

MISSION STATEMENT

The Ocean State Montessori School fosters independence, self-esteem and a love of learning by providing an academically excellent and nurturing Montessori environment for children in preschool through eighth grade.

HISTORY

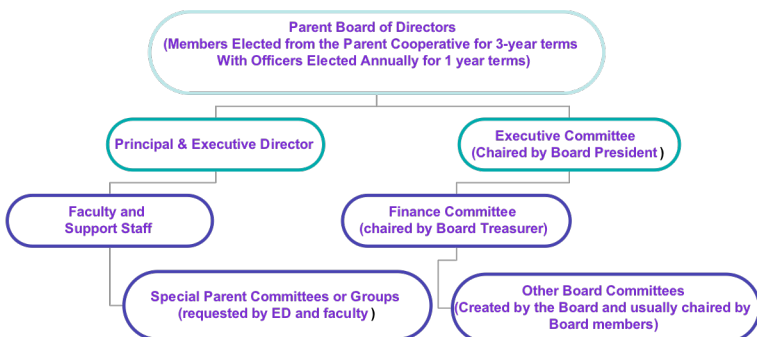
The Ocean State Montessori School was founded in 1973 when a group of parents secured a grant to buy Montessori materials and hired a teacher and two assistants to teach thirty students in the Presbyterian Church in Barrington. In 1977 the school moved. Twenty 3 to 6 year old children were taught each year in rooms rented from various East Providence churches. In 1983 the OSMS moved to quarters at the St. Francis Xavier Church where we stayed for over 20 years. At first we rented a single room with an adjacent playground where both a morning and an afternoon Montessori class were held. Beginning in 1986 the school began to provide an extended day program for children of working parents. As enrollment climbed, staff was added and more classrooms obtained for use.

The OSMS opened a Lower Elementary program in 1999 and an Upper Elementary program in 2002. In November of 2002 the OSMS moved to our current location at 100 Grove Avenue. This facility offered a multitude of bright sunny classrooms as well as much needed space for storage, meetings, offices and expansion. A Middle School program was added in September 2007 and September 2008 saw the beginning of our Wee Threes program.

The OSMS currently provides a Montessori education for children ages 3 through 14, as well as after-school programs and vacation and summer camps. The OSMS is licensed by the RI Department of Education and the RI Department of Children, Youth and Families. Our Montessori teachers possess BS/BA degrees, or higher, and Montessori certification.

ADMINISTRATION AND ORGANIZATION

The OSMS is organized as a 501c3 charitable organization and is exempt from taxes under the laws of the United States and RI. The OSMS is a family cooperative governed by a Board of Trustees who appoints an Executive Director who is responsible for the daily operation of the school.



GENERAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Enrollment Deposit

Upon notification of acceptance to the OSMS a nonrefundable deposit is required to reserve a child's place. This deposit is refunded only upon completion of a full school year when the School has received written notification by the stated deadline that a child will not be returning for the following school year. The enrollment deposit is not refunded should a child withdraw prior to the last day of school, is asked to leave the school prior to the end of school year, and/or if notification to not return is provided past the stated deadline.

All students must be able to use the toilet independently and be self-sufficient in taking care of their toileting needs in order to attend the OSMS. Children who have been accepted but are not toilet-trained by the first day of school may choose to reserve their spot by continuing to pay tuition until the child is ready to begin, or they may choose to be put on a waiting list for possible January enrollment. In the event that a child does not begin school because s/he is not toilet-trained the enrollment deposit is not refunded.

TUITION PAYMENT POLICY

The OSMS offers 3 tuition payment plans:

- 1) Ten Month Plan:** one tenth of the annual tuition is due on the first of each month with the first payment due July 1 and the final payment due April 1. There is a one time processing fee for families electing to use this option. Families enrolling after July 1 must pay the entire amount due according to the plan selected.
- 2) Semester Plan:** 60% of the annual tuition is due August 1 and 40% is due January 1.
- 3) Single Payment Plan:** the entire annual tuition is due August 1. There is a \$100 discount for families selecting this option.

Failure to make timely payment prior to September 1 according to the plan selected on your Enrollment Contract may result in the loss of the place reserved for your child. Report Cards, Progress Reports and Evaluations/Recommendations will not be completed and/or distributed to any families with a past due balance.

After July 1 obligation to pay tuition fees for the full academic year is unconditional (except for the provision in the following paragraph) and no portion will be refunded or canceled in the event of a child's absence, withdrawal or dismissal from OSMS.

Parents of students entering the OSMS for the first time become responsible for the entire year's tuition only after the child completes the first six weeks of school and the parents decide to continue with the program. Families choosing to withdraw during these first six weeks will be refunded all unapplied tuition. The enrollment deposit is nonrefundable.

Families with more than one child in the school pay full tuition for the oldest child and receive a 5% tuition discount for younger siblings who enroll in the OSMS.

Parents electing to pay with a credit card (MC, Visa or Discover) will be charged an additional 3%.

FINANCIAL AID

A limited amount of financial aid is available. Financial Aid applications may be requested beginning in December and must be postmarked by February 1 to be considered for the following school year. Notification of financial aid awards will be in March.

