

The Duluth Montessori School



Parent Handbook

Welcome to The Duluth Montessori School

We are happy that you have chosen Montessori education for your child. We are committed to providing the very best AMI experience for your whole family.

The mission of The Duluth Montessori School is to provide a sound foundation in basic education emphasizing character, concentration, independence and a respect for the rights and properties of others.

This Parent Handbook is designed as a reference tool for you to access information about The Duluth Montessori School's policies and procedures. The partnership between parents, teachers and administrators is key to a successful relationship and our goal is to provide the tools for good communication from the start.

Please familiarize yourself with the contents of this handbook and refer back to it as needed throughout the school year. If you have questions or comments, please direct them to the main office at 770-476-9307.

Thank you and welcome to The Duluth Montessori School family!

Table of Contents

Welcome.....	2
Table of Contents.....	3
Our History	4
Partnership Agreement	5
General Policies and Procedures:	
School Hours	9
Attendance.....	10
Carpool	11
Dress Code.....	13
Freedom and Discipline Policy	15
Health Policy	17
Nutrition: Breakfast/Lunch/Snacks.....	23
Field Trips/Going Outs	25
Communication: Parent Meetings/Newsletters/Conferences	26
Montessori Transitions	28
Parent Participation	29
Teacher Workshops and Observations	31
Weather, Fire or Other Emergency.....	31
Contact Information	32

*Parent Handbook printed by
The Duluth Montessori School, Inc.
Revised August 2011*

The History of The Duluth Montessori School

Founded in 1984 by Edith K. Overholser, The Duluth Montessori School is committed to providing an environment in which children have the opportunity to grow physically, emotionally, academically and in spirit. Each child is encouraged to reach his or her fullest potential at an individual pace.

Our AMI trained teachers guide the child to curiosity and meaningful work in accordance with Montessori principles of observation, individual liberty and preparation of the environment. AMI teacher certification represents a year of graduate work, providing the most thorough preparation in Montessori theory and practice. All of our instructors are AMI educated, thereby coming to us with the highest level of Montessori training. Ongoing education is required for teachers, assistants and administrative staff.

Primary emphasis is on the natural development of children. This takes place in a structured, interactive environment designed to meet their needs. Through active involvement in the classroom, children develop self-discipline and become self-directed, creating a working, real life model community.

Children are grouped together in the toddler community from ages fourteen to thirty-six months; in the primary community from ages three to six years; and in the elementary community from ages six to twelve years. In this way, every child experiences a cycle of introduction, familiarity and leadership.

The Duluth Montessori School has two splendid, rolling campuses with beautiful facilities and outdoor environments that are extensions of the classroom studies. Our original location on Main Street has three buildings that hold the primary community, the extended care program and administrative offices. Only two miles from our original location, the Sugarloaf Campus is an extension of the school and has two buildings which hold the elementary community, the toddler community, and administrative offices.



Partnership Agreement

The relationship between the family and the school is essential to success for the child. In order to ensure that the best relationship is formed, we enter into this Partnership Agreement with parents.

What does the school expect from parents?

- *Make continuing efforts both to understand and to embrace the Montessori approach and to work in partnership with the school.*

The Duluth Montessori School desires parents who understand and embrace our mission. To that end, we help parents learn about the Montessori approach by providing information and opportunities for parent education throughout the school year. Parents are expected to attend regularly scheduled parent-teacher conferences, parent meetings, Montessori education events and to read articles provided. Also, parents should familiarize themselves with the philosophy, policies, and procedures contained in the Parent Handbook and other school publications.

- *Demonstrate respect for all adults and children, the school, and the school's programs.*

Through your behavior, you contribute to your child's moral development and to the culture and climate of the school. Model for your child respect: for themselves, their work, their classmates, parents of classmates, teachers and other school staff. Respect begins with civility and deepens into trust. Our most fundamental behavioral guidelines for the children are: respect for self, respect for others, and respect for the environment. We expect the same from parents and school staff at all times and in all relationships within the school community. Support your child by speaking of his teachers, classmates and school in positive terms. Respect and abide by the school's policies and procedures. Honor your commitments. Look for ways to make a positive contribution to the life of the school.

- *Strive to parent according to Montessori principles.*

Learn as much as you can about Montessori principles as they apply to your interactions with your child and preparation of the home environment. Remember that you should never do for the child what he is able to do for himself. Prepare the home so that you allow your child to engage in all of the simple tasks of

practical life. Children develop a love of learning and become responsible, independent and capable when parents' values and expectations are consistent with those of the school.

You have chosen Montessori education for your family. Extra academic activities are not necessary (working with your child at home, tutoring, outside math programs, etc.) and, in fact, undermine the Montessori principles.

The Montessori philosophy is built on concrete experiences for the young child. The Duluth Montessori School encourages parents to eliminate, or at the very least, limit exposure to television and other electronics, including computers.

- *Maintain active, direct and respectful, two-way communication with the school.*

Read communications that are sent home including memos, letters, newsletters and calendars. Inform the school in a timely fashion of pertinent changes in your child's life as well as any changes to your contact information.

What can parents reasonably expect from the school?

- *The Duluth Montessori School maintains accreditation by the Association Montessori Internationale (AMI) and high standards for training and professionalism among its faculty.*

The Association Montessori Internationale was founded in 1929 by Dr. Maria Montessori to maintain the integrity of her life's work, and to ensure that it would be perpetuated after her death.

AMI accreditation ensures: an AMI trained teacher at the appropriate age level for each class; a consultation by an AMI trained consultant once every three years; a complete set of materials for each class from a manufacturer authorized by AMI; classes made up of children representing a three year age range, between 28-35 children in each class, including a well balanced division of ages to ensure social development; morning sessions five days per week for the full class, with an afternoon session consisting of two to three hours of Montessori activities for the older children in the primary class; an uninterrupted three-hour work cycle each morning.

