of attendance. Refund claims are calculated based on the student's last day of attendance. However, if the enrollment office is notified of a withdrawal after the student's last day of attendance, School Fees charges will continue until notice is received.

***School Fees (includes Tuition, Extended Care, Student Fees, Lunch Program, Equipment Rental, Exam Fees and applicable taxes)**

COVID-19 Policy and Procedure

Please refer to the COVID-19 Supplemental Handbook for a detailed outline of our policies and procedures regarding COVID-19 practices.

Enquiring Minds Montessori PARENT HANDBOOK POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

PLEASE DETACH AND SUBMIT THIS ACKNOWLEDGEMENT PAGE TO THE SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR

This is to verify that I have read, understood and agree to abide by the policies and procedure as outlined in the Enquiring Minds Montessori Parent Handbook 2020 - 2021

Child's First & Last Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Parent/Guardian's Signature: _____

Signed Date: _____

For Office Only:

Received Date:

Signature:

