



Pure Montessori

Parent Handbook

A safe, nurturing, and inspiring environment rooted in the tradition of Montessori, where children can develop their intrinsic desire for life-long learning.

“Our care of the child should be governed, not by the desire to make him learn things, but by the endeavour always to burn within him that light which is called intelligence.”

— Maria Montessori

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Welcome

“All children carry within themselves the person they will become.”
— Maria Montessori

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome your family and thank you for choosing **Pure Montessori School** as your child’s Montessori early education program. Our team of dedicated and experienced Montessori guides are committed to providing your child with a safe, nurturing, inclusive, and stimulating Montessori environment where your child will develop socially, emotionally, mentally, and physically to reach their full potential as life long learners.

This handbook will encompass everything families are likely to need to ensure a successful school year and we encourage you to read it thoroughly and refer to it often. We invite you to reach out to us with any questions about Pure Montessori School at any time. The policies and procedures outlined in the Parent Handbook are a part of your contract with our school.

It is a privilege to be a part of your child’s Montessori education and we look forward to building a strong partnership with your family this school year and for years to come.

Warmly,

Kim Reinhardt
Director, Lead Montessori Guide
Pure Montessori School Ltd.

Our Background

Please allow me to introduce myself. My name is Kim Reinhardt and I am the owner, Director, and Lead Guide of **Pure Montessori School Ltd.**

I have been a proponent of the Montessori Method for over 20 years when I began researching Montessori for my own children. After moving to Edmonton from Montreal (by way of British Columbia), I was fortunate to enrol my sons into an incredible home based Montessori School run by Surabhi Nair (Dave). I was invited to volunteer in the classroom and soon discovered my passion for guiding children in the Montessori Method. It was a departure from my previous career in Human Resources and Art Direction, yet it was a perfect transition to allow me to guide our sons early childhood education.

In 2009, I studied for and received my NAMC Montessori accreditation under the mentorship of Mrs. Dave and when she decided to expand her school, I was offered a teaching position. The school that we opened in 2009 soon became the top Montessori program in Edmonton and went on to earn that title for many years. After 15 years as a senior Montessori Guide and trainer, Mrs. Nair retired and I decided to open my own school in order to grow traditional Montessori on the South side of Edmonton.

My colleague and accredited NAMC Montessori Guide, Mrs. Sushma Sheshadri, brings to our school 9 years of experienced teaching excellence. I have had the pleasure of working alongside Mrs. Sheshadri for the past 4 years, where she has shared the same passion for providing our students and parent community with the very best traditional Montessori education.

Our team is comprised of an additional, fully accredited Montessori Guide when we move to our permanent location, along with Mrs Surabhi Nair, returning as our supply teacher with over 35 years of Montessori experience.

With extensive planning, research, experience, and time spent guiding students from my home based Montessori classroom, we are preparing to open the permanent **Pure Montessori School** location in September of 2025.

Our goal is to continue to provide an outstanding traditional Montessori learning environment for the families of Edmonton's South side for many years to come.

Mission

We commit to develop and nurture the intellectual, creative, and human potential of the children entrusted to us by providing them with a safe, nurturing, stimulating environment rooted in the traditions of the Montessori Method.

Guiding Principles

- Every child is a unique person with creative potential, the drive to learn and the right to be treated with respect as an individual
- As children are profoundly affected by society and their immediate surroundings, we must create an environment in harmony with the child's natural development
- Children must be given freedom to work and move around, within a structure that supports the child's need to see themselves as a member of a group and an independent being
- The Montessori materials and prepared environment help children to explore and master activities which foster holistic personal development
- Children must have the freedom to choose work at their own pace in cooperation with others or individually
- The daily practice of careful, considerate observation of each child within the prepared environment must be observed to assist their full potential

- A mixed age classroom provides opportunities for children to develop their social abilities within our harmonious community

We promote the holistic development of each child by placing emphasis on:

- Establishing self confidence and self esteem
- Independence within respective age limits
- Learning to form ones own opinions
- Building assertiveness for self advocacy
- Learning responsibility in small steps
- Learning conflict resolution and Peace education
- Encouragement of positive social growth

The Montessori Method

“Our work is not to teach, but to help the absorbent mind in it’s work of development. How marvellous it would be if by our help, if by an intelligent treatment of the child, if by understanding the needs of his physical life and by feeding his intellect, we would prolong the period of functioning of the absorbent mind.”

