

Westboro Jewish Montessori Preschool

Parents' Guide

2016 - 2017



INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this handbook is to provide information about the school, the programs it offers, how it is run and what is expected of parents. Please contact any of the teachers if you have any questions or concerns that are not answered by this guide.

SCHOOL PROGRAMS

Half Day:	8:30 am - 11:30 am
Full Day:	8:30 am - 3:30 pm
Preschool (Casa) Program	2.5 – 6 years
Toddler Program	18 mths – 2.5 years

The Half Day Program includes indoor play, circle time, classroom time, and snack followed by outdoor play.

The Full Day Program is a place where the children are given the opportunity to expand areas they study in the morning session and to pursue more advanced Montessori work. The program consists of morning class, lunch, outdoor play, nap/quiet time, followed by more concentrated work in the afternoon.

THE MONTESSORI METHOD

Dr. Maria Montessori founded the first Children's House in Rome in 1907. She developed a method of instruction, in a scientifically designed environment, where the child has freedom of movement. The child learns at his/her own pace and reaches his/her potential.

It has been shown that the early years, birth to six, are the vital years to reach a child's true potential. In this period, he/she learns easily and is most responsive. Children of mixed age groups are in the same environment involved in their own projects or working with others. It is an ungraded classroom in which each child receives individual attention and thereby learns at his/her own pace.

Montessori teachers are specially trained to observe and take leads from the child, and to meet the needs of their students. A Montessori child leaves the environment with a feeling of independence and confidence.

ADMISSION and DISMISSAL POLICY

All children are admitted on a first-come, first-served basis. However, priority will be given to siblings of youngsters already enrolled in the school. The minimum age for admission is 2.5 years for the Montessori Preschool Program and 18 months for the Toddler Program.

All new students will be given a trial period of one month. During this time, if the program is not suitable and/or does not meet the needs of the child, **a full refund of the tuition minus one month's fee will be given.** If you need to withdraw your child before the end of the school year, **two months' written notice is required and the fees for these two months must be paid.**

Under unavoidable circumstances the administration will consider exceptions.

A teacher will interview each child prior to admission to the school.

JEWISH CURRICULUM

The Jewish Curriculum includes the Hebrew Alphabet, Parsha (Torah Portion) of the week, Jewish Holidays with themed crafts, morning Tefillah (prayer) circle, blessings over food, and the Jewish calendar. Every Friday the children bake challah and participate in a Shabbat Celebration.

MUSIC PROGRAM

The children participate in music circles where they learn songs and learn to play and recognize different musical instruments. This enables them to appreciate music and rhythm. During the Shabbat Party on Fridays, the children enjoy a music circle with an accordion, which gives them an appreciation for Jewish music.

Medical forms providing information on childhood diseases and medical conditions, allergies, and inoculations must be provided to the school upon admission. Immunization records are required.

SPECIAL NEEDS

Children will be assessed on an individual basis concerning special feeding needs, toilet needs, and non-ambulatory needs. Every effort will be made to accommodate every child's needs. Unfortunately, the school cannot provide services for all special needs.

FIELD TRIPS

The younger children may take part in one or two field trips during the year. But it is generally our preference and seen as best for the children to have visitors such as policemen, firemen, musicians, dental and health nurses, etc. to visit the school. The children in the Full Day program make several field trips for the practical application of their classroom subjects. Parents will be asked to volunteer to provide transportation for the field trips.

ORIENTATION OF NEW STUDENTS

To facilitate adjustment of new children, Westboro Jewish Montessori Preschool has a two-phase orientation. During the first week of September, a group orientation is held. During this special time, the new children become acclimatized to the environment of the classroom, bathroom, and playground, as well as the directress, teachers, assistants, and the appropriate behaviour in the school. While your children are involved in this orientation, we ask all parents to attend a parent briefing in our meeting room on school policies and procedures. After Labour Day, you will be notified about the date and time that your child will enter the classroom.

ATTENDANCE

Regular and punctual attendance is necessary for your child to get the full benefit of the program. Children sick with a contagious disease must be kept home for the health and safety of other children. Please observe the school calendar when planning vacations.

ARRIVAL and DISMISSAL

Morning arrival begins promptly at 8:30. The teachers will be at the door to welcome your child. If you are late, you must accompany your child inside and bring him/her to the classroom.