- *The Duluth Montessori School aspires to fulfill its mission as an AMI Montessori School.*

As a Montessori school, we are different from traditional schools. Our first commitment is to the multi-dimensional development of the child. Montessori children amass a great deal of factual knowledge in school. However, our aim is for each child to be far more than a repository of this information: we guide each child to think for himself. Cognitive development and a solid academic foundation are important, yet they represent only one dimension of our aspirations for your child. Equally significant is your child's social, emotional, spiritual and physical

development.

- *We aim to maintain open, honest, timely, and respectful communication with you about your child and about information affecting the school community.*

There are two regularly scheduled parent-teacher conferences each year. In the event of special concerns, your child's teacher will contact you to discuss these concerns. Each DMS teacher is a well-trained professional and her evaluation is confidential between parent, teacher and administration and based on direct observation of your child. All parent conferences are done face to face where the teacher will offer her current best understanding of your child's progress, strengths and needs. The teacher's observations may be augmented by input from administration.

In addition to the parent-teacher conferences, The Duluth Montessori School also distributes frequent parent memos, a school calendar and a printed newsletter, *The Buzz*. We hold regularly scheduled parent education nights as well as occasional morning parent education meetings.

- *The administration of The Duluth Montessori School focuses on the needs of the individual child in harmony with the life of the community. All decisions are driven by our mission to provide a sound foundation in basic education while aiding in the development of character, concentration, independence and a respect for the rights of others.*

Administrative staff works with all aspects of the school: students, parents, extended family, faculty, alumni, prospective parents, professional visitors, government officials, other schools and educational organizations, and the general public. In your interactions with administration, you can expect professional, courteous, and business-like conduct, as well as mutually respectful communications.

The administration often faces decisions requiring balance of competing priorities. Sometimes those factors are mutually exclusive; sometimes equally well-intentioned adults see matters differently. In making decisions, the administration will focus on the interest of the individual child in balance with the needs of the school.

GENERAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

School Hours

Office Hours

Administrative Offices:

Main Street 8:00 am - 3:30 pm

Sugarloaf 8:15 am - 3:45 pm

School Hours

Toddler..... 8:15 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Half-day Primary 8:15 a.m. - 11:45 p.m.

Full-day Primary 8:15 a.m. - 3:15 p.m.

Elementary: 8:15 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Extended Care:

Main Street Primary Community 11:45 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Sugarloaf Toddler Community..... 12:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Sugarloaf Elementary Community 3:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Attendance

Tardiness

Your child misses a very special part of the day when arriving late: classmates greet each other; friends join together to choose work; the teacher plans special lessons for each student. A child feels awkward coming into the class after missing the beginning rituals of the day. It is also a disruption to the class when a child arrives late. Children are eager to see their friends and become distracted.

If you arrive after carpool you must park and walk your child to the office to sign him in. Any child arriving after 9:00 a.m. will not be admitted to the class without a doctor's note.

If you expect your child to arrive late because of an appointment, please send a note to your child's teacher in advance so that lessons can be re-arranged according to his arrival.

Early Pick-Up

If your child is to be picked up early, please send a note to your child's teacher in advance so that lessons can be re-arranged according to his dismissal.

To pick up a child early you must sign them out at the office and your child will be brought to you.

Absences

It is important that your child is in class every day. Each child is an essential part of the classroom dynamics. Lessons are planned for children each day, thus a child's absence impacts the schedule.

We do not, however, expect you to send your child to school when he is sick or recuperating. See our Health Policy found on page 24 of this handbook.

Please call the office when your child has an unexpected absence for sickness or other reason. If we do not hear from you by 9:00 a.m. we will call you.

Carpool Procedures

General Carpool Information

We are dedicated to ensuring that your children are transported safely to and from school. The state of Georgia has specific laws regarding child safety seats. In accordance with the law, children under six who have outgrown their forward-facing seat must be restrained in a booster seat until the vehicle seat belts fit properly, usually at age 8 or when they are 4'9" tall.

Many families choose to form carpools to share transportation duties. Be sure to inform the office of these arrangements. We will not release your child to anyone without your authorization. If you must make alternative arrangements from time to time, be sure to inform the office.

It is very important that our children be properly restrained in a car seat or booster seat. Please attach a note to your child's booster seat if you are leaving it for another person to transport your child. This will avoid any miscommunication. Car seats should be left where your child's classroom dismisses. Carpool time is a very busy time - a time when teachers and classroom assistants cannot be expected to remember which child is going home with another, or to know the whereabouts of a child's car seat. It is the responsibility of the driver to ensure that every child is properly restrained.

Supervision of children is crucial. Please do not engage teachers or assistants in conversation at this time.

Every effort is made to be sure your child goes home with his or her belongings. If something is forgotten that must come home at once, leave the carpool line and park away from the main drive to retrieve the item.

At all times please be courteous and aware of surrounding traffic. Pull around to the back of the line to take your place; do not block intersections, driveways or railroad tracks.

Please refer to the next section regarding carpool procedures for each campus.

Main Street Campus

An assistant will be stationed outside to welcome your child at your designated arrival time. Our goal is for parents to drop off their child and have the child come into the class on his own. This action fosters independence and pride. Please pull up to the assistant's station to release your child. Put your car in park while children are entering and exiting the car. **At no time should a child be released in other parts of the driveway or after the assistant has begun working in the classroom.** If, for some reason, it is necessary to drop off your child after morning carpool is over, park in the office parking lot and accompany your child to the main office to be signed in and admitted to class. **After 9:00 a.m. children may not be admitted without a doctor's note.**

At release, an assistant will be stationed outside to bring your child to you. **Stay in your car.** Once your child is in the car, pull up to the end of the drive to buckle your child and secure his belongings. You will have plenty of time to accomplish this while we are loading other cars. If you arrive more than fifteen minutes past your child's scheduled release time, park in the office parking lot and report to the office to pick up your child and settle your late fees.

