

# Parent Handbook



## ***Summerside Montessori Children's Studio***

## Welcome Letter from Our Founder

Dear Families,

Welcome to *Summerside Montessori Children's Studio*! I am delighted to have you and your child as part of our Montessori community.

My name is Jane Boyd, and I am the founder of this program. With extensive experience in Montessori education and early childhood consulting, I am deeply committed to creating a nurturing, child-centered environment where children can develop independence, confidence, and a lifelong love of learning.



At *Summerside Montessori Children's Studio*, we are both guided and inspired by authentic Montessori principles, providing thoughtfully prepared environments that encourage curiosity, exploration, and self-discovery. I believe that every child is a capable and unique individual who thrives when given the freedom to learn at their own pace, supported by respectful guidance and meaningful experiences.

In addition to my work with this program, I also specialize in early childhood consulting, helping other childcare centres across Canada to create high-quality, developmentally appropriate programs. My passion is not only to guide children but also to support educators in fostering engaging, inclusive, and enriching learning spaces.

I look forward to partnering with you in your child's educational journey. If you ever have any questions or would like to learn more about our approach, please don't hesitate to reach out. Together, we can create a joyful and inspiring learning experience for your child.

Warmly,

**Jane Boyd**

Founder & Co-Co-Director of Summerside Montessori Children's Studio

Child Care Consultant, 45 Conversations Media & Education Ltd.

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**Summerside Montessori Children's Studio**

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**Parent Handbook**

**October 2025**

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## Welcome to Summerside Montessori Children's Studio!

Dear Families,

It is my sincere pleasure to welcome you and your child to Summerside Montessori Children's Studio.

We are delighted that you have chosen to embark on this journey with us—a journey rooted in the Montessori method of education, guided by respect, curiosity, and a deep belief in the innate potential of every child.



At Summerside Montessori, we offer more than just a child care experience. We provide a nurturing, thoughtfully prepared environment where children are encouraged to explore, create, and develop at their own pace. Our approach values independence, cultivates grace and courtesy, and supports each child in becoming a confident, capable, and compassionate human being.

As the Co-Director, I bring many years of experience in early childhood education, a commitment to Montessori values, and a passion for creating spaces where both children and educators thrive. I am here to support your child's growth and development, and to ensure that your family feels welcomed, heard, and connected.

We are proud to work in collaboration with 45 Conversations Media & Education Ltd.—a child care consulting and training firm owned by Jane Boyd, the founder of our studio. This partnership allows us to integrate current best practices in early learning and to contribute to broader conversations in the field of early childhood education.

Please take time to read through this Parent Handbook, as it outlines our daily routines, policies, and the values that shape our work. We see families as essential partners in a child's learning journey, and we look forward to developing a strong, respectful relationship with you over time.

On behalf of our entire team, thank you for entrusting us with your child. We look forward to getting to know you and walking alongside your family in the years to come.

Warmly,

**Kim Ellsworth**

Co-Director

Summerside Montessori Children's Studio





# 1. Introduction



Welcome to Summerside Montessori Children's Studio, where we are dedicated to providing a high-quality Montessori education in a nurturing, child-centred environment. Our goal is to foster independence, curiosity, and a lifelong love of learning by following the principles established by Dr. Maria Montessori.

At Summerside Montessori, we believe that children learn best when they are given the freedom to explore, make choices, and engage with their environment in meaningful ways. Our classrooms are designed to encourage self-directed learning, where children can work at their own pace with materials that support their developmental needs. We emphasize respect for each child's unique learning journey and provide guidance that nurtures both academic and social growth.

This handbook serves as a guide to our policies and procedures, outlining expectations for families and ensuring that every child has a positive and enriching experience. We encourage open communication between parents and educators and welcome any questions or concerns.

## 2. Program Overview



Summerside Montessori Children's Studio offers a carefully prepared Montessori environment where children are encouraged to explore, engage, and develop at their own pace. Our program is structured to provide a balanced approach to learning, incorporating both guided and independent activities that promote cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development.

### **Age Groups & Classroom Structure**

We provide a Montessori education for children in the following age group:

- **Infant Community (12-22 months)**
- **Casa (Preschool 22 months – 4 years)**

Our classroom is a dynamic environment where children engage in hands-on learning through practical life exercises, sensorial exploration, language development, mathematics, and cultural studies. Carefully designed to foster independence and purpose, the space offers open shelves with developmentally appropriate materials that children can choose freely. Educators serve as facilitators—observing, guiding, and supporting children's learning journeys while encouraging self-discipline and intrinsic motivation.

## **Daily Schedule**

A consistent and predictable daily schedule helps children feel secure and engaged in their learning environment. Our schedule is adjusted according to the ages of children we are working with as necessary. Our daily routine includes:

- **Montessori Work Cycle:** A two-to-three-hour uninterrupted period where children select activities that interest them and work independently or in small groups.
- **Outdoor Play:** At least 60 to 120 minutes of outdoor activity per day, allowing children to develop gross motor skills, engage in nature-based play, and socialize with peers.
- **Open Snack & Lunch Times:** Children participate in preparing the classroom for mealtimes and sometimes even contribute to meal preparation, fostering independence and responsibility.
- **Rest & Quiet Time:** A designated period for children who need to rest, while others engage in quiet activities such as reading or working with materials.
- **Group Activities & Cultural Exploration:** Storytelling, music, movement, art and cultural lessons that enrich the child's understanding of the world around them.

