

Montessori School of Cheyenne Parent Handbook

"Where small folks do great things!"

FEE SCHEDULE

TODDLER PROGRAM (Full Day Only-14 mos.-3)

5 full days Aug. 23, 2011- August TBD, 2012

\$710 per month

PRIMARY PROGRAM (ages 3-6)

5 full days Aug. 23, 2011- August TBD, 2012

\$665 per month

5 half days Aug. 23, 2011- August TBD, 2012

\$565 per month

This includes a monthly supply fee, which offsets the purchases of everyday supplies that the school needs.

ALL TUITION IS DUE ON THE FIRST OF EACH MONTH. If tuition is not paid by the 10th of each month (unless prior arrangements have been made with the Director), a \$25.00 late fee will be assessed. Questions regarding tuition should be addressed to the Director or Assistant Director. Tuition is subject to change per Board resolution and notification of parents.

ACADEMIC YEAR 2011-2012 CALENDAR

Our school is open year round. Changes to the following school calendar will be posted on the front door.

2011

August 18th, 19th, and 22nd-Closed for Teacher work days

August 23rd-First day of classes

September 5th-Closed for Labor Day

November 24th and 25th-Closed for Thanksgiving

December 22nd and 23rd- Closed for Christmas

December 29th and 30th- Closed for New Year

2012

January 16th-Closed for Martin Luther King Day

April 2-6th-Spring Break; Alternate activities available

May 28th-Closed for Memorial Day

May 30th- Last day of classes

May 31st and June 1st-Closed for teacher work days

June 4th-First day of summer session

July 4th-Closed for Independence Day

July 25th-Closed at Noon for Cheyenne Day

August-TBD

PHILOSOPHY/MISSION STATEMENT

Montessori School of Cheyenne nurtures each child in a loving, caring, and enriched environment. We teach the child to respect others, nature, and themselves; while developing an internal love for learning. We are a community of children, parents, families, and highly qualified staff united by the Montessori philosophy which supports open communication, trust, and support.

Our philosophy follows the teachings of Dr. Maria Montessori. The child is an independent spirit that is to be nurtured and respected. Each child should be allowed to develop in his or her own way using the Montessori materials. The teacher's job is to guide and encourage; presenting lessons but leaving the child free to explore and experience life. The teacher provides a safe, beautiful, and stimulating environment.

SCHOOL HOURS

MSC hours are 6:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. (M-F) Half-day sessions are 6:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. or 11:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Children attending in the morning are requested to be **at school by 8:30 a.m.** This ensures that they will be in class for any group lessons presented and quality time spent with the Montessori materials.

A \$10.00 late pickup fee will be charged for every fifteen (15) minute interval after 1:00 or 5:30 p.m. that a parent has not picked up their child.

Parents are always welcome to visit the school to observe their children. There are two-way mirrors looking into each classroom so that you can observe without your child seeing you.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance records are kept on all children. There is no refund for children who are ill, for absences, or for vacations. Please notify MSC if your child will be absent, arriving late, or needs to be picked up for an appointment.

Requirements and Rules

Families may choose to participate in fundraising and work day or opt out using one of our package options. Please see the enrollment packet for more information.

Fundraising/Parent Work Day Requirements

As a not-for-profit, the school is funded by tuition and fundraising. We rely on families to help us in a variety of ways. Parents are asked to do volunteer work at the school; and each family is asked to do 4 hours of work per school year. Work options will be posted by the inside front door. If you have special abilities or talents, please notify the Director. If you are unable to participate, you will be assessed a fee of \$200. Please remember that your time and talents are more valuable to us!

MSC also has a fundraising requirement per child. Goal amount is based on the % that the school receives, not retail sold. There will be a minimum of four fundraisers per year. The annual Silent Auction does not count towards each family's requirement.

\$250 per school year for the first child

\$75 per year for each additional child

\$75 for children attending summer camp

Families may choose to participate in fundraising and work day or opt out using one of our package options.