BUILDING ACCESS/SECURITY CARDS

Our building is equipped with a pass card security system at 2 doors: the handicap entrance at the front of the building and the double doors on the John St. side of the building. Parents may access the building through the front entrance any time school is in session. The John St. entrance may be accessed only after 3:00 pm.

Parents/Guardians are required to complete a security card request form in order to receive their pass cards. Additional cards may be requested for other people (babysitters, grandparents, etc) regularly responsible for picking up a child, and who are listed on a child's Permission Form/Pick-Up List. There is a **\$10 deposit** per card. The deposit is refunded when a card is returned in **good, reusable condition**. Lost or damaged cards result in the forfeiture of the \$10 deposit and an additional \$10 must be paid for each replacement key requested.

Lost/stolen cards should be reported to the office as soon as possible so they can be deleted from the system. If a lost card is located, it may be reactivated.

Changes: Should you need to delete access for someone for whom you previously requested a card (babysitter change, custody situation) please notify the office as soon as possible. Court documentation is required for custody situations.

Effectiveness of Security System: The effectiveness of our security system is directly dependent on the cooperation of everyone who has a pass card. **Please do not hold the door open for anyone but you and your children when entering or exiting the building. Please do not ask/expect the person in front of you to hold the door for you.** If you forget your card please ring the doorbell and a staff member will let you in.

While this policy may seem rude it is the only way to insure that only those with authorized access are allowed into the building. Custody situations and babysitters can change overnight so someone who previously had access one day may be denied the next. Possession of a key card does not mean it is activated. Likewise, someone who looks familiar may no longer have an activated key.

Exiting the Building: Please exit via the front entrances or the John Street exit only.

ARRIVAL AT SCHOOL

School begins promptly at 8:30 am for all ages. Children may be dropped off at their classroom beginning at 8:15 am or via Drive-Thru Drop-Off (see following for more information). Please do not leave children unattended in the hallway. It is important for the teacher to acknowledge your child's arrival so that all children are accounted for at all times.

All students are expected to enter their classroom on their own. Goodbyes, hugs and kisses should take place outside the classroom door. Students are responsible for hanging up their belongings on their hooks either in the classroom (Wee Threes and Primary) or in the coat room (Elementary and Middle School).

Please make every effort to get your child to school on time.

Late arrivals are disruptive to those who have arrived on time, as well as to the teachers who are trying to give uninterrupted lessons or conduct a morning circle. Children who arrive late miss their personal greeting by their teacher and miss the opportunity to say good morning to their friends before settling into their morning work. Children with excessive tardiness may put themselves at risk for not being invited back the following year. We recognize that traffic jams and other obstacles may make you late on occasion. If this happens please have your child enter the classroom as quietly as possible while still being sure that a staff member acknowledges his/her presence in the classroom. **Please note that tardy arrivals will be recorded on our daily attendance records. This information is recorded on all Elementary report cards and Primary progress reports that are part of a student's permanent record.**

EARLY MORNING DROP-OFF

Early Morning Drop-Off is available each day beginning at 7:30 am. Children need to be signed in and parents will be billed accordingly. Advance notice is not required for use of Early Morning Drop-Off.

DRIVE-THRU DROP-OFF

Drive-Thru Drop-Off begins after the first few weeks of school and may be used by all students **except the Wee Threes**. Drive-Thru Drop-Off is available between 8:15-8:30 am daily. Parents drive into the Grove Avenue parking lot to the end of the building and turn right, driving behind the school. A staff member will be at the first set of doors and will help your child out of the car. Please have your child ready to get out of the car to keep traffic flowing.

Please do not remove the orange cones from the driveway, a staff member will be responsible for doing this.

PARKING LOTS

OSMS has two parking lots, Grove Avenue and John Street. The Grove Avenue lot is to the left of the building when facing the front of the school, and the John Street lot is on the right side of the building, near the multipurpose room.

The John Street lot is for staff only until 3:00 pm. Prior to 3:00 pm please use the Grove Avenue lot, or street parking where available.

SCHOOL DISMISSAL

Children are dismissed from their Montessori programs at the following times:

| | |
|------------------------------|-------------|
| Wee Threes and Primary | 11:45-12:00 |
| Kindergarten | 1:30 |
| Elementary and Middle School | 3:30 |

At dismissal time parents are asked to wait in the hallway while the staff dismisses students one at a time. Students are expected to have gathered all their belongings before leaving the classroom so that once they are dismissed they do not have to re-enter the classroom.

If your child needs to be dismissed early (such as for a doctor appt) please notify the teacher at drop-off. We will try to have your child ready to go at the appointed time. In this case you may quietly open the classroom door and establish contact with the teacher. **Do not take your child from any classroom until the teacher acknowledges your presence and the dismissal of your child.**

Any child not picked up by the designated time above will be brought to the Children's Room or Prime Time and parents will be billed accordingly.

Each year parents are required to complete a Permission Form on which they list individuals authorized to pick up their child(ren). Please be sure the phone numbers are clearly written and current. Parents/Guardians can add or delete names on their child's Permission Form throughout the school year by stopping in the office and doing so in person. Please be sure to share our Pick-Up Policy with anyone who may be responsible for picking up your child. All adults should routinely bring their licenses into the building when picking up students.

