



Parent Handbook

2026-2027

I. General Information.....	3	B. Clothing	
A. Mission		C. Change of Clothes	
B. Philosophy		D. Snack	
C. Classroom Materials		E. Lunch	
D. School Affiliations		F. Rest and Nap Time	
E. Staff Education		G. Children's Work	
F. Non-Profit Status		VI. Special Occasions.....	11
II. Operations.....	4	A. Birthday Celebrations	
A. Calendar		VII. Health.....	11
B. Programs and Hours		A. Use of the Bathroom	
C. Tuition and Fees		B. Allergies and Medical Conditions	
D. Admissions		C. Illness	
E. Non-Discrimination		D. Reporting Communicable Disease	
F. Children with Special Needs		E. Medication Administration	
G. Family Involvement		F. Immunizations	
H. Giving and Donations		VIII. Safety.....	13
III. Communications.....	5	A. Accident or Injury	
A. Parent and Faculty		B. Sunscreen	
B. Parent Teacher Conferences		C. Weather	
C. Communication Methods		D. Weather Closures	
D. Guidance		E. Visitors	
E. Classroom Concerns		F. Emergency Procedures	
F. Grievance Policy		G. Supervision	
G. Withdrawal		H. Closing Procedures	
H. Dismissal		I. Lost Child	
IV. Daily Routines.....	7	J. No Pick-Up	
A. Attendance		IX. Common-Sense Policies.....	14
B. Health Screenings		A. Code of Conduct	
C. Drop-Off		B. Confidentiality	
D. Goodbyes		C. Weapons	
E. Pick-Up		D. Drugs, Alcohol, Smoking	
F. Aftercare		E. Money	
G. Late Pick-Up Fees		F. Electronic Media	
H. Parking		X. Violations.....	15
I. Daily Schedule		A. Reporting Child Abuse	
J. UPK		B. Filing a Complaint	
V. What to Bring (or Not).....	9	XI. Thank you.....	15
A. Some Suggestions			

Mission

Forest Park Montessori School is committed to providing an authentic Montessori education in which every child develops a love of life and learning within a safe, peaceful, and intimate setting.

Philosophy

Our programs follow the philosophy, method, and curriculum taught by Dr. Maria Montessori. Our classroom environments and our teachers demonstrate a deep respect for the individual self, which allows each child to reach full potential. A nurturing of independence leads each child toward purposeful behavior, self-motivated and joyful learning, confident problem solving, and creative thinking. With a central focus on character development, children learn peaceful conflict resolution based on kindness and care for each member of the classroom community.

An integrated curriculum that is multi-sensory, sequential, and structured in a specially prepared environment supports each child's unique developmental milestones by teaching to learning style, and rate of learning. Activities of practical life and the sensorial area prepare children to engage in language, math, science, and geography. In addition, there are many opportunities for self-expression through daily art, music, and movement activities.

Classroom Materials

The Montessori curriculum emphasizes the importance of respecting the developmental needs of individuals and, therefore, allows each child to learn in an environment of experiential learning. **Children in the Primary Classroom will have access to small items such as beads, beans, cotton balls, etc. that are traditional in a Montessori classroom, and parents should be aware that these items pose a potential inhalation and choking hazard. Children will also have access to materials such as household tools, glass and ceramic items, staples, pin punches etc. that are traditional in a Montessori classroom, and parents should be aware that these items may pose a risk for laceration.** The state requires that we make parents aware of these classroom items, and by signing an enrollment contract. You are agreeing that the potential risk is minimized by the benefits of an authentic Montessori curriculum, as well as a professionally-trained staff.

School Affiliations

Forest Park Montessori School is an affiliate, full-member school of the American Montessori Society. Forest Park Montessori is also a member of the Colorado Montessori Association.

Staff Education

All our teachers are Montessori trained and certified (either AMS or AMI) to teach children between the ages of 2 ½ and 6. Our toddler teacher is trained through AMS to teach children aged 0 to 3. Our head of school and lead teacher, Angela Gutierrez, is a fully accredited early childhood Montessori educator. As such, she has completed a rigorous study of Montessori philosophy and curriculum in all academic subject areas, as well as child development, individual and class management, and the development of social skills and positive emotional growth. Angela is credentialed by a MACTE-accredited Montessori teacher education program, has her bachelor's degree in Psychology, and is Director Certified through the Colorado Department of Early Care and Learning.

Non-Profit Status

Forest Park Montessori School is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. The Board of Directors provides oversight of strategic planning, fundraising, and supervision of the head of school. Parents and/or legal guardians become members of Forest Park Montessori School when they enroll a child in the school. All parents are invited to attend monthly meetings of the Board of Directors, the dates and times for which are announced in our monthly newsletters and/or on our classroom announcement board.