— Maria Montessori, *The Absorbent Mind*

Research has established the critical importance of the first six years of life for a child’s physical, cognitive, emotional, and social development. A Montessori early childhood education is structured to capture a child’s greatest potential during the age of 0-6 years, where a child learns more easily and efficiently than any other period in life. The method is based on the philosophy and teachings of Dr. Maria Montessori, an Italian physician and educator. This proven method of early childhood education has been practiced for over a century with consistent, studied, and quantifiable results.

One of the key elements of the Montessori method is the **3 Year Work Cycle**. This refers to the span of three years that is considered a pivotal plane of development in a child's life that encompasses significant changes in their cognitive, social, emotional, and physical growth. This is a scaffold approach to learning where each year builds on the previous to provide a sequential stream of learning. **Children learn best when given the time to master new skills and concepts at their own pace.**

The first year is the **Absorbent Mind** where the child is an incredible sponge soaking up the world around them. The role of the Montessori guide is to prepare an environment that stimulates a child's natural curiosity and desire for exploration.

The second year is the **Reasoning Mind** where children start to develop critical thinking and problem solving skills. They begin to ask questions, develop self confidence, and seek personal autonomy. The curriculum builds on these innate needs by providing an environment of experimentation, problem solving, and exploration.

The third year is the **Creative Mind** where a child's creative and artistic abilities are honed in this final year of the cycle. They become more self aware of their emotions and feelings and begin to express themselves through art, music, and storytelling. The Montessori curriculum supports the need for self expression, creativity, and imagination.

The 3 Year Cycle fosters a learning environment of consistency, mastery, independence, and individualized learning.

A Montessori environment differs from the traditional classroom in more ways than just structure. The environment is prepared intentionally to serve the child. The materials are made easily accessible on individual trays placed on low shelving and the child is free to choose that which interests them. There is an emphasis on manipulative activities as young children are drawn to hands on, involved learning that provide the opportunity for movement. These materials are referred to as 'works', which lends a sense of dignity to the efforts the child puts into their activities and allows them to relate to the 'work' they see in an adult

environment. It instills the idea that purposeful work can be enjoyable and worthwhile.

The autonomy to choose the work is gratifying to the child's desire for independence and speaks to the joy in the process of doing rather than in the end product. Through careful observation, the guide can present new materials based on the child's interests and abilities as they reveal themselves.

Within most of the specialized Montessori materials is a control of error. This teaches the child that they can self identify if a mistake has been made and can work independently to correct it without unnecessary intervention. This is one of the built in lessons of developing inner confidence and independence.

Self discipline is closely aligned with constructive work in that when children are actively engaged, they aren't interested in causing disturbances. Children will focus on their own works and abilities which supports self motivation over peer competition.

The role of the Montessori guide differs from traditional teaching roles. The Montessori guide must carefully prepare the environment and closely observe the children interacting within that prepared environment. The guide makes detailed observation notes and uses them to prepare individual and group lessons, and to anticipate child readiness for new materials to be introduced and presented. The guide will work with the children to familiarize them with the materials and leave the child to explore the work independently. The guide will model and present socially acceptable behaviour in grace and courtesy to establish a peaceful classroom.

Each week, new materials and theme work are presented to the children through large group, small group, individual, and independent study. The children are guided through a carefully prepared three year curriculum, **however, opportunities for spontaneous, child led learning will always take precedence.**

The **Prepared Environment** includes the following areas of study:

- Sensorial
- Practical Life

- Culture and Science (geography, zoology, botany, history, art, and music)
- Language Arts and Writing
- Math

The benefits of our mixed age cast classroom are innumerable. A mixed aged classroom models a realistic social community for children to work and thrive in and allows children to practice multiple social roles. Both pre-school and Kindergarten Montessori programming occurs simultaneously in a Montessori Casa. Younger children learn from older children and older children grow in confidence as they become mentors to the youngest in the classroom. This is a spontaneous occurrence. Older children are not required to help younger children and have many activities of their own to work on however, they often find self fulfillment in offering their support and knowledge to others.

