

The Way of the Shepherd
Catholic
Montessori School

2017-2018
Handbook

763-862-9110

www.wayoftheshepherd.org



THE WAY OF THE SHEPHERD CATHOLIC MONTESSORI SCHOOL

The Lord is my Shepherd

As The Way of the Shepherd begins its 20th year, the passages from John 21:15-17 are strikingly relevant to our work with the children. In John 21:15, Jesus exhorts us to “Feed my lambs.” In John 21:16, he tells us to “Tend my sheep” and in John 21:17, he tells us again to “Feed my sheep.” It is our love for the children that compels us to feed and tend these future saints. The children are fed not only educationally but also spiritually, feasting on the rich banquet of God’s eternal truths through the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd. We tend the children, placing great emphasis on grace and courtesy, safety, and moral and ethical excellence. In the world of a shepherd, lambs often fall prey to those that would destroy them. So great a charge has been placed before us, we covet your prayers and heavenly petitions on our behalf.

As we forge ahead in fulfilling Jesus’ commission to “feed and tend the lambs”, we humbly beg for your prayers and support. What we see is only temporal but The Good Shepherd sees what is eternal. By God’s grace, we place ourselves in your service now and in the future and pray that “Only goodness and mercy shall follow us all the days of our lives and we shall dwell in the house of the Lord for years to come.” Ps 23:6

~The Board and Staff of The Way of the Shepherd~

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MISSION

The Way of the Shepherd Catholic Montessori School provides a nurturing learning environment personalized to each child and centered on God, where ministry to children helps them grow in holiness and become contributing members of society for God's greater glory.

PHILOSOPHY

The Way of the Shepherd Catholic Montessori School is dedicated to providing a welcoming, faith-filled learning environment in which parents and educators work together to help children develop a personal relationship with God, and to achieve their full potential.

Catholic Identity

- We believe the foundation of a Catholic school is its Catholic identity.
- The Way of the Shepherd Catholic Montessori School loyally adheres to the teachings of the Magisterium of the Roman Catholic Church.
- The staff, administration, and Board of Directors are faithful Catholics centered in Eucharistic devotion, through the intercession of Our Blessed Mother. Members of The Way of the Shepherd community strive for growth in their relationship with Jesus Christ.
- The children are immersed and formed in the Catholic faith through the Eucharist, daily prayer, moral formation, and the teachings and practices of The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd.

Montessori

- The Way of the Shepherd follows the educational method developed by Dr. Maria Montessori.
- We believe it is the role of the school and parents to assist children in discovering their God given gifts and talents.
- We believe it is the role of the school to foster and nurture the children's natural desire to learn by providing the proper learning environment, materials, guidance, and encouragement which helps them recognize and nurture their talents.
- We believe it is the role of the school to guide children through their developmental stages by encouraging independence, and responsible engagement in their work, while providing regular, prayerful assessment of their progress.

Parent

- We believe that parents are the primary educators of their children.
- We believe that the home environment and the role of the parents as teachers and models throughout a child's life are fundamentally important.

Child

- We believe that all children are called to holiness and are created by God in His image and likeness with a unique combination of abilities, interests, and learning styles.
- We believe that all children are inquisitive and creative and that they possess a natural desire to learn.

- We believe that all children move through successive developmental stages, and at each stage, the children must be committed and actively involved in the learning process.

Community

- We believe the school needs to form a covenant of mutual service among the children, parents, staff, and Board of Directors, in order to be unified in the education of the children.

THE CATECHESIS OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

The heart of the curriculum at The Way of The Shepherd is the spiritual formation the children will receive. All children will be participating in The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd. This is a unique religious experience designed for children by Sofia Cavaletti & Gianna Gobi in Rome beginning in 1954. It is based upon Maria Montessori's spiritual vision for children, combined with the teachings and the traditions of the Roman Catholic Church regarding Holy Scripture and Liturgy, using Dr. Montessori's educational principles.

The purpose of the Catechesis is to proclaim the message of Jesus to children using the "Parable Method" for meditation on Scripture, while using Montessori methods to provide a learning environment conducive to the spiritual development of the young child. Children are especially attracted and are sensitive to the Good Shepherd's abiding love for His sheep. They in turn develop a special love for Jesus, who is the Good Shepherd even before they realize that they are the sheep. Materials usually accompany each presentation and are then left for the children to manipulate and meditate upon.

WHAT IS MONTESSORI?

A Montessori school is an environment which embodies the educational principles established by Dr. Maria Montessori as she consistently and scientifically observed how children develop and learn.

Dr. Maria Montessori (1870 - 1952) was an Italian physician whose vocation was dedicated to the study of children. She discovered that the characteristics at each stage of human development are unique, and that the foundation of the whole personality is laid during the early years of life. This discovery is now universally accepted as "best practice" in the field of education. Maria Montessori referred to the child in the first six years of life, as the "*Absorbent Mind*". It is this stage of development that is most critical and formative.

In a Montessori setting, interactive learning occurs in an environment carefully prepared by an educator trained to work with children of that specific age group. In a non-graded class of mixed ages, the children spontaneously and independently use materials designed by Dr. Montessori. They are guided to choose their own activities and develop practical and intellectual abilities through individual discovery and exploration of language, mathematics, geography, geometry, art and music.

The highly social atmosphere of this environment stems from a unique combination of freedom and structure, founded on respect. Montessori education aids the fullest development of a child's potential and provides each child with the foundation for a life of joyful learning.

WOS STAFF

Tricia Menzhuber	Head of School
Megan Duevel	Business Manager
Linda Olson	Administrative Assistant
Shannon Alinder	Children's House Guide
Tricia Grape	CH-Alinder Assistant
Rosie Johnson	Children's House Guide
Lucy Olson	CH-Johnson Assistant
Kristin Sack	Children's House Guide
Lisa Willems	CH-Sack Assistant
Sara Feinberg	Lower Elementary (E1) Guide
Grace Schneider	E1-Feinberg Assistant
Emma Novak	Lower Elementary (E1) Guide
Karen Lewis	E1-Novak Assistant
JoAnn Schulzetenberg	Upper Elementary (E2) Guide
Sue Pilon	E2 Assistant
Maria Post	Adolescent Guide
Carolyn Kohlhaas	Lead Catechist
Jeanette Burke	Children's House Catechist

Marilyn Smith	Sacristan
Sara Neel	Theater
Don Olson	Spanish
Brandon Kuehn	Art
Bob Vaughn	Physical Education
Ethel Smith	After School Coordinator
Mary Minor	Community Atrium Coordinator

RESPONSIBILITIES

Of the School

1. To provide a warm, loving environment that is attractive, clean and safe.
2. To follow the teachings, doctrines and disciplines of the Catholic Church.
3. To maintain high educational Montessori standards.
4. To provide a stimulating program consistent with Montessori philosophy.
5. To provide an excellent, caring and fully engaged staff.
6. To maintain written records on each child.
7. To provide parent education and conferences.

Of Parents

1. To understand and accept the Church's teaching that parents are the primary educators of their children.
2. To deliver and pick up their children on time.
3. To read the school handbook.
4. To attend conferences and parent meetings.
5. To maintain realistic expectations about their children.
6. To keep informed about school policies and goals.
7. To become aware of the Montessori Method in order to assist the child.
8. To fulfill financial and legal obligations to the school in a prompt and timely manner.
9. To volunteer and become active in their child's education.

Of the Child

To "construct" the person God is calling him/her to be.

DISCIPLINE POLICIES

Student Conduct/Discipline Policy (Children’s House)

The Montessori philosophy for social and intellectual development is centered on respect: respect for God, oneself, others and the environment. This respect is necessary in order to develop the natural capacity for self-control. In addition, The Way of The Shepherd teaching staff encourages the children to interact with others in a Christian manner as “brothers and sisters in Christ.” The teachings of Jesus are our central focus and our guide.

In the Children’s House environment, the materials and presentations are geared toward the sensitive periods of the development of the child years 3-6. Children repeat their work with the material. As children begin to reveal themselves, their Guides cater to their interests and strengths while encouraging children to work with materials that hone a wide variety of interests and skills. Children are expected to choose challenging work and receive new presentations willingly. They are to care for the materials, supplies, and friends in their learning environment. Yet, children are also developing their will. An important part of Children’s House is helping children direct their will to accomplish the meaningful work of their hands.

When a child’s behavior is inappropriate, however, the child is redirected to a more satisfying activity. If the problem persists and a positive resolution cannot be reached through discussion with the classroom Guide, the child will spend some “buddy time” with the classroom Guide or be separated until he/she has regained proper composure and is ready and willing to return to work. The separation will usually take place in the same room as the Guide and the other children. If the child is removed from the room, he/she will always be placed in a well-ventilated, well-lit area within sight and hearing of an adult. It is always our goal to “Follow the Child” in order to discover and guide them according to their needs and toward those activities that will follow their interests and highlight their talents and abilities. Respect for the child’s dignity is honored at all times.

Expected Level of Discipline

- Care in our movements: walking slowly and deliberately
- Care in our speech: using words of kindness; deliberate articulation
- Waiting one’s turn and sharing
- Awareness of the needs of self and eventually, the needs of others

Unacceptable Behaviors in Children’s House

- Physical Harm—hitting and/or pushing others—causing injury to self or others
- Verbal Harm—teasing, inappropriate language
- Unwillingness to follow directions—during work cycle, transitions, and classroom gatherings

- Refusal to choose work or complete chosen work
- Blatant disrespect
- Disrupting others at work—difficulty keeping hands to self, uncontrolled voice
- Careless or destructive use of materials; Refusal to keep the order of the environment
- Constant verbal outbursts or uncontrolled voice/mannerisms
- Unsafe behavior—Running away, rough behavior in building or on the playground, roughhousing, etc.

Procedure:

- Parents will be informed of misbehavior via a “Behavior Report,” a phone call, or email.
- The classroom Guide will work with the parents to resolve and correct behavior. Multiple contacts home will result in a meeting that includes a review of specific behavior situations and responses that may be implemented by the Guide, as well as by the parents in the home.
- If behavior continues or willful aggression toward others occurs so that we cannot safely care for your child, other children, and materials/environment, we will call parents to remove their child from school. We may need to carefully move children when there is a safety concern.
- Persistent, willful misconduct with no incremental improvement may warrant an administrative review with possible expulsion from school.

Student Conduct/Discipline Policy (Elementary)

The Montessori philosophy for social and intellectual development is centered on respect: Respect for God, oneself, others and the environment. In order to develop the child’s God-given gifts and talents to the fullest, the child is encouraged to cultivate a natural capacity for self-control. In addition, The Way of the Shepherd teaching staff encourages the children to interact with others in a Christian manner as “brothers and sisters in Christ.” The teachings of Jesus are our central focus and guide.

In the elementary environment, the children are expected to display a positive standard of work, which has been fostered during their Children’s House experience. We offer an environment designed to engage the children in serious thought and deliberation in their work. While the coursework may be demanding, we are convinced it can be successfully pursued by any child who is willing and able to approach their studies with an open mind and a sense of intellectual curiosity. Children are expected to work at their highest capacity. The goal of our teaching staff is to guide the children toward a genuine desire for exploration and learning. We expect a certain level of order and civility so that the teaching and learning can proceed in an uninterrupted manner for all children.

The Elementary child is expected to have internalized a certain level of discipline during their early years in Montessori. They are on a path toward greater sociability and therefore, need our continued encouragement from their home and school environments. We are all members of the “sheepfold of Christ” and we must always strive to see each other and interact with each other as Christ would want us to.

Expected Levels of Discipline:

- Respect for all Guides, staff, or adults in authority
- Honoring parents in word and action, and by remaining at school until given permission to leave
- Displaying a genuine desire to learn and making it possible for fellow students to do the same
- Focused attention during presentations
- Willingness to work and follow directions
- Appropriate use of technology in the classroom, as a learning tool
- Demonstration of truthfulness and honesty
- Respect for another person’s body, which includes refraining from fighting, physical harm, and unwanted contact
- Respect for others’ feelings, in word and action
- Respect for school property, other students’ property and all the materials in the classroom environment
- Appropriate, respectful use of language
- Amenable behavior or attitude

Unacceptable Behaviors in Elementary:

- Physical Harm—hitting and/or pushing others—causing injury to self or others
- Verbal Harm—teasing, inappropriate language
- Unwillingness to follow directions—during work cycle, transitions, and classroom gatherings
- Refusal to choose work or complete chosen work
- Blatant disrespect
- Disrupting others at work—difficulty keeping hands to self, uncontrolled voice
- Careless or destructive use of materials; Refusal to keep the order of the environment
- Constant verbal outbursts or uncontrolled voice/mannerisms
- Unsafe behavior—Running away, rough behavior in building or on the playground, roughhousing, etc.

Procedure:

- Parents will be informed of misbehavior via a “Behavior Report,” a phone call, or email.
- The classroom Guide will work with the parents to resolve and correct behavior. Multiple contacts home will result in a meeting that includes a review of specific behavior situations and responses that may be implemented by the Guide, as well as by the parents in the home.
- If behavior continues or willful aggression toward others occurs so that we cannot safely care for your child, other children, and materials/environment, we will call parents to remove their child from school. We may need to carefully move children when there is a safety concern.
- Persistent, willful misconduct with no incremental improvement may warrant an administrative review with possible expulsion from school.

Playground Safety

All adults, staff and parents, who are in the presence of the children should help to monitor playground safety and cleanup. Adults responsible for the children, especially the Recess Supervisors, should primarily focus their attention on the children. Parents, staff, and children should report broken equipment, loose screws, or other playground hazards to the office immediately. During school hours, school staff is primarily responsible for safe play. After children have been dismissed at the end of their day, parents are primarily responsible for safe play. In general, children are expected to show respect for self, for others (especially the adults in charge) and for the environment.

Expectations of the Recess Supervisor/Assistant:

1. The assistant of each Children's House invites and leads the children, walking ahead of them back into the school peacefully. Hallway manners should be monitored.
2. Any conflict that occurs during recess time must have a complete, peaceful resolution before the children involved return to the classroom.
3. All injuries or misbehavior must be addressed and recorded.
4. The drinking fountain may be used only upon re-entering the building and must be monitored.

1. Children will show respect for themselves.

- Children will behave in a dignified, Christian manner.
- Children will refrain from violent imaginative play.
- Children will play in a safe manner.
- Children may not play in areas out of sight of the Recess Supervisor

2. Children will show respect for others.

- Children will treat others with kindness.
- Children are expected to let any other child join in a game and share equipment.

(There may be times when a child will need to have a partner join with them to keep the teams even or perhaps a game that has been closed by a playground supervisor or guide because there is no space for more children to join.)

- No profanity or inappropriate language will be allowed.
- Wrestling, tackling, tripping and shoving are prohibited.
- Throwing sticks, rocks, snow balls, or other objects is prohibited.
- Children will not grab each other's clothing.
- Unsafe items (such as knives, matches, lighters, cap guns, real or play guns, fire crackers, etc.) are not permitted at school and could result in suspension or expulsion.
- The following items are not to be brought to school: Toys, dolls, CD players, electronic games, and other non-educational items unless the item is needed for a class activity and a Guide has given written permission.
- Skateboards, roller blades, rolling shoes and skates are not permitted on the school grounds.

3. Children will show respect to all adults.

- Children will follow directions given by an adult immediately.
- Absolutely no disrespect, in word or gesture, will be tolerated.

4. Children will show respect for the environment and equipment.

- Equipment should be used for its intended purpose only. (e.g., jump ropes for jumping rope, hockey sticks for hockey)
- To safeguard longevity, playground equipment will be available after school hours only when there is proper adult supervision .
- All food and snacks will remain in the designated eating areas.
- No gum, wax or similar chewing materials are permitted on the school grounds.
- To preserve a quiet visiting space, running will be confined to the area west of the curb line. No running is permitted through the sandbox area. Children are not permitted to be in or behind the shed.
- Some playground areas may be off limits during wet weather.
- Climbing on trees, hanging from branches, climbing on the fence or any other structures not intended for climbing are not permitted.
- Play equipment needs to be shared and children must take turns.