Calendar

Please find a calendar for the current academic school year on the Parent Resources page of the FPMS website. Reminders for important dates will be sent out regularly in monthly newsletters. Any necessary revisions to the calendar throughout the year will be communicated to parents via email.

Programs & Hours

5 mornings	8:15-12:00 Monday-Friday
5 mornings + 3 afternoons	8:15-12:00 Monday & Friday; 8:15-3:30 Tuesday-Thursday
5 full days	8:15-3:30 Monday-Friday
Montessori Kindergarten	8:15-3:30 Monday-Friday
Aftercare	3:30-5:00 Monday-Friday

Please understand that our classroom thrives on consistency. While we strive to accommodate your family's scheduling needs, excessive program scheduling changes will incur a fee of \$100 for each change that is made throughout the year.

Tuition and Fees

Forest Park Montessori relies on tuition income to meet its carefully prepared budget. A contract deposit in the amount of 1/10th of the annual tuition is due at contract signing, with the balance due in 9 additional payments made on the first of each month from September through May. Tuition rates for the current academic year can be found on the Programs page of the FPMS website. Tuition can be paid through the ProCare App. A late fee of \$35 will be assessed on tuition payments made after the 10th of each month. Withdrawal from the school is conditioned in the signed contract between both parents and Forest Park Montessori School. Families enrolled will pay full price for the youngest child and receive a 5% discount on tuition for all other siblings. The sibling discount applies only when both children are enrolled in the primary classroom and does not apply to the toddler classroom. The sibling discount only applies to the regular tuition rate and is therefore not applicable to aftercare or summer tuition. There are no make-up days for absences due to illness, vacation, or school closure. There are no refunds, and tuition will not be prorated due to absence or closure.

Admissions

A prospective parent must tour the school and observe the classroom in session before receiving an application. After the school receives the completed application and application fee, the child will be placed on our waitlist. When a waitlist spot becomes available, the head of school will contact the parents to schedule a one-on-one visit for the child before acceptance for enrollment. If the parents and Head of School, based on observation, discussion, and developmental history, determine that the child can benefit from attending FPMS, an enrollment contract will be offered.

Both parents must sign the contract and pay the contract deposit before a space can be reserved for the child. If the child is not yet old enough to attend Forest Park, and therefore not old enough to schedule a one-on-one visit, a provisional contract will be offered in the meantime to hold that child's spot until the one-on-one visit can be scheduled. Before the actual date of enrollment, a general information form, an emergency form, a child background form, a physician-signed health form, a physician-signed immunization certificate, permission forms, and any additional forms required must be fully completed and turned in to the head of school. In the case of returning students, these forms must be resubmitted prior to the beginning of every school year. Forest Park Montessori reserves the right to refuse to admit and/or suspend the enrollment of a child who is lacking necessary forms.

Priority enrollment will be given to siblings and transferring Montessori students. Others will be accepted from a waitlist according to their stated program preference and enthusiasm for a Montessori education, as demonstrated by the parents.

Non-Discrimination

Forest Park Montessori School welcomes children, 12 months - 6 years, from all racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds and does not discriminate on any basis, including race, creed, class, religion, ethnicity, national origin, gender, family structure, or sexual orientation. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and with the child's best interest in mind, we welcome children with special needs according to our ability to fully meet the child's specific needs and without compromising the school's purpose and philosophy.

Children with Special Needs

Children with identified special needs may be enrolled if it is determined that the child will benefit from the program without compromising our purpose and philosophy, and/or changing staffing needs and patterns. Any existing health care plan, including behavioral interventions, will be evaluated to make this determination. If a health care plan does not exist, one must be created and signed by parents, treatment professionals, and the head of school before enrollment.

If it is suspected, after enrollment, that a child may have special needs, a meeting will be scheduled with the parents and the head of school to discuss the child's strengths and weaknesses and specific, observable difficulties that are compromising the benefits of the program. As a team, a plan of intervention will be designed with specific goals, a method of attainment, and a clear measurement of progress. If, after a specified period of time, the child has not made progress toward meeting the initial goals, parents will be requested to seek evaluation of needs by a professional with expertise in the area of special needs. A copy of this evaluation will be provided to the head of school in written form. It will then be determined if the suggested recommendations can be provided by the school and its staff. If it is determined that the school can no longer benefit the child, the parents will be asked to withdraw their child, and no tuition penalties will accrue.