Package A-opt out of fundraising and work day; pay \$450 in September

Package B- opt out of fundraising; pay \$25 monthly

(Averaging out to \$300)

Participate in work day equaling 4 hours

Package C- Participate in fundraising \$250 and work day equaling 4 hours

MSC also participates in the following year-round fundraisers:

- Box Tops for Education
- Recycle for the Rainforest
- Domino's Pizza Nights

These do not count towards requirement!

PARENT HELP IN THE CLASSROOM

Classroom teachers can always use help with their class. We encourage parents to become involved as volunteers. This also counts towards your parent work day hours. Please check with your child's head teacher.

ADMISSION

The Director or Board of Directors reserves the right to deny admission of any child to the Montessori School of Cheyenne.

TERMINATION OF ENROLLMENT

The Director or Board of Directors reserves the right to withdraw a child's placement in the school. In the event a child's placement is terminated prior to the end of the month, the balance of the month's tuition shall be returned. In the event the family decides to leave the school, we require a two week notice (or no balance will be returned).

Should tuition payment become over-due into the next month, your child will forfeit their enrollment spot. Your account will then be turned over to a Collection Agency and the parent or guardian whose signature appears on the contract will be responsible for all collection and/or attorney fees.

RELEASE OF CHILDREN

Please note that we can only release children to authorized parties on your child's record form. We require notice in advance if an unauthorized party is to pick up your child. Please remember that we also require identification if someone new is allowed to pick up your child.

PARENT EDUCATION

We offer a variety of parent education workshops, trainings, and materials. We highly recommend that you attend any workshops we offer. Child care is usually provided. Please check the front door for dates and times.

There is always an Orientation meeting for new families at the beginning of the Fall semester. **We require all new parents to attend!** There is also a Kindergarten meeting in early spring for those considering what to do for their child's Kindergarten year.

PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Parent-Teacher conferences will be held once a year. During these conferences, the child's progress will be discussed. Parents and teachers should remain in contact at other times as concerns and questions arise.

DISCRIMINATION

In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.)

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, Room 326-W Whitten Building, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC, 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice or TDD). USDA is an equal opportunity employer.

STAFF/BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Our staff is well trained and has been selected because of the Director's belief that they can provide a quality learning environment for our children. If you are concerned by the actions or behavior of a staff member, the Director should be notified. A list of current staff members, Director, and Board of Directors is available at the school. The members of the Board of Directors are parents and are elected by the parents of children attending MSC.

SUNSCREEN

Parents should apply an appropriate waterproof sunscreen to their children before school. The staff will reapply throughout the day as needed.

EXTRA CLOTHES

Please keep an extra change of clothes, labeled with your child's name, at school at all times. Accidents do happen and your child will feel more comfortable if he/she has his/her own clothes to change into.

***We ask that girls wear shorts under dresses so they are covered and modest while sitting cross-legged and playing on the playground.**

FIELD TRIPS

The school attempts to offer out-of-school field trips. These trips expand your child's experiences and provide a welcome addition to in-school learning. Since we realize that children mature at different rates, the staff will determine which children are of an appropriate behavior level to attend field trips. Parents may be asked to attend field trips and provide supervision for their children. Occasionally, there may be an admission charge or other cost for a field trip not included in your child's tuition.

Guidelines, Tips, and Information

LUNCH GUIDELINES

Each family will provide lunch for their own child(ren). We will provide an A.M. & P.M. snack and milk at lunch. Please follow these guidelines:

- Provide a lunch box or bag with child's name written on it.
- Include a frozen cold pack in the lunch. (We will not be storing lunches in the school refrigerator).
- As we are encouraging healthy, nutritious lunches, we ask that **no candy, no sweets, and no drinks** be sent in lunches. We will provide milk or water at lunch.
- Please send small servings of a variety of foods. Can use small plastic containers or baggies and thermos bottles for warm food. Example: ½ sandwich, fresh fruit, fresh veggies, and yogurt. Occasionally, leftovers from last night's supper, such as a small piece of meat or mac & cheese, a small salad and fruit cup.