Sugarloaf Campus

Traffic enters through both driveways. Please be extremely cautious while driving in the circular drive. **After 9:00 a.m., children may not be admitted without a doctor's note.**

☞ Elementary

Children are dropped off and picked up at the gate closest to the lower building. Please put your car in park while children are entering and exiting the car. Do not allow your child out of the car unless a staff member is present to open your child's car door. We cannot accept children before 8:15 a.m.

After 3:45 p.m., children that have not been picked up will be sent to Extended Care in the lower level of the main building and a late pick-up fee will be charged to your account.

☞ Toddler

An assistant will be stationed outside to welcome your child at arrival. Please pull up to the assistant's station to release your child. Put your car in park while children are entering and exiting the car. **At no time should a child be released in other parts of the driveway or after the assistant has begun working in the classroom.** If, for some reason, it is necessary to drop off your child after morning carpool is over, park in the office parking lot and accompany your child to the main office to be signed in and admitted to class.

At release, a teacher or staff member will be stationed outside to bring your child to you. **Stay in your car.** Once your child is in the car, pull up to the end of the drive to buckle your child and secure his belongings. You will have plenty of time to accomplish this while we are loading other cars. If you arrive more than fifteen minutes past your child's scheduled release time, park in the office parking lot to pick up your child and settle your late fees.

Dress Code

Toddler

Children should be dressed in comfortable clothing that they can manage by themselves. Elastic waist, large buttons and short sleeves help younger children to be more independent. Polo shirts or plain T-shirts with pants, shorts or skorts are good choices. Dresses can be challenging, therefore, shirts and pants are preferred.

Children must have two pairs of shoes for school – indoor and outdoor. Outdoor shoes should be soft-soled and supportive. Safety is always our first concern, so sandals, crocs or croc-type shoes, patent leather dress shoes, cowboy boots, etc. are inappropriate for the playground, as they provide no traction. Light-up style shoes are not permitted at school. Children function better in solid, closed, proper fitting shoes. Indoor shoes should be well fitting and washable croc-type shoes, as toilet learning is in progress.

Jewelry and other adornments are a distraction and should be left home. Perfumes and heavily scented lotions can be irritating to some and can be dangerous for those with allergies and are not permitted.

Please remember that we are encouraging your child to be independent, so keep that in mind in terms of clothing items that you are sending. Does this item promote independence? Can pants be pulled up and down easily? Can the shirt be changed easily? Are these socks loose enough to pull up? Also, keep in mind that the children will be using paint, clay and water as well as going outside and cooking or preparing food. Because these activities tend to soil clothing, “play clothes” are recommended.

Primary

Children should be dressed in comfortable clothing that they can manage by themselves. Elastic waist, large buttons and short sleeves help younger children to be more independent. Remember, they will be working on the floor, painting, working in the gardens, etc., and should not have to worry about getting dirty. Polo shirts or plain T-shirts with pants, shorts or skorts are good choices. Clothing with large logos, cartoon characters, and fashions such as muscle shirts, half-tops and short skirts are inappropriate and unacceptable. Shorts must be worn underneath dresses and skirts.

Children must have two pairs of shoes for school – indoor and outdoor. Both pairs of shoes should be soft-soled and supportive. Safety is always our first concern, so sandals, crocs or croc-type shoes, patent leather dress shoes, cowboy boots, etc. are inappropriate, as they provide no traction. Light-up style shoes are not permitted at school. Children function better in solid, closed, proper fitting shoes. Leather shoes that can be polished in the classroom are preferred.

Jewelry and other adornments are a distraction and should be left home. Perfumes and heavily scented lotions can be irritating to some and can be dangerous for those with allergies and are not permitted.

Elementary

Children should dress in comfortable, loose fitting clothing that is appropriate for gardening, painting, working with clay, etc. Clothing with cartoon characters, wordage or other similar advertisements is not allowed. Shorts should be longer in length (walking short style). If girls wear skirts they must have shorts underneath. Tank tops must have shoulder straps of at least a two-finger width. Children with long hair are expected to keep it pulled back out of their face while at school.

Indoor shoes must be light, quiet and fit the foot well. “Keds” style shoes are ideal for the classroom. High heels, hard sole shoes, light-up shoes and clog styles shoes are inappropriate for the classroom and may not be worn to school. Please, no sandals, crocs or croc-type shoes. Outdoor shoes must be stable, strong athletic shoes that completely enclose the foot, as children need to be safe on the uneven terrain of the playground.

Freedom and Discipline Policy

The balance of freedom and responsibility is essential to form a harmonious community. It is freedom with responsibility that leads the individual to self-discipline. In the classroom the child is allowed to make those choices, which are dictated by his sensitive periods and inherent developmental needs. We must not restrict the child too much or direct him too little otherwise his intellect and personality will not become integrated.

The freedoms of the individual must not infringe on the rights of the others in the group, therefore the teacher is to make sure the freedoms of the child are balanced with rules for courteous and considerate behavior.

Montessori is very clear that behavior, which is unbecoming or harmful to others or to the child himself, is unacceptable. The freedoms in the classroom must have logical limitations, to which the child should feel inclined to conform. The rules that we set must serve the child for life.

We have specific rules in the class with certain limitations.