Family Involvement

Forest Park Montessori School is deeply committed to forming a partnership with each child and family enrolled in our programs. A relationship based on mutual respect, a willingness to solve problems or conflicts in a peaceful way, and support of all of the children and the school will create and maintain a partnership that will be most beneficial for all.

Clear and open communication is the foundation for our community. There are many ways for you to be a part of your child's school experience and become better informed about her Montessori education. These include:

- monthly newsletters reviewing classroom and school happenings.
- Parent-teacher conferences: fall and spring meetings to review and share information regarding social, emotional, and cognitive development.
- a multitude of volunteer opportunities, including various committees.
- seeking a position on the board of directors.

Giving and Donations

If your family chooses to provide FPMS with a monetary donation, please ask the school for important information regarding amazing tax credits and benefits.

Some families choose to give a gift to the school at their child's birthday celebration. If this is something your family would like to consider, please contact the head of school regarding a list of appropriate gift options.

Parent and Faculty Communication

Montessori teachers are specially trained professionals who are responsive to every aspect of your child's development. Please help us to be as supportive as possible by sharing any events or life changes that may have an impact on your child. Being aware of a parent's travels, an illness or death in the family, or a change in family

structure allows us to be supportive and understanding of your child. If your child is receiving assistance or treatment from a professional, the school must be aware of the treatment plan. Any professional working with your child should be expected to ask for teacher input as part of any evaluation, and should share the results in writing with the head of school.

As part of our partnership, teachers will openly share any concerns regarding your child's health, safety, development, and success in the environment with you as soon as a concern arises. A partnership is a give-and-take endeavor. Please take responsibility for reading materials that are sent home, and communicating information, concerns, or questions in a respectful and timely manner.

During school hours, the head of school may not always be able to have lengthy conversations, but will be happy to make other arrangements outside of school hours as necessary. Also, please understand that while email helps share information, it is not always the best format for dealing with problems and concerns. For these types of matters, please call to speak to the head of school in person at (720) 260-0519.

Parent Teacher Conferences

Forest Park Montessori holds thirty-minute parent-teacher conferences twice yearly (in late fall and early spring) to provide formal communication regarding your child's behavior, progress, and needs at school. There is no school in session on days when daytime conferences are scheduled.

Communication Methods

To notify the lead teacher (prior to school hours) of a change in drop-off, absence, etc., please **call or text** the school or send a message through ProCare. To inform the lead teacher of a prolonged absence (as with a vacation), please **email** with the dates that your child will be absent.

To notify the lead teacher (at drop-off) of a change in pick-up, appointment for your child, etc., please **verbally communicate** the information to the teacher signing in your child, so that she may make the appropriate notes on the clipboard.

To notify the lead teacher of a change in pick-up, absence, appointment for your child, etc. (during school hours), please **text** the school with a brief message.

To notify the lead teacher of an emergency or for detailed instructions regarding your child that cannot be effectively communicated over text (during school hours), please feel free to **call** the school.

Guidance

At the heart of Montessori philosophy is respect. We provide children with a peaceful environment that models respectful interactions in a calm and supportive manner. Conflicts between children are an opportunity for each child to learn and practice compromise while resolving problems in a respectful way.

It is important that children learn cause and effect through logical and natural consequences, but these must always be based on sound child development and appropriate to the child and the situation. Forest Park Montessori will never use any kind of corporal punishment, ridicule, humiliation, teasing, or bullying. If a child needs to be separated from an activity or another child, it will be in the classroom with supervision, and for a brief duration. Children will not experience consequences for toileting or food issues. The provider, parents, and, if needed, a mental health consultant will work together on persistent challenges. As a team, we will identify an action plan to support the needs of the child.

Classroom Concerns

Montessori teachers are highly educated professionals who will always have the best interests of your child as their first priority. They will provide for and interact with your child based on best practices and authentic Montessori

philosophy at all times. **Please remember that young children are not always accurate in explanations of their day or a specific event. Please contact the head of school for clarification if your child's comments are a cause for concern.** This initial conversation may necessitate an additional, in-person meeting following the 3:30 end of school.

Grievance Policy

For classroom, policy, procedure, or financial concerns or questions, please contact the head of school. If you have issues that are unresolved after working with Angela, you may request a meeting with the Chair of the Board of Directors.

Withdrawal

If a family decides to withdraw their child before the contract end date, 30 days' written notice must be provided to the head of school, and tuition will be expected to be paid for those 30 days, as we look for a replacement student. Full details of this policy can be found on the student contract.