Our program is designed to provide balance—allowing children to develop focus and concentration through individual work, while also providing opportunities for collaboration, social interaction, and movement. By following the Montessori method, we cultivate independence, problem-solving skills, and a love for learning that extends beyond the classroom.

## **Food and Nutrition at Summerside Montessori Children's Studio**

We believe in promoting independence, healthy habits, and social responsibility around food.

### **Our Open Snack Program**

Our Studio provides open snack times in both the **morning and afternoon**.

Children are welcome to serve themselves from a selection of fruits and vegetables as well as other nutritious offerings, fostering choice, independence, and respectful eating practices.

- Morning Open Snack is available - 9:00 am to 11:00 am
- Afternoon Open Snack is available - 2:30 pm to 3:30 pm



**Family Weekly Contribution to Class Snack Basket for Open Snack** - To encourage responsibility, independence and generosity we request that your child independently carries in 1 fruit or vegetable 1, 2 or 3 times per week and places it in our community snack basket in the front entry area.

Items like apples, oranges, bananas, carrots, broccoli, peas, tomatoes etc are all good choices. We also accept seasonal fruits as well. These contributed items are prepared and shared with the children during Open Snack.

**Please do not contribute items other than fruits/vegetables.**

### **Our Lunch Program**

For children enrolled in our **Montessori program**, a **healthy, well-balanced lunch** is provided daily. Meals are served in a calm and community-oriented setting, aligned with our Montessori approach to mealtime routines. We play calming music for the first 10-15 minutes of lunch; during which time we encourage children to quietly and mindfully enjoy eating their food. After the music is turned off the children may engage in respectful social conversation.

Lunch is usually served between 12:05 and 12:45 each day. Children can take as long as necessary to enjoy their meal.

At Summerside Montessori Children's Studio we follow the Division of Responsibility model. This model includes what caregivers (parents/guardians and educators) are responsible for and what children are responsible for with respect to feeding.

**Caregivers** are responsible for:

- What food is offered.
- When food is offered.
- Where food is offered.

**Children** are responsible for

- How much to eat.
- Whether to eat from what is offered.

We understand that children's appetites go up and down from day to day. Children know best how much food they need. Children are never forced or bribed to eat food. Food is not used as a punishment. We encourage and support children's independence in both the selection and eating of food.

We post our daily snacks and meal menu in our front entry area for parents to review.

We encourage children to:



- Practice grace and courtesy at the table.
- Participate in food preparation or cleanup as developmentally appropriate.
- Respect individual food preferences and dietary restrictions.

If your child has allergies or food sensitivities please speak with the Co-Director to further discuss your child's needs.

### 3. Admissions & Enrolment



Summerside Montessori Children's Studio strives to maintain a smooth and transparent admissions process that ensures families and children find the best fit for their educational needs.

#### Eligibility Requirements

- Children must meet the age criteria for their respective program (Infants 12 Months to Under 22 Months and Preschoolers Over 22 Months to 4 Years)
- Children must require full time care as we do not provide part time spaces)
- Families must complete all required documentation and meet financial obligations.

#### Admission Criteria

- Due to **limited availability**, we base our admissions upon a specific priority criteria. We take into consideration the following:
  - If the family has a commitment to our Montessori philosophy and core values of respect, independence, and learning.
  - The age of the child needing a space.
  - If the child already has sibling(s) enrolled in our program.
  - If they are a child of one of our staff members who is returning to work in our program after being off on maternity or parental leave.
  - If they are a child of parents/guardians who are working/attending school in Summerside and surrounding areas.
  - If they are a child transitioning from another Montessori child care program.

All of the above are factors in determining who we are able to make an offer of

admissions to.

### **How To Join Our Program**

1. Families complete an **Application Form** online via our website SummersideMontessori.com.
2. When a space becomes available, families are contacted in order of application date and as per our Admission Criteria. It is important to remember that spaces in our program can be very limited. Families are encouraged to make an application to our program well in advance of when they are expecting to need the space.
3. Once contacted, a family is made an offer to schedule a tour of our program.
4. Tours are available by appointment only and provide families with an opportunity to:
  - a. Observe our Montessori learning environment.
  - b. Meet with the Co-Director and educators.
  - c. Ask questions regarding philosophy, curriculum, and daily routines.
  - d. Discuss the child's needs and readiness for enrollment.
5. Upon completion of the tour, if it is determined that the child/family is a match for our program they will be offered an **Enrollment Offer** so that they can decide if they wish to enroll their child in our program.
6. Families have 2 business days to accept the Enrollment Offer and must provide all of the necessary paperwork, payments and documentation within the lessor of one week or prior to the child commencing the program.

### **Gradual Entry Process**

To support a smooth transition, new children participate in a **gradual entry process**, typically spanning **one week**. This process allows children to build trust with educators and adjust to the new environment at their own pace.

A typical gradual entry schedule includes:

- **Day 1:** Short visit with a parent (1hour).
- **Day 2:** Half day visit, including a snack and outdoor play.
- **Day 3:** Longer half-day, including lunch and quiet time.
- **Day 4:** Extended half-day with increased independence.
- **Day 5:** Full-day attendance, with educators monitoring comfort levels.

During this period, parents should remain accessible in case an early pick-up is required. If a child experiences difficulty adjusting, we work closely with families to provide additional support.