1. The child is free to choose his work from the lessons he has been presented as long as the material is available and used appropriately.
2. The child is free to work as long as he wishes according to his own timing and rhythm. There are few limitations to this freedom, except the essential events of the day, in which the child is required to participate.
3. The child is free to move about. He may work where he wishes, in any part of the room. He may work at a table or on a mat on the floor. He may approach other children, and if appropriate may even work outside. This freedom must never be a license for producing noise or disorder. The child is not allowed to move in a way that disrupts other children.
4. The child is free to interact and communicate, which brings about a natural socialization process. The child's voice must not be so loud that it produces a noise level that disturbs other children in their work. The child must also learn not to interrupt another child who is working.
5. The child is free to repeat. We may have to introduce the idea of repetition and keep encouraging it. The reason for this is because people move quickly from one thing to another in our fast-paced society.

We can see clearly that freedom in the classroom is not the freedom to be disorderly or undisciplined. The rules are made clear mostly through lessons of grace and courtesy.

Correction of Misbehavior

When we find it necessary to correct a child's behavior we must follow a logical plan. Correction must not be chastisement. Children learn self-discipline if they live under a plan of discipline.

For a plan of discipline to be successful the child must not only understand the rules, but must also wish to conform to them. Unacceptable behavior can have three types of consequences.

1. *Natural Consequences* are natural results of inappropriate action. The child learns from natural consequences without the humiliation of being scolded or corrected by the adult.
2. *Logical Consequences* are decided by the adult and are not to be administered as punishment. They must have a logical relation to the misdeed and usually restrict the freedom that has been abused. The teacher will offer a positive learning experience. The child, when asked to correct his actions, needs encouragement and when a logical consequence fails, it may be that the child perceives the situation incorrectly.
3. *Punishment* is not an acceptable form of correcting behavior. It is illogical and retaliatory. The child gains nothing from punishment except fear of the punishment, therefore this correction is not used in the classroom.

At times it may become necessary to deal with chronic misbehavior. If the teacher is having difficulty with a child she will spend time observing and documenting the situation. The teacher will notify administration in writing that the child is experiencing difficulties. Communication between teacher, parents and administration is vital to understanding and correcting undesirable behavior. Parents will be contacted and asked to come in for a conference to discuss the difficulties and establish a plan of action to correct the misbehavior.

Any intentional behavior that results in injury to another child (hitting, biting, pushing, kicking, etc.) will result in the child being removed from the classroom and parents being called to arrange for immediate pick-up.

Health Policy

We cannot admit your child to school if one or more of the following conditions exists:

- ☞ The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in normal school activities, including outdoor play.
- ☞ The illness/injury requires more care than teachers can provide without compromising the health, safety, and supervision of the other children in the class.
- ☞ The child has an oral temperature of 100.4 degrees or greater.
- ☞ Symptoms and signs of possible severe illness, such as lethargy, abnormal breathing, uncontrolled diarrhea, vomiting, unexplained rash, mouth sores with drooling, behavior changes, or other signs that the child may be severely ill.
- ☞ A health-care professional has diagnosed the child with a communicable disease, and the child does not have medical documentation to indicate that the child is no longer contagious.

Children should come to school healthy. Wait 24 hours after vomiting, diarrhea, or a fever over 100.4 degrees (without fever reducing medication) has subsided before bringing your child back to school. If your child develops a fever, or shows other signs of illness during school hours, you will be called to arrange for him to be picked up. Parents' specific instructions will be obtained and followed until the child is released. Children with communicable diseases as defined by the Common Infectious Illness chart (found on pages 26-29) may not come to school, nor be readmitted until the recommendations by the Georgia Department of Human Resources as outlined on the chart have been met.

Medications

If your child requires medication, please confer with your doctor and, if possible, obtain medication that can be administered twice daily, in the morning and in the evening at home. Medication prescribed to be taken three times daily should be taken in the morning, after school, and bedtime.

If it is absolutely necessary that your child have medication administered during school hours, please fill out a *Permission to Dispense Medication* form that you may obtain from the school office or on our website. School staff will not administer medication, including cough lozenges, lip balms, acetaminophen and/or ibuprofen without written authorization from a parent. **Do not send medication to school in your child's lunchbox or on his person.**

Medications must be delivered to the school office in the original container, labeled with the child's name, a date, directions for administration, the physician's name and pharmacy name. The school will administer the medication only as stated on the label instructions, or as amended in writing by the child's physician.

Follow these guidelines to allow school staff to dispense over-the-counter medications:

- ☞ The child must fall within the correct age range written on the label instructions of the over-the-counter medication, unless accompanied by a doctor's written instructions (on official stationery or note pad) stating the amount and dosage schedule.
- ☞ We cannot give medication "as needed" without prior detailed written instructions, or verbal consent from a parent at the time of administration.
- ☞ Parents must give written notification when a child is to stop taking a medication.
- ☞ Parents must provide dispensers for medication.

Common Infectious Illnesses (Communicable Disease Recommendations)

*Adapted from Common Infectious Illnesses poster—2000 edition
Georgia Department of Human Resources and Children’s Healthcare of Atlanta*