Program Schedule

Opening Hours and Schedule

Monday to Friday:

Morning session - 8:45 am to 11:45 am (doors open at 8:40 am)

Afternoon session - 12:30 pm to 3:30 pm (doors open at 12:25 pm)

Theme work

Each month we build on our curriculum directives and carefully prepare materials and lessons to coordinate with our theme. These themes are designed to enrich our students understanding of the world around them and their place in it. The ideas will translate through other areas of the classroom in order that our students may explore and absorb a holistic knowledge of the current theme.

Circle Time

This is time that is shared as a class community and offers the children a chance to practice socially appropriate behaviours like taking turns, listening, platform skills, and grace and courtesy. The children will practice the concept of time through calendar work, identify the continents and oceans on a map, practice other

languages, and sing. The Montessori guide will take this time to prepare our students for the day and review the weeks theme.

Art Appreciation

Art in the Montessori classroom is mainly **process based rather than end product**, with a focus on teaching a technique or skill and then offering the children the tools to explore the learned skill using their own creativity. Throughout the year, the students will engage in art history lessons in relation to the current theme or continent study. A significant artist, medium, or period in history will be used to illustrate a technique that our students will then interpret into their own piece.

Material to create process art will be available all year in the art area and will be refreshed as new techniques are learned and mastered. When possible, we will endeavour to invite local artists that work in different mediums, to share their talents with our students.

Music Appreciation

Music is woven into the daily life of a Montessori classroom where many genres are introduced for exploration. There is a designated music area where music literacy can be explored as a group or independently. Much of our cultural or historical theme work can best be expressed through music and art appreciation. In addition to music and movement, one circle per week is designated for singing, instrument discovery, yoga, or dance, as we work to build our classroom song list and prepare to share learned musical skills with our parent community.

Calendar

The school will be closed for all public holidays and will follow the EPSB calendar with some exceptions. **The school will be closed for 2 weeks over the winter break, 2 weeks over the Spring Break, and will close approximately one week earlier than the EPSB for Summer.** The school will observe scheduled professional days that may differ slightly from EPSB and Edmonton Catholic schools. Summer School programming will be offered contingent upon meeting enrolment minimums. The school reserves the right to adjust the yearly school calendar

while providing due notice to the parent community in advance of any changes. A school calendar will be posted at the beginning of each school year for your reference, with monthly reminders of upcoming important dates.

Admissions

Pure Montessori is non-discriminatory in its admission policies. We believe in equal attention and care for all children without regard to sex, race, colour, creed, ability, religion, or beliefs. We are a neuro diverse, inclusive environment.

Enrolment preference is given to returning families committed to following our three year program. Returning families will receive notice in January of the current school year.

Requirements for admission

- Children must be at least 2 years and 9 months of age (our environment and materials are not suitable for younger children)
- Children **must be completely toilet trained** and independently perform the following:
 - can anticipate and act upon the need to toilet
 - can remove and put on clothing
 - can wipe themselves
 - can get onto and off of a child sized toilet
 - can flush the toilet
 - are free of diapers or training pants
- Ours is a **3 year early learning program** where ideally your child would start at year 1. We will accept children in years 2 and 3 with the full understanding that your child will **not** receive 3 years of condensed Montessori programming
- Parents /Guardian have toured the school with their child
- Registration form is complete

- Parents/Guardian have read and signed off on the Parent handbook
- Once admitted, students may remain at Pure Montessori until July of the year that they turn 6 years old

Wait List

You may place your child's name on our waitlist after you have booked a school tour. **The non refundable waitlist fee of \$50** will be applied to your registration fee when a space becomes available for your child.

Admission will be granted on the basis of availability and age category. Parents/Guardians will be notified when space becomes available. Confirmation of your acceptance is required within one week of the notification or the space will be forfeited and the child's name will be removed from the list.