Summerside Montessori is committed to ensuring a welcoming experience for all families. Our Co-Director is available to assist with any questions throughout the application and enrollment process.

### **List of Items/Supplies to Bring to Montessori for Your Child**

- Extra set of clothing that your child can change into if necessary.
- Inside shoes with rubber soles or slippers with anti-slip soles.
- Diapers & wipes if your child is still wearing diapers.
- Extra underwear if your child is toilet learning. While we allow Pull-Ups, we actively encourage toilet learning when your child shows signs that they are developmentally ready. We will discuss this with you as necessary.
- **Seasonal Items:**
  - Spring/Summer - sunscreen, sun hat, cooler clothing such as t-shirts/shorts, child friendly mosquito repellent (if desired), proper outdoor shoes. **No flip-flops or loose fitting sandals.**
  - Fall/Winter - boots/snow boots, muddy buddy, snow pants, fall/winter jacket, layered/warm clothing, hat, mittens/gloves. **No scarves.**
- **For children who nap** - blanket/crib sheet and soother (if applicable)
- **For children still drinking formula or breastmilk** - Pre-prepared bottles or sippy cups. Packed in an insulated lunch bag with an ice pack.

**ALL ITEMS MUST BE CLEARLY LABELED WITH YOUR CHILD'S FULL NAME**

## 4. Tuition & Fees



Tuition remains payable regardless of absence or closure, including but not limited to:

- Statutory/Paid/Recognized holiday closures
- Snow days and other weather-related closures
- Air quality closure days
- Power outages
- Professional development and maintenance days (6 per year)
- Program closure days due to illness outbreaks, public health directives, or other health-related emergencies
- Child illness or sick days
- Child vacation days
- Family decision to temporarily withdraw for travel or other personal reasons
- Quarantine or isolation periods due to illness exposure, travel, or public health mandates

- Missed days resulting from custody arrangements, family legal issues, or scheduling conflicts
- Delayed openings or early closures due to weather or emergency events
- Closures due to staff shortages, building maintenance, or facility-related emergencies (e.g., flooding, heating failure)
- Disruptions caused by community-wide events, public transit shutdowns, or road closures
- Days missed due to failure to submit required documentation (e.g., immunization records, emergency contact updates)
- Closures for scheduled pest control, deep cleaning, or other regulatory compliance measures
- Any other absence or unexpected closure beyond the control of the program

Tuition fees ensure the sustainability of our program and our ability to retain qualified staff, maintain our carefully prepared environments, and continue to offer high-quality early learning experiences. Thank you for your understanding and ongoing support.

Below is a breakdown of the monthly tuition fees based upon the month.

### **2025**

| Month (Days of Care) | Fee Payable |
|----------------------|-------------|
| November (20 days)   | \$200.00    |
| December (23 days)   | \$230.00    |

### **2026**

| Month (Days of Care) | Fee Payable |
|----------------------|-------------|
| January (22)         | \$220.00    |
| February (20)        | \$200.00    |



|                |          |
|----------------|----------|
| March (22)     | \$220.00 |
| April (22)     | \$220.00 |
| May (21)       | \$210.00 |
| June (22)      | \$220.00 |
| July (23)      | \$230.00 |
| August (21)    | \$210.00 |
| September (22) | \$220.00 |
| October (22)   | \$220.00 |
| November (21)  | \$210.00 |
| December (23)  | \$230.00 |

### **Payment Procedures**

**Tuition is due on the 1st of each month.** Tuition is payable regardless of child attendance or program closures as outlined in this Parent Handbook.

#### Preferred Payment Method

- Interac e-Transfer (preferred): **Payments should be sent to SummersideMontessori@gmail.com on or before the 1st of each month.** Please include your child's full name in the message field of the transfer to ensure accurate tracking.

#### Alternate Payment Options

If you are unable to pay via Interac e-transfer, the following methods are also accepted:

- **Post-Dated Cheques:** Twelve (12) post-dated cheques (dated on the 1st of the month) for monthly tuition may be submitted at enrollment. Make cheques payable to *Summerside Montessori Children's Studio* and provide them to the Co-Director.
- **Cash:** Must be sealed in a labeled envelope with your child's name. Deposit in the locked payment drop box in the program entry area. **Immediately email notification to SummersideMontessori@gmail.com is required when cash is deposited to ensure prompt collection.** Teachers do not accept payments or provide change.

### **Late or Returned Payments**

- **Late Payment Fee:** A fee of \$50 will apply if tuition is not received by the 3rd of the month.
- **NSF/Failed Payment Fee:** A fee of \$35 will apply for each returned cheque or failed payment attempt.

Please ensure that all payments are submitted on time to avoid **interruption of care and maintain your child's enrollment.**

### **Non Refundable Deposit and Related Registration Fees**

- **Non Refundable Deposit Upon Admission:** A non refundable deposit of \$230.00 is required to secure a child's space. This non refundable deposit will be applied to the final month's tuition when proper withdrawal notice is given. Interac e-transfer is the preferred method of payment and should be sent to SummersideMontessori@gmail.com upon enrollment. Please include your child's full name in the message field of the transfer.
- **Use of Deposit Conditions:** The deposit is **only** applied to the last month's tuition if the required written notice is given. If a parent fails to provide the

required written notice, withdraws early, has their space terminated or has unpaid fees, the deposit will be forfeited. We do not provide refunds of the deposit.