Procedures

- A. Supervisors will step in and correct inappropriate behavior when it is addressed.
- B. Children will be assisted in resolving conflicts. They will take turns telling what happened and listening, then they will take turns apologizing, forgiving, and moving on.
- C. Behavior Reports will be issued for persistent unacceptable behaviors and the school discipline policy will be followed.

Simple Rules to Help Supervisors

1. Slide down, feet first; do not climb up the slide.
2. No running with sticks.
3. No climbing on trees, fences or anything else not intended for climbing.
4. Only 3 at a time on the tire swing.
5. One person at a time on the regular swings - seated only.
6. Nothing is to be thrown except balls and frisbees.
7. The children must be visible at all times – they may not go behind the shed.
8. Sandbox toys must stay in the sandbox and be put away when appropriate.
9. Only children 4 years and younger can play in the plastic “playhouse.”
10. When kickball is in session, no running through the kickball infield.
11. Wrestling, tackling, tripping and shoving are prohibited.
12. Equipment should be used for its intended purpose only (e.g. jump ropes)

Parking Lot Rules

- A. Absolutely no playing in parking lot, including all space outside of the gate, even grassy areas.
- B. Children must be next to guardian at any time outside of the gate (or in the parking lot area on north campus).
- C. Please follow the one-way direction of our parking lot on south campus.
- D. Please drive slowly. Better to be safe and late than fast and on time.

Bullying Policy

Purpose: The Way of the Shepherd Catholic Montessori School is committed to providing a safe educational environment for its students and teachers on school property or at school-related functions. Bullying, like other violent, harassing, or disruptive behavior, can interfere with a students’ ability learn and the teachers’ ability to educate students in a safe environment. The purpose of this policy is to assist The Way of the Shepherd in its goal of preventing and responding to acts of bullying, intimidation, harassment, violence, and similar disruptive behavior.

The Way of the Shepherd Catholic Montessori School cannot monitor all activities and eliminate all incidents of bullying between students, particularly when one or more of the students involved is not on school property or at school-related functions or under the direct supervision of school personnel. However, to the extent that such conduct affects the educational environment at WOS, The Way of the Shepherd reserves the right to take action to investigate and respond to such conduct.

Definitions: For purposes of this policy,

1. “Bullying:” Deliberate or intentional behavior using words or actions that is intended to cause or that does cause fear, distress, intimidation, or harm. Bullying may be repeated behavior or a pattern of behavior, and it may involve an

imbalance of power. Bullying can take different forms, including but not limited to:

- a. Verbal conduct (e.g. using threatening or intimidating language, teasing, or name-calling);
 - b. Social (e.g., spreading rumors, ostracizing or socially excluding others, breaking up friendships);
 - c. Physical (e.g., physical acts and gestures, including hitting, kicking, tripping, theft, damaging property, threatening or intimidating behavior); and
 - d. Cyberbullying.
2. “Cyberbullying:” The use of any electronic means to harass, intimidate, or bully, whether on or off school grounds. “Cyberbullying” is a form of bullying, and provisions of this policy that refer to “bullying” are intended to refer to cyberbullying as well.
 3. “On school property or at school-related functions:” The Way of the Shepherd Catholic Montessori School buildings, school grounds, and school property or property adjacent to school grounds; WOS school buses, school vehicles, and school-contracted vehicles; the area of entrance or departure from school grounds and premises; and school-related trips, functions, activities, or events. While prohibiting bullying at these locations and events, the school does not represent that it will provide supervision or assume liability at these locations and events.

Provisions:

1. Prohibition: The Way of the Shepherd expressly prohibits bullying, by either an individual student or a group of students, on school property or at school-related functions. The WOS also expressly prohibits cyberbullying, regardless of whether such acts are committed on or off school property or with or without the use of school resources. These prohibitions apply to students who directly engage in an act of bullying and to students who, by their indirect behavior, condone or support another student’s act of bullying. This policy also applies to any student whose conduct at any time or in any place constitutes bullying that interferes with or obstructs the mission or operations of the school or the safety or welfare of the student, other students, volunteers, or employees.
2. Alleged Consent Irrelevant: Apparent permission or consent by a student being bullied does not lessen the prohibitions contained in this policy.
3. Reporting: A person who observes an act of bullying or becomes aware of such an act must report it to a teacher. Anyone with any bullying-related concerns should also contact the Head of School.
4. No Retaliation: Retaliation against a victim, good-faith reporter, or a witness of bullying is prohibited.
5. False Accusations: False accusations or reports of bullying others are prohibited.
6. Violations: A student who violates this policy shall be subject to discipline for that act in accordance with The Way of the Shepherd Catholic Montessori School’s policies and procedures. The WOS may take into account all factors it determines to be relevant. Depending on the circumstances, such factors *might* include: the age, development, and maturity levels of the parties involved; the

levels of harm, surrounding circumstances, and nature and severity of behavior; past incidences or past or continuing patterns of behavior; the relationship between the parties involved; and the context in which the alleged conduct occurred.

Depending on the level and severity of the offense, discipline may range from positive behavioral interventions to more serious consequences as outlined in The Way of the Shepherd discipline policies, including but not limited to, suspension or dismissal. Consequences for other individuals engaging in particular acts of bullying may include, but not be limited to, exclusion from The WOS school property and events or termination of services or contracts.

The Way of the Shepherd retains the sole discretion to determine the appropriate response, including the appropriate discipline or consequence, for violations of this bullying policy.

Nothing in this policy prevents the WOS from responding to violations of its other policies or code of conduct policy.

“It is easier to build a peaceful child than to repair a violent adult.” Maria Montessori

Weapons Policy

The Way of the Shepherd upholds a zero tolerance regarding weapons. Weapon is defined as a knife or a gun or any other device or instrument which is utilized in such a manner so as to threaten, intimidate or produce bodily harm or the fear of such. No weapons are permitted on school property at any time. All violations of policy will be evaluated on a case-by-case manner, considering all components. Possible suspension or expulsion may be imposed. A second violation would result in immediate expulsion. Parents/guardians will be informed of disciplinary action.

ADMISSIONS

Admissions Policy

While embracing the Catholic and Montessori philosophy that each child develops in a unique way and welcoming applications from a wide variety of children, we also recognize our limitations in meeting some highly complex or specialized learning needs. Our admissions procedure will therefore take into account our ability to accommodate a particular child's special needs without disruption to our program as one factor when evaluating applicants. Children who have special needs that fall within our ability to address may be accepted on a provisional basis, with additional stipulations (such as cooperation in having the child assessed or requirement for tutor or therapist assistance.)

An Admissions Committee, consisting of the Head of School, student’s Guide and any other relevant professionals or specialists who may be appointed by the Head of School,

will make all admission decisions. Admission decisions will be based on the following general criteria:

Primary Children

- * Able to cooperate in a social group
- * Shows respect for authority
- * Shows respect for other children
- * Demonstrates independence in toileting skills
- * Able to understand and follow school and classroom rules and guidelines
- * Demonstrates an eagerness to learn
- * Developmentally functional in all aspects of daily school routines.

Elementary Children

- * Able to cooperate in a social group
- * Shows respect for authority
- * Shows respect for other children
- * Demonstrates an eagerness to learn
- * Capable of working independently
- * Able to understand and follow school and classroom rules and guidelines
- * Developmentally functional in all aspects of daily school routines
- * Current academic and life skills at levels commensurate with targeted class

Families

- * Understanding of and commitment to our school mission and philosophy as a fully Catholic and fully Montessori learning environment
- * Understanding of and commitment to long-term participation in the Montessori education process
- * Understanding their role in partnering with the school in living its mission (e.g. volunteerism, attendance at school meetings and functions, support of school's vision and growth)

PROGRAM AND SCHEDULE

School Days

Half-Day Children's House, Full Day Children's House, Elementary: Monday - Friday

1/2 Day Children's House Session South Campus

Session Begins: 8:00 a.m.