***We will microwave food as needed. Pyrex glass is the best choice for microwaving.

DONATIONS

A list of needed items will be posted. Before getting rid of items, please check with our staff to see if it might be a treasure for our school.

SUGGESTED DONATIONS

On a regular basis, we will post items which are in particular demand at the school, in hopes that parents will donate these items and help our budget a bit.

The following items are ALWAYS in demand and we would appreciate them at any time!

Bleach
Paper towels
Toilet paper
Kleenex
Dish soap
White washcloths
Band-aids

REST AND GOOD DIET

Rest and proper diet are very important for your child. Our staff can provide suggestions in these areas, if necessary. Children need a good breakfast to do their best work.

NAPPERS

We ask that nappers bring a blanket, pillow, or nap roll to sleep on. Please put your child's name on each item. These items will be in each child's classroom on Friday to be taken home for washing. It is important that weekly washing be done in hot water with liquid bleach.

Your child will nap in the early afternoon until the staff and the parents determine that the child can maintain in our program without a nap. This is a very individual matter and, therefore, we do not determine the need to nap just by the child's age.

SNOW DAYS

Inclement weather/ "Snow Days" are those days when Laramie County schools and/or government offices are closed. The final decision to open or close the school will rest with the Director and/or the Board of Directors and will be based on the ability of staff to safely get to and from the school. Parents should be aware that even if the school is open, staffing and programming may be seriously limited and, therefore, we request that parents who are home from work voluntarily keep their children home, if possible.

Additionally, the opening of the school may be delayed if roads are such as to delay the staff's arrival. Closures of the school will be announced on CBS channel 5 and 1240 AM. No refunds will be given for days or portion of days when the school is closed due to inclement weather. If schools and offices close early due to weather, parents are asked to pick up their children as soon as possible so that our staff and children can get home safely.

TORNADO/EMERGENCY SHELTER

In the event of a tornado, the staff will take emergency precautions and the children will be safely placed in our middle room which is the safest area of our building. We will be constantly informed using the weather radios.

We also practice monthly fire drills. In the event of a fire or any other emergencies, please refer to your Disaster handbook for our school procedures.

BIRTHDAYS

We celebrate birthdays with a simple Montessori ceremony. The month of your child's birthday, we will send a letter to you about treats, pictures, etc. for your child's celebration. If you are having a party for your child, we ask you to mail all invitations and thank you notes. This will help to eliminate hurt feelings for those not included in the party.

ROSTER

A complete list of addresses, phone numbers and e-mail addresses of the parents/children will be available for each family in the fall. If you do not wish to have any or part of your information included, please let us know immediately and we will not include it.

COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

If you have any concerns or complaints, please see the Director immediately. We will make every effort to solve any problems. If needed, you may also wish to speak to a member of the Board of Directors.

CHILD ABUSE/NEGLECT

As a childcare provider, we are obligated by law to recognize and report any evidence of child abuse of any kind.

GUM/POP/CANDY AND GUNS

Children may not bring toy guns, pop, candy, or gum to school. We discourage your child bringing other toys to school because we cannot be responsible for loss or damage to these treasures.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Our Board is the governing and policy making body of the school, together with the Director and the Assistant Director. These elected members establish the school's long range planning, oversee operations, approve the annual budget, provide support to school projects, and provide support to the staff. All Board meeting information will be posted on the front door prior to meetings and all parents are invited and encouraged to attend. Elections for open Board positions will be held at the Annual Parent Meeting in the fall.

PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATION

Our school does not take the place of the parent, but continues the work done by the parent. The goal of both the parent and the staff is to give our children the ability to be happy, useful human beings.

Our staff strives to guide the children in as gentle a manner as possible, hoping that our children will mimic this gentle behavior. Our staff is available to suggest parent follow through at home to continue this more gentle form of discipline. When used consistently at home and school, this often can lead to a child who wishes to be well-behaved and who responds to non-violent guidance. Respect for all is so vitally important.

In turn, we ask that parents be respectful to the children and the staff during class time. Please observe that if the Head Teacher is giving a lesson to a child when you bring your child into the classroom, please do not interrupt. Please refer to the Assistant or leave a message with the Director.