PICK-UP POLICY

1. A child will be released to both parents/guardians except in cases where a parent/guardian provides court documentation stating otherwise.
2. A child will be released to individuals listed on the Permission Form **only under the following conditions:**
 - a. the individual is recognized by the classroom teacher and is at least 16 ½ years of age, or
 - b. the individual provides proof of identity (valid photo ID) as an authorized pick-up person listed on the Permission Form. Parents may also be requested to provide proof of identity if not recognized by staff.

3. In the event that a change is to be made in pick-up (i.e. a child is going home with a friend) and the parent must enlist an individual who is not on the Permission Form to pick up the child, the school will release the child **only under the following condition:**

a. a handwritten note, signed by the parent/guardian is given to the teacher (or office staff) **directly from the parent or guardian, or from an individual listed on the Permission Form** (if your child is in a carpool that adult should be on your pick-up list and therefore authorized to deliver the note; notes may not be delivered by anyone who is not on our Permission Form, i.e. the person whose name is on the note).

4. If an individual arrives to pick up a child whose name:

a. does not appear on the Permission Form

b. is not recognized by the staff and cannot provide proof of identity even though his/her name is on the Permission Form, or

c. prior arrangements have not been made according to #3 above, **the child will not be released.**

EMERGENCY CALL-IN AUTHORIZATION POLICY

We strongly encourage parents to have others on their child's Permission Form so someone other than both parents can pick up in case of an emergency that prevents either parent from being able to do so (snowstorms, traffic jams, etc). However, in the event that a situation should arise necessitating the emergency authorization of someone not on the pick-up list each family will receive a password that will be used to verify their identify over the phone or email. This password must be provided to OSMS staff in order for the emergency authorization to be permitted. The password will be provided at the beginning of the school year and will remain the same for the child's duration at OSMS, unless it is compromised.

SCHOOL CANCELLATIONS/INCLEMENT WEATHER

When making the decision to close school or remain open, the safety of all students and staff is taken into consideration. Please remember that our students and staff come from all over RI and nearby MA. Your town may do a great job plowing while others may not, causing driving hazards for other families.

1. Our school cancellations will be announced as the Ocean State Montessori School and are separate and independent from any other schools.

2. Cancellation notices will air on:

| | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| WBRU 95.5 | 1180 WCNX |
| WCRI 95.9 | 1450 WLKW |
| Lite Rock 105 | 1110 Poder |
| B101 | 1290 WRNI |
| Hot 106 | 790 True Oldies |
| WHJY 94.1 | RIPBS |
| 92 PRO-FM | WPRO 630 |
| 93.3 Coast Fun | 10 NBC |
| 99.3 WJZS | ABC 6 |
| WEEI 103.7 | FOX PROVIDENCE |

You can sign up to receive a call or text message announcing school closings or early dismissals at:

www.turnto10.com or www.eyewitnessnewstv.com

3. If OSMS needs to close early due to inclement weather that begins after school is in session we will call parents or others on the Permission Form to notify them of the time of our closing. All children are expected to be picked up by the specified closing time.

ILLNESS, ABSENCES AND ATTENDANCE

Consistent attendance is necessary for children to progress and master the materials in their classroom. Children with excessive absences may not be academically, and/or socially, ready to move on according to their chronological age. Teachers will counsel parents should absences become a hindrance to a child's progress and a course of action will be discussed. Please plan family vacations during school breaks.

If your child is going to be absent for any reason please notify the office by 8:30 am via phone or email. If your child has been diagnosed with a contagious illness (chicken pox, strept, conjunctivitis, flu, head lice, etc) please notify the office immediately so that we can post this information (without names).

Children must be symptom/fever free for 24 hours (without medication) in order to return to school.

Should a child become ill at school we will contact a parent/guardian to come pick up the child. If we are unable to reach a parent/guardian we will contact others on the Permission Form.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURE

In the event of a serious accident or illness while at school our policy is to call 911. Our district hospital is Hasbro Children's Hospital in Providence and ambulances are usually dispatched there. A school staff member will accompany the student in the ambulance or will follow behind in his/her car. The office staff will contact parents and/or emergency contacts listed on the student's Authorization Form with instructions to meet at the hospital. The staff member will stay with the student until a parent or authorized individual arrives. A copy of your child's Authorization Form will be given to EMT and/or hospital personnel. **Please be sure the Authorization Form includes all allergies and medications for your child, and that it is updated as needed throughout the school year (stop by the office to do so).**

Unless a child's condition is life-threatening hospital personnel typically will not begin treatment until a parent/guardian or other authorized individual arrives.

MEDICATION DISPENSING AT SCHOOL

The OSMS staff will dispense prescription medication only*.

Prescription medications need to be brought to school in their **original container with the printed pharmacy label intact.** Pharmacies will provide you with an extra container if you explain you need it for school. A **Medication Form** needs to be completed by a parent/guardian. Staff will not dispense medication without this form. Forms are available in the office or from classroom teachers.