Dismissal

Occasionally, a Montessori environment does not fit well with a particular family. When staff become aware of significant issues, we will contact parents to share our observations, strategize, and develop a timeline and consistent plan of action for at-home and school. If it is warranted, we may suggest additional testing or consultation with outside professionals. Although we believe that most issues can be resolved through mutual communication, there may be some instances where we ultimately ask a family to leave the school. The following are circumstances in which this could happen:

- 1) The child needs more attention than the staff can provide or would benefit from another setting
- 2) A solution cannot be found for a child's aggressive or disruptive behaviors
- 3) A family is not willing to follow the policies stated in this handbook
- 4) Consistent failure to make timely payments, when no special circumstances occur
- 5) The family and school disagree on treatment, intervention, or structure for the child
- 6) Parents (or other family members) are consistently disrespectful in their communications with staff

Attendance

To receive the greatest benefit from our Montessori program, your child's regular attendance is extremely important. Arriving on time (no later than 8:45) will give your child the opportunity to be a full member of our classroom community and to avoid that awkward feeling of walking into a situation late.

If your child will not be at school for any reason, PLEASE let us know. To notify us of an absence, please call, text, or use the ProCare app.

Drop-Off

Morning drop-off is between 8:15 and 8:45. You may park and walk your child to the playground, or, in inclement weather, the front door (North Park Dr. entrance). The green arrow sign on the southwest corner of the building will indicate to which location the children should be dropped off each day. State licensing requires that you sign your child in upon arrival. **We require parents to remain outside of the playground during school hours. Please help our teachers by respecting this rule.**

Goodbyes

A quick hug, kiss, and “see you later” will assure your child that school is a fun and safe place to be. **Long and drawn-out goodbyes do not benefit children. Please know that it is okay to leave even if your child is crying; in fact, it is usually best.** Children quickly become interested in other activities once their parents have left, and we will always call you if there is cause for concern in the length of a child’s distress at drop-off.

Pick-Up

Come to the playground between 11:45 and 12:00 (for morning program students), between 3:15 and 3:30 (for full day students), or by 5:00 (for aftercare students) to pick up your child. Sign your child out using the ProCare app. **Please sign your child out first, prior to coming to the gate, and please remember that, for safety reasons, a teacher must excuse your child from the playground prior to his or her leaving.** On days of inclement weather, please come to the front door (North Park Dr. entrance) to pick up your child. For pick-up other than scheduled times, please give as much notice as possible to allow a smooth transition for your child. To notify the lead teacher of a change in pick-up (during school hours), please **text** the school with a brief message.

If someone other than you, or your regular designee, is to pick up your child, you must notify Angela in writing by email, text, or direct phone contact, and supply that person’s full name. Photo identification in the form of a driver’s license will be required. Persons not designated to pick up a child from the school will be asked to speak with the head of school and may be asked to leave. Any further attempt will be cause for contacting the local police.

Aftercare

Aftercare takes place between 3:30 and 5:00. Scheduling options include either 3 (TWTh) or 5 days per week. You may pick up your child at any time between 3:30 and 5:00. Aftercare has a fixed, monthly cost, and tuition is not prorated for picking up children prior to the 5:00 hour. Additionally, there is no sibling discount for aftercare. Parents are not allowed to enter the school building at the time of pick-up. If you prefer not to wait for your child at the back patio door while he is getting ready, please text the school phone to give 10 minutes’ notice. The aftercare teacher will attempt to have your child ready to go by the time you arrive.

Upon arrival, please sign your child out using the ProCare App. Knock on the back patio door to gain the attention of the aftercare teacher. She will wave to show recognition of your arrival, but will not approach the door until your child has on his shoes, coat, and all belongings in hand, ready to leave. She will then walk your child to the door and open it to let the child join you outside. **Please remember that for safety reasons, a teacher must open the door and excuse your child before he can leave the building.**

Late Pick-Up Fees

Please be respectful of our teacher’s personal lives, and pick up your child on time. If your child is not signed up for aftercare, he must be picked up by 3:30, or aftercare fees will be assessed. This includes a late fee of \$25, and an additional \$10 every fifteen minutes following 3:30. If your child is signed up for aftercare, he must be picked up by 5:00, or late fees will be assessed. This includes a late fee of \$25, and an additional \$15 every fifteen minutes following 5:00.

Parking

We share the parking lot with many other businesses in the business complex. Please be kind and considerate of the needs of others using this space. We do not want to block traffic on the road or the parking lot in any way. If you plan to stay for a lengthy period of time in the park or at the school, please do not park immediately in front of other businesses. Instead, please park in the center of the lot, so that other businesses can have access to parking spots for their customers. **At any given time, we are only allotted seven parking spots; therefore, during school events, you must park on the street or in the church parking lot.** Please do not park your car in any space designated for handicapped parking. Please make sure your child is near you at all times when in the parking lot. Let’s all work together to keep the parking area safe and successful for everyone.