We request that parents limit calls to staff during class hours to a minimum so our staff may be available in the classroom. Our staff will be happy to set up time for phone or in-person consultations during non-class time.

Please also note that our children's resting/nap time is from 1:00-3:00 and we ask that visitations be limited during this time.

Sick Child and Behavior Policies

While we make every effort to keep the children safe through supervision, minor injuries are inevitable. Minor "boo-boos" will be taken care of at school and an accident report filled out. Please sign the form, and we will keep them in your child's file.

If an injury requires immediate attention, we will call 911 and you will be notified immediately. If necessary, your child will be taken to the nearest hospital. If you can't be reached, we will contact the emergency contact person listed on your child's information form. Please note that all of the staff is certified in Infant/Child CPR and First Aid.

We provide a well-child program! For the safety and protection of all the children in our care, we follow recommendations of the American Academy of Pediatrics. We request that you not place your child in our care if they display any of the following symptoms:

- a. Fever in the last 24 hours
- b. Diarrhea or vomiting in the last 24 hours
- c. Pink Eye or other Eye Infections
- d. Severe Sore throat (other than allergy related)
- e. Colored nasal discharge
- f. Skin rashes other than diaper rash
- g. Lice
- h. Any communicable diseases

Children are required to remain out of school for the standard suggested time for all contagious illnesses (24 hours from beginning an antibiotic, or 24 hours without a fever). Additionally, we are not medically staffed and, therefore, do not have staff to clean up small children with severe diarrhea or vomiting, even if it is of non-contagious origins, or to care for convalescing children.

If you suspect your child may have strep throat, contact your physician or the City/County Health Unit for a throat culture. Please see the Sick Child Policy section.

SICK CHILD POLICY

The following are excluded from care:

1. Any child who cannot participate in a regular child care program due to discomfort, injury, or other symptoms of illness may be refused care by the provider.
2. A facility serving well children may not admit a child who has the illness/symptoms specified below:
 - a. Diarrhea, when it is:

- Due to disease spread by fecal contamination or when the child is under the care of a physician
 - Accompanied by evidence of dehydration or fluid loss, identified by sunken eyes or poor skin elasticity
 - Accompanied by abnormal stools with blood or mucous
 - Accompanied by a history of poor intake or unusual drowsiness
 - Continued beyond three or four days unless the child is under the supervision of a physician with written documentation that it is safe to readmit the child for care
- b. Severe pain or discomfort
 - c. One or more episodes of acute vomiting within a period of 24 hours
 - d. Difficult or rapid breathing
 - e. Yellowish eyes or skin
 - f. Sore throat with a fever or severe coughing
 - g. Untreated head lice
 - h. Untreated scabies
 - i. Children suspected of being in contagious stages of chicken pox, pertussis, measles, mumps, rubella, or diphtheria
 - j. Skin rashes, excluding diaper rash, lasting more than one day
3. Children with the following symptoms should be excluded from school unless they are under the care of a physician, and the physician has approved in writing their return to school.
 - a. Skin rashes, excluding diaper rash, lasting more than one day
 - b. Swollen joints or visibly enlarged lymph nodes
 - c. Elevated oral temperature
 - d. Blood in urine
 4. Other conditions may be determined by the Director on an individual basis

*** Please note that we use a thermometer for the forehead. If it is above 100 degrees, we will call you.**

Our staff will notify you if your child needs to be picked up due to illness. We realize that this causes an inconvenience for parents. However, we believe removal of sick children is necessary for the continued well-being of ALL MSC children and staff.

MEDICATION

If your child is required to take medicine, you must sign the medication in on the clipboard in the middle room (Toddler charts are in the toddler rooms) and tell your child's teacher. Medicines are kept on top of the first aid cabinet in the middle room. If they need to be refrigerated, place them in the lock box in the refrigerator. All medicines must be labeled with the child's name and be in the original container. We will do our best to give your child medicine at the appropriate time. However, it is sometimes very difficult to give it at the exact time needed. If it is important that your child receive medicine at an exact time, please make sure that you can administer it yourself.