### **Withdrawal and Refund Policy**

- A **minimum of one month and one day's written notice** is required for withdrawal from the program. Written notice should be sent by email to SummersideMontessori@gmail.com
- **If proper notice is not given, the deposit will be forfeited. We do not provide refunds for the deposit.**
- Refer to the chart on the next page for a breakdown of the required notice dates for withdrawal. Refer to the **Last Day of Enrollment** column to determine the child's last date of enrollment. Then refer to the **Notice Must Be Given By** column to determine the date that Summerside Montessori Children's Studio must receive the parent's/guardian's written notice of withdrawal.

| <b>Month of Withdrawal</b> | <b>Notice Must Be Given By</b> | <b>Last Day of Enrollment</b> |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| January                    | December 31                    | January 31                    |
| February                   | January 31                     | February 28                   |
| March                      | February 28                    | March 31                      |
| April                      | March 31                       | April 30                      |
| May                        | April 30                       | May 31                        |

|           |              |              |
|-----------|--------------|--------------|
| June      | May 31       | June 30      |
| July      | June 30      | July 31      |
| August    | July 31      | August 31    |
| September | August 31    | September 30 |
| October   | September 30 | October 31   |
| November  | October 31   | November 30  |
| December  | November 30  | December 31  |

### **Additional Fees**

- **Late Pick-Up Fee:** Parents will be billed \$10 for any amount of time within the first 10 minutes, and an additional \$1.00 per minute per child after the initial 10 minutes. Refer to the Late Pick-Up Procedure Policy for further information.
- **Additional Programming:** Occasional special events, or enrichment activities may have separate fees, which will be communicated in advance.

### **Financial Assistance**

Families may be eligible for additional subsidies through the **PEI Child Care Subsidy Program**. Please inquire with that program for further details

## 5. Hours of Operation & Attendance



We strive to provide a consistent and structured daily routine while ensuring flexibility to meet the needs of families.

### Operating Hours

- Monday to Friday: Full Day Program 7:15 AM – 5:15 PM
- The centre remains closed on statutory/paid/recognized holidays & professional development days. These include:
  - New Year's Day
  - Islander Day
  - Good Friday
  - Easter Monday
  - Victoria Day
  - Canada Day

- Labour Day
- National Day for Truth and Reconciliation
- Remembrance Day
- Thanksgiving Day
- Christmas Day
- Boxing Day
- The centre may also close for emergency closure days such as unsafe air quality days, storm/snow days and/or power outages etc.

### Storm, Weather & Air Quality Delayed Opening/Early Closing, Full Day Closure Days or For Other Unexpected Reasons

On occasion we may need to delay opening, close early or have a full day closure due to a snowstorm or for other weather/air quality related issues. Generally we will follow the Three Oaks Family of Public Schools. If these schools close we will also be closed. If there are delayed openings in the Three Oaks Family of Public Schools we will also be delayed by the same amount of time. If the Three Oaks Family of Public Schools close early we will also close early. Parents/Guardians should listen to the radio for updates as we will call into CBC 96.1 & SPUD FM 102 to advise of any delayed openings, early closures or full day closures due to storms, weather or air quality. We will also post on our Instagram account if we are closed for the day.

Sometimes we may need to close for an emergency or for some other unexpected reason. This could include due to a power outage, a health emergency, due to being short staffed or for some other unanticipated reason.

Parents/Guardians will be contacted when we need to close early for the day and we expect children to be picked up promptly.

### Drop-Off & Pick-Up Procedures

- **Drop-Off:** Parents are required to sign their child in upon arrival.
- Drop-Off Times:

- We request that children are dropped off as follows:
  - Your child may arrive **as early as 7:15 AM but not later than 9:00 AM.**
  - Due to child-staff ratio requirements, we can only accept children later than the above posted times if prior arrangements have been made with the Co-Director. This is to ensure minimal disruption to the Montessori work cycle times that we aim to provide each morning and afternoon.
- **Pick-Up:** Parents must sign their child out at pick-up. Any changes to the authorized pick-up person must be communicated in advance.
- Pick-Up Times:
  - We request that children are picked up as follows:
    - Your child may leave anytime but **not later than 5:15 PM.**
- **Identification Requirement:** Staff may request photo ID from any individual picking up a child if they are not immediately recognized.
- During busy holiday periods, we may ask for

#### Late Pick-Up Policy

#### **Late Pick-Up:**

If a child is not picked up by the scheduled pick-up time, we will make every effort to contact the parents or guardians. If the child is not picked up by the end of the child's daily Montessori session, the studio will charge a late pick-up fee.

**Late Pick-Up Fee: Parents will be billed \$10 for any amount of time within the first 10 minutes, and an additional \$1.00 per minute per child after the initial 10 minutes.**

Parents will be required to sign a late pick up form when they are late.

The Child Care Office will invoice parents for all late pickups and prompt payment is required. Non-payment of late pick-up fees could result in the termination of a child's space.

If you are going to be late, please contact the centre.



**If the parent or person designated to pick up the child has not made contact with the centre after 10 minutes of being late we will begin calling your child's emergency contacts. Late fees will continue until your child is picked up.**

**If we are unable to reach the parent or designated person to pick the child or any of the emergency contacts on file within 45 minutes of the end of the program your child is enrolled in we will contact the PEI Child Protection Services and request guidance. During business hours we will call - 1-877-341-3101. After business hours we will call - 1-800-341-6868.**

**We will also document the situation.**

Families are required to provide their child's expected pick-up time. We kindly request that pick-up times are adhered to as closely as possible to ensure a smooth transition for both the child and the staff. If there is a change to the planned pick-up time, please notify Summerside Montessori Children's Studio in advance.