Parents of children requiring Epi-pens for severe allergies will need to complete a Medication Form for the Epi-pen and/or Benadryl. The Epi-pens and Benadryl will be stored in the child's classroom for easy accessibility and will be taken along for recess and "specials", and on field trips. Children who routinely attend the Children's Room or Prime Time will need to supply a second Epi-pen and/or Benadryl for that program as well.

Parents of children requiring inhalers will need to complete a Medication Form. Inhalers will be kept in the classroom by the teacher (i.e. not in a child's backpack) due to the potential immediacy of use.

***We will dispense Benadryl for severe, anaphylactic allergies only, when prescribed in conjunction with an Epi-pen.** Parents need to provide a prescription from the child's pediatrician or allergist.

No other medications, including Tylenol, Motrin, Advil, cough syrups, or topical ointments will be dispensed.

Please inform your child's teacher if your child is taking medication, even if it will not be dispensed at school. Often times this will help a teacher better understand a child's behavior.

Please be sure to update your child's Authorization Form should s/he begin, change or stop taking medication, or if new allergies or other medical conditions are diagnosed.

IMMUNIZATION POLICY

Prior to beginning school each child shall return a completed health and immunization form completed by his/her pediatrician. The RI Department of Health requires that all children under the age of 6 have a lead screening and these results must be included on the child's health form. The RI DOH also requires that all students be up-to-date on immunizations. Please visit the RI DOH website at health.ri.gov/immunization/index.php for a list of required vaccinations. Families who choose not to have their child immunized for religious or other beliefs, must complete an Exemption Form (available in the office).

Children who are not immunized may be excluded from school for the duration of an outbreak, should one occur, as per RI DOH.

VISITOR'S POLICY

Visitors to the OSMS are asked to make advance arrangements through the office. All visitors are required to report to the office upon arrival at school, and to notify the office upon leaving.

Classroom observers are asked to be as unobtrusive as possible when visiting so our students are not disturbed or interrupted as they go about their daily routines.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

The OSMS is a parent cooperative and the high standard of excellence maintained by our school is achieved by the cooperation of teachers, staff, and parents working together for the good of the students. As a member of the OSMS cooperative each family is obligated to:

- *attend meetings of the Corporation (generally 1-2/year)
- *perform ten (10) hours of volunteer service per year with a minimum of 5 hours of non-classroom related activities (see below for more details)
- *report completed volunteer hours to the office on a monthly basis
- *work together with the Board and other parents to promote a positive, harmonious school environment
- *support the long and short term goals of the OSMS

In addition to parent responsibilities as a member of the corporation parents are expected to be supportive of their child's education. Parent Education Nights are held periodically throughout the school year and it is expected that at least one parent/guardian will attend these educational opportunities. Parents' understanding of the Montessori philosophy and materials will enhance their and their child's school experience. Parent Observations and Parent-Teacher Conferences are offered twice a year and parents are expected to participate in these as well.

Parents who choose to avoid contributing their ten hours of volunteer time, and/or those who do not participate in parent educational opportunities may jeopardize their child's standing at the OSMS when considering enrollment for the following year.

PARENT VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Classroom Opportunities (minimum 5 hours/year)

Teachers requesting help within their classroom post sign-up sheets outside their classroom. These "jobs" may include bringing in library books to supplement classroom library; taking home laundry (towels) at the end of the week; bringing in flowers for flower arranging; dusting/cleaning the classroom and materials; preparing push-pin or other works; and bringing in food for food prep works (bananas, cucumbers, oranges, etc).

Non-Classroom Related Activities

At the beginning of each school year sign-up sheets for committees and specific school-wide events are posted in the main hallway. Parents should select the committees and activities that best suit their talents and interests. Throughout the year other opportunities become available and are communicated via email or newsletter. A minimum of 5 hours of non-classroom related activities is required.

Committees:

- Fundraising
- Strategic Planning
- Finance
- PR/Communications
- Buildings and Grounds
- Hospitality
- Family Events

Other opportunities include substituting, office support, classroom support, book fairs, and chaperoning fields trips (elementary and middle school).

PROGRAM EVALUATION

To help insure that we continue to provide the highest quality program we ask parents to complete yearly evaluations on different aspects of the school including programs offered, quality of programs and services provided, parent involvement and Board leadership. The evaluations are developed, distributed and reviewed by the Strategic Planning Committee and results are shared with the OSMS Board, Executive Director, staff, and parent community.

MONTESSORI PROGRAMS

WEE THREES

Age 3: preschool
8:30-12:00

PRIMARY

Ages 3-4: 8:30-12:00
Kindergarten: 8:30-1:30

LOWER ELEMENTARY

Ages 6 to 9: 1st-3rd grade
8:30-3:30

UPPER ELEMENTARY

Ages 9-12: 4th-6th grade
8:30-3:30

MIDDLE SCHOOL

Ages 12-14: 7th-8th grade
8:30-3:30

ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS

CHILDREN'S ROOM: after school program for ages 3-4

PRIME TIME: after school program for K and up

VACATION AND SUMMER CAMPS: for ages 3-6

AFTER SCHOOL EXTRAS: varies

WEE THREES

Our Wee Threes program was created specifically for children who turn three between September 1 and December 31 and addresses the specific developmental needs and pace of learning of this "young three" group. The program is designed to bridge between a toddler program and the Primary program. The Wee Threes program is based on the same Montessori principles that are the foundation of our Primary program but with more emphasis on practical life and sensorial materials and cultural studies (units of study). Beginning math and language materials round out the curriculum. Upon completion of one year in the Wee Threes program students will be ready to enter a Primary classroom.