Morning dismissal is at 11:30 am. If you arrive late, your child will be waiting for you in the classroom or playground.

Afternoon dismissal is at 3:30 pm. Please park your car in our parking lot or on the street. We ask parents to please be prompt and respect our pick-up times.

SNACKS

The school provides a kosher and nutritious snack in the morning and afternoon. The snacks typically include a fruit or vegetable and crackers or cookies.

LUNCH

Lunchtime is a social and educational experience. The children are seated together at a table in the kitchen. They are expected to eat with good manners and enjoy social conversation.

As an on-going part of the Montessori classroom, the children are presented with lessons in nutrition. They begin by learning about the four basic food groups. As an application of this knowledge, we ensure that all four food groups are represented in their lunch every day.

ALLERGIES

Please inform the office and the teachers at the beginning of the school year if your child has any food allergies.

MEDICATION

If your child requires medication while at school, a medical release form must be completed by the parents or guardians at the time the medication is left at school.

The medication must be prescribed by a physician. It must be in its original container with the child's name clearly marked. Medication will only be accepted if it's in the original container. There will be no exceptions to this rule.

ABSENCES

It is not necessary to call the school each day that your child is absent. However, please inform the office if your child will be away for an extended period of time.

We request that you let the office know if your child has caught a communicable disease.

COMMUNICABLE DISEASES

Pupils who have contracted a communicable disease may be re-admitted to the school after the following exclusion periods:

~ **Chicken Pox** – From the time of the appearance of vesicles until a) seven days thereafter or b) the lesions are healed (scabs all off), whichever period is longer.

~ **Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)** – Until medical care and drainage from eyes has cleared. Doctor's note required for re-entry into school.

~ **German Measles** – 7 days from the onset of the rash.

~ **Impetigo** – When all sores are completely scabbed over and 24 hours following initiation of appropriate oral antibiotics or topical therapy with Bactroban (mupirocin) if there are only a few small lesions. Doctor's note required for re-entry into school.

~ **Mumps** – 9 days from the onset of swelling.

~ **Head Lice and Nits** – When no further nits (eggs) or lice (insects) are present and special treatment has been given.

~ **Ringworm** – After treatment has been initiated. Doctor's note required for re-entry into school.

~ **Scabies** – After treatment has been initiated. Doctor's note required for re-entry into school.

~ **Strep Throat/Scarlet Fever** – 24 hours after the start of effective medication, provided it is continued for 10 days.

RETURNING TO SCHOOL AFTER AN ILLNESS

Please remember that your child must be healthy enough upon returning from an illness so that he/she can participate in all school activities. Children should be in good health before returning to school. This will benefit the child and his/her classmates.

PARENT-TEACHER INTERVIEWS

There are two opportunities each year for parent-teacher interviews. Dates are in the school calendar. Sign-up sheets are available for parents to sign up for a convenient time. Children should not be present during the meeting.

If you wish to speak to the teacher about your child at any other time, please arrange an appointment with them.

Discussions at arrival and dismissal times are discouraged. It is difficult for both the teacher and parent to concentrate on a discussion with the children present. Alternatively, call the school office and request that the teacher call you after school hours.

We believe good communication between home and the school is essential to fostering the child's learning environment. Please remember that the teachers are always available to answer any questions you may have.

EMERGENCIES

We need to have contact information on file so that we can reach you quickly and easily should an emergency arise at the school or with your child.

If your address or phone numbers change during the year, please inform the office as soon as possible. It is very important that all of this information be up-to-date.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

Our periodic Parent Workshops are an invaluable means to learn more about the Montessori Method. There are also various other programs where we expect parents to attend and volunteer. With parental involvement in the school's activities, we can establish a strong community for your child.

RELEASE NOTES

Children will be released to authorized persons only. If you know in advance that another person will pick up your child, a note of explanation must be given to the school. In an emergency, call the office. If a person other than the parents is picking up the child, please acquaint them with our procedures.

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION

One of the best and most delightful ways of learning about the Montessori approach to education is to see a class in action. Parents may come to visit the classroom at any time during school. However, if you want to observe the classroom for a period of time, we have a special observation schedule. This program begins in November.

Appointments should be made in advance with your child's teacher so that we do not have too many adults observing at one time.