Session Ends: 11:30 a.m.

All Day Children's House and Elementary South Campus

Session Begins: 8:00 a.m.

Session Ends: 3:00 p.m.

1/2 Day Children's House Session North Campus

Session Begins: 7:45 a.m.

Session Ends: 11:15 a.m.

All Day Children's House, Elementary, and Adolescent North Campus

Session Begins: 7:45 a.m.

Session Ends: 2:45 p.m.

Before and After School Care

The Way of the Shepherd offers before-school care from 7:00 AM and after-school care until 6:00 PM during school days. Children must be preregistered into the program.

Attendance & Reporting Pupil Absences

Children are expected to be at school regularly for learning to take place. We feel it is important for the child to be at school as consistently as possible, so we do not recommend taking a child out of school for long periods of time, unless the child is ill. We ask that families take vacations in accordance with school vacations. If this is unavoidable, please let the front office know about these absences. There is a form that needs to be completed by the child's teachers and parents beforehand.

Elementary Attendance: It is the law that children above the age of six years must attend school. Children should arrive at school between 7:45 and 7:55 am on south campus and 7:30-7:40 am on north campus every day that school is in session. If your child will be absent, please call the front office by 8:00 am. When calling in an absence, state your name, your child's name, the date of absence and the reason for the absence. Illnesses, family emergencies, or appointments are examples of excused absences. Sleeping in or missing the bus are examples of unexcused absences. Other excused absences may be granted by the Administration or Board of Directors. The Way of the Shepherd Administration will contact parents or guardians regarding the child's status relative to this Attendance Policy.

Elementary Tardiness: Children are considered tardy after 8:00 am on south campus and 7:45 am on north campus. Three tardy marks equal an unexcused absence. If your child arrives to school late, you must sign in at the office for children to be admitted. You **MAY NOT** escort your child directly to their classroom. We strongly discourage lateness, as it disrupts the children's daily routines.

Elementary Truancy Policy: In accordance with state law, after a child above the age of six years has three (3) unexcused absences, The Way of the Shepherd will send home a warning letter to the child's parents. After six (6) unexcused absences, the school will report this information to the Minnesota Attorney General Office's Truancy Division via Anoka County's Truancy Office.

Preschool Attendance Policy: Although there is no legal requirement that preschool children attend school, children under six years of age registered in Children's House are

expected to attend all days for which they are registered on a weekly basis. They should arrive between 7:45 and 7:55 am on south campus and 7:30-7:40 am on north campus.

Messages

You may leave a written message in the front office or via email or call the school office at 763-862-9110 to leave a verbal message. If there are changes regarding transportation in the p.m., those should be made *by telephone* prior to noon of that day. Staff will call you back as soon as they are able. Please check Family Folders and read the WOS Weekly Newsletter to keep abreast of what is happening at The Way of the Shepherd.

Our staff welcomes and appreciates communication from the parents of children enrolled at the school. They are open to ideas and suggestions and enjoy getting to know the parents as well as having the parents get to know them. They encourage you to communicate with them as often as you feel necessary. Do not hesitate to write a note, send an email or request an appointment with any staff member. Please also respect staff's need to prepare, clean up after school, and allow for evening personal family time.

Special Information from Home

In the event that a significant change occurs in your home, please consider informing the staff. We will accept your judgment as to which changes may affect your child's behavior and security. Common causes for stress include moving, a new person living in the home, either or both parents being away from home, illness in the family, any hospitalization, accident or death in the family, new guardian, and death of a pet. All information is regarded as strictly confidential.

Snacks

We do not have a regular, daily snack time in Children's House. However, we do offer a snack each day, in both Children's Houses. Children may choose to prepare their own food project from the practical life area. Lower elementary students may bring a snack from home or participate in their daily snack program. Upper elementary students may take part in their daily snack program.

We also have special parties for the children on or around certain holidays and ask that parents help by contributing the snacks for these occasions. These snacks must be pre-packaged foods. Our beverage is usually water.

Most of the primary children find it quite delightful when they are ready for one or all of the individual snack preparation activities. These include cutting an apple, orange, carrot, banana, or celery. When your child is ready (and you will know when he/she is!) he/she may bring these items to school, do the exercise, and then choose to either eat it himself/herself or bring it home to share. If your child is NOT ready for these exercises, he/she may still bring these items to school and an older child will prepare them for him/her.

Please be certain that you have included all food allergies on your Emergency Form. Discuss with the Guide if these allergies can be life threatening. Classroom-wide exclusions of some foods (e.g. nuts) may be made as needed to accommodate student allergies. Notification of this will be made at the beginning of each school year.

Because some children have a low tolerance for sugar, and because we wish to encourage good nutritional habits, all regular snacks will be nutritious. We have included some nutritious snack ideas which you may find helpful. You may wish to send a special snack like one of these for your child's birthday. No cookies, cakes, or candy, please. Ideas are found in the addenda on p. 36.

Lunch

The Way of the Shepherd children bring bag lunches each day. Because of the number of children, it is not feasible for each to use the microwave to heat food. Soups, stews, pasta, etc. can be kept reasonably warm in a good insulated thermos. The school does serve milk or water, if preferred.

Invitations

In an effort to be sensitive to all the children, please be discreet when distributing party invitations. We ask that the distributing not be done during school hours. Staff may not pass out invitations nor should the Family Folders be used for this purpose. Most often, it seems that when there have been invitations, they include all of one grade level so no one was left out. However, there have been instances when select children were invited and they began to talk. While no malice was intended, the hurt was still very real. We appreciate your partnering with us in teaching the children to be not only kind but also sensitive.

Napping in Children's House

All Day Montessori children will quietly rest after lunch each day. Each child will have a napping mat, slip cover, blanket, and pillow of their own. A small special item from home is acceptable to bring for nap time. Each child's bedding and blanket will be stored separately and must be washed weekly, or when soiled or wet. When in use, mats will be placed on the floor, in a secluded area so napping children will not be disturbed. Nap time will vary for each child, allowing for individual rest needs. A child who has rested quietly for 30 minutes will not be required to remain on his/her mat. After resting each child will be allowed to return to quiet work time until dismissal at 3:00 PM on south campus or 2:45 PM on north campus.

ARRIVALS AND DISMISSALS

Arrival

The morning is important preparation time for the Guides. They complete preparation, gather for prayer, and would like to greet your children no earlier than 7:45 a.m. on south

campus or 7:30 a.m. on north campus. The only exception is the children arriving on the bus or part of the before care program. **All vehicles should always enter the parking lot on the south side and depart thru the east exit on south campus and through the north parking lot on north campus.** On south campus, when you are ready for your child/ren to enter the building, please drive up to the schoolyard gate. At 7:45 am until 7:55 am, an adult will be at the gate to greet the children and guide them safely through the front door of school. On north campus, a staff member will be present to welcome children between 7:30-7:40 am at the doors. Please be careful and consistent when dropping off your children in the morning. **Please, for the sake of safety, the children should always exit the vehicle from the driver's side, eliminating the need to walk between running vehicles!** If there is not an adult ready to receive the children at the gate, you will need to escort your child into the building. Parents who escort their children into the building should say good-bye in the entryway and allow the children to enter the hallway independently. This allows the child to grow in independence as well as keep the hallway relatively open for the number of students who need to get ready for the day. Thank you for your help with this!

Dismissal

Please pick up your child on the playground each day on south campus and at the 11:15 AM pick up on north campus. At the 2:45 PM pick up on north campus, please pick up your child with the same curbside process used at arrival in the morning.. We will walk children out and they will wait in classroom lines for pick-up. Once we see that the responsible adult designated to pick up your child is present, we will extend our final good-bye and excuse your child. Once children have been picked up by the parent/responsible adult, The Way of the Shepherd is no longer responsible for their supervision.