Daily Schedule

Children are dropped off at the playground and enter the classroom shortly thereafter. We may begin our day with a brief circle of conversation, singing, and/or a group reading time. This will be followed by a work period in which children will receive individual and/or small group lessons, choose independent activities to work with alone or in small groups, and have a snack. At the end of the work cycle, we will have another circle to sing songs, create our calendar page for the day, and celebrate birthdays when appropriate. This will be followed by outside play on the playground, weather permitting.

Children staying for the afternoon, from 12:00-3:30, will have lunch together, a nap or rest period (as appropriate for each child), an afternoon work cycle with the Montessori materials, and Spanish language lessons. We will have free play outside at pick-up time.

What to Bring (or Not)

- practical and durable clothes that are appropriate for playing outdoors
- clothes that the child can independently take off in a hurry (to help avoid bathroom accidents)
- shoes/sandals that are safe to run in, don't fall off, **and can be put on independently**
- slippers to be worn indoors
- Jewelry is often a distraction and may get lost or broken
- Costumes are welcome on Halloween only
- Small personal items, toys, or money tend to get lost or broken and will only distract from the wonderful activities at school
- gum should be placed into the trash on arrival
- a book, a unique item from nature, or a vacation may be brought in to share with the class on certain days; please show the item to a teacher at drop-off to ask permission

Clothing

Young children generally love to pick out their own outfits. Giving your child a limited choice of seasonal and weather-appropriate clothing can be a fun way to express his or her creativity. Being able to dress oneself gives a wonderful sense of confidence, independence, and helps your child feel comfortable in knowing that he or she can dress and undress "all by myself." **Please do your best to ensure that ALL articles of clothing (INCLUDING SHOES) promote independence. (This means that your child can put the item of clothing on and take it back off without any help from you.)** In keeping with the goal of independence, your child should be able to dress and undress with minimal assistance from staff. We are happy to teach parents the lessons your child will receive to accomplish independent dressing so that you may have this expectation at home.

Change of Clothes

Each child needs a change of clothing to keep at school that includes underwear, socks, a shirt, pants or shorts, and a face mask. Each item should be labeled with your child's name and placed in a clear plastic bag with the name on the outside. Should your child have wet clothes to bring home, we will put them in this bag and ask that you bring a fresh set the next day of school. **PLEASE remember that any wet or soiled clothes that are sent home must promptly be replaced with clean items on the following morning. We do not have extra clothes at school for your child.**

Snack

A healthy snack of a whole grain, fresh fruit or vegetable, and/or a protein will be made available every morning. We ask that each family take a turn bringing snack for the entire week. You will be given a shopping list by Friday, and we ask that you bring the supplies on the following Monday. Children will have access to water throughout the day.

Children with severe food allergies may need to bring their own daily snack in their own container. Please speak with Angela if you feel this situation applies to your child.

Lunch

The lunch tables will be set with placemats, plates, cloth napkins, and metal utensils daily. **PLEASE do not provide your child with additional napkins or utensils from home.** After washing hands, each child will put his food on his plate, and return containers to his lunchbox for storage next to his chair. Together, we will sing a song of thanks for our food before we begin eating. Teachers eat with children to model sitting in a chair, using utensils, eating in a slow and careful way, and will help engage the children in social and polite conversation with those at their table.

If your child will be staying for lunch, we ask that you have your child bring a nutritious lunch in a labeled lunch box or bag. We suggest a protein, a whole grain, a fresh fruit, and a vegetable. The school is not equipped to heat items in your child's lunch; however, you may choose to pack hot foods in a thermos. Whole foods that need to be chewed, rather than soft foods in pre-packed containers, are beneficial for the development of fine motor skills and social maturity. Please do not send candy. **PLEASE put foods in containers your child can open by himself or with minimal help from other children. PLEASE do not pack tubes of yogurt.** A cup of yogurt that is low in sugar and that your child can open independently is wonderful. **PLEASE have your child test out his lunch containers prior to school to ensure that he can open them completely independently.**

Rest and Nap Time

Each pre-school-aged child will be expected to rest every day after lunch according to child care regulations. The school will supply a mat with a sheet for each child who needs one. Please bring a blanket in an appropriately-sized cloth tote for children who will be taking a nap. **We will send all of your child's bedding home on your child's last day of school for the week, and ask that you PLEASE wash and return all of your child's nap items in the bag on the following Monday.**

Children's Work

Children 2 ½ - 6 years of age are generally much more interested in the process of their work rather than the finished product. If a child wishes to keep something he or she has produced, however, it can be placed in a completed work folder. Every Friday, your child's work for that week will be set out in a folder at pick-up. It is not uncommon for children to have no paperwork to bring home, especially at the beginning of the school year. Facebook photos and the newsletter will give updates as to the activities that are available to the children in the classroom. You may also be in touch with one of your child's teachers if you would like specific feedback on activities and lessons your child is working on within the classroom.