Disease, Illness, Organism	Incubation period	How is it spread?	When is child most contagious?	Return to school?
Chicken pox * # (Varicella)	10-21 days	Airborne or direct contact with droplets from nose, mouth and skin lesions of infected individuals	From 2 days before rash, until all lesions are dry and crusted	When all lesions have crusted (usually 7-8 days)
Cold Sore (Herpes Simplex)	2 days-2 weeks	Direct contact with infected oral lesions or secretions	While lesions are present	After lesions are scabbed over
Common Cold (upper respiratory infection)	1-5 days	Contact with droplets from nose, eyes or mouth—virus can live in environment 24 hours	Variable—from day before symptoms, until symptoms resolve	No exclusion, unless fever, or child too ill to attend
Conjunctivitis (Pinkeye) (may be viral, bacterial or allergic)	Variable, depending on cause	Contact with secretions from eyes, or contaminated surfaces	Variable—(allergic conjunctivitis is not contagious)	When cleared by physician, after 24 hours treatment if bacterial
Croup (viral respiratory infection) causes “barky” cough	Variable Usually 2-6 days	Contact with droplets from nose, eyes or mouth	Variable—usually from day before symptoms and for 3 days of illness	When breathing comfortably, cough improved, and no fever for 24 hours
Diphtheria *	2-5 days	Contact with discharge from nose, eyes, mouth or skin lesions	Onset of sore throat until 4 days after treatment begins	After 2 negative cultures are obtained
Ear Infection (Otitis media) Sinusitis	Variable	Not contagious	Not contagious	No exclusion unless child too sick to attend
Fever (100.4 degrees or higher) no specific reason known or identified	Unknown, until illness diagnosed	Unknown until illness identified, safe to assume it may be spread by contact with any secretions	Unknown, assume child is contagious while fever is present	After 24 hours without fever, and child behaving normally
Fifth Disease # (Parvovirus) “Slapped cheek” appearance and a lacy rash	4-21 days	Contact with droplets from nose, eyes or mouth	During the week before the rash develops	No need to restrict once rash has appeared

Common Infectious Illnesses (continued)

Disease, Illness, Organism	Incubation period	How is it spread?	When is child most contagious?	Return to school?
Gastroenteritis, bacterial – (E. coli, Salmonella, Shigella, Campylobacter, Yersinia) usually have vomiting/ diarrhea	6 hours to 7 days, depending on organism	Contact with stool from infected individual; from contaminated food, beverages or water (especially raw eggs or improperly cooked meats)	When diarrhea is present	When diarrhea is resolved–E coli and Shigella require 2 negative stool cultures
Gastroenteritis, viral (Adenovirus, rotavirus, Norwalk virus)	Varies with organism, usually 1-5 days	Contact with stool, saliva or vomit from infected individual; directly or from contaminated surfaces	From 2 days before illness, until vomiting and diarrhea improve	When no fever or vomiting for 24 hours, and fewer than 5 stools/day
German measles (Rubella) * #	14-21 days, usually 16-18 days	Contact with droplets from nose, eyes or mouth of infected person; may be transmitted to fetus across the placenta	From 5 days before until 7 days after rash appears	7 days after rash appears
Giardia (a parasite which causes diarrhea)	1-4 weeks	Contact with infected stool; consuming contaminated water or food	When diarrhea is present	When stools are formed, or less than 5/day
Hand, Foot and Mouth Disease (Coxsackie virus) (causes sores in these areas)	3-6 days	Contact with stool, oral or respiratory secretions	May be contagious for several weeks after infection	When no fever for 24 hours, and child is behaving normally
Head Lice (Pediculosis)	Eggs (nits) hatch in 6-10 days	Close contact with infested individuals, and sharing combs, brushes, hats or bedding	When there are live insects on the head	After treatment, if crawling lice are gone. Nits need to be removed, however nits alone should not be a reason for exclusion.
Hepatitis A	2-7 weeks	Eating contaminated food/water; close contact with infected individuals; contact with infected stool	From 2 weeks before the illness until 1 week after jaundice (yellow skin) has begun	After 1 week from the onset of jaundice (yellow discoloration of skin)
Hepatitis B * #	2-6 months	From contaminated needles, blood, bloody secretions, ear piercing, tattooing, sexual activity	Virus can be spread at any time, with the listed contact	After cleared by physician

Common Infectious Illnesses (continued)

Disease, Illness, Organism	Incubation period	How is it spread?	When is child most contagious?	Return to school?
Impetigo (Staphylococcus or streptococcus) skin infection	1-10 days	Person-to-person skin contact (especially nasal discharge or hands)	Until active lesions are gone, or after 24 hours on antibiotics	After at least 24 hours of topical or oral antibiotics
Influenza	1-3 days	Contact with droplets from nose, eyes or mouth of infected person	Variable, from the day before, until the first 5 days of illness	After 24 hours without fever and symptoms are improving
Measles (Rubeola) *	7-18 days, usually 8-12 days	Airborne or direct contact with droplets from nose, eyes or mouth of infected persons	From 4 days before the rash begins until 4 days after the rash appears	At least 5 days after the appearance of the rash
Meningitis, bacterial (Infection of the fluid lining the brain and spinal cord, causing fever, headache, neck stiffness, rash)	1-10 days	Contact with droplets from nose, eyes or mouth of infected person	Unknown, probably from several days before symptoms, until at least 24 hours of antibiotic treatment	After at least 24 hours of antibiotic treatment, including antibiotics to eliminate carrier state
Meningitis, viral (Enterovirus)	Usually 3-6 days	Contact with droplets from nose, eyes, mouth or stool of infected person	From the day before the illness, until fever has resolved	After 24 hours without fever, and child is behaving normally
Mononucleosis (Mono) Epstein-Barr virus	5-7 weeks	Close personal contact with droplets from nose, eyes or mouth of infected person	Probably several days before the illness, until the fever has stopped	After 24 hours without fever, unless too sick to attend
Mumps*	12-25 days (usually 16-18 days)	Contact with droplets from nose, eyes or mouth of an infected person	Peak infectious time begins 2 days before swelling, but may range from 7 days before to 9 days after	9 days after parotid gland swelling begins
Pinworms	2-6 weeks	Pinworms cause rectal itching. Microscopic eggs found on hands of infected children may contaminate surfaces. Infections spread through ingestion of eggs.	Eggs may survive up to 2 weeks after treatment, and after rectal itching stops. Reinfection is common.	No exclusion, but treatment should be given to reduce spread
Pneumonia (viral or bacterial) lower respiratory infection	Variable, numerous causes	Contact with droplets from nose, eyes and mouth of infected persons. Some viruses can live on surfaces up to 24 hrs.	Variable, from the day before through the first 3 days of the illness	No exclusion needed unless there is fever, or child is too ill to attend