11:15 or 11:30 a.m. Departure—Please do not enter the playground area until the bell rings at 11:15 or 11:30 AM and the playground supervisors indicate that it is time to enter. Please leave the playground by 11:20 or 11:35 as the older students will be using the space for recess.

3:00 p.m. Departure on South Campus— Please do not enter the playground area until a staff member welcomes you at 3:00 PM. Once all children are dismissed, a bell will ring. At that time, families are welcome to enjoy the play yard for fellowship and play as long as there are no school-sponsored activities exclusively using the space. Please do not allow children to play until dismissal has concluded (bell rings). We request that the play area is picked up after any informal use. Playground rules also must be followed during free play. These rules are posted on the front door and the shed's whiteboard for all chaperones to review. Each child and chaperone should agree to following the playground rules each day by initialing their agreement to the rules on the whiteboard on the side of the shed. If the play yard is not picked up and/or playground rules are not being followed, we will not offer after school free play. The school building, however, is not available after school hours. Interior doors will be shut at 3:15 PM. Any child

hoping to enter the building will have to do so with a parent/adult chaperone. It may be a good idea to have children bring water bottles for after school play.

In the event of heavy rain or storms, staff will enact curbside gate pick up on both campuses. Please be aware that this process may take some extra time.

Child Pick-up

For the safety of your child, the staff will not release a child to anyone without prior arrangement or written permission from the parents. No child will be released alone or with anyone under the age of 16. Please use the "Consent to Release" form (available in the office) or provide an email authorization or phone call to let staff know when someone else will be authorized to pick up your child that is **not** listed on the emergency contact form. Drivers will need to provide a photo ID to authenticate that they are a person authorized to pick up the child. No child will be released to anyone who is under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

Good-byes

The way in which you say goodbye to your child is important. Pre-school children go through various adjustments in their separation from parents. Therefore, we recommend that you say goodbye with confidence and leave promptly. We discourage long, emotional good-byes as they often make the child feel unsure about staying. For example, the child may conclude that if you, the parent, feel fear about leaving him/her, there must be something about which to be frightened. We realize that this can be a trying time for parents of younger children, but we assure you that the staff is trained to handle any problems of this nature that may arise with your child.

Late Arrivals

When students come in late, it may be disruptive to community meetings and prayer time; children may miss receiving the benefits of God's word. "Thus faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes through the word of Christ." Romans 10:17 We understand that even in the most well planned mornings, "life happens" and when it does, please accompany your child into the building and say goodbye in the entryway. Office personnel will take the child to their classroom, and parents should sign their child in at the front office. All late arrivals will be noted as tardy with the only exception a late arriving bus. Out of respect for the teachers, the students, and your child/children, please make every effort to arrive at school in enough time for your child to be IN the classroom by 8:00 a.m. on south campus and 7:45 a.m. on north campus. It is more than just being respectful; it is a life lesson on punctuality.

Late Pick-Up

Please be on time to pick up your child. As much as the children enjoy school, friends, and the work they are doing, they do look forward to seeing their parents at the appointed

time and can become very upset when their parent is late. Also, they are learning their first examples of consideration from you. If you must be late due to an emergency or an unforeseen circumstance, please call the school. If we are momentarily unavailable to take your call, you may call the office (763-862-9110) and leave a message for us; this should only be done in emergencies. If late pick-ups become a habit, administration will work with families toward a possible solution. Children who are staying past dismissal should be picked up in the office.

Carpools

The basic responsibility for transporting your child to and from school rests with you, the parents/guardians. The school recognizes, however, that transportation can be a difficulty and has found that carpools are often the solution to that difficulty. If you need to form a carpool, we recommend that you read through the school directory, noting parent addresses close to you, and try to make your own arrangements.

Please notify the staff in writing of your carpool arrangements. While we realize carpool drivers are named on your Emergency Forms, having your carpool list handy will aid us in calling children's names at the end of a session or calling drivers, if necessary.

Busing

The local school district (ISD 11) may provide busing services for elementary and kindergarten aged children depending upon the location of your home. If you wish to use this busing service, please complete and return the registration form during the enrollment period for the upcoming academic year. You may contact the school office for more information. **Due to scheduling differences, busing is available only in the morning.**

Picking Up Your Child Early

In the event that you must pick up your child early, please send a note or call the office informing the staff of your arrival time. Check in at the office and sign out your child. The child will come to the office to meet the adult when leaving. Please do not go directly to the classroom.

Change in Transportation Arrangements

If there is a change in your child's departure procedure, please notify the staff in writing on the day of the change, or, if possible, ahead of time. You may also call the front office prior to noon of the day to alert them of the change. Office staff will confirm receipt. **The staff will not release your child to a stranger or another parent without your permission.** We will require proper identification (i.e. driver's license) from any person, other than the parent, who is picking up the child, so please be sure that the person is aware that he/she will be asked to produce such identification.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Snow Emergency

The Head of School will make a decision whether or not to close school due to inclement weather. You will be notified by email. If you call the school, the voicemail message will report the cancellation, and it will be posted on our school website and Facebook page. The school will also report cancellations to WCCO radio (830 AM) and local television stations.

If a storm begins while school is in session, you may desire to pick up your child early. Likewise, depending on how quickly a storm is developing, we may want to reach you to come early. It is important, therefore, that the contact information on your Emergency Form be kept current. If weather is looking ominous on a particular day, and you are going to be somewhere other than the phone numbers indicated as contact points on your Emergency Form, please let us know a number at which you can be reached on that particular day. Use your own good judgment when weather looks bad. Don't feel obligated to drive when safety is a factor, but please notify other parents if you are in a carpool.

Home

If a family emergency occurs which may affect your child, you may call the school. If the phone is not answered immediately, leave a message on the voice mail and a staff person will return your call as soon as possible.

School

Staff has been trained in CPR and First Aid. If an accident occurs and requires immediate emergency treatment, the staff member will proceed by calling 911. If less serious, the staff will administer the necessary first aid as well as contact the parents. An accident report form will be completed and a copy sent home with the child.

Utility Failure, Power Outage, or Blizzard Emergency

In case of a power outage or in an event of a utility failure (heat, water and sewer) parents will be notified to pick up their children. This will also apply to blizzard conditions.

SCHOOL ATTIRE

Outdoor Apparel: Your child will have outdoor playtime unless it is raining, temperature is below 10 degrees (0 degrees for elementary), or the wind-chill factor is below zero. Children should have the appropriate outerwear including head covering, mittens, snow pants and boots when it is cold or snowy. If your child is too ill to be outside, they are too ill for school.

Children' House Clothing: Children must be toilet trained prior to entering school, but sometimes accidents do happen. Every child needs to have a clean change of clothes that will be stored at school. If an accident happens, the spare change of clothing will need to be washed and returned. Clothing should be easy for the child to manage himself/herself so that he/she becomes independent and use the toilet with a minimum of frustration. Please be sure that your child wears clothing that is completely washable. It helps the staff a great deal if all sweaters, coats, boots, shoes, hats and other outerwear are labeled with the child's name. It is difficult to remember who wore what and even more difficult if things are left behind. We ask that you send a pair of appropriate black indoor shoes that can be left at school. These must have support around the heel and non-slip soles, as the tile floor is slippery. Please repair or replace clothing and indoor shoes when necessary.

If possible, try to allow time for your child to dress himself/herself prior to departing for school. This promotes independence. Encourage your child to lay out clothes the night before on a table or chair, thus teaching your child a good lesson in responsibility. It is difficult and frustrating sometimes for parents to allow time for their child to dress himself/herself, especially if the child happens to dawdle. Hopefully, this approach will keep that frustration to a minimum.

School Uniform Guidelines: The appearance of students contributes to a positive attitude toward learning and behavior. It also speaks volumes about our school culture to the visitors and prospective parents who visit our school. All students are expected to wear the OFFICIAL school uniform on field trips, Mass days, Eucharistic celebrations, and all school prayer services from the first day of school until school closes, unless permission is given for special circumstances. All items should be kept in good repair or replaced as needed. Other guidelines for uniforms are:

- Please label all articles of clothing.
- No licensed characters are permitted on any apparel item, shoe, lunchbox, or backpack worn or brought to school.
- Uniforms may be purchased at Land's End (Preferred School # 9001-3573-2) or at Donald's Uniforms. Monograms may be added to any tops through these vendors.
- For school days up until October 15th and after April 15th, black or khaki shorts to the knee will be admissible for both boys and girls on regular uniform days.
- Elementary children must keep shirts and blouses tucked in on both official and regular uniform days.

The Way of the Shepherd School Dress Code

OFFICIAL SCHOOL UNIFORM

REGULAR SCHOOL UNIFORM

	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Shirts/Blouses	White dress shirt	White dress shirt or blouse	White or burgundy collared shirt	White or burgundy collared shirt
Pants	Black dress/twill pants (consider elastic waistband for Children's House)		Black or khaki dress/twill pants (consider elastic waistband for Children's House)	Black or khaki dress/twill pants (consider elastic waistband for Children's House)
Belt	No belts for Children's House; Black Belt is		No belts for Children's House; Black Belt is	No belts for Children's House; Black Belt is

	optional for Elementary		optional for Elementary	optional for Elementary
Jumper/Dress		Drop waist plaid jumper* Jumper must be to the knee		Drop waist plaid or khaki jumper* Collared knit maroon polo dress from Donald's— (Children's House only) Jumpers must be to the knee
Skirts		Plaid pleated skirt (E2 only)* Skirts must be to the knee		Khaki, black or plaid pleated skirt* Skirts must be to the knee
Socks, Tights, Leggings	Plain black socks	Plain black or white leggings or tights; plain black socks	Plain black or white socks	Plain black or white leggings or tights; plain black or white socks
Indoor Shoes	Plain black loafers, deck shoe, slip ons, or sketcher Snug fitting, hard-soled, closed toe, with backs	Plain black loafers, deck shoe, slip ons, or sketcher Snug fitting, hard-soled, closed toe, with backs	Plain black loafers, deck shoe, slip ons, or sketcher Snug fitting, hard-soled, closed toe, with backs	Plain black loafers, deck shoe, slip ons, or sketcher Snug fitting, hard-soled, closed toe, with backs
Sweaters Sweatshirts	Burgundy vest OR maroon or plaid tie MUST BE WORN	Burgundy cardigan (optional)	Burgundy vest, burgundy cardigan, maroon or plaid tie, burgundy monogrammed sweatshirt or fleece (no hoods)	Burgundy or white cardigan, burgundy monogrammed sweatshirt or fleece (no hoods)
Accessories	Watches, a religious medal, cross or scapular may be worn under the uniform. Boys are not permitted to wear earrings.	Watches, a religious medal, cross or scapular may be worn under the uniform. Simple hair accessories in line with uniform colors. Girls may wear small, stud earrings.	Watches, a religious medal, cross or scapular may be worn under the uniform. Boys are not permitted to wear earrings.	Watches, a religious medal, cross or scapular may be worn under the uniform. Simple hair accessories in line with uniform colors. Girls may wear small, stud earrings.
Notes	Boys' hair must be 1" above collar Appropriate haircuts are expected; no "fad" haircuts are permitted No tattoos or writing on body parts.	No nail polish or makeup may be worn Hair must be kept out of the face. Appropriate haircuts are expected; no "fad" haircuts are permitted No tattoos or writing on body parts.	Boys hair must be 1" above collar Appropriate haircuts are expected; no "fad" haircuts are permitted No tattoos or writing on body parts.	No nail polish or makeup may be worn Hair must be kept out of the face. Appropriate haircuts are expected; no "fad" haircuts are permitted No tattoos or writing on body parts.

* Plain black "biker" shorts should be worn under jumpers and skirts when worn with socks.

Uniform Exceptions

Several special days throughout the school year, students will be allowed to wear something other than their uniforms. Please keep in mind that the children are still in school and that clothing with suggestive themes, i.e. smoking, alcohol, or secular symbols of death are not acceptable. In short, clothing that does not reflect the glory and goodness of God should not be worn. When in doubt, it is always best to err on the side of caution.

Modesty

All children in the school are required to wear the designated uniform. However, occasionally throughout the year we have "no uniform" days. On such occasions, clothing should be simple, comfortable, and modest. The dictionary defines "modest" as decent, proper, humble, and chaste. In light of the fashions of the day, we encourage parents to help their children choose clothing which reflects a Christian lifestyle rather than a worldly one.

When children come out of uniform, it is important that outside attire should be consistent with the modesty of the school uniform (no licensed characters, leggings under skirts or dresses, shorts and skirts to the knee, shoulders covered, etc.) Halter tops, low cut tops, loose shirts that “gap” when leaning over, or shirts that expose the midriff area are also inappropriate. The introduction of the concept of modesty is best begun when children are still in their formative years; to teach them that their bodies are a temple of the Holy Spirit and in all things we want to give glory to God. By the grace and mercy of Almighty God, may our own choices model what we hope to see in our children.

Finally, the school administration reserves the right to determine the appropriateness of clothing both in Children’s House and Elementary.

Possessions

Of the Child:

- Toys --Toys should remain at home (even on show and share days). Please assure your child that he/she will have special work to do at school and that his/her toys are for use at home.
- Candy and Gum -- Candy and gum may not be brought to school.
- Special Items -- Children are permitted to bring items to the school that relate to classroom activities, especially books, science objects, geography items, or other religious articles. If you have questions about what is permissible, please discuss it with the staff. Please remember that there is a possibility that things may get broken or lost. Therefore, don’t send anything too valuable and please label all possessions.
- Electronics – No electronics are allowed in school. This includes cell phones, iPods, tablets, hand-held video games, etc.

Of the School:

Small items such as tiny cylinders, beads, cubes, bottles, etc. may look insignificant but are often vital to a piece of classroom equipment. Children are often fascinated with these things and sometimes inadvertently take them home in their pockets. If you should notice any of these things at home, we would greatly appreciate it if you would see that they get returned to school.

Pets: The Way of the Shepherd has pets that are kept in the classroom. Besides providing the children with hours of entertainment throughout the year, the presence of a classroom pet teaches them about caring for pets and animal nature. Please notify the Guide if your child has allergies to any animal hair, dander, etc.

HEALTH PROCEDURES AND POLICIES

Illness

Regular attendance is important to your child’s development. Call the school if your child is sick and will not be attending school. If a child becomes ill at school, we will attempt

to notify the parents. If the parents cannot be reached, the “alternate” names on the emergency card will be notified. In the event none of the persons listed can be reached and the child is not seriously ill or injured, the child will be cared for in a designated area with a cot allocated for sick children. This cot will be placed in an area where an adult will be in attendance. Sick children will not be required to be with the class or participate in activities. Please notify the office if your child has a contagious illness. In case an infectious or communicable disease appears in the classroom, parents will be notified by a written notice, which will be posted on the parent’s bulletin board. The Department of Health will also be notified.

Emergency Form

It is mandatory that we have this form on or before the first day of school. During the school year, should there be any changes to the information that you provided on this form, please let us know immediately. The safety of your child is our primary concern in requesting this information.

Medical Information

A health care summary and immunization record of each child is required upon admission to school, following the guidelines mandated by the state. Before a child is admitted to school or within 30 days of admission a current physical examination of the children signed by the child’s source of medical care must be turned in. For children already admitted to the school, a physical examination form signed by the child’s source of medical care, whenever any child 24 months or older advances to an older age category, must be submitted to the school. When a child is enrolled in the school the school must obtain documentation of current immunizations, a signed notarized statement of parental objection to the immunization, or a medical exemption.

Medication Administration

All prescription medications to be given must be in a completely labeled original pharmacy container. It will be administered according to the Doctor’s instructions, which will be on the label. Written parental authorization must be presented before any medication will be given. These forms are available in the office. **Please make every attempt to give medication at home before and after school.** We will dispense medication only if absolutely necessary and if covered by the school’s insurance.