**Repeated late pick-ups may result in a review of the child's enrollment.**

## 6. Health & Safety



At Summerside Montessori Children's Studio, we prioritize the well-being of all children by maintaining strict health and safety policies. These guidelines ensure a clean, secure, and nurturing environment for all children and staff.

### **Procedure for When Children Should Be Excluded from the Program Due to Illness**

Summerside Montessori Children's Studio adheres to a strict policy regarding health and illness. The purpose of our policy is to ensure that our child care environment remains as free from illness as possible. When children come to child care ill they put at risk the health and safety of educators and other children in the program.

**It is for this reason that children who are experiencing symptoms of illness must not attend child care.**

Parents/guardians are advised to keep their children at home or to seek alternative care for children who have shown the following conditions:

1. **Fever over 100°F (37.8°C) or higher.**
2. **Head lice.**
3. **Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea** - Children can return after they have been symptom free for **48 hours**. This means **48 hours** from the last time they complained of nausea, they vomited or had a stool that was diarrhea.
4. **Eye infections, such as conjunctivitis.** Children showing signs of conjunctivitis must be treated and the child's eye(s) must be clear (showing no pink in the white of the eye or discharge) before they can return to child care.
5. **Infected skin** - (rash, itchy marks or dots) - Children may return to child care after they have been examined for any undiagnosed skin irritations or conditions and have provided a written medical clearance.
6. **Rash accompanied by fever.**
7. **Excessively runny** nose with green or yellow discharge.
8. **Communicable diseases/contagious illnesses** (e.g., mumps, measles, chickenpox, RSV, whooping cough, COVID-19, see list below for further examples).
9. **Severe cold** - Obvious discharge of green or greyish mucus. (Children may return to child care when the mucus discharge has substantially subsided and is clear.)
10. **Persistent cough** - If the cough is 4-6 times per hour and/or if choking or vomiting accompanies the cough. (Children may return to child care when the coughing has subsided if they are clear of other symptoms.)
11. **Ear infection or sore throat** - Child complains of sore ears, is pulling at their ears, has trouble swallowing or is experiencing throat pain.
12. **Excessive tiredness, fatigue or is generally lethargic** - Children must have the energy to fully participate in the program. They must not return to child care until they feel well enough to participate in all program activities.
13. **Loss of appetite, headache, loss of sense of taste or smell, difficulty breathing, chills, body aches, changes in behaviour (seems more**

**emotional, sad or crying more than usual)** - Children must have the energy to fully participate in the program. They must not return to child care until they feel well enough to participate in all program activities.

Some illnesses have a given amount of time that the child is to be away from the program (see below), or if the child is not well enough to participate in the program's daily activities they should remain at home.

Children should be excluded if they have:

- Chicken Pox: Until 6 days after the start of the rash or when sores have dried up and crusted.
- Shingles: Only if sores cannot be covered by clothing or a dressing; if not exclude until sores have crusted and are dry.
- Measles: Until 5 days after the rash starts
- Rubella: Until 6 days after the rash starts
- Mumps: Until 9 days after the rash starts
- Hepatitis A: For one week after jaundice appears or as directed by health department
- Active Tuberculosis: Until the local health department approves return to the facility
- Strep Throat: Until 48 hours after the initial antibiotic treatment and fever has ended

- Scabies/head lice, etc.: Until 48 hours after treatment has begun

**Medical Clearance:** For specific illnesses or upon request, parents may need to provide a written statement from a healthcare professional confirming the child is not contagious and can return to the centre.

**Communicable Illness Notification:** Parents must inform the centre if their child has a confirmed communicable disease. Here is a list of the communicable diseases that we must be informed about:

- **Respiratory Illnesses**
  - COVID-19
  - Influenza (Flu)
  - Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)
  - Whooping Cough (Pertussis)
  - Common Cold (caused by various viruses)
- **Skin and Rash Illnesses**
  - Chickenpox (Varicella)
  - Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease
  - Measles
  - Fifth Disease (Parvovirus B19)
  - Scarlet Fever
- **Gastrointestinal Illnesses**
  - Norovirus
  - Rotavirus
  - E. coli Infections
  - Salmonella
  - Giardia
- **Other Contagious Illnesses**
  - Mumps
  - Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)
  - Head Lice (Pediculosis)

- Strep Throat
- Impetigo

Under no circumstances should children displaying any of the above symptoms be given medication to mask symptoms (e.g., Tylenol) and then sent to the child care centre. This compromises the well-being of the child and others in the care environment.

## **Monitoring of Children for Potential Illness Upon Arrival and While in Care**

### **Policy Statement**

To ensure the health and wellbeing of both the children who are registered in the child care program the employees of the program will monitor the health of children upon arrival and also throughout the duration of the day.