UPK Policies

1. Healthy Development & Child Screenings

TO SUPPORT YOUR CHILD'S HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT, OUR PROGRAM PROVIDES INFORMATION ON VOLUNTARY DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENING SERVICES. PLEASE SPEAK TO ANGELA GUTIERREZ OR EMAIL ANGELA@FORESTPARKMONTESSORI.ORG FOR INFORMATION ON OBTAINING ANY OF THE FOLLOWING:

- Developmental or Health Screenings
- Vision, Hearing, or Dental Screenings
- Social-emotional, Cognitive, or Language Screenings
- Mental Health or Special Education Referrals
- Translation Services

2. Family and Community Engagement

We believe you are your child's first and most important teacher. Our program is committed to partnering with you in the following ways:

- **Language Support:** We provide opportunities to utilize interpreters or other language resources as needed to ensure clear communication.
- **Cultural Sharing:** We invite and encourage you to share your home's cultural and social practices within our classroom community.
- **Goal Setting:** We will partner with you to set individual learning and development goals for your child.
- **Program Decision-Making:** We offer opportunities for families and community partners to engage in our program's operational decision-making processes.
- **Transitions:** We will actively involve you in your child's transitions between classrooms or when moving to a new school.
- **Feedback:** We value your perspective and provide opportunities for you to give feedback on the quality of program-family and program-staff interactions.

3. Annual CDEC Family Survey

Each spring, the Colorado Department of Early Childhood (CDEC) conducts an annual family survey. You will be notified of the opportunity to participate and share your experiences regarding your meaningful and culturally appropriate involvement in our program, as well as the healthy development supports provided.

Birthdays Celebrations

A birthday is very important to children. We have a special way of celebrating this milestone in a Montessori classroom! We invite you, grandparents, and siblings to share in this celebration of your child's life. Please plan to bring a photograph from each year of your child's life. For instance, if your child is turning three, please bring a newborn photo (year 0), a photo from year 1, year 2, and a recent (almost) 3-year-old photo. You may also bring a special low-sugar snack (teachers are happy to give suggestions) to share with the class. Before your child's school birthday celebration, an email will be sent from the head of school providing more information and to verify the date on which the celebration will occur. Your child is invited to bring a simple gift for his/her school community to be opened at the birthday celebration. A list of gifts that would be helpful to the school can be obtained from the head of school. Please do not distribute invitations to private birthday parties in children's cubbies, as children who do not receive one can feel left out.

Use of the Bathroom

Montessori encouragement and opportunity for development of independence include the use of the bathroom. Children who are independent in their toileting needs develop healthy habits, including maintaining privacy, flushing the toilet after use, and thorough hand washing. **PLEASE help your child learn these valuable bathroom and sanitation skills by teaching and requiring them at home.**

Independent use of the toilet is required for children who attend Forest Park Montessori School. Independent toilet use means that your child can recognize bodily cues, listen to his body, walk to the bathroom, remove any necessary clothing, use the toilet, wipe (when appropriate), refasten clothing, flush, and thoroughly wash hands. However, we are happy to provide reminders and appropriate support for children who are in the process of gaining full independence.

Allergies and Chronic Medical Conditions

Your child must have a health form signed by a health care provider before attending school. We must have information regarding any allergies or chronic health issues, including the nature of the allergy or health problem, symptoms to be aware of, treatment the child is receiving, and any emergency procedures. If your child needs a special diet, we will discuss snack needs with you prior to your child attending school.

As required by regulations, Forest Park Montessori works with a health consultant regularly for assistance with health issues and the administration of medications. Children with severe allergies or chronic health problems will require an Individualized Health Care Plan completed by your physician. If needed, we will ask you to meet with the staff and our health consultant to review your physician's health care plan and how it will be implemented in the school setting.