Non-Prescription Medication

All non-prescription medications must be in original containers, written authorization to administer these medications must come from the parent or guardian. Medication will not be given after the expiration date. A record will be available for parents in the child’s file.

Child Exclusion Policies

Your child will be excluded from school because of the following:

1. A reported illness or condition determined to be contagious and there has not been sufficient treatment to reduce the health risk of others
2. A temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit (under arm), or more, and should stay home for 24 hours after the temperature returns to normal
3. Vomiting within 24 hours
4. Three (3) abnormal loose stools or diarrhea in the last 24 hours.
5. Contagious pinkeye or has pus draining from the eye
6. A bacterial infection such as strep throat or impetigo and has not completed 24 hours of an antibiotic treatment and has been symptom free for 24 hours
7. Chicken pox until no longer contagious. Usually about 6 days after the first sign of vesicles
8. Unexplained lethargy
9. Lice, ringworm or scabies that is untreated or contagious to others
10. An undiagnosed rash or a rash attributed to a contagious illness
11. A significant respiratory distress
12. Unable to participate in the school with reasonable comfort
13. Requires more care than our staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children
14. If your child is too ill to go outside and play

Vision Hearing and Screening

District 11 provides a nurse consultant who will be conducting vision and hearing screening for elementary and extended day children sometime during the school year.

Sunscreen and Insect Repellent

We do not apply sunscreen to any of the children in our program. If parents have a concern about their child's exposure to the sun, they may apply sunscreen before dropping the child off at school.

We do not apply insect repellent to any of the children in our program. If public health authorities issued a statement advising us that insect repellent is recommended due to a particular danger, we would advise parents accordingly.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

The staff at The Way of the Shepherd Catholic Montessori firmly believes that the parents, child and teachers all interact to form the environment from which your child ultimately constructs himself/herself. We recognize that the Montessori method is most effective when the environments of both home and school are working together to provide a consistency in which your child can grow and develop.

Volunteers

Volunteering is vital to the success of The Way of the Shepherd and we welcome and encourage your ideas and efforts. There are many opportunities to volunteer and as each family's time constraints/availability vary; we offer a choice regarding the level of volunteerism that is right for you. As always, we prefer that you choose to volunteer, but the options are as follows:

1. Each family volunteers a minimum of 30 hours. The Way of the Shepherd will be reimbursed for any "agreed to" but "un-worked" volunteer hours at the rate of \$15 per hour.

OR

2. Donate a Non-participation fee of \$450 (30 hours x \$15.00 per hour.)

In addition to volunteering time, volunteer hours may also be logged by attending Parent Education and Information Nights. For questions regarding applicable volunteer efforts, please speak with office personnel. The Volunteer Log will be maintained by front office staff.

Throughout the school year, we will keep you informed of your volunteer hours status. Un-worked but "agreed to" volunteer hours must be paid in full prior to June 30th.

All volunteers working directly with children at The Way of the Shepherd must complete:

- VIRTUS training session (a local 3 hour program focusing on personal safety awareness for children) **ALL (go to www.virtus.org to register)**
- Sign a Code of Conduct **ALL-Every 3 years**
- McDowell Agency Background check **ALL-Every 3 years. (Yearly if there is a 1 year break in volunteering)**
- Dept of Human Services background check and fingerprinting **Children's House Only**

Parent Information Nights

During the school year, Guides may conduct informational meetings. These may include demonstrations on the children's work areas (Good Shepherd, Practical Life, Sensorial, Math, and Language.) Parents are strongly urged to attend these meetings for two reasons: (1) to understand the materials the child is working with, and (2) at conference time there will be a clearer understanding of what the child has accomplished. These demonstrations are for those interested in learning more about The Way of the Shepherd and the Montessori philosophy and methodology.

Conferences

As was noted in your application form, it is a parent or guardian's responsibility to attend two conferences during the school year. Sign-up sheets will be available electronically at least one week prior so that you can choose a convenient time. If you have a problem in scheduling, please let the staff know so that they can do their best to arrange another appointment. At these conferences you will be given a written report on your child's progress intellectually, physically, socially and emotionally.

The staff will be happy to arrange special conference times anytime during the year if there is a need. Simply make the request by email or a written note.

Observations

Observing in the classroom is an ideal way to get better acquainted with The Way of the Shepherd and the application of Montessori philosophy. We invite and encourage all parents to take advantage of this opportunity. Parents of returning students may begin observing in late October and parents of new students may begin after Christmas. This is to assure that the first-year children will have had enough time to adjust to the Children's House so that they will not be too distracted when their parents come to visit.

It is important that you make an appointment to observe ahead of time by contacting the front office, so we can plan appropriately for your visit. We also recommend that you try to observe before the month of March, since we usually have many parents of prospective new children that wish to observe during the spring months. Please contact the office to set up an appointment.

Family Folders

Many of our communications with you will be placed in a colored plastic folder and sent home with the youngest child in the family each Thursday. Parents should remove contents and return the folder to school the following Monday. Any forms that need to be returned to school may also be placed in the folder to ensure reception. The initial folder is free. If folder is lost, we offer replacements for \$5.

School Calendar

The WOS Community Calendar will keep you informed of important dates, such as conferences, programs, school Masses, fund raisers, etc. The most up-to-date calendar is on our website at www.wayoftheshepherd.org. If there are date changes, staff will notify you in the weekly school newsletter.

WOS Weekly Newsletter

The Way of the Shepherd will electronically distribute a Newsletter on a weekly basis. The Newsletter will keep you informed on the latest activities and upcoming happenings at the school. If you have ideas or suggestions, please do not hesitate to contact Administration by phone or email.

School Visitors

The personal safety of each student is a high priority for us. We ask that all visitors report to the school office to check in. We ask for your help and cooperation on this matter so we can better provide a secure learning environment. Parents may visit classrooms; however we ask that you stop at the front office prior to entering the classroom to limit the amount of classroom disruption. If you choose to observe for an extended period of time please contact a staff member to confirm that class is in session on the date you desire to visit. Please note: the inside entry doors are locked during the day with the exception of recess and phy-ed (the outside doors on north campus). A doorbell located to the upper left of the inside entry door will alert us of your presence on south campus. North campus visitors will need to gain access through the use of a cell phone call or through the church main entrance. Only staff or adult volunteers are permitted to open doors to visitors.

The greatest possible contribution we could ask of you, as parents, is to talk about us. Tell your friends and neighbors about us and invite them to come and visit us. Your confidence in the Catholic Montessori education method and your child's success are our finest advertisement. The best way that we can ensure a continued quality education is to maintain healthy enrollment numbers.

TUITION, WITHDRAWALS, AND SCHEDULE OF REFUNDS

Tuition

As stated on your Contract for Admission, and agreed to by you under its general terms and conditions, tuition is due and payable under four option plans. If paying in full, you may pay by cash, check, credit card or electronic funds transfer (EFT). If choosing an installment plan, we will withdraw your payment on the date and according to the method indicated on your contract.

Prompt payment of tuition, as well as compliance with all other general terms and conditions as contained in your Contract for Admission, is the basis for continued enrollment of your child at The Way of the Shepherd. If you are unable to make the monthly tuition payment on time, you are asked to contact the school office at (763) 862-9110. A returned or declined payment will incur a \$25 returned payment fee and may result in termination of enrollment and/or denial of future registration.

Tuition for late enrollees will be pro-rated on a semi-monthly basis. A full month's payment is due from the first of the month through the fifteenth of the month of enrollment. A half-month's tuition is due from the sixteenth of the month through the end of the month of enrollment.

Withdrawals

Full annual tuition for any child withdrawn from enrollment in the school after the date this agreement has been signed is the responsibility of the parent or guardian entering into the agreement. Tuition refunds or release from this responsibility will be made available if and when a replacement student is enrolled in the school. Hardship cases will be considered on an individual basis. There is no distinction among various causes of withdrawal, unless it is requested by the school. In case withdrawal is requested by the school and confirmed by the Administration, the annual tuition obligation and normal refund policy does not apply, i.e., payment of the full annual tuition will be waived and a pro-rated refund will be made.