PRIMARY PROGRAM/THREE YEARS

The Primary Program is built on the fact that a child's development occurs in stages. The three-year age span allows the younger child to see the possibilities for future development and it gives

the older children a clear sense of the progress they have made. There is no artificial division of the ages so a child of three may do the same work as a four year old, depending on each one's interest and ability. The program comes to full fruition in the Kindergarten year when all of the previous lessons and experiences come together in a meaningful whole. Children who do not complete the three-year cycle because they started at a later date, or did not remain through Kindergarten may not reap the full benefits of the program.

Acceptance into our Lower Elementary program is contingent upon several factors, the most important being the Primary teacher's recommendation.

The Lower Elementary program requires a greater degree of independence and not all children are well suited to this type of academic environment. Our goal is not to deny entry to our Elementary program but to insure the greatest chance of success for each student by placing him/her in the most suitable environment given each child's individual learning style.

Other factors include parent participation and involvement, and attendance and tardiness.

ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Dr. Maria Montessori recognized that the needs of children at this age are different from the needs of preschool aged children. Elementary aged children begin to move from concrete reasoning to being able to understand more abstract ideas. They begin to develop their moral selves and have a greater desire to explore and learn about their environment. Social interaction with peers becomes increasingly important to the elementary aged child. The multi-aged Montessori classroom offers a positive environment for social and moral as well as educational development. The children help to set ground rules for the class and decide what should happen if these rules are broken. They also take a more active role in helping to care for their classroom environment, school and community.

Independent work occupies much of the elementary student's day. Each student plans and follows a daily record that outlines the work s/he needs to do each day. Our integrated curriculum includes mathematics, geometry, spelling, grammar, reading comprehension, history, geography, and physical and social sciences. There is opportunity for group work and interaction promoting social development and community spirit.

Fostering independence is a large component of a Montessori elementary classroom. Students are expected to take care of their own belongings, from hanging up their outerwear and backpacks when they arrive at school, to packing their backpacks at the end of the day. Please allow your child the time and opportunity to do these activities on his/her own.

Likewise, the students are responsible for keeping track of their daily record and recording the works that they have completed. They will learn to budget their time so they can complete all their work within a given work period. The teachers will follow-up with students to provide guidance to those who need it.

Parent support at home can help foster this independence: let your child tie his/her own shoes (no more Velcro); have your child pack his/her own lunch; give your child chores to do such as feeding a pet, setting the table, clearing the table after meals, or sweeping or vacuuming.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

Younger Students

The Ocean State Montessori School aims at enhancing self-discipline primarily through the use of Montessori materials. Montessori activities are done in an orderly, sequential progression and the children are taught to be respectful of both the materials and their fellow classmates and teachers. The children develop a focus because of the purposeful nature of the activity. Those who work constructively are said to be “normalized”, according to the Montessori philosophy.

Some children need time for the environment and the nature of constructive work to calm them. These children often need assistance in focusing their scattered energies in an attentive, responsible direction. They are encouraged to work, given suggestions and kept from interrupting others. When necessary the imposed discipline at this stage is usually removal from the group. Every effort is made by the staff to constructively occupy a child after this short period.

There are some situations in which teachers and/or the director may choose to have a child sent home from school. These situations are when a child is presenting a danger or hazard to him/herself or to others. Examples of behaviors include biting, hitting, yelling, damaging materials, or exhibiting inappropriate behavior that does not abate with “normal” intervention. The purpose of being sent home is to convey the clear message that this type of behavior is not acceptable at school. Students sent home from school should spend a quiet afternoon at home with a follow-up conversation with a parent about why the child was sent home, what behaviors were not acceptable, and suggestions of how to handle a situation differently when s/he returns to school. This time out of school should not be made “fun” by going out for lunch, to the zoo, a movie, etc. Those types of fun activities may reinforce the negative behaviors since the “reward” for the inappropriate behavior was enjoyable time with mom or dad.

Occasionally we meet children who cannot benefit from the Montessori method. A child who cannot handle the freedom of responsibility, movement and choice inherent in the method without hurting or disturbing the whole and who has not responded to any agreed upon award or discipline will be asked to leave the Ocean State Montessori School. We do this so that a more suitable environment may be found for the child, and to allow those children who do benefit from freedom, choice and responsibility to work together in peace and harmony.

Older Students

Our Elementary and Middle School students typically participate in creating “ground rules” for their classrooms, as well as consequences for breaking the agreed upon “rules”, with guidance and approval from the

head teacher. Consequences vary depending upon the infraction but may include missing a portion of recess or receiving a “ground rules” form to bring home to parents. In certain situations consequences for infractions may be dispensed by the teacher or director and may include “restoration” to the school. For example, if an infraction occurs on the playground a consequence may include playground clean-up. Consequences are meant to be meaningful and helpful to the classroom or school community so the student “gives back” or makes amends for the infraction. Fighting and bullying (see below), and other similar inappropriate behaviors are not tolerated and may warrant the student being sent home for the remainder of the day, or suspension from school.