Common Infectious Illnesses (continued)

Disease, Illness, Organism	Incubation period	How is it spread?	When is child most contagious?	Return to school?
Poison Ivy (not infectious) Reaction to sap on leaves of poison ivy, poison oak and poison sumac	2-3 days after contact with sap	Child is not contagious, only direct contact with sap may cause rash	Sap may be on clothes or skin for 12-24 hours after contact with leaves, or until child bathes	No exclusion
Ringworm (Tinea capitis, corporis, pedis) Fungal infection of scalp, body, or feet	Unknown	Direct skin contact with infected people or animals, or with surfaces contaminated with fungus; scalp lesions from contact with barber clippers or shared brushes	From onset of lesions until treatment begins	After treatment begins—scalp infection usually requires medication by mouth, others may be treated topically
Scabies (mites which burrow under the skin, causing severe itching)	Usually 4-6 weeks, 1-4 days after re-exposure	Skin contact with infested individuals; contact with bedding or clothes of infested person	From up to 8 weeks before skin rash appears until it has been treated	The day after adequate treatment begins
Strep Throat/Scarlet Fever (Group A Streptococcus) Scarlet fever is a strep throat infection with a rash	1-5 days	Contact with droplets from nose and mouth	From onset of symptoms until 24 hours after treatment begins	After at least 24 hours of antibiotic treatment and no fever for 24 hours
Tuberculosis	Some infected persons do not develop disease, but risk is highest 1-2 years after exposure	Airborne or contact with droplets from nose and mouth of infected person (children usually contract TB from close contact with an infected adult)	Children with TB usually are not infectious to others	Only when Health Department gives permission
Whooping Cough * (Pertussis)	5-21 days	Contact with droplets from nose, eyes or mouth of infected person	Most infectious before cough onset (with onset of runny nose), continuing until child is on antibiotics for 5 days—is infectious for 3 weeks after cough begins, if not treated.	After antibiotic treatment for 5 days

* These diseases should have been vaccinated against, if immunizations are up to date. Chicken pox may still occur, but usually in a milder form.

These diseases may be of concern to staff members who are pregnant or trying to become pregnant. Follow up with obstetric health care provider is recommended after known or suspected contact.

Exceptions to the exclusion/return to school guidelines listed on this chart may be made by local health department personnel on an individual case-by-case basis. Adequate hand washing facilities, policies and practices in the school are the keys to excellent hygiene that will eliminate or minimize transmission of these diseases and keep students in school.

Nutrition

We place an emphasis on good nutrition. Children learn about foods and their importance in building healthy bodies and minds. Choose foods that are as close to their natural form as possible. Fresh fruits and vegetables, dairy products and whole grains are all good examples. Granola bars, chips, pretzels, goldfish, (and similar products), fruit drinks (such as Capri Sun, Fruitopia, etc.), sweets, white bread, and highly processed foods such as American cheese slices and “lunchables” are not considered nutritious and **are not allowed**. Soups, peanut butter, applesauce, yogurts and cereals should be all natural with no sugars (corn, syrups, honey, etc.), salt, dyes, or hydrogenated oils added. Students should have a balanced lunch that includes a protein, fruit/vegetable and grain. **PLEASE READ LABELS.**

Breakfast

Without a doubt the value of a healthy breakfast is necessary for energy and productivity. This means that one must plan time in the morning to sit down to a good breakfast. It is unrealistic to expect children to be attentive and energetic after eating a cookie, pop-tart, cocoa puffs or a rushed, greasy, drive-through breakfast in the car.

There are ways you can make breakfast quick and easy without resorting to convenience foods. Prepare enough whole-wheat pancake or waffle batter on Sunday for the week. Have fresh or frozen fruit on hand for toppings instead of syrup. Low sugar fruit and nut muffins served with yogurt and juice make a complete meal. Scrambled eggs, grits and oatmeal only take a few minutes of preparation and when served with milk, fruit and whole-grain toast makes a great breakfast. Peanut butter on whole-grain bread and a banana is a good choice when time is short.

Not only should the nutritional importance of a good breakfast be considered, but also the emotional and social importance as well. If you consistently take time to sit with your children and enjoy a healthy breakfast, you are showing them they are a priority. Having time together will help them reconnect with you after sleep and help them to face the day at school in good spirits. Setting an example teaches them good habits that will last a lifetime.

Snack

Snack in the classroom is presented as a practical life lesson. It is available for children to choose just as any other lesson. It is not considered important for every child to have snack; indeed, we expect that they have had a good breakfast and will have a good lunch. The emphasis is on grace and courtesy and the preparation of food and washing dishes. Snack is available from approximately 9:00 to 10:45 most mornings. Please be assured that a child who is hungry will choose that lesson!

Toddler and primary parents will be assigned on a rotating schedule during the year to provide snack, milk and flowers for their child’s class. A memo will be sent home detailing the exact items

that are requested for your child's class along with any exclusions due to food allergies. Please review the above nutrition policy when making your selections.

Snack is available in the Elementary classroom during the morning work period. Snack is a combination of family-purchased snacks and student-purchased snacks. If your family volunteers to purchase snack, a shopping list will be included in your child's courier pack the week before the snack is due. Review the school nutrition policy when making your selections. Please refer to the "Going Out" section of the Elementary Handbook for more information on class shopping trips.