EMERGENCY SCHOOL CLOSINGS

The school may be closed occasionally because of inclement weather. If CFRA Radio or the local TV stations announce that the Ottawa-Carleton School Board is CLOSED, then the Westboro Jewish Montessori Preschool will also be closed.

The Preschool also operates a 'phone tree' linking all the families in the school. This system will be used to communicate unexpected school closings and special individual classroom events.

TOYS

We ask that children do not bring toys to school. The one exception to this is children in the Full Day Program who may want a soft toy for naptime. If your child would like to share something in his/her class, please see the classroom teacher for appropriate ideas.

DISCIPLINARY STEPS

These procedures vary depending on the circumstances and the age of the child. These procedures will be reviewed in the classroom regularly.

- Children are spoken to individually.
- The child is asked to have 'quiet time' to think about what he/she had done.
- The child is asked to express his/her feelings to the other person/s involved.
- All infractions are recorded.
- If behaviour persists after three warnings, the child's parents will be notified to discuss changing such behaviour.
- A further infraction may result in the child being sent home for a short period.

We do not use prohibited practices, such as: corporal punishment, deliberate harsh or degrading measures that would humiliate or undermine a child's self-respect, deprivation of food, shelter, clothing or bedding, confining a child in a locked room, or exits locked for the purpose of confinement.

CLOTHING FOR SCHOOL

Indoors

We ask that children dress appropriately for working in class. Children often work on the floor, and this should be kept in mind when suggesting what your child might like to wear to school. It is very important that children wear shoes in the classroom. In the winter, an extra pair of shoes may be left at school (please label these). In case of emergency, the children must be ready to vacate the building immediately. Please send your child with a change of clothing, spare hat and pair of mittens and a backpack.

Outdoors

Children should also wear appropriate outdoor clothing, especially in the winter. Children are encouraged to dress and undress themselves, so clothing that is easy for them to put on and take off is best. If the weather is not too blustery, children will have an outdoor playtime every day.

Outdoor activities can help the child develop physically, socially, and emotionally. As a rule of thumb, a child who is not well enough to go outside at break time should be kept at home.

WASHROOM

Initially, your child will be accompanied to the washroom by a staff member. After he/she learns the routine, an older child will accompany the child to help foster independence.

Children will wear a "washroom necklace" when they leave the room. In this way, the teacher can monitor the children.

DIAPERS

Diapers will be changed at the changing table. The table will be disinfected. Teachers will use gloves and diapers will be disposed of.

CALENDAR

School will be closed during Statutory Holidays, Professional Development Days, Jewish Holidays, and mid-winter breaks as specified in the school calendar.

A copy of the calendar, outlining events at the Westboro Jewish Montessori Preschool, is provided at the beginning of the school year. Please keep this calendar handy so that you will be aware of the special programs at school, interview times, in service days, etc. You will be reminded of these events through our weekly and monthly newsletters.

CONCLUSION

We hope this handbook has answered any questions that you have about the operations of the school. Should you have any other questions, please contact:

Devora Caytak 613-729-7712



Jewish Youth Library of Ottawa

B"H

192 Switzer Avenue, Ottawa, ON K1Z 7H9
Phone: (613) 729-7712 Fax: (613) 761-5896

Photo Waiver

I give permission for the use of my child's portrait, picture or photograph by the Jewish Youth Library (hereinafter: JYL) and the Westboro Jewish Montessori Preschool (hereinafter: WJMP).

These images may be used on JYL's website (www.jewishyouthlibrary.com) as well as in JYL and WJMP communications or promotional products, such as publications, videos, newsletters, pamphlets and presentations. The main usages will be in a weekly emailed newsletter. Uses include, but are not limited to:

- communications to parents
- attracting prospective parents and students
- informing Canadian and international audiences about the JYL and WJMP

I understand that my child's portrait, picture or photograph will be included in an image bank for use by the JYL and WJMP. Further, I understand that if I take my child out of the WJMP, any image in this collection bearing my child's likeness may still be used.

In addition, should I wish to have my child's portrait, picture or photograph no longer used by the JYL and WJMP, I am to contact JYL administration at: office.jewishyouthlibrary@gmail.com

I agree that I shall have no claim against the JYL, WJMP or against anyone accessing or using images from this collection.

I confirm that I am the parent/guardian of _____.

Signed,

Name (print in block letters): _____

Child's Name: _____

Date: _____