In accordance with the Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) it is the policy of this school that no child shall suffer corporal punishment, cruel or severe punishment, humiliation, verbal abuse, denial of food, or punishment for toilet-related issues.

Further, any staff member suspecting a case of child abuse and/or neglect will report it to the school Director and together will contact DCYF in accordance with state law.

BULLYING POLICY

The Montessori philosophy of education views the child as a whole. At the Ocean State Montessori School each child’s academic, emotional, spiritual, and physical self are acknowledged and cherished. Implicit in this philosophy is the concept of Peace Education. Children are taught (beginning with our youngest students) about the importance of respect—for each other, for their teachers, for the environment, and for the world at large. Because of this core philosophy of respect, bullying is not acceptable.

Bullying is an act of aggression causing embarrassment, pain or discomfort to another. It can be exhibited in a number of forms including physical, verbal, emotional, gesture, cyber stalking, extortion, and exclusion. It can be planned and organized, or unintentional. Individuals or groups may be involved.

Examples of Bullying include:

- *any form of physical violence including hitting, pushing and spitting
- *interfering with another’s property by stealing, hiding, damaging or destroying it
- *using offensive names, teasing or spreading rumors about others or their families
- *using put-downs, belittling others’ abilities or achievements
- *writing offensive notes or graffiti about others; using the internet or text messaging for this purpose
- *making degrading comments about another’s culture, sexual orientation, religious or social background
- *hurtfully excluding others from a group
- *making suggestive comments or other forms of sexual abuse
- *ridiculing another’s appearance
- *forcing others to act against their will

Students who bully may:

*be removed from the place where the bullying occurred, and may lose the opportunity to participate in the activity taking place when the bullying occurred (for example, a student who bullies on the playground may not be able to participate in outdoor recess).

*be required to make a positive contribution to his/her classroom or the school (for example a student who bullies on the playground may be required to do playground clean-up; or a student who bullies in the classroom may be required to perform extra chores, complete a special project, or help out in another classroom)

*be required to make restitution (repair or replace) for damaged or destroyed items (for example a child who damages another child's backpack may be required to replace the backpack; a child who damages classroom materials may be asked to replace or repair them)

*be required to seek psychological counseling if the behavior continues despite the above consequences

*be suspended from school

*be expelled from school

As a school community it is imperative that everyone in the school work together to prevent bullying:

School staff is expected to be positive role models in word and action at all times. Staff should be observant of signs of distress or suspected incidents of bullying. They should maintain vigilant attention at all times, including recess and field trips. A staff member who observes bullying is required to intervene immediately (staff training will provide information on appropriate ways to intervene).

NO NUT POLICY:

THE OCEAN STATE MONTESSORI SCHOOL IS NUT-FREE. Nuts of any type are not allowed as snack, or as part of a child's lunch.

All snack items are to be sent to school **in their original container so that ingredients can be checked.** The Ocean State Montessori School is nut-free so that we can create as safe an environment as possible for our students with severe (anaphylactic) nut allergies. We will not serve an item if

*we cannot verify the ingredients

*the ingredients contain nuts or nut by-product (almond extract, peanut oil, etc)

*the ingredient label states that the product 1) was made in a facility that also processes nuts or on equipment that manufactures food with nuts or 2) may contain nuts or nut oils (i.e. peanut oil)

If you choose to bake an item from scratch please send in a list of **all** ingredients, and specify what type of oil was used. If you use a mix, please send in the ingredient list from the package, and what else may have been added (eggs, milk, oil, etc.)

An "oops, you sent in something with nuts" note will be sent home if we find a product containing nuts—Just as a reminder so you don't send in that item again. We have found that some foods that were previously acceptable now have labels saying they are made in a facility that also processes nuts—so please check labels every time.

OTHER ALLERGIES:

We also have a number of children with other food allergies. Each individual teacher will monitor snack for the other food allergies in their class. At this time nuts are the only “banned” ingredients. Teachers may ask parents to provide a “back-up snack” for their allergic children so there is always something appropriate to serve.

If we are ever in doubt, we will err on the side of caution and not serve the product.

SNACK PROGRAM (WEE THREES AND PRIMARY STUDENTS)

The Ocean State Montessori School emphasizes a nutritionally sound snack program. We have designated a different type of snack for each day of the week: cheese, fruit, vegetable, grain, and free choice. Parents are required to provide snack on their designated day (a monthly schedule is distributed in mail pockets) along with a gallon of milk or juice. There should be sufficient snack for 20 children.

Typically snack is set out as though it is just another “work” in the classroom. Children serve themselves when hungry.

NO-NO’S: The following are not allowed

*Go-Gurts (choking hazard)

*grapes, cherry tomatoes: choking hazard

SNACK SUGGESTIONS

Cheese Day: cheese and crackers (cut cheese into squares or cubes), cheese sticks, yogurt, pudding. If you send in cheese and crackers please do not put the cheese on the crackers—the crackers get soggy and then the children don’t want to eat them.