### **Procedure**

1. Parents are asked to do a general health check in the morning to see if their child is well enough to attend child care that day. If the child is not well the parents must make alternate arrangements for their child's care.
2. On arrival at the program the employees will have a look at the child and ask any questions if concerns appear. The employees are looking to see if there are any physical symptoms and to see if the child seems to be able to participate in the day's activities. If, in the opinion of the employee, the child is not well enough to remain in care, this will be expressed to the parent.
3. Throughout the day the program employees will be watching the health of all the children. If a particular child appears irritable, is continually crying, or requires more attention than can be provided without compromising the

health and safety of the other children; the child's parent/s shall be contacted to come and take the child home. If a child becomes ill or symptoms increase, the child's parents will be contacted for the child to return home. If it is a case of communicable diseases the program may be obligated to inform Environmental Health and the parents of the other children in the program if there are two or more cases.

4. **Symptom-Free Requirement:** Children must be symptom-free for 48 hours without medication before returning to the centre.

### **Procedure for Dealing With Children Who Become Ill While in Care at the Program**

Summerside Montessori Children's Studio employees are trained to recognize symptoms of illness and care for children who are ill. Symptoms of illness can appear very rapidly. Even with our exclusion policies in place we may need to care for children who are sick while waiting for their parents to arrive.

#### **Procedures**

1. **Immediate Action:** Children displaying symptoms of illness while at the centre will be separated from others and monitored by a staff member. Staff will comfort and reassure the child as necessary. Staff may choose to wear a mask while caring for a sick child.
2. **Notify Parents/Guardian Contact:** Parents or guardians will be contacted to arrange immediate pick-up.
3. **When to Contact Emergency Contacts:** If parents/guardians cannot be reached, emergency contacts on file will be notified.

4. **In a Medical Emergency:** If a child's condition becomes critical, 911 should be called immediately.
5. **Sanitization:** All areas where the sick child played or rested will be cleaned and sanitized. All toys will be cleaned as well.
6. **Handwashing:** Staff caring for a sick child will complete proper hand washing to prevent further spread of the illness in the classroom.
7. **Documentation of Illness:** Once the child has been picked up, staff will document the child's departure from child care by completing the **Child Illness Form**.

## **Procedure for Administration of Medication to Children by Child Care Employees**

### **Policy Statement**

Summerside Montessori Children's Studio employees cannot administer medication without the proper information and consent. The program requires written consent from the child's parent or guardian with written directions from a licensed physician. Acceptable directions are a label on a prescription drug bottle or a written letter from a physician including the child's full name, medication dose, frequency medication should be administered, and any special precautions.

### **Staff Procedure**

1. The Parent/s must fill out a written consent form stating the correct dosage, time to be given, name of the medication and additional information. This must be accompanied by written directions of a licensed physician. The instructions that are printed on the pharmacy label on the medication are considered acceptable. Only prescribed medication will be administered.
2. Check the medication bottle to ensure it is clearly labeled, in the original bottle and has a valid expiry date.



3. If staff are unsure about the medication for any reason they should not administer it to the child. Staff should ask the parent/guardian questions if needed.
4. Store appropriately depending on medication (as indicated on label).
5. Emergency Medication such as an Epi-Pen or Inhaler is to be kept readily available but in place out of children's reach. Staff will carry on their person during outdoor play time.
6. At the time of administering medication, staff are to read the directions three times:
  - While removing medication from the container.
  - Before pouring or dispensing the medication for the child.
  - After pouring or dispensing the medication but before administering
7. Before administering medication always ensure staff should ensure they have the correct child.
8. After the medication has been administered, staff should return the medication to the locked box and record the dosage, the time medication was administered, who the medication was given to, and initial the form.
9. Staff should record any side effects they may notice.
10. At the end of the day, staff must return all unused medication to the parent/guardian. Staff should inform the parent/guardian of the dosage and time medication was given as well as any side effects that may have occurred.
11. Record the time, date and dosage of medication administered in the Medication Log.

#### Important Guidelines Regarding Medication Administration

##### **1. Prescription and Over-the-Counter Medications:**

- **Prescription Medications:** Medications must be in their original packaging, with the child's name, dosage instructions, and the prescribing doctor's name clearly labeled. Staff will only administer

prescription medications in accordance with the prescribed instructions.

- **Over-the-Counter Medications:** These will be administered only if accompanied by written instructions from the child's physician. Parents are encouraged to consult with their child's healthcare provider before giving over-the-counter medications regularly.
- **Homeopathic and Herbal Remedies:** Parents must provide detailed written instructions from the child's healthcare provider regarding any non-prescribed remedies or supplements. These will only be administered with explicit parental and healthcare provider consent.

## 2. **Non-Administration of Medication:**

- In the event that a parent forgets to send medication with their child, or if the necessary consent forms are not completed, the medication will not be administered.
- If a child becomes ill or needs medication during the day and the parent has not provided the medication or consent, the parent will be contacted immediately to make alternate arrangements.

## 3. **Staff Training:**

- All staff will be trained in the proper procedures for administering medication, including the correct dosage, timing, and handling of emergency situations such as allergic reactions.
- Staff will receive refresher training annually, and any staff member who is new to the program will undergo training as part of their onboarding process.

## Accidents & Injuries

- **Minor injuries** (e.g., scrapes, small cuts) are treated on-site, and parents will receive a **Hugs & Hurts Form** at pick-up. We will usually call parents in advance to let them know of a minor that has occurred; however sometimes if the program is busy we may not have time to do this. Rest assured,

parents will be contacted if we feel the parent needs to be aware of the minor injury.