Illness

Any child or staff member who exhibits the following symptoms must be excluded from school until he or she has fulfilled the conditions to return. Children who begin to exhibit symptoms while at school must be picked up immediately and will be isolated and supervised until that time. Symptoms requiring exclusion include:

- a temperature of 100.4 degrees or higher
- new or worsening cough
- congestion or a runny nose
- shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- chills
- muscle or body aches
- sore throat
- new loss of taste or smell
- headache
- fatigue
- nausea or vomiting
- diarrhea

State licensing regulations do not permit us to care for sick children. To keep a safe and healthy environment at school, please respect the following additional guidelines when determining if your child is well enough to attend school. Please refer to the chart below when determining if your child must be kept at home due to the following conditions:

ILLNESS/DISEASE	EXCLUSION IS NECESSARY
conjunctivitis	yes—until 24 hours after treatment begins
strep throat	yes—until fever-free and 24 hours after treatment begins
chicken pox	yes—until blisters have dried and crusted
lice	yes—until 24 hours after treatment begins
hand foot and mouth	yes—until mouth sores heal and doctor okays return

Emergency Staffing Shortage Policy Purpose: To ensure the safety and supervision of all students in the event of unexpected staff absences due to illness or other emergencies.

Policy Statement: In situations where a significant number of teachers or staff members are absent, and adequate classroom supervision cannot be maintained, the school reserves the right to request that parents or guardians keep their children at home or pick them up early. We will do this first voluntarily; if not enough families volunteer, we will require parents to either pick up or keep their child home. This measure will only be taken when all reasonable options for substitute coverage and internal staffing have been exhausted, and when the school determines that continuing normal operations would compromise the safety, supervision, or quality of care provided to students. **Procedure:** 1. The Head of School will assess the staffing situation and determine if normal operations can continue safely. 2. Parents and guardians will be notified as soon as possible through ProCare. 3. Families will be informed of the expected duration of the closure or early dismissal and any updates regarding the return to regular scheduling. 4. The school will make every effort to minimize disruption to families while maintaining the safety and well-being of students. **Rationale:** This policy ensures that the school can respond responsibly and promptly to emergency staffing shortages, maintaining a safe and supportive environment for all students.

Reporting Communicable Disease

Reportable communicable diseases include: COVID-19, Campylobacter, chicken pox, cryptosporidiosis, E. coli, Giardia, hepatitis A, hepatitis B, influenza (suspected outbreak), measles, bacterial meningitis, mumps, rubella, Salmonella, shigella, tuberculosis, and whooping cough. **If your child is diagnosed or exposed to a communicable disease, please notify the head of school immediately, as we are required to report this to the Department of Public Health with regard to possible exposure.** The names of children exposed will not be released to other families, but personally identifiable information must be shared with the health department.

Medication Administration

State licensing requires strict guidelines to be followed in administering any medication (including prescriptions and over-the-counter products) to your child. Children are not allowed to carry or keep any medication on their person, in a backpack, or in their lunchbox. Medication must be handed directly to the head of school by a parent. All staff administering medication will be trained in medication administration and delegated to do so by our nurse health consultant. Should it become necessary that your child be given a medication at school, please obtain all of the requirements and necessary forms from the head of school before expecting staff to give your child medication. Medication will be given according to the Nurse Practice Act and in consultation with our health consultant. Medicine that is no longer needed will be returned to you for disposal. **Please do not send any medication, vitamins, over-the-counter drugs, sunscreen, lip balm, cough drops, or supplements in the possession of your child.**

Immunizations

All children must be fully immunized and have a completed and up-to-date immunization record in their file before enrollment. **We do not accept unvaccinated children at this time.**

Accident or Injury

If your child has a serious accident or injury at school, we will call you or your emergency contact if you cannot be reached. If the head of school determines that your child may need immediate medical treatment, 911 will be called, and your child will be taken to the nearest hospital recommended by the emergency medical team, with consideration given to your hospital preference when possible. In the event of a less serious accident or injury, staff will provide first aid and give you a written injury report at pick-up. A copy of this report will be on file at the school as well. If there is any concern about an injury, the head of school will call you.

Sunscreen

We strongly recommend that your child have sunscreen applied before arriving at school in the morning. When necessary, we will apply sunscreen to your child for the afternoon with a signed permission form allowing us to do so.

Weather

We will be going outside every day unless the weather is too extreme to be considered safe for the children. This determination is based on multiple factors, including the air temperature, wind speed, relative humidity, and whether or not the sun is shining. In hot weather, children will be provided with water on a regular basis and will be encouraged to play in shady areas of the playground. Outside time may be limited if the weather is extremely hot or cold. If we are unable to go outside, the children will participate in gross-motor activities indoors. **However, please always assume that we will go outside, and dress your child appropriately for the weather. Please label all of your child's winter clothing items, especially snow pants and gloves, as these are very easily mixed up between children.**

Weather Closures

Forest Park will close if Boulder Valley Schools close due to extreme weather. However, Forest Park will also take into consideration the local Lafayette area weather conditions, and may (in extreme cases) close even if Boulder Valley Schools do not. This determination would be made if the road conditions for parents and/or staff are perceived as not safe for travel. Please understand that our foremost goal is to keep your children and our staff safe, and that determinations to close the school will not be taken lightly. Forest Park Montessori School will announce closure due to inclement weather by group text. Snow days are sacred, and home-learning will not be provided.