Fruit Day: fresh fruit including watermelon, cantaloupe, honey dew, strawberries, oranges, clementines, bananas and apples, or assorted fruit cup, applesauce, or raisins. If sending in bananas or apples please do not cut them ahead of time—they will brown and the children won’t eat them.

Vegetable Day: carrot sticks, celery sticks with cream cheese (on the side), pickles, sliced cucumbers, broccoli. Many children enjoy vegetable more if they have “dip” (salad dressing). If you send in dressing we will portion it into individual servings to avoid “double dipping”. Zucchini bread or carrot muffins are also ok.

Grain: pretzels, bagels with cream cheese, goldfish, crackers, bakery pizza strips, cinnamon bread with cream cheese or margarine, snack mixes, mini muffins.

Free Choice: any of the above—or your child’s favorite food. Be creative!

BIRTHDAYS

Children who have birthdays during the school year are usually assigned snack on or near their birthday. You are welcome to bring in cupcakes or another special snack your child enjoys. We’ve had heart shaped jelly sandwiches, whoopee pies, pepperoni sandwiches, pudding, Jell-O jigglers, etc. Please do not send in cakes—they are difficult to cut and serve.

In addition to sending in snack (don't forget the milk or juice), you should also send in a photo and statement representing each year of your child's life. The teachers have a special birthday celebration they will do with the class. Snack is served group style when there is a birthday celebration.

Other Birthday Considerations: We recognize that birthdays and their accompanying celebrations are a much anticipated and highly touted part of a young child's life. However, birthday parties can be a source of hard feelings (for both children and parents) when some children are invited to a party and others are not. While we certainly don't expect every family to invite the entire class to their child's birthday party we do ask that if you are not inviting the whole class that you mail the invitations home rather than distribute them via the mail pockets outside the classroom. We strongly discourage children from discussing their parties at school—especially the “you're not invited to my party” kind of talk that is often meant to be hurtful. While we don't want to diminish a child's excitement about his/her party we also try to teach about respecting others' feelings and not using hurtful words.

CLOTHING

Please send your (young) child to school in clothing that allows for independence and participation in outdoor play. Suggestions include elastic waistbands, shoes and boots that are easily put on by the child. Overall clasps and belt buckles can be tricky for little fingers (if you have to help your child at home, don't send it to school). **Well-fitting shoes should be worn at all times** so children can run and play freely and safely on the playground. Please avoid “party” shoes that have smooth, slippery soles. **Clogs and other slide-on type shoes are not acceptable, nor are platforms.**

For safety purposes clothes should fit well without hanging or dragging. Clothing is expected to have properly working zippers, snaps, buttons, or other closures.

Hats, including baseball caps and scarves, are not to be worn while in the classroom but may be worn outside at recess. Barrettes and headbands can often be a distraction to children. If you know your child tends to remove these items from her hair please avoid having her wear them to school. They can be easily lost and some children have a tendency to put them in their mouths, presenting a choking hazard.

Belly baring shirts, halter tops and tops with spaghetti straps are not allowed. T-shirts with offending logos or pictures are also not allowed. Please avoid t-shirts with action figures (X-men, Star Wars, Transformers, etc) as they often promote discussion about their fighting powers (along with re-enactments of their kicking and chopping moves!).

Deciding what to wear to school each day is a “teachable” moment about what clothes are appropriate for different situations. It is important to be dressed comfortably in “play” clothes for school. Party dresses and fancy shoes may be fine for special occasions and parties but not for school—just like gym clothes or tuxedos or cocktails dresses may not be appropriate for you to wear to your work.

EXTRA CLOTHING BOX

Each student has a box for extra clothes. Please send in underwear, pants, shirt, and socks to be kept in your child's box for when a change of clothes is needed. If your child attends the Children's Room a second box is kept in that room, requiring another complete change of clothes.

Label, Label, Label

Please label all of your child's belongings (shoes, boots, slippers, jackets, backpacks, lunchboxes, sweaters, mittens, hats, etc., etc.). Many children have the same or similar belongings and can't always tell which item is theirs. If they are clearly labeled there will be no question.

LUNCH

Kindergarten, Elementary and Middle School students eat lunch in their classrooms. Lunches need to adhere to the school's **No Nut Policy** and should include a variety of nutritious foods. Suggestions include cheese and crackers, fresh fruits and vegetables, bagels, bakery pizza, yogurt, hard-boiled eggs, and salads. The Kindergarten students may bring in leftovers that can be reheated in the microwave. **There is no microwave in the Elementary and Middle School classrooms.** Leftovers (except foods like a half eaten yogurt that can't be resealed) will be sent home so that you can gauge how much your child is eating for lunch. Candy and gum are not allowed. Students do not need to bring a beverage from home (see below).

MILK LIST

Parents of Kindergarten, Elementary and Middle School students are asked to bring in milk for the whole class, approximately once a month. A schedule will be distributed prior to each month. The schedule will include how much milk to provide (half vs. whole gallon). Our experience has shown that students prefer 1 or 2% rather than whole or skim.

ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOL PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL FUNCTIONS

Physical fitness and the opportunity for physical exercise are an important part of the elementary curriculum. Students are expected to participate in these activities and will be excused from doing so only with a doctor's note. This includes daily recess, walks, aerobic exercise, gym class and field trips.

COMMUNITY SERVICE

The Ocean State Montessori School places an emphasis on community service. Students participate in activities that teach them to care about others within their community, and show that they can have a positive influence on the world. Past activities include sponsoring a winter coat drive, making and donating a quilt to a homeless shelter, building and raffling an Adirondack chair and donating the proceeds to the RI Food Bank.

The Elementary students are also responsible for the school's recycling program and the raising and lowering of our USA and RI flags.

PROGRESS REPORTS/REPORT CARDS

Primary and Wee Threes

Parents of Primary and Wee Three students are invited to observe in their children's classrooms twice a year: once in October and again in March. Following both observations are Parent-Teacher Conferences. At the conference in October parents receive a verbal summary of their child's progress to date. In March parents receive a written Progress Report that covers social, academic, and physical development.*

Elementary and Middle School

Parents of Elementary and Middle Schools students are invited to observe in their children's classrooms twice a year: once in October and again in March. Following both observations are Parent-Teacher Conferences. At the conferences parents receive a verbal summary of their child's progress. Report Cards are provided in late January and at the end of the school year.*

*Please note that Progress Reports, Report Cards and teacher recommendations will not be completed/distributed for any student whose tuition account is not current within 30 days.

ELECTRONICS, CELL PHONES, ETC.

Gameboys, MP3 players, etc are not allowed at school. If a child needs to bring a cell phone to school it must remain in his/her backpack in the coatroom or in the Director's office. Cell phones found in a student's possession during the school day will be confiscated and brought to the office where the student may retrieve it at the end of the day.

AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAMS
CHILDREN'S ROOM (AGES 3-4)
PRIME TIME (AGES 5+ UP)

401.434.6442
(direct phone line for
after school programs)

PHILOSOPHY

Our after school programs provide a calm and relaxed atmosphere for children who spend the entire day with us. Complementing the philosophy and thematic curriculum of the Montessori programs, the Children's Room and Prime Time programs provide children with the opportunity to have lunch (Children's Room only), rest, play outside, and pursue age appropriate arts and crafts and other activities (such as dress up and creative play in the Children's Room, board and card games in Prime Time).

Hours of Operation:

| | |
|------------------------|-------------------|
| Children's Room | 12:00-5:30 |
| Prime Time | 1:30-5:30 |

Schedule of Daily Activities Children's Room:

| | |
|-------------|---|
| 12:00-12:30 | Lunch |
| 12:30-12:40 | Bathroom (this is a group trip; children may also go to the bathroom when needed, with a teacher) |
| 12:40-1:30 | Rest Time (children who fall asleep will be allowed to sleep until they wake up on their own) |
| 1:30-2:00 | Circle Time (stories, songs, movement activities) |
| 2:00-3:15 | Free Choice and/or Craft activity |
| 3:15-3:30 | Snack |
| 3:30-4:00 | Recess (children may stay outside longer during nice weather) |
| 4:00-5:30 | Free Choice and/or Craft activity |

Schedule of Daily Activities Prime Time:

| | |
|-----------|---|
| 1:30-1:50 | Rest (Kindergarten only) |
| 1:50-2:20 | Circle (stories, movement activities, song) |
| 2:20-3:20 | Free Choice and/or Craft Activity |
| 3:20-3:40 | Snack |
| 3:40-4:00 | Free Choice and/or Craft Activity |
| 4:00-5:00 | Recess |
| 5:00-5:30 | Free Choice and/or Craft Activity |

Children may be picked up at any time during the afternoon but for billing purposes there are three different time brackets:

Children's Room

12:00-1:30 aka "Gappers". This time frame was originally established so parents of a preschooler and a Kindergartner didn't have to come at 12:00 and again at 1:30 to pick up their children. During this time period children have lunch and rest. Other (more fun) activities begin around 2:00.

12:00-3:30 Extended Day

12:00-5:30 Full Day

Prime Time

1:30-3:30 for Kindergartners only. They have a brief rest period for approximately 15-20 minutes before beginning their afternoon activities.

1:30-5:30 for Kindergartners needing full day coverage

3:30-5:30 for Elementary students

A fee schedule is available in the office. Children may sign up for 1-5 days per week although preference is given to those needing full coverage.

Drop-Ins

Drop-Ins are accepted if space is available. Please call the office 24 hours in advance to inquire about availability for drop-ins.

DEPARTURES

Parents are required to sign-out their children when picking them up. Please refer to the School's Pick-Up Policy for more information about our release policy. Parents picking up after their contracted time will be billed accordingly. **There is a \$1 per minute fee for picking up a child after 5:30 pm.**

MILK/JUICE SCHEDULE

Parents bring in milk and juice on a rotating basis approximately once a month. A monthly schedule will be distributed in parents' mail pockets and posted on the OSMS website.

LUNCH (CHILDREN'S ROOM ONLY)

Parents are expected to provide a nutritious lunch for their children. Please see the section on Kindergarten lunch for more details. Lunches may be left on the windowsill in the hallway leading to the Children's Room. Please be sure to label your child's lunch box clearly as other children may have the same one.

Please remember that we are a nut-free facility.