- **Serious injuries** will be documented in an **Incident Report**, and parents will be contacted immediately.
- In case of an emergency, **911 will be called**, first aid will be provided and parents will be notified as soon as possible.

## 7. Behaviour Expectations & Positive Guidance



Summerside Montessori follows a **respectful, Montessori-based approach** to behaviour guidance, focusing on **positive reinforcement, redirection, and conflict resolution**.

### Guiding Principles

- We believe that **children thrive when they are respected as individuals** and given the opportunity to make independent choices within structured limits.
- **Self-regulation and natural consequences** are encouraged instead of punitive measures.

- Educators guide behaviour by **modeling respect, kindness, and problem-solving skills**.

## Prohibited Disciplinary Actions

### **We will do not permit any form of:**

- **Physical punishment** (e.g., spanking, hitting).
- **Verbal or emotional punishment** (e.g., shaming, threats).
- **Withholding of basic needs** (e.g., food, rest, toileting).

## Our Ground Rules

We follow a set of basic ground rules in our program. These include:

Our basic rules include:

- Be kind and gentle to one another.
- Everyone has a right to privacy and concentration. Please don't disturb anyone who is trying to concentrate on his/her work or play.
- Listen when others speak. Do not interrupt.
- Everyone has a right to their personal belongings. Please do not touch anything that is not yours without the owner's permission.
- Everyone has the right to feel safe and secure. Please don't express anger or upset feelings in a way that insults or threatens someone else.
- Everyone here has the right to be physically safe. Please don't do anything that might hurt or endanger anyone.
- No one is allowed to physically fight, push, wrestle, trip, or use any other aggressive behaviour.
- Use the play area equipment as intended.
- Do not climb on the fence.
- Be kind to friends who might want to play with you when playing outside.
- Stop chasing or playing scary games when asked.
- Please don't pull or trip one another.

- Keep sand and sand toys in the sandbox.
- Do not throw sand, gravel or other objects that might hurt a friend.
- If asked not to throw snow please stop.
- Do not leave your teacher's supervision without permission.
- Children may only go to the parking lot with a parent or guardian at pickup time.
- Please help to put all sand toys and other outdoor equipment away when you are finished playing with them.

### Addressing Challenging Behaviour

At Summerside Montessori Children's Studio we strive to support the needs of all of the children in our care however some behaviours are considered to be more concerning. This includes but is not limited to: biting, hitting, punching, slapping, excessive yelling/screaming, pushing, shoving, kicking, hair pulling, throwing toys or objects at children or educators and/or running away from the group. Such behaviours may be considered to be challenging by the Co-Director or Program Owner of Summerside Montessori Children's Studio.

In some cases, a child's behaviour may require more guidance, support or intervention than we are able to provide. **If a child has repeated challenging behaviours, minor incidents, reportable incidents or endangers the health and safety of the other children or educators in the program they may be asked to leave our child care program. This can happen with or without notice; depending upon the behaviours and/or circumstances.** Should this occur, the behaviour and situation will be clearly documented in the child's file and Child Care Licensing may also be contacted should the Co-Director and/or Owner feel this is necessary. Such a decision is an absolute last resort and is only taken when all other options have been exhausted.

The decision to terminate a child's space is at the full discretion of the Owner and/or Co-Director of Summerside Montessori Children's Studio.

## 8. Our Approach to Inclusion



Summerside Montessori is committed to **creating an inclusive environment** where all children are valued and supported.

**We believe every child is capable and deserving of meaningful participation in all aspects of our program.** Our inclusive practices are rooted in:

- Respect for diversity and individuality.
- Adapting environments to meet the needs of the child, rather than expecting the child to conform to the environment.
- Promoting cultural competency and fostering connections to nature and community.

- Supporting educators and families in creating a collaborative, nurturing space where children feel safe, valued, and empowered to reach their potential.

We have an Inclusion Policy that families are welcome to review if they would like to understand more about how we practice inclusion within our environment. Please ask the Co-Director to provide you with a copy of the policy if you are interested in it.

## **Termination When Needs Cannot Be Fully Met**

### **Standard Process for Transitioning a Child Out of the Program**

While we are committed to supporting every child, there may be instances where, despite our best efforts and collaborative work with families and external specialists, we are unable to fully meet a child's needs. In such cases we will do our best to work with the child's family to transition the child to another care environment that is better able to meet their needs. In situations where the needs of the child are far greater than what we are able to support or there are health/safety concerns the Owner and/or Co-Director have full discretion to terminate a child's space without notice.



## 9. Parent Communication



We believe in **open, transparent communication** between educators and families to support each child's development.

### Parent-Teacher Communication

- Teachers provide periodic updates to parents about their child's progress in our program.
- We update parents about program events as necessary so that they are informed about the activities in our program.
- We also post information on our website and social media.
- Parents will be immediately contacted if Staff have any urgent concerns.

### How to Raise Concerns

- Parents can contact the Co-Director with any questions or concerns by sending an email to [SummersideMontessori@gmail.com](mailto:SummersideMontessori@gmail.com).

- For more serious matters, parents can also request a meeting with the Co-Director.

## 10. Emergency Procedures



Summerside Montessori maintains **detailed emergency response plans** to ensure the safety of children and staff.

### Fire Drills & Evacuations

- Fire drills are conducted **monthly** to familiarize children and staff with evacuation procedures.
- In the event of a fire, children will be led to the **designated safe area** outside the building.