Registration and Fees

Upon completion of the requirements for admission, you will receive a registration package requesting relevant contact information, your child's medical information and authorization, a FOIP consent form, and contract signature. Please submit these forms with the following fees for a total of **\$950**:

- An annual, **non refundable** registration fee of **\$100**. The annual registration fee covers the administrative costs to welcome your child to the school (**\$50** if you have previously paid the **\$50** Waitlist fee)
- An annual, **non refundable** deposit of **\$750**. **This deposit will be applied to your last months tuition in June**
- An annual fee of **\$100** for art supplies, and incidental replacement/wear of materials

These fees will be deposited upon receipt. **Registration fees will be made by E - transfer or PAD (pre authorized deposit) to puremontessoriyeg@gmail.com**

Please review the Alberta Early Learning and Childcare Agreement updated April, 2025, to determine your subsidy eligibility

There will be an additional fee for any in school enrichment programs that we offer during the school year. We typically plan for one enrichment per term. Permission slips and fees will be sent to parents in advance of the program.

Tuition

A monthly tuition fee of **\$750** is due on the **first day of each month** for 9 consecutive months beginning September through to May. **\$750 of your initial deposit will be applied to your last payment in June.**

Monthly Tuition fees will be made to **puremontessoriyeg@gmail.com** by PAD (pre authorized payment).

A \$50 late payment fee will be charged if payment is not received within one week of scheduled payment. Tax receipts for tuition may be requested twice yearly.

Withdrawal

If you choose to withdraw your child between September and March of the current school year, **2 months notice of withdrawal** must be provided in writing on or before the first day of the first month to be counted as part of the 2 months notice.

2 months tuition fees will be charged in lieu of notice if you decide to withdraw your child between September and March of the current school year.

As per your contract with Pure Montessori School, you are agreeing to pay 2 months full tuition in lieu of notice of withdrawal.

There will be **No Refund** of tuition fees if a child is withdrawn between April 1 and the end of the school term in June as we typically do not accept new students during the final term.

Termination

Pure Montessori School Ltd. reserves the right to discontinue service to a family if financial commitments and/or terms of your contract are not upheld. We will provide written notification to allow for arrangements to be made for an alternative program.

Taking time off/Holidays

If your family chooses to take time off from school or goes on holiday, the full tuition fee is still due otherwise your child will lose their place at the school. Please advise the school in advance of a lengthy absence.

Inclusion

Pure Montessori is an inclusive environment where we will work with parents to provide the best learning environment for all children. We have experience welcoming children with neuro diversities and their support teams, and look forward to collaborating with families to determine if our school environment is a fit for your child.

Preparing your child for Montessori

There are many small things that parents can do to help prepare your child for school in advance of their first day. Here are some ideas:

- Ensure that your child is present during your scheduled school tour so that they may be introduced early to their new environment.
- Talk about or read books about Montessori School and what to expect
- Show pictures of Montessori materials
- Explain that there will be other children just like them that will be students and that there are grown ups called guides/teachers that will help them
- Invite your child to help in the selection of their new indoor shoes, snack container, and back pack

- Practice independence - putting on their coat using the 'Montessori flip', putting on and taking off both indoor and outdoor shoes, opening and closing their snack container, putting on their backpack
- Practice toileting independence - taking down and pulling up undergarments and pants, wiping, flushing, washing and drying hands
- Practice self advocacy vocabulary - I need to use the bathroom, I feel sad, I need help, I am hurt, I don't like that, I would like...

The Montessori School Year Begins

Returning students may observe regular school hours from the first day.

We prefer that parents drop off their children at the door and say a cheerful, quick goodbye and remind them that you will be back to pick them up. Your positive, confident demeanour assists your child in settling in and helps to foster independence right from the start. It is not unusual for a child to become tearful when entering an unfamiliar environment. The longer the goodbye, the greater the chance that your child will continue to cry. Our teaching team are very experienced and trained to manage this natural response to change and we will help comfort your child through the transition.

Often, the first few days are shorter for new and younger children as each child responds differently to change. We will allow each child the time they need to feel secure in their new surroundings. You may see children experiencing separation anxiety and we thank you for your understanding during this transition period.

Graduated entry for new students

Entering a School environment for the first time is an adjustment for both children and their parents. We ask both new and returning families to be flexible for the first few weeks of the school year. Graduated entry offers children experiencing separation anxiety, the opportunity to take the time they need to feel comfortable in their new classroom community.

We will contact you to come and pick up your child if your child experiences separation anxiety that lasts for more than 20 minutes, so please be prepared to stay close by. If you don't receive a call then please follow regular pick up times.

Please make yourself, or another authorized person close to your child, available for your child these first days. We may ask you to stay in a designated area of the classroom to support your child and the teaching team in helping your child acclimate. Once your child has gained the confidence to explore and be independent in the classroom, you may leave after confirmation from a staff member. This process can take several days.

Tips to support your child through separation anxiety

- Be positive. Your child is highly sensitive to your own feelings of separation anxiety. If you are enthusiastic about school, your child will likely be enthusiastic as well
- If/when your child cries, remain calm. Try not to say "don't be afraid" or "there's nothing to be afraid of", or "there's no reason to cry". It's best to address your child in a positive way. "It's OK to be afraid, your teachers will take care of you and help you."
- Never sneak out or slip away. Tell your child that you are leaving, when you'll be coming back, and what you'll be doing.
- Don't ask your child for permission to leave. This can be confusing. Be straight forward instead

When you have successfully completed graduated entry, we ask that you have a clear and consistent separation routine with your child. **Allow your child to walk on their own to the classroom.** Say goodbye kindly and with confidence. We will comfort your child if they are anxious.

Comfort Kits

From time to time during the school year, your child may feel the need for comfort as a result of anxiety, hurt feelings, tiredness, missing snack, or a minor bump or cut. We invite you to send the following items that can fit into a small ziplock bag labelled with your child's name:

- A small family photo
- A small comfort item
- A loving note from home
- A non perishable snack item

We provide a safe and secure school environment for each child in our care, and will continue to observe your child's readiness for our program. We will offer daily support and strategies to encourage your child and we will invite you to collaborate with our team to offer any strategies that you currently use at home that may work in the school environment. If your child continues to struggle with feelings of anxiety that impede their ability to participate and enjoy the Montessori environment, we will consult with your family to discuss options that may better suit your child.

Toileting Policy

A Montessori classroom is a highly specialized learning environment and requires a certain level of independence from the students attending. Montessori guides do not function as daycare staff and their time is required in the classroom in an educational capacity. As such, we ask that your child be fully toilet trained when they start at Pure Montessori as per the following definition;

- Not wearing diapers or training pants
- Independently recognizes the need to toilet
- Able to navigate pulling down and pulling up clothing independently
- Able to get onto and off of a child sized toilet independently
- Able to wipe independently
- Able to flush and wash independently

We fully recognize that your child may have the occasional accident but it cannot be the norm. In the event that your child wets themselves, a teacher will assist your child in changing their clothes. Should your child have a bowel movement accident, you will be required to come to the school, as soon as is possible, to change your child. At no time will a child be addressed in a punitive manner for having a toileting accident and we will do everything possible to maintain the child's self esteem and privacy.

Persistent toileting accidents will be discussed with parents, where your child may need to take time off from school to focus on training at home. In some instances, your child may be deferred until they have mastered toilet training.

Clothing

We encourage you to dress your child in durable, **barrier free clothing** with the understanding that your child will be participating in active, hands on work each day. Your child's educational focus is on personal independence and spills/accidents are inevitable as they navigate their daily work. School appropriate clothing are those that **are free of** belts, buttons, buckles or zippers that your child cannot manage independently. Tutus and long dresses can be tripping hazards and are often difficult to maneuver during toileting. Clothing should be appropriate for the season so that your child remains comfortable in our heated/cooled classroom.

We ask that your child's jacket zippers are equipped with child friendly zipper pulls. There is a unique method of putting on coats independently in the Montessori classroom called the 'Montessori flip'. You can google a video instruction to practice with your child prior to the start of the school year.

Pure Montessori School shirts will be offered for purchase upon confirmation of your child's registration at the beginning of the school year. You may e transfer **\$35 per shirt** to **puremontessoriyeg@gmail.com** We ask that students wear their shirt on Fridays, for program enrichment days, and for class photos. Wearing a uniform can offer children a sense of place and belonging and aides in building a feeling of a strong school community.

Backpacks

We recommend a backpack or cross body bag appropriate in size for your child's stature so that they may wear it comfortably. It must have room for a small snack container, a child sized, spill proof water bottle, indoor shoes, and a full change of clothes. **Extra clothes should include socks, underwear, shirt, and pants stored in a large ziplock bag labelled with your child's first and last name. This bag should remain in your child's back pack for the duration of the school year.** Please insure that your child is aware of the contents of their backpack, can pack them on their

own, and can zip and unzip their backpack independently. Large zipper pulls are excellent tools to aide in your child's independence.

Please avoid sending oversized or rolling back packs to school.

Shoes

Your child requires a pair of closed toe, slip proof indoor shoes solely for indoor school use. **These shoes should be packed in their backpack and brought to school daily.** It is important that your child's shoes are well fitting and barrier free so that they may put them on and take them off independently. Shoes that are too small or too large can be a tripping hazard and can impede independence.

PLEASE LABEL ALL CLOTHING AND PERSONAL ITEMS WITH YOUR CHILD'S NAME

The school cannot be responsible for lost or damaged clothing or personal items. We ask that all personal items like sunglasses, toys, jewelry, and umbrellas remain at home as they can be distractions in the classroom. **Toys should not be given as incentive to behave or come to school if your child is refusing.** This short term fix replaces the need for the child to come to terms with and overcome their feelings in a healthy, sustainable way.

Our classroom materials are of great interest to our students and from time to time, a child may take something home. Due to the specific nature of Montessori materials, if a piece of tray work goes missing, we cannot use the tray. We ask that you occasionally check your child's back pack for objects that aren't familiar to you.

Pick up and Drop off

Your child will be signed in by a teacher at drop off and signed out by a teacher when your child is picked up. **Your child will only be released to their parent/ guardian or persons listed on your authorized pick up list.** We must be notified in advance if your child will be picked up by someone that is not on the list. We require the name, phone number, and physical description of the person and may ask for picture ID before releasing your child if it's the first time they are picking up.

Late pick up

We ask that you closely follow the designated pick up times as late pick ups can cause your child distress and keep staff from having their short break between classes or leaving on time. **We understand occasional late pick ups but if it occurs frequently, there will be a \$20 fee for every 10 minutes that you are late.**

Absences

Consistent attendance is important in a Montessori classroom. The children who benefit most from the Montessori environment are those that attend regularly. Your child's experiences in the classroom are cumulative and consistent attendance bolsters learning. Intermittent attendance can affect your child's adaptation to school, social growth, and overall learning.

The best way to notify the school of your child's absence is through text message to Kim Reinhardt at (780) 990-5665

Nutrition and Snack Policy

We believe that a healthy diet is essential to a child's well being and ability to learn. We foster an environment of healthy eating and an interest in good, fresh food. Through our culinary programming and cultural studies, we encourage our students to explore food from it's source to their plate.

In a Montessori environment, children are encouraged to listen to the needs of their own bodies, to eat when they feel hungry, and drink when they feel thirsty. There is no set snack time so that the children can practice critical thinking and make decisions based on their own needs. At the start of the school year we will offer gentle reminders for children to listen to their bodies, but there is no requirement for children to eat snack during their time at school.

Please pack snacks in a small, reusable container that your child can open and close independently. There won't be room in the cloak room or snack table for oversized lunch bags.

Any food items larger in width than your child's index and pointer fingers together, must be cut into smaller pieces to avoid choking. Messy food like yogurt or applesauce should be opened and food transferred to a child friendly container. Child sized food picks are great for fine motor skills practice.

WE ARE A NUT FREE PROGRAM. PLEASE DO NOT SEND NUTS IN ANY FORM.

Please consider the amount of food that you pack for your child's snack as they are at school for only 3 hours. **Your child's school snack should not replace their main meal of breakfast or lunch.** Many children feel obligated to eat their entire snack regardless of hunger and will spend a large amount of time attempting to finish a snack that is too large.

The types of food that you pack has direct relation to your child's mood, comfort, independence, and energy levels. We ask that you refrain from sending the following:

- Items with high sugar content
- Juice
- Foods with wasteful or difficult packaging
- Candy
- Fruit or vegetables that require peeling unless the child can do so independently
- Too much food

Table Manners

The snack area is a wonderful place for children to take a self directed break while providing time to socialize. We use the snack area as an opportunity to practice table manners, care of others through appropriate table conversation, fine motor skills practice, care of self with hand and face washing, and care of environment by cleaning up after a meal. Many of the practical life works presented at the start of the school year support these areas of development.

Culinary

Each month of the school year, students participate in culinary skills training, food preparation, or food tastings relating to our area of study. **Parents will be invited to sign up to volunteer on culinary days or to supply some of the necessary ingredients.**

Food Allergies and Dietary Restrictions

We will refer to your child's registration and medical forms for allergies and food intolerances. If your child has a food allergy or dietary restriction, we ask that you send a recent 2" by 2" photo of your child to accompany your child's list of allergies or restrictions, to be posted and visible to all teaching staff at a glance.

Birthdays

We celebrate Birthdays in a unique way in a Montessori Classroom. Children are taught that on the day they were born on planet Earth, they begin a 365 day journey around the sun. We replicate the journey at Circle time and invite their classmates to celebrate the child's milestones of their growth and development. Parents can send milestone pictures to share with the class during the celebration. Parents are welcome to join us. In lieu of goody bags or cake, we ask that your child bring their favourite book to be read to the class. If parents wish, they may donate the book to our classroom library and we will inscribe the book with your child's name. **This is in no way compulsory.**

Health and Safety Policies

For the health and well being of your child and of others in the classroom, please keep your child at home if they exhibit any of the following symptoms:

- Lethargic behaviour
- A fever (**your child must remain at home until they have been symptom free without medication for 24 hours**)
- Sore throat, persistent cough, persistent runny nose with green or yellow discharge, vomiting, nausea, visible rash, or diarrhea (**your child must remain at home until they have been completely symptom free without medication, for 48 hours**)
- Red, itchy eyes with discharge, or any communicable disease (**your child mustn't return to school until the course of medication is complete and your child is symptom free**).
- The school must be advised of any diagnosed communicable disease.
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Blood in urine
- Visibly enlarged lymph nodes

A sick child will be much more comfortable at home than at school. **Please do not send a sick child to school where other students and teachers will be at risk of being infected.**

Parents will be contacted to pick up their child immediately if any of the above symptoms are visible or occur at school.

First Aid

All teachers have Current First Aid Certification and will administer basic first aid in the event of a minor injury. We do ask that, wherever possible, any medications be given to your child at home. Please be sure to complete the medical form in your registration package so that we are aware of any special medical considerations your child may have.

We will administer first aid and communicate to parents in the following manner:

- If your child gets a minor scratch or cut, we will clean it and apply a bandaid
- If your child has a minor bump on their body, we will apply an icepack, sit with the child to ensure they are capable of continuing their day at school, and relay the details to you at pick up time.
- If we assess that the child may need a visit to their family physician, we will immediately contact the parents/guardian to pick up their child. If we cannot contact the parents, we will use the next contact listed. We will ensure that the child is comfortable and with a teacher at all times until the child is picked up. We will document the incident.
- If the injury is an emergency, we will call 911, stay with your child and perform basic first aid until help arrives, and contact the parents/guardian to relay what happened and where the child has been taken for treatment. One staff member will accompany the child to the hospital until the parents/guardian arrive.

Child Protection

All staff members have recent police safety checks as a condition of employment at Pure Montessori School. All staff are mandated by the Province of Alberta to report any suspected sign of child abuse and/or neglect to Alberta Child Care Services.

Fire and Disasters

Our school is equipped with smoke detectors, fire extinguishers, carbon monoxide detectors, a fully approved fire alarm system, sprinklers, and signed emergency exit doors. We will conduct mock fire drills throughout the year as required by Alberta Health and Safety codes, while the children are in attendance. We have a written evacuation plan and will usher the children outside to safety, at which time we will contact parents.

Incident Reporting

As per Alberta Child Care Regulations, parents will be informed of any serious incident that involves your child and you will be required to sign an incident form. The school is required to report any serious incidents to the Alberta Child Care Licensing Office immediately in the event of any of the following:

- An emergency evacuation
- Unexpected program closure
- An intruder on the premises
- An illness or injury to a child that requires the school to request emergency health care and/or requires a child to remain in the hospital overnight
- An allegation of sexual abuse or neglect of a child by a school staff member or volunteer
- An unexpected absence of a child from the program (lost child)
- An error in the administration of medication by staff or a volunteer that results in the child becoming ill or requiring first aid
- A child removed from the program by a non-custodial parent or guardian
- The commission by a child of an offence under an Act of Canada or Alberta
- A child left on the premises outside of the program's operating hours

Parent - School Communication

In a Montessori environment, the relationship between home and school is extremely important to ensure that your child has every opportunity to flourish. We commit to offering parents transparency of school operations with respectful, accessible, non judgemental communication at all times. Your child's well being is at the centre of all that we do at Pure Montessori and we place great value on the collaborative partnerships fostered with our parent community.

Timings between class sessions don't allow for long conversations at pick up and drop off but you can arrange for a meeting with the school director and discuss any concerns that you may have (when children are not present).

Teachers may however, offer a word of encouragement or a quick progress note that is appropriate for children's ears, during pick up or drop off or when you are volunteering in the classroom.

Teacher Observations

Montessori Guides spend a great deal of time observing your child as they explore the prepared environment. Maria Montessori called this process 'scientific pedagogy' where the teachers are observing all aspects of the child's development including; emotional, spiritual, and physical growth, along with intellectual development. This allows the teacher to anticipate the child's readiness for presentations of new work or areas of study that require further instruction before mastery is achieved. These detailed observations are documented in each student's individual record keeping and form the basis of your child's individualized curriculum.

Montessori students are guided and encouraged from the first day to take an active role in learning through independent study and exploration. These early years are considered sensitive periods where your child is absorbing much of the knowledge that they will carry with them and build successes from, throughout their lifetime.

During this time, your child may feel vulnerable when their progress is being discussed and it is not in your child's best interest to review their efforts and behaviours in their presence. If the teachers feel that they have something to discuss with you, they will ask for a meeting where your child is not present.

Parent Observation Session

The materials and methods used in a Montessori prepared environment are highly specialized and parents often have questions about their application and how they contribute to their child's learning and development. **We welcome parents to**

book a 20 minute observation if you'd like to visit your child's classroom during the Montessori work cycle from end of October onwards.

Please note that the visit will offer a snap shot of what your child's work may be on that day and illustrates their progress in that moment. Teachers will generally only have time to provide a brief overview of your role while you are in the classroom before giving their full attention to the students.

Communication Tools

In addition to your scheduled classroom observation, we offer many opportunities for parents to receive pertinent information:

- **Teachers** - we love to connect with our parent community when we aren't busy guiding your child's Montessori education.
- **Progress reports** - documentation of your child's progress is ongoing in their individual observation files. These documented observations will be discussed during parent/teacher meetings. Parents of third year students will receive a cumulative report of their growth and development at the end of their third year with pure Montessori.
- **Show Me Day**- there will be an opportunity to meet your child's Montessori guides and join your children so that they may show you around their classroom and share some of their favourite works. The teachers will be available to demonstrate presentations of a selection of Montessori materials.
- **Parent-/Teacher Meeting** - parents are invited to sign up for a one on one meeting where we will discuss your child's progress to date. Children will **not** be in attendance and regular school will **not** operate.

Volunteering /Family involvement

There are many opportunities throughout the school year for parents to get involved in their child's Montessori experience. We encourage you to share your special skills, creative talents, cultural expertise, but most of all your time. We value the importance of intergenerational volunteers (grandparents) for our students and invite them to share their knowledge and storytelling skills. