



**NORTHRIDGE**  
MONTESSORI SCHOOL

# Parent Handbook

A guide for parents

**NORTHRIDGE MONTESSORI SCHOOL**  
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# PARENT HANDBOOK

## Philosophy & Program Statement

We follow the educational methods developed by Dr Maria Montessori. The Montessori philosophy seeks as its goal an independent self-directed child. Our program fosters the development of responsibility, collaboration, cooperation and an enjoyment of learning. We provide a firm foundation of academic learning and problem solving skills thus stimulation children's ideas & willingness to learn. Low student/teacher ratios allow the teacher to provide the student with the amount and type of attention that is required for the student to flourish. Dr Montessori believed that the goal of childhood education should be to cultivate the child's own desire to learn. Specifically designed Montessori materials are integrated with other developmentally appropriate activities to provide the child with progressive learning in the areas of practical life, sensorial, mathematics, language & cultural activities.

Our program provides a total curriculum which allows for the optimal growth of children in all areas including social, emotional, physical & cognitive development. The children are supported in a safe, nurturing and stimulating environment that promotes self-esteem and emphasizes child-selected and child-directed activities. Each home, child and family is recognized as unique. Family styles, values, cultures and traditions are respected and reflected in the curriculum.

## Enrolment & Service Terminations

A child cannot be accepted into the school unless the Registration procedure is fully completed. A one month written notice will be required to withdraw a child from the program. In case this notice is not provided, fees will be charged for that month. There are no refunds or reductions for mid-month withdrawals. Child services will be terminated if the school policies are not followed or if the fees are not paid. The Northridge Montessori School environment should always be a positive one for all students. Thus, we reserve the right to dismiss any child who does not seem to be benefiting from the programs & curriculum that we offer. Furthermore, we promote & reinforce a zero-tolerance policy regarding aggressive behaviours - verbal & physical. Students who do not seem to be cooperating with our positive system of values, as well as treating others with respect will be asked to seek attendance at another institution.

## Registration/Orientation Procedures

In order to accept a child into the school, the following are required:

- All registration forms completed and signed.
- 2 copies of the child's immunization record.
- \$150.00 registration fee (one-time, non-refundable, payable at time of registration).
- All post-dated cheques for the full academic year (dated for the 1st of each month).
- First & last month's fees (payable at time of registration).

A lump sum payment option is also available, whereby payment for the whole year can be made at the time of registration. On the first day of school the new student will be introduced to his/her teachers. The parent/guardian of the child can accompany him/her in his/her classroom for a maximum of 30 minutes. Due to COVID-19, at this time parents cannot accompany their child into the classroom.

### **Illness in a child & degree of illness which precludes child from care**

In the case that a child becomes ill or is suspected of having a communicable disease during school hours, the parents/guardians of the child will be contacted to arrange for the child to be taken. If your child complains of feeling ill, has a fever, or diarrhea, we request that he/she stays at home. Children who have a communicable disease such as chicken pox, German measles, measles, mumps, & whooping cough must be kept at home. Their return must be accompanied by a doctor's note. This is for the benefit of all children. As per Bill 142 (Immunization of School Pupils Act 1983) all pupils in school are to be fully immunized against Measles, Mumps, Rubella (German measles), Diphtheria, Tetanus & Polio. Students without up to date immunization cannot be admitted to the school.

### **Administration of Medications**

The school is not permitted to administer any over the counter medication that is not specifically prescribed to the child.

Before a staff member can administer any prescribed medication, the following procedure must be followed **without exception**:

1. Completely fill out a Medication Form
2. Authorize your consent with your signature
3. Release medication ONLY to the teacher in charge
4. The medication must be in the original bottle, labelled with the student's name
5. The teacher has the right to refuse admittance to a child who appears to be sick upon arrival at school.
6. Parents and/or emergency contacts will be contacted if a child's condition worsens during the day.

### **Fee Payment Policy & Payment Options**

There are two fee payment options: on a monthly basis (via post-dated cheques) OR lump sum amount (paid at the time of registration).

**Monthly basis:** Post-dated cheques, dated for the first of the month are due for the full year.

**Lump Sum:** The entire year's fees may be paid at the time of registration. Lump sum option may be eligible for a discount. Please contact the administrator.

### **Fee payment policy relating to absences due to illness or vacation**

There are no refunds or reduction of fees due to illness or vacation. There are no refunds for mid-month withdrawals, or days missed for any other reason throughout the school year.

### **Arrival, departures & release of children from the program**

To ensure your child's safety, upon arrival, please accompany your child to a staff member, and remain with your child, until the staff has assumed responsibility for supervision. The school does not assume responsibility for any child who is dropped off in the parking area or left at the door



of the building. It is advisable to inform the staff of any changes in routine or behavior that may affect your child's participation in the program.

When picking up your child, please ensure that a staff member is aware of your departure. We recommend that you come for your child at a regular time every day. Children feel more secure when their daily pick up timetable is maintained.

Children will not be released from school to anyone other than parents, grandparents & nannies who have been previously introduced. If someone other than these people will be picking up your child, please notify the staff by completing the necessary "alternate pick up/drop off" section on the application form for admission. The new person will be asked to provide government issued photo identification (e.g. driver's license, passport) at the time of pick up.

We strive to give our students a sense of order & punctuality. School starts promptly at 9.00am & the morning session ends at 12.00 noon. The afternoon session begins at 1.00pm & ends at 3.50pm. Please ensure that your child arrives on time. A student arriving late for class is both disruptive & distracting from the ongoing learning process. Late arrivals miss out on the excitement generated by the introduction of new topics & materials by their teacher.

Please be punctual in dropping off & picking up your child, so as to prevent disruption of school functioning. A late fee will apply when a child is not picked up on time as this will affect the hours of scheduled supervision provided by staff. After 6.00pm, the late fee is \$1 per minute due to detainment of staff beyond regular hours.

### **Guiding children's behavior**

Children are disciplined in a positive manner at a level that is appropriate to their actions & their ages. This is in order to promote self-discipline, ensure health & safety, respect the rights of others and maintain equipment. Corporal punishments are not permitted under any circumstances. Students are taught and must realize the consequences of their actions; recognize the respect & properties of others; and achieve self-control & self-discipline through positive reinforcement. Methods of discipline are discussed at staff meetings and consistent disciplinary measures are agreed upon. We promote & reinforce a zero tolerance policy regarding verbal and/or physical aggressive behaviors. Parents are asked to help us by encouraging these policies & positive system of values outside of school hours. Your cooperation is necessary & very much appreciated.

### **Field Trips & off-site activities**

Throughout the year trips are arranged to special places of interest that are both fun & educational. A notice will be sent home well in advance of the excursion, informing you of the destination, time & date. It will also include a permission slip to be signed & returned. Parents are always welcome to join the group as volunteers. [All volunteers are required to provide a criminal reference check (CRC); forms are available from the administrative office; there are no charges for volunteer CRC's in the Region of Peel].

### **Children's belongings**

All children's clothing should be clearly labeled with the child's name on the inside with a permanent marker. Please send your child dressed in clothes & shoes that are comfortable &

easy for children to handle. A complete change of clothing must be kept at the school in case of accidents (e.g. spills). Please remember to bring in a set of clean clothes if the previous ones were taken home to be washed. Toys may not be brought to school without the teacher's permission, to avoid being misused or broken.

### **Process for expressing concern**

As we truly value input from families, we strive to provide systems of communication that will ensure parent-to-staff contact & facilitate quick responses to family needs. Opportunities for daily communication (verbal and/or written), formal meetings, center visits, & parent participation in our programs are offered & encouraged. In addition, there are specific opportunities each year for parents to provide a brief evaluation of their child's program. However, comments & suggestions are welcome anytime throughout the year at your convenience.