If your child is sick, please remember that he needs to be fever-free (without the aid of any medicines) for 24 hours. Children also need to be free from vomiting and diarrhea for 24 hours before returning to school. We need your help in preventing the spread of contagious illnesses. We all miss

fewer days when sick children are kept home until they are not contagious. We really appreciate your compliance with this policy.

IMMUNIZATION

Our school requires that you provide proof (on the state form) of up-to-date immunizations prior to admission of your child to school. Immunizations are required to be kept current.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

The Montessori School of Cheyenne expects its children to follow three simple rules at all times:

1. Authorities (administrators, teachers, assistants) are to be respected. This means that children are to follow the leader's instructions when asked to do something or not do something.
2. Other children are to be respected. This rule has two implications:
 - a. Children will keep hands, feet, and objects to themselves. (No hitting, kicking, poking with anything, etc.)
 - b. Children will respect and therefore not interfere with each other's work and each other's opportunity to learn.
3. School materials are to be respected and used in the proper manner.

EXTREME BEHAVIOR (Biting, scratching, etc.)

Although these types of behaviors can be age appropriate...

The safety and well-being of our children is our #1 priority. When these behaviors become extreme, the following actions will occur:

*Parent/Teacher communication regarding the behavior and what steps can be taken to resolve the behavior.

*If extreme behavior continues, the child will be asked to leave for the remainder of the day and may return the next day. If the behavior occurs following their return, you will be contacted and the child will need to be removed for the remainder of the day.

*When we feel we have made every attempt to help your child refrain from the extreme behavior, the child will be asked to leave the school and you will need to find other childcare.

TRIAL PERIOD POLICY

The first eight weeks of school are considered an orientation and evaluation period for any child entering or moving up to a new classroom at MSC. Parents are notified by classroom teachers of any problems arising during this evaluation period. MSC wants all students to be successful so if problems continue, a meeting is scheduled with the parents to discuss intervention strategies. These include observations to be made and goals to be set. During or at the end of this evaluation period, the director, with input from the child's classroom teacher, may require that the child be withdrawn from the school, or moved to another classroom if there is availability. The child may be allowed to re-enroll at MSC at a later date if: 1) there is room available; and 2) the director and the classroom teacher in which the child will be enrolled make a determination that the problems or issues which led to the child's withdrawal from MSC have been adequately addressed or corrected.

BEHAVIORAL RUBRICS

- 4
- Works independently
 - Helps others resolve conflicts
 - Is respectful
 - Complies with requests from adults

- 3
- Works independently
 - Works quietly
 - Is respectful
 - Responds when asked to do something
 - Is able to work out conflicts
 - Is able to change behavior when requested

- 2
- Works with an adult present
 - Behaves acceptably on line when close to an adult
 - Is able to change behavior when requested while adult is close by

- 1
- Is unable to change behavior when requested
 - Disrupts class- vocally or physically
 - Uses inappropriate language
 - Disrupts line
 - Disrupts other's work
 - Is a danger physically to self or others
 - Is rude to adults or children

As we are a school with the goal of providing an environment that promotes self-directed learning and discovery, we have an obligation to require respect. If a child is repeatedly disruptive and disrespectful to the point of hindering others' opportunities to learn, we will call you.

An evaluation period may be initiated any time a child's behavior is significantly disruptive to the classroom or is affecting the child's ability to learn. During this time, the teachers observe the child, intervene when problems occur, and document the incidents. Parents are contacted and a plan is developed to address the child's behavior. If the child does not make significant progress, the child will be withdrawn from MSC.

**“The most important period of life is not the
age of university studies, but the first one,
the period from birth to the age of six.**

**For that is the time
when man’s intelligence itself,
his greatest implement is being formed.**

**But not only his intelligence;
The full totality of his psychic powers...**

**At no other age
has the child greater need of intelligent help,
and any obstacle that impedes his creative work
will lessen the chance he has of
achieving perfection.”**

Dr. Maria Montessori, The Absorbent Mind