Lunch

Lunch is an important community time for the children. We emphasize Grace and Courtesy and Practical Life activities during this time. Children set the tables with placemats or tablecloths, silverware, napkins, plates and/or bowls, glasses and flowers. A separate table will be available, if requested, for children with food restrictions due to allergies.

Children bring their lunches and are to follow school policy by bringing nutritious food. Children are expected to eat from their plates and return containers and plastic bags to their lunchboxes. Each table waits until everyone at the table is prepared to eat. We work very hard to make this the most pleasant and relaxing social time possible.

Please refer to the lunch section of the Toddler Community handbook for more information on the toddler lunch procedure. Primary children are not to bring beverages; we will provide whole milk and water. Elementary children may bring milk and 100% juices.

Lunches should be packed with cold packs, as we do not have enough refrigerator space to accommodate lunch boxes. Microwaves are provided in each Primary class as well as in the Extended Care environment. Children are encouraged to bring homemade soups, salads and healthy leftovers. There is no microwave available for Elementary children to heat food during lunchtime. Hot food may be sent in a thermos.

In an effort to cut down on waste and as a way of enhancing the child's interest in being environmentally friendly, the students will return all uneaten food, containers and plastic bags to their lunchboxes. By returning all of these items the students can see whether they are packing too much food, as well as how much waste they may have generated. We recommend using reusable containers so liquid items will not spill in their lunchboxes during the return trip home.

Field Trips

Field Trips

We are fortunate to live in a community with access to a variety of venues to further your child's science and cultural arts experiences. These opportunities for discovery open the doors for introduction to research of various things that are not easily brought into the classroom. Through the experience of going out into the community the children further their Grace and Courtesy skills and gain confidence in their knowledge of the world.

Elementary Going Outs

A Going Out is a planned outing from our campus that is organized by a small group of students. These trips are motivated by work or research interests of the child. This is part of the Practical Life work of the elementary class. Children may call parents to arrange Going Outs as it is a parent that usually provides the transportation. Going Out parent training will be provided in the fall.

Another part of the Going Out program is care of our school environment by going to various stores to purchase supplies that may be needed in the classroom. A group that includes older and younger children goes shopping weekly for snack items, cooking ingredients, as well as other supplies. Parent volunteers take the children on these errands and act as a guide. Valuable lessons are learned as children evaluate what is needed, organize the outing, and consider time and money management.

Each elementary child is to obtain a Gwinnett County library card and PIN (personal identification number). Cards and PINs will be kept on file in the classrooms for students. Library trips occur on Tuesdays and Thursdays of each week. A parent volunteer provides transportation to the Suwanee Branch of the library system. Please refer to the library section of the Elementary Handbook for more information.

Communication

Drop boxes are provided in each of the school driveways for notes, permission slips, checks and other correspondence of this nature. Written instructions should always be provided to inform us of changes to personal records, transportation arrangements, or concerns about your child. Please do not engage staff members during carpool as their focus is on the safety of the children at this time.

Teachers are very busy during the day and cannot give parents their full attention. If you have a question or concern, contact the school office to schedule a time to speak with your child's teacher.

If a situation arises where parents feel a meeting with Administration is in order, please call the office to schedule a time to come in and discuss the issue.

All requests for observations and conferences should be directed to the office. If you need to discuss something with us, please pull up and park away from the main drive and enter the office. We want to be able to give you the attention you deserve and will be happy to help you as soon as possible.

Parent Education Meetings

Parent meetings are an important component to the partnership between home and school, and parents are highly encouraged to attend all four meetings scheduled throughout the year. Teachers prepare meetings based on Montessori theory in an effort to aid parents in learning as much as possible about Montessori principles as they apply to interactions with their child and preparation of the home environment.

Mother's/Father's Night

This is a time when we set aside a special hour of one-on-one attention for parent and child. Parents come with their child to experience the excitement as the parent is introduced to the Montessori classroom and materials from the child's perspective. If possible, parents should dress comfortably. Work will take place in little chairs and on mats on the floor.

Parents should enjoy this time following their child without pressure. This is not a time to expect perfection or to evaluate the child's progress. Correction will embarrass the child and create a stressful atmosphere. Nor is it a time to seek a conference with your child's teacher. Be a happy observer.

Newsletters

The Buzz is published quarterly and is distributed to the oldest child in each family. Through this publication we strive to provide parents with articles that focus on various Montessori principles,

aspects of the child's school day, and special DMS events. This is an important tool in parent education.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

There are two regularly scheduled parent-teacher conferences each year. In the event of special concerns, your child's teacher will contact you to discuss them. Each DMS teacher is a well-trained professional and her evaluation is confidential between parent, teacher and administration and based on direct observation of your child. All parent conferences are done face to face where the teacher will offer her current best understanding of your child's progress, strengths and needs. The teacher's observations may be augmented by input from administration.

Observations are permitted after the first six weeks of school. Contact the office for details

Contacting Your Child's Teacher

Teachers will set aside weekly office hours. Please call the office if you would like to schedule a meeting. In preparation for a meeting during office hours, please send the teacher a short note indicating your questions or concerns so that she may review your child's records and observe him in the classroom, resulting in a much more productive meeting.

Montessori Transitions

Transition through the Montessori curriculum is a natural process. The child moves from being a toddler to a primary child. A primary morning child develops into a primary afternoon child. Then from primary he moves to the elementary community as he grows and matures. There are many considerations for determining readiness for each transition. The teacher observes each child and notes the milestones that are reached as he progresses. When she identifies that he is nearing readiness, the administration is notified. The teacher and administrators will observe the child and the class to determine the best timing for a change. Once the timing has been determined, the parents are notified and preparations are made for a smooth transition.

Transition to Elementary

In the child's third primary year parents are encouraged to begin attending special elementary parent meetings in preparation for the transition. Children will begin to make scheduled visits to the elementary classes during the fall of their third primary year. Parents will drop the child off at the Sugarloaf campus for the morning visit and will leave the child's car seat for safe transport back to the child's class by a staff member or parent volunteer. As children remain in the primary class for three or four years, the child's primary teacher, administrator and elementary teachers will work together to determine the appropriate time for each child to transition.

The Elementary Experience

In January, there is a special meeting to give parents an overview of the elementary program. Elementary teachers, students, parents and alumni present *The Duluth Montessori School Elementary Experience*. This exciting meeting includes tours of the classroom and presentations of work. Parents, students, alumni and teachers are on hand to share their experiences and answer questions.

Parent Participation

Parent participation is indispensable in a good Montessori school: in planning outings, material preparation, painting, gardening, driving and working on other projects. With everyone contributing a small amount of time and energy our children will have an exceptional experience at The Duluth Montessori School.

Duluth Fall Festival

Each year The Duluth Montessori School hosts a booth at The Duluth Fall Festival. Parents are needed to volunteer to promote our school.

Fall Harvest/Christmas Open House/Spring Planting

These annual celebrations are wonderful DMS traditions. Sign-up sheets will circulate with needed items prior to each event.

Chaperones/Drivers

Throughout the school year parents are needed to drive and/or chaperone field trips and going outs.

Various Projects

Teachers may call on parents throughout the year for a variety of projects ranging from cooking with children, to gardening, to painting and creating materials.

Maintaining the School Gardens

The gardens are an important part of the child's nature and community study. Parents are asked to continue their child's education through the summer by helping to care for the school gardens. Please harvest and enjoy the crops as they are ready.

Head Elf

On the last day of school before the winter break the children leave their shoes outside on the decks and porches in anticipation of a visit from St. Nicholas. Parents will be needed to purchase and organize supplies as well as stuff them into shoes for the children to discover. This annual DMS tradition is much anticipated by the children.

Special Events/Holidays

At The Duluth Montessori School we put a lot of thought into our celebrations of holidays to give the child the most meaningful experience possible. Throughout the year there are many celebrations that the children participate in as part of their cultural studies. Observations of holidays and celebrations help children to gain an understanding of different cultures and beliefs. Our school is fortunate to have such diversity. We encourage you to talk with your child's teacher to discuss the celebrations that are important in your family and possibly share a presentation with the class.

Birthdays

For your child's birthday prepare together either a simple album or poster with a single photograph representing each year since his birth.

Parents may choose to bake a special snack with the birthday child, for example, banana or zucchini bread, to share with classmates. If you wish to send a gift for the classroom, a book or small plant would be nice. Invitations, if any, may not be handed out at school.

Annual Children's Opera

Each year The Duluth Montessori School Elementary Program presents a children's opera. Mr. and Mrs. Sanford Jones, from Youth Opera International, travel to Duluth for one week for the event. In the five-day Youth Opera workshop, three elements of theatre ~ singing, dancing and acting ~ come together in an original children's opera.

This is a big production and the participation of **every DMS family** is important to ensure its success. Parents, not only of elementary and afternoon primary students, but also parents of primary children that are not in the production, are needed to participate in the preparation for this unique event. Volunteers will be needed for many aspects of the opera to help with set production, making costumes, providing staff lunches the week of the workshop, transportation, supervision of children, as well as working backstage during the night of the performance.

During the month preceding opera week, the elementary teachers begin the preliminary work with the children and volunteers: learning the story, text and music, preparing sets, props and costumes, and engaging in cultural studies related to the theme/culture of the opera. Youth Opera provides the libretto, musical score, guidelines for casting, costuming, set design and props, along with a sample videotape and audiotapes for rehearsal.

During opera week, each day is given over to rehearsals. The day begins with physical and vocal warm-ups, singing the cast songs, and learning the language of the theatre. From mid-morning to mid-afternoon, the children work on solos and small group songs and dances. By mid-week, rehearsals move to the performance venue and staging is begun. Dress rehearsal is Friday morning and the performance is Friday evening.

Parents who volunteer for the night of the Opera are needed for the dress rehearsal Friday morning.

There will be an additional fee charged for each child's participation in the Opera. The fee is determined each year based on the requirements of each new production. The fee is used to pay for your child's weeklong workshop with Mr. and Mrs. Jones and goes towards the cost of the production and costumes.

The whole school community - children, parents and staff - comes together for this productive and joyful event. Each performance is one of the highlights of our school year.

Weather, Fire or Other Emergency

In case of severe weather (i.e. ice, snow, extreme cold), listen to WSB 750 or watch WSB TV, WXIA, or CBS for our school's listing in the school closing reports. If Gwinnett County schools are closed, we will also be closed. In case of tornado warnings, keep your child home. Every possible precaution will be taken to ensure the safety of the children.

The school is equipped with a fire alarm system, a weather band radio and fire extinguishers in each room. If there is a power failure or other physical problem with a building, parents will be notified as soon as possible to make early pickup arrangements for their child.

Teacher Workshops and Observations

Teachers attend various workshops and visit other classes during the year for the good of your children. School will be closed for scheduled workshops and a suitable substitute will be utilized for observation days.

Contact Information

Main Street Campus / Primary Community:

2997 Main Street, Duluth, Georgia 30096

Phone:..... 770-476-9307

Fax:..... 770-476-9792

Sugarloaf Campus / Toddler and Elementary Communities:

1768 Old Peachtree Road, Duluth, Georgia 30097

Phone:..... 678-474-9967

Fax:..... 678-475-1387

Website: www.duluthmontessori.com

Email: montessoriduluth@bellsouth.net