### **Role of parents in the program**

A Montessori education is one that extends beyond the classroom, and into the home environment. Parents are strongly encouraged to understand how the principles of Montessori can be integrated into the home. Throughout the year there are opportunities for parents to meet with the teachers to discuss these concepts and learn more about the Montessori philosophy.

The relationship between the school and the parent is one of cooperation. The primary goal is to determine and provide what is best for each child. Parents will have open and ongoing communication with their child's class teacher. They are encouraged to become a part of the school community by attending events, volunteering during field trips and offering a skill or talent in the classroom.

### **Role of students & volunteers in the program**

Placement students and volunteers bring talents, skills, life experiences and resources to Northridge Montessori School. We are committed to student and volunteer participation in our programs. We support the education of future professionals in the early learning and care sector and family education through the provision of field placements in our programs. Volunteers provide additional support and value to our programs. Students and volunteers function under the direction of staff at all times and are never left alone with a child.

### **Parent Issues and Concerns**

Parents/guardians are encouraged to take an active role in our child care centre and regularly discuss what their child(ren) are experiencing with our program. As supported by our program statement, we support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents/guardians, child care providers and staff, and foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents/guardians about the program and their children. Our staff are available to engage parents/guardians in conversations and support a positive experience during every interaction.

All issues and concerns raised by parents/guardians are taken seriously by The Operator and Staff and will be addressed. Every effort will be made to address and resolve issues and concerns to the satisfaction of all parties and as quickly as possible.

Issues/concerns may be brought forward verbally or in writing. Responses and outcomes will be provided verbally, or in writing upon request. The level of detail provided to the parent/guardian will respect and maintain the confidentiality of all parties involved.

An initial response to an issue or concern will be provided to parents/guardians within a few business day(s). The person who raised the issue/concern will be kept informed throughout the resolution process.

Investigations of issues and concerns will be fair, impartial and respectful to parties involved.

## **Confidentiality**

Every issue and concern will be treated confidentially and every effort will be made to protect the privacy of parents/guardians, children, staff, students and volunteers, except when information must be disclosed for legal reasons (e.g. to the Ministry of Education, College of Early Childhood Educators, law enforcement authorities or a Children's Aid Society).

## **Conduct**

Our centre maintains high standards for positive interaction, communication and role-modeling for children. Harassment and discrimination will therefore not be tolerated from any party.

If at any point a parent/guardian, provider or staff feels uncomfortable, threatened, abused or belittled, they may immediately end the conversation and report the situation to the supervisor and/or licensee.

## **Emergency Management policies and procedures**

Northridge Montessori School has its own Emergency Management policies and procedures. Parents will be notified if an emergency occurs in the following method:

- 1) As soon as possible, The Supervisor must notify parents/guardians of the emergency situation and that the all-clear has been given.
- 2) Where disasters have occurred that did not require evacuation of the child care centre, the supervisor must provide a notice of the incident to parents/guardians by e-mail or text.
- 3) If normal operations do not resume the same day that an emergency situation has taken place, the Supervisor must provide parents/guardians with information as to when and how normal operations will resume as soon as this is determined.

Upon arrival at the emergency evacuation site, The Supervisor will notify parents/guardians of the emergency situation, evacuation and the location to pick up their children.

Where possible, the Supervisor will update the child care centre's voicemail box as soon as possible to inform parents/guardians that the child care centre has been evacuated, and include the details of the evacuation site location and contact information in the message.

## **Waitlist Policy and Procedures**

- 1) A Child is put on the waitlist when contact is made with the Supervisor of The Northridge Montessori School. This can be done over the phone, by email or in person. Confirmation of placement on the waitlist should be received within 5 business days of request.
- 2) Children are categorized on the list based on date of initial contact and the type of care required (Toddler or Pre-School)
- 3) It is the parents/guardians responsibility to contact the center to confirm their spot every 6months. This can be done in person, by phone or by email. If this is not done, your name is removed from the list.
- 4) Priority spots are given to the School staff first and then siblings of current Northridge Montessori School families. Sibling spots are maintained according to date of initial contact and the type of care required (Toddler or Pre-School)
- 5) Parents/Guardians are not guaranteed a childcare spot until a maximum of 30 days before the spot is available regardless of the placement on the waitlist. A childcare spot is guaranteed once the enrolment is complete and a contract is signed.
- 6) When a spot becomes available, parents are called in order of the placement on the waitlist. If a parent denies the spot then the next parent on the list is called until a parent accepts the spot and at that point the spot is considered filled.
- 7) The waitlist will be made available in a manner that maintains the privacy and confidentiality of the children listed.

## **PROCEDURE**

The NORTGRIDGE MONTESSORI SCHOOL recognizes that choosing the right quality child care program for your child is an important decision. The NMS strives to accommodate all registration requests; however there may be times when space is unavailable. To address this issue the SCHOOL has created a waiting list procedure.

Please note there is no fee to place your child on a waiting list. It is important for you to keep your contact information up to date with us.

Children are placed numerically on the waiting list based on the date and time that the waiting list application is received by the Northridge Montessori School. Determining where your child (ran) is on a waiting list/or admissions to the program is subject to a number of considerations including, but not limited to;

- when the children currently enrolled move to the next age group
- the ages of the children on the waiting list
- the length of time each child will be in an age group before having to transition to the next age group

Exceptions that could affect the order in which admissions are offered are:

- A child protection/welfare agency requests placement for a child;
- Children requiring full time care (5 days per week);
- Siblings of children currently registered in the Northridge Montessori School.
- Children of Northridge Montessori School employees;
- Children living within the school boundaries and attending their home school.



Northridge Montessori School Child Care Program waitlists are managed by the location. To find out your child(ren)'s status on the waiting list, simply contact the Supervisor of the program where you originally completed the waiting list form. The Supervisor will disclose the child(ren)'s position on the waiting list to the Northridge Montessori School parent subject to the privacy statement.

Find the Northridge Montessori School location by visiting [www.northridgemontessori.com](http://www.northridgemontessori.com) website address or call 905 281 0840.

## Fee Subsidy Information

The Region of Peel provides funding for fee subsidies. Fee Subsidy is a program that is intended to assist eligible families with the cost of their child care. Inquires can be directed at 905- 791-1585 or through the region web-site <http://www.peelregion.ca/children>

**Northridge Montessori School** is eligible to receive subsidized families.

## Prohibited Practices

Young children benefit from an affirming approach that encourages positive interactions with other children and with adults, rather than from a negative or punitive approach intended to manage unwanted behavior. Research from diverse fields of study has shown that children who attend programs where they experience warm, supportive relationships are happier, less anxious and more motivated to learn than those who do not. Experiencing positive relationships in early childhood also has significant long term impact on physical and mental health, and success in school and beyond. The Northridge Montessori School Program Statement sets out approaches that support positive interactions between children, families, staff and the community.

Northridge Montessori School with respect to a child receiving child care does not allow the following:

- (a) corporal punishment of the child;
- (b) physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a high chair, car seat, stroller or other device for the purposes of discipline or in lieu of supervision, unless the physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing a child from hurting himself, herself or someone else, and is used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent;
- (c) locking the exits of the child care centre for the purpose of confining the child, or confining the child in an area or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is required as part of the licensee's emergency management policies and procedures;
- (d) use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or use of derogatory language directed at or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame or frighten the child or undermine his or her self-respect, dignity or self-worth;
- (e) depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding; or
- f) inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

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## Rules for parents who send food to Northridge Montessori School

Northridge Montessori School has rules in place for food that is sent to the center. All parents who send food with their children to the center must follow these rules.

1. Ensuring a "peanut-free" and "nut-free" environment for our anaphylactic students. Due to the growing incidences and seriousness of allergies to peanuts and other foods the Center does not provide any foods with any trace of nuts which includes nuts, tree nuts or any other peanut products.

2. **NO** food can be brought to the center without prior approval and consent of the Program Supervisor. This includes any birthday cakes, chocolates or any other type of food.
3. From time to time events are held after hours that involve meals brought in from parents. Parents are reminded to keep their contribution free from nuts and parents of children with allergies are responsible for monitoring their intake at such an event. Due to COVID-19, events and gathering are currently suspended.
4. In case of severe allergies and approved by the Program Supervisor all food brought into the Center from home shall be clearly labelled with the child's name by the parents and also shall be nut free for the safety of other children.

## PROGRAM STATEMENT OF NORTHRIDGE MONTESSORI SCHOOL

Northridge Montessori School follows "How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years (2014)" as the guiding document under the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014.

We strive to be organized around the foundations of belonging, well-being, engagement and expression in children where the goals and expectations integrate the six guiding principles of ELECT (Early Learning for Every Child Today). Some of the other Ministry documents Northridge Montessori School refers to and implements in its programming are:

- How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years
- Ontario Early Years Framework
- Ontario Early Learning Framework
- Think Feel Act: Lessons from Research about Young Children
- Early Learning for Every Child Today

Northridge Montessori School uses a play-based learning approach to create the best environment for children to learn and grow. Play-based learning allows children to learn in a way that is most appropriate for them. Each child may choose to pursue activities of their own interest, giving them the opportunity to be creative and innovative as they learn.

### **Children are competent, capable, curious and rich in potential**

Northridge Montessori School recognizes each child is a unique individual who brings his or her own abilities to the program and deserves the encouragement and space to try new things, explore new ideas and develop their own unique creativity. We provide an environment that fosters curiosity, one that allows children to explore. We believe that every child deserves a safe and caring environment (a place where children want to be and where they feel "at home"), in which to grow and develop to their maximum potential. We understand the importance of taking children's stages of development into consideration. For each child, their stage of development is an individualized and complex interplay between developmental factors and their unique family, community and life experiences. In each case, we aim to integrate all areas of the child's development into our program in a holistic way.

Our goals for children, consistent with the Ministry of Education pedagogy, include the following:

- Every child has a sense of belonging when he or she is connected to others and contributes to their world.
- Every child is developing a sense of self, health, and well-being.
- Every child is an active and engaged learner who explores the world with body, mind, and senses.
- Every child is a capable communicator who expresses himself or herself in many ways.

To foster learning and support children's interests, Northridge Montessori School offers a variety of daily activities such as language and physical literacy, numeracy, music, outdoor play, science, nature, technology, rest time, blocks (fine motor and gross motor) and creative arts.

### **Independence and self-reliance**

Our physical set-up meets a child's need to become independent and self-reliant by allowing free choice of play materials, and with the exception of routines, free use of these materials within limits. Cubbies, tables, toy shelves, toilets, etc. are all at the child's level. The children are encouraged to be self-reliant in routines such as dressing, toileting, washing, eating, and tidying up their playthings. An adult is available for assistance when needed, but the child is made to feel responsible for the job at hand.

### **The initiative, imagination, and courage to face the situation**

The creative part of the program is planned to meet a child's need to develop initiative, imagination and the courage to face situations. The child is given no set patterns to follow when working with paint, paper, play dough, markers, or any creative media; the children may use these materials the way they wish. Dramatic toys (doll centre, blocks, puppets, etc.) stimulate the child's imagination. Using these toys the child enjoys role-playing, building houses, roads, etc. No one tells him/her what must be constructed. We provide an environment that allows children to explore their surroundings and fosters curiosity. In addition to an environment conducive to play-based learning, Northridge Montessori School provides a safe, caring and healthy environment for our children. We strive to ensure that children feel like they belong, making friends and interacting with their teachers. We understand that each child's development differs and that factors such as family, community and life experiences influence it. In each case, we aim to integrate all areas of the child's development into our program in an all-inclusive way. Our goals for children, consistent with the Ministry of Education pedagogy, include the following:

- Every child has a sense of belonging when he or she is connected to others and contributes to their world.
- Every child is developing a sense of self, health, and well-being.
- Every child is an active and engaged learner who explores the world with body, mind, and senses.
- Every child is a capable communicator who expresses himself or herself in many ways.

Our programs are intended to:

- encourage children to interact and communicate in a positive way and support their ability to self-regulate
- foster the children's exploration, play and inquiry

- provide child-initiated and adult-supported experiences

The program statement offer opportunities to create relationships with others in the program. Our educators further support children's self-regulation through play partner interactions by following the lead of children, observing their interests and taking note of how they interact with others and the physical environment. Through continual observation and attention our educators support children in developing strategies to remain calm and to regulate their emotions.

## **RELATIONSHIPS AMONG CHILDREN, FAMILIES, STAFF AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS**

Northridge Montessori School works with families and children as a team. We foster collaborative and co-operative relationship between children and the adults. We believe that relationship of trust is the basis of a good foundation for this team to work towards the children meeting their maximum potential. We promote a sense of belonging for children and their families in our programs by creating positive communications and partnership with families. Staffs empower the children to resolve conflicts, learn responsibility along with social skills. Northridge Montessori School is committed to working collaboratively with all of our community partners to meet the best interest of the children and their families.

## **HEALTH, SAFETY, NUTRITION AND WELL-BEING OF CHILDREN**

Early years sets the foundation for children's health and well-being.

### **Health and safety**

Health and safety of adults and children is extremely important to us. Northridge Montessori School meets and strives to exceed all health and safety requirements of the Ministry of Education and local government bylaws. This information is also presented in our Parent Policies.

### **Nutrition**

Northridge Montessori School follows Canada's Food Guide to develop menus. The menus are reviewed by the person who has food handler's course. Menus can be viewed on the parent communication board. We accommodate dietary or religious food requirements for children in our program.

### **A sense of closeness and belonging**

The staffs are educators who are consistent and gentle. Each child is given individual attention during the day and special attention should he/she need it. Each group is comprised of children his/her own age plus those a little younger or a little older but developmentally at the same stage. The child feels comfortable and value

## **POSITIVE SELF-EXPRESSION, COMMUNICATION AND SELF-REGULATION**

Northridge's inclusive programming leads to children's sense of belonging. Progressive learning environments and practices, focused on play-based learning, encourage children's self-expression, communication, self-regulation and their

ability to deal with stress. As they learn how to remain and return to a state of calm in stressful situations, they are best able to control their emotions, pay attention, ignore distractions and understand the consequences of their actions.

### **Trust in the world and people**

Our staff meet the child's need to develop trust in the world and people by providing staff who are cheerful and happy to see them each day, and are consistent in their classroom conduct. The rules are always the same. The day is conducted in a familiar pattern. Everything is planned following the child's lead and interest. If this is the child's first experience away from home he/she will find it to be one of quiet consistency. Staff do not expect too much of a child, but are there to lend support necessary to the child to accomplish each new task as they are ready. Self-worth encouraging each child to reach their maximum potential: Each child is an individual and treated as such. The group is small enough so that no child is overlooked. The child is not rushed into an activity for which he/she may be unprepared. Routines are conducted by guiding small numbers of children from one activity to another; the child accomplishes each task at his/her own rate. At the end of each day the child leaves with a feeling of satisfaction.

### **OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES**

Each day, weather permitting, each child enjoys two hours of outdoor activity unless a physician advises otherwise in writing. Learning to run, jump, climb, and take turns is a healthy way to participate in group activities while developing coordination and strength.

### **Growing in language and cognitive skills**

The program focuses on play-based learning where learning happens when children manipulate, explore and experiment. Purposeful play-based learning enables children to investigate, ask questions, solve problems, and engage in critical thinking. Play is responsive to each child's unique learning style and capitalizes on his or her instinctive curiosity and vision. Our plans are developed over a period of a week or two and planned to coincide with the interests of the children. Puzzles used for spatial concepts, matching, sorting, serration, and counting games are provided. Science concepts are taught and a science table set up. Books are available. Stories, poems, songs, games and finger plays are used daily for language development. Children articulate their ideas and use different languages to express them. Northridge Montessori School respects, fosters, responds, supports and includes different cultures and languages. In our inclusive learning environments, we welcome children of all abilities. Inclusive learning environment in our programs is implemented by

- Acknowledging diversity and valuing the culture and first language of all children
- Environment that is accessible to each child

- Recognize each child as unique and working with the families around their developmental needs

## **PARENT ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION**

Northridge Montessori School encourages and practices open communication with the families. We aim to foster outreach, engagement and communication with families about our program and their children's learning experiences. Sharing knowledge is integral to the success of your child. Respect, empathy; trust and honesty are core values in all our interactions with families. In addition to the daily interaction with program staff, we offer many opportunities for parent feedback and involvement—such as surveys, open houses and parent interviews. We use parent input to improve our programs and services.

The partnerships with the families supports our program in many ways:

- to value children's experiences and help them to reflect back on those experiences in their learning environment
- to learn together with the children involving the meaningful adults in their life
- to reflect and monitor appropriate development as the children grow
- for program staff to co-plan with children about learning
- to keep an open and ongoing dialogue with families about children's experience
- a self-reflection opportunity for program staff, as they participate in continuous professional learning
- promoting responsive relationships

## **COMMUNITY PARTNERS**

Northridge Montessori School is committed to involving and engaging local community partners in supporting children, families and staff. Northridge Montessori School supports volunteers and students from the community and provides placement, training, learning opportunities and practical work experience, in the areas of programming and management. Volunteers and students on placement enhance the high-quality care and individual attention given to the children in the programs

## **SUPPORTING STAFF IN CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL LEARNING**

Northridge Montessori School is committed to hiring, training and fairly compensating staff. Our non-discriminatory hiring practices provide individuals of all backgrounds the opportunity for employment. All staff are respected, supported and treated fairly. All full time staff working with children has completed early childhood education and are registered with the College of Early Childhood Educators. All program staff attends mandatory professional meetings and are committed to continuous professional learning. Northridge Montessori School participates in Raising the Bar in Peel, a voluntary community standards program for early learning and child care programs in Peel. In our program, positive adult-child interactions are ongoing. Staff works closely with the children to extend their

learning by encouraging them to build upon their existing awareness. Staff develops programs that support early learning following the child's lead and curiosity. Our staff recognize and support the uniqueness in each child, engage with the children as co-learners during their exploration of the environment, provoke their curiosity and guide positive interactions, engage in a positive approach to support children's emotions, know when to intervene and stimulate thinking and are committed to building self-awareness, regularly reflect on practices as they engage in new learning experiences, both individually and with colleagues.

## **DOCUMENTING AND REVIEWING THE IMPACT OF OUR PROGRAM STATEMENT**

Northridge Montessori School recognizes that pedagogical documentation is a way for our program staff to learn about how children think and learn. Our staffs make daily observations of children in the program and use this information to enlighten their future planning. The purpose of our documentation is also:

- to value children's experiences and help them to reflect back on those experiences in their learning environment
- to learn together with the children involving the meaningful adults in their life
- to reflect and monitor appropriate development as the children grow
- for program staff to co-plan with children about learning
- to keep an open and ongoing dialogue with families about children's experience
- a self-reflection opportunity for program staff, as they participate in continuous professional learning
- promoting responsive relationships

## **Staff and Volunteers Approaches To Implement the Program Statement**

The Northridge Montessori School is committed to the ongoing professional development of all our educators. After all, what the educator learns informs practice and the benefit is passed onto the children. NMS educators attend a series of curriculum training sessions throughout their career with the CDRCP (Child Development Resource Connection Peel). Additionally the Northridge Montessori School provides opportunities for educators to attend external learning events and conferences and keep legislated training requirements like Standard First Aid & Infant and Child CPR up to date. On a day-to-day basis the child care centre supervisor is responsible for the leadership, mentorship, coaching and development of educators. Based on the learning needs of the educators the supervisor may meet with staff to suggest strategies, conduct learning huddles to focus on a particular area of Northridge Montessori School curriculum with the entire team, conduct regular staff meetings to reflect and plan, invite PIRS or EYS to provide materials including links, articles, and various readings to supplement educator's professional learning. Moreover the Staff and Volunteers sign a form stating that they have read the Program Statement and adhere to it at all times.



## **Providing child-initiated & adult-supported experiences**

Children and parent/guardians are warmly greeted upon arrival and after a brief check-in to share news from the evening before, the children get down to the serious business of playing. The room is set up with a variety of activities that support the observed interests of the children. The children might join some friends at the creative art table to work collaboratively on a collage, or they might work on a Lego structure they safely stored on the counter to complete the next day.

There are no expectations imposed by the educator or curriculum on where children play, or whom they play with, or how long they play at one activity. That is for the child to choose based on their interests.

You may overhear a small group of children in the dramatic play centre dressed in costumes acting out a scene of being “mama, papa, and baby at the doctor”. The educator has been assigned the role of “doctor” by the children and takes this opportunity to ask the children questions that expand their understanding of what happens at a check-up.

Tomorrow the educator supports the children's interest by adding books about doctors and hospitals to the dramatic play centre hoping to build on the children's interest and spark more questions and play – resulting in more learning.

Northridge Montessori School's Program Statement is reviewed annually by the Supervisor to ensure that it is aligned with the Minister's policy statement.

## **Parent Issues and Concerns Policy and Procedures**

Name of Child Care Centre: Northridge Montessori School

Date Policy and Procedures Established: September 2017

Date Policy and Procedures Updated: June 2021

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to provide a transparent process for parents/guardians, the child care licensee and staff to use when parents/guardians bring forward issues/concerns.

### **Definitions**

*Licensee:* The individual or agency licensed by the Ministry of Education responsible for the operation and management of each child care centre it operates (i.e. the operator).

*Staff:* Individual employed by the licensee (e.g. program room staff).

Operator: Munira Hyder

### **Policy**

#### **General**

Parents/guardians are encouraged to take an active role in our child care centre and regularly discuss what their child(ren) are experiencing with our program. As supported by our program statement, we support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents/guardians, child care providers and staff, and foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents/guardians about the program and their children. Our staff are available to engage parents/guardians in conversations and support a positive experience during every interaction.

All issues and concerns raised by parents/guardians are taken seriously by the Operator and will be addressed. Every effort will be made to address and resolve issues and concerns to the satisfaction of all parties and as quickly as possible.

Issues/concerns may be brought forward verbally or in writing. Responses and outcomes will be provided verbally, or in writing upon request. The level of detail provided to the parent/guardian will respect and maintain the confidentiality of all parties involved.

An initial response to an issue or concern will be provided to parents/guardians within 10 business day(s). The person who raised the issue/concern will be kept informed throughout the resolution process.

Investigations of issues and concerns will be fair, impartial and respectful to parties involved.

#### **Confidentiality**

Every issue and concern will be treated confidentially and every effort will be made to protect the privacy of parents/guardians, children, staff, students and volunteers, except when information must be disclosed for legal reasons (e.g. to the Ministry of Education, College of Early Childhood Educators, law enforcement authorities or a Children's Aid Society).