Schedule of Refunds

Refunds will be paid within 30 days of the date of replacement.

OTHER POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Public Relations

The student contract contains a clause which must be initialed by the parent, if they choose, giving permission for any photos that might be used for a public relations activity or event.

Non-Public Pupil Aid

The State of Minnesota has authorized local public school districts to loan textbooks, standardized tests, and individualized instructional materials to pupils attending our school. Our students are also allowed access to Pupil Health Services programs. These programs are requested on behalf of each student each year and serve as wonderful additions to our school program. *If you do not wish to have access to these services this school year please contact the front office no later than **September 9th**.*

Non-Discrimination

The Way of the Shepherd Catholic Montessori School admits students of both sexes and of any race, color, national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, national or ethnic origin or disability in

administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, and athletic and other school administered programs.

Grievance

If you have any questions or concerns regarding your child at The Way of the Shepherd, you may contact your child's Guide by email or phone message to set up a meeting. If satisfaction is not realized or a mutual remedy not arrived at, Administration may be contacted by email or phone message for additional discussion. Grievance must be communicated in a formal meeting to ensure that action is taken and communicated to resolve issues. Further escalation may include consulting The Way of the Shepherd Board Executive Committee for mediation. Children's House parents also have the right to contact the licensing department at **(651) 431-6500**.

Drug and Alcohol

Any parent/guardian attempting to take their children from school when it is apparent they are under the influence of drugs or alcohol will be asked to make arrangements to have their children picked up by someone else.

Facility

The Way of the Shepherd is a smoke free facility.

License and Insurance

The Way of the Shepherd Montessori Children's Houses are licensed by the State of Minnesota Department of Human Services. The Way of the Shepherd is licensed to serve children ages 3-6 years old. The school's program plan is available upon request in the office. We carry the legal amount of liability insurance for our school.

The Way of the Shepherd Children's House program is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), and the Elementary program is accredited by the Minnesota Nonpublic School Accrediting Association (MNSAA).

Disclosure of Records

No photos or any information from children's records will be disclosed unless a parent or guardian has given written consent.

Employee Background Check

The Way of the Shepherd will conduct a job-related background check on any candidate for employment prior to their first day of employment. Any/all of the following may be required, dependent upon the corresponding employment position and directive from The Department of Human Services:

- Dept. of Human Services (State of MN) **for Children's House employees**
- McDowell Agency-comprehensive background check or Consent to Share Form (between parishes) **Every 3 years**
- VIRTUS (safe awareness training—live class and video training updates)
- Code of Conduct **Every 3 years**
- Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (teachers only—upon hire and periodically as an internal control)

Maltreatment of Minors Act

Any person working or volunteering at The Way of the Shepherd School who knows or has reason to believe a child is being neglected or physically or sexually abused, shall immediately report the information to the Department of Human Services, Licensing Division's Maltreatment Intake line at 651-431-6600. Reports regarding incidents of suspected abuse or neglect of children occurring within a family or in the community should be made to the local county social services agency at 763-717-7730 or local law enforcement at 763-785-6168.

Administration will be notified of any reports and shall provide information about the circumstances of the alleged maltreatment to the State of Minnesota Department of Education.

All reporting policies and procedures are outlined in this Handbook and are available upon request in the school office.

SPECIAL DAYS FOR THE CHILDREN

Birthdays

We enjoy celebrating your child's birthday with a very simple party. We are happy to make arrangements to celebrate your child's birthday should it fall outside the regular school year or over vacations.

A birthday tradition that we have is to read to the class one or two things that have happened in each year of the child's life. The children particularly enjoy this if pictures accompany the reading. Please send us the needed information and materials if you wish us to do this for your child, if possible the day before your child's birthday. In addition to a food treat, may we recommend that your child give a gift to the school from our suggestion list. The donation (like a book) will be appreciated by all of the children for many years.

Field Trips

During the year, the elementary and/or extended day children may go on field trips. A general permission slip, applicable to all field trips and signed by a parent, must be on file at school in order for the child to participate. Individual field trip details will be made

available through the weekly folder and newsletter. Field trips may require parent chaperones. Staff/chaperone ratios will be maintained on field trips.

Others

We will send out updates, plans and calendars announcing how we will celebrate holidays and Holy Days in a liturgical manner. There will be many special fun days throughout the year.

ADDENDA

Medical Resources

Anoka County Public Health nurse 763-422-7030 Poison Control 1-800-222-1222
Minnesota Department of Human Resources 651-296-3971 Anoka County Abuse
Protection 763-422-7125

Anoka County Services

If you are in need of additional services for your family, contact the Anoka County Services at www.anokacounty.us/193/Economic-Assistance.

Translator Services

If any family requires assistance with translating program policies and procedures, a translator will be acquired to help. The front office keeps a current list of interpreters and translators on file.

What Did You Do At School Today?

“Oh...nothing.” Please do not be dismayed when your child responds to your question in this manner. Almost all children answer in this way. Typically, children consider school their world and often do not like to be questioned about it. Imagine yourself, from an adult point of view, coming home tired from a work-filled day and having someone demand: “Tell me everything you did at work today.” We adults would get quite tired of such questions, perhaps even resent them. A child may feel the same way.

Please remember that the work the children do in the classroom varies with their ages. Therefore, so will the type of work each child brings home. Please do not pressure your child to bring home lots of papers. Most of the work in the Montessori classroom goes on in the child’s mind, with the use of manipulatives; thus, pressure to bring things home could have a detrimental effect on your child.

Snack/Lunch Ideas

Protein

Cheese (sliced – good with apple slices or crackers)
 Cream cheese on celery or whole wheat bread
 Hard-boiled eggs
 Popcorn, granola
 Puffed rice patties with peanut butter

Vegetables

Olives and Carrots
 Celery (fun when stuffed)
 Cauliflower, Pickles
 Cucumber (sliced, top with cottage cheese or spreads)
 Vegetables or cheese dips

Fruits

Raisins
 Dried cherries
 Apricots (dried) Banana – try dipping in peanut butter then wheat germ
 Apples, grapes, pears, kiwi, oranges, tangerines, melons, strawberries, pineapple – also good dried

Recommended Readings

Books on Montessori

MARIA MONTESSORI by Rita Kramer
 MONTESSORI: A MODERN APPROACH by Paula Polk Lillard
 THE MONTESSORI METHOD by E.M. Standing
 MARIA MONTESSORI: HER LIFE AND WORKS by E.M. Standing
 THE SECRET OF CHILDHOOD by Maria Montessori
 THE ABSORBENT MIND by Maria Montessori
 THE DISCOVERY OF THE CHILD by Maria Montessori

Books on Discipline

DARE TO DISCIPLINE by Dobson
 PARENT EFFECTIVENESS by Gordon
 PARENTS HANDBOOK by Gordon
 BETWEEN PARENT AND CHILD by Ginnott
 HOW TO REALLY LOVE YOUR CHILD by Campbell
 “HOW TO GET YOUR CHILDREN TO DO WHAT YOU WANT THEM TO DO”
 (Tape)
 HOW TO TALK SO KIDS WILL LISTEN

Books on Right Brain

DRAWING ON THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE BRAIN by Betty Edwards

RIGHT-BRAIN EXPERIENCE by Marilee Zdenek

“CRITICAL THINKING” (Tape)

Montessori Magazines

TOMORROW’S CHILD - International Montessori Society

Many of these books can be checked out from the Parent Resource Library.

Psalm 23

The Lord, Shepherd and Host

The Lord is my shepherd;

I shall not want.

In verdant pastures he gives me repose;

Beside restful waters he leads me; he refreshes my soul.

He guides me in right paths for his name's sake.

**Even though I walk in the dark valley I fear no evil,
for you are at my side with your rod and staff that give me courage.**

You set a table before me in the sight of my foes;

You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

Only goodness and kindness follow me all the days of my life;

And I shall dwell in the house of the Lord for years to come.



THE WAY OF THE SHEPHERD CATHOLIC MONTESSORI SCHOOL

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