### Medical Emergencies

- All educators are trained in **first aid and CPR**.
- Parents will be notified **immediately** if a medical emergency occurs.

## **Emergency Relocation**

- **In the event that we need to relocate from the child care building we will walk the children to KFC which is located at 62 Water Street or another location of the Co-Director's choosing at the time of the event. We will begin calling parents to immediately pick up their children.**

## 11. Policy for Termination of a Child's Space



Enrollment in our program does not guarantee continuing enrolment. Our primary objective is to find the right match between child, family and the child care program. If it becomes clear that our child care program has proven to not be an appropriate match with either the child or the child's family; we will communicate our decision for the child not to remain at the Facility. A six week probation period is in effect for all new children in the program.

While we strive to support all children and families, **termination of enrolment** may be necessary in certain cases.

### Grounds for Termination

- **Failure to pay tuition** beyond the agreed timeline.
- **Chronic late pick-ups** despite multiple warnings.
- **Disruptive or dangerous behaviour** that cannot be safely managed within the program.
- **Parent misconduct**, including harassment of staff or failure to adhere to policies.

- **Other situations deemed appropriate by the Owner and/or Co-Director.**

Whenever possible, we work **collaboratively with families** to find solutions before considering termination of a child's space.

## 12. Parent/Visitor Observations & Parent Engagement



### **Open Door Policy**

At Summerside Montessori Children's Studio, we believe in fostering openness, trust, and partnership with families. Our Open Door Policy welcomes parents and guardians to visit and observe their child's classroom experience at mutually suitable times.

Visits are arranged in advance with the Co-Director to ensure that observations are calm, respectful, and supportive of the children's focus and routines.

We invite parents to quietly observe the Montessori environment, gaining insight into their child's learning and the beauty of the prepared classroom. Conversations about children or program details should take place privately outside observation times to maintain confidentiality.

All visitors are asked to sign in, follow health and safety protocols, and respect the peaceful tone of our Montessori space.

## **Why We Ask Parents to Observe Quietly and Not Interact**

Montessori classrooms are thoughtfully prepared environments designed to promote independence, focus, and deep engagement in learning. Children are encouraged to make their own choices, repeat activities, and develop concentration at their own pace. When adults speak to or assist children during these moments, it can unintentionally interrupt their natural learning process and shift the child's attention away from their own inner drive.

By observing without intervening, parents have the opportunity to witness the Montessori method in action—seeing how children take initiative, solve problems, and experience the joy of self-discovery. This quiet observation helps parents better understand their child's development, interests, and growing capabilities.

We ask all visitors, including parents, to allow children to remain immersed in their work. Your quiet presence contributes to the calm and respectful atmosphere that is essential to the Montessori method.

## **Parent Engagement**

Families are an essential part of our Montessori community. We encourage parent engagement in ways that support connection, collaboration, and shared purpose.

Our Parent Advisory Committee meets a few times each year to exchange ideas, provide feedback, and help plan community-building events such as the Spring Tea, Family Summer Gathering, or other special activities.

Participation is informal and open to all interested parents—there's no ongoing commitment, just an open invitation to contribute when possible. The committee provides



a way for families to share their perspectives, support program initiatives, and strengthen our collective sense of community.

### **Prospective Family Visits**

Families considering enrollment are invited to book a visit in advance. These visits allow parents to observe the Montessori environment, meet staff, and learn more about the program. We ask that prospective parents observe respectfully to preserve the integrity of the classroom routine.

### **Safety, Confidentiality & Unscheduled Visitors**

- **All visitors must follow health, safety, and sign-in protocols** during visits.
- **Child and family confidentiality is strictly respected**—discussions regarding any child must occur privately and never during an observation.
- Spontaneous visits or drop-in tours are **not permitted**. Prospective families arriving without an appointment will be redirected to our admissions process online.
- **Regulatory inspectors (e.g. licensing, fire, public health)** may arrive unannounced as part of compliance checks. Staff will verify their credentials before permitting entry.

### 13. Final Notes and Suggested Reading



Thank you for being a family of Summerside Montessori Children's Studio. We are thrilled you are part of our beautiful little Montessori program.

This handbook serves as a **guide for families** to understand the expectations and procedures at Summerside Montessori Children's Studio. We welcome your questions and feedback related to all aspects of our program.

Please note that our policies are subject to periodic review, and parents will be notified of any major changes. Summerside Montessori Children's Studio may modify this handbook and/or our policies at the discretion of the Owner and/or Co-Director at any time and without immediate notice in some cases. Modifications will be communicated to families via written email communication and/or paper written notice.

Every effort is made to ensure policy modification communications are accurate and current. Should a discrepancy be noted, the intended outcome for the policy will be determined by the Owner and/or Co-Director of Montessori Children's Studio.

## **Suggested Reading**

We encourage families to learn more about Montessori. Here are some books worth adding to your reading list:

- The Discovery of the Child by Maria Montessori
- The Absorbent Mind by Maria Montessori
- Montessori for Every Family by Tim Seldin and Lorna McGrath
- How to Raise An Amazing Child The Montessori Way by Tim Seldin
- Montessori and Mindfulness by Susan Mayclin Stephenson

## **Our Contact Information**

### **Summerside Montessori Children's Studio**

 22 Water Street, Summerside, PE

 SummersideMontessori@gmail.com

 (902) 918-3116 - Leave a Message and We Will Get Back To You