Visitors

All visitors to the school are required to sign in stating the purpose of their visit and may be asked for photo identification. We reserve the right to restrict access to the school to those who are not parents or guardians of currently enrolled students, or to persons who have no official business with the school.

Emergency Procedures

A school crisis can take any number of forms, including severe weather, a fire, a chemical spill, a gas leak, or a suspicious person in or near the school. As such, we will have regular emergency drills so that each child knows what to expect in the event of a real emergency. The school's emergency preparedness plan is reviewed for potential changes each year, and the roles and responsibilities are designated to each staff member. Evacuation plans are posted near each exit and in a central classroom location. In the event of a real emergency, our priority is to ensure the safety of the children and staff. Once everyone is safe and accounted for, we will inform parents of the situation through text message (or other means as necessary). In the event that students must be picked up immediately, we will contact parents first, followed by the child's emergency contacts, to notify each family of our location and to facilitate reunification.

Supervision

The staff of FPMS is first and foremost concerned with the safety and well-being of your children, and as such, we closely attend to the task of supervising the students. Throughout the day, and especially at transition times, a teacher will review and compare the attendance record and sign-out sheet, taking count of the children in the class.

Closing Procedures

Before locking school doors and leaving the grounds, we will perform a final sweep of the playground and classroom to ensure that no children are present. At the end of the day, we will review and compare the attendance record with the sign-out sheet. If there is a discrepancy, we will call to verify that the child was picked up. If pick-up cannot be confirmed, then we must follow the lost child procedure.

Lost Child

Though it is extremely unlikely, should a child become unaccounted for, we will do an immediate search of the school and all surrounding areas in an attempt to locate the child. If the child cannot be located or accounted for in a reasonable amount of time, you will be called immediately, and the police will be notified of the situation.

No Pick-Up

If you fail to pick up your child after the school closes, and we are unable to reach you, we will attempt to contact your child's emergency contacts. If that fails, we are required by law to have Social Services pick up your child.

Code of Conduct

Forest Park Montessori School employees must treat each staff member, parent, and child with the utmost respect. The maintenance of high standards of professionalism, integrity, impartiality, and conduct is essential to ensure a positive environment for all and to earn and keep the community's confidence in our program.

Confidentiality

Information regarding the students at our school is confidential and released only if permitted by state law and the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA).

Weapons

Weapons of any kind or toys that represent weapons are prohibited on school property. Children are also not allowed to pretend to use guns by using their hands, sticks, or any other object.

Drugs, Alcohol, and Smoking

The use of drugs (including marijuana) or alcohol by school employees during school hours is strictly prohibited. Some after-school functions may have limited amounts of wine or beer for parents and teachers to drink. Any parent or guardian who appears to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol when picking up a child will be asked to call someone else to accompany them home. 911 will be notified if a parent or guardian leaves with a child while appearing to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Smoking of any kind is not permitted on school grounds.

Money

In general, children should not bring money to school. The exception to this rule is when we do specific fundraisers for UNICEF, the Sister Carmen Food Bank, the World Wildlife Fund, etc. In these instances, the head of school will provide instructions for how children may bring change or small bills to school for the collection jar.

Electronic Media

It is our policy not to show videos or watch television during the school day. We may, on occasion, show a very brief video on a topic of cultural or scientific interest. We do not have computers or any device with a screen in the prepared environment, except for the school phone and a laptop, which is used for our record-keeping system.

Reporting Child Abuse

Any Forest Park Montessori School staff member who has reasonable cause to know or suspect that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect, or who has observed the child being subjected to circumstances or conditions which would reasonably result in abuse or neglect, will immediately report or cause a report to be made of such circumstances to the Boulder County Department of Social Services Child Protection Team. If you believe that your child has been abused, you should also seek immediate assistance from your county department of social services. Some numbers to call for suspected child abuse are 303-441-1309 or 1-844-CO-4-KIDS.

Filing a Complaint

To file a complaint concerning suspected licensing violations, contact the Colorado Department of Human Services, Division of Child Care, 1575 Sherman Street, 1st floor, Denver, CO 80203-1714. Their phone number is 303-866-5958.

Thank You for taking the time to read thoroughly! Please notify the head of school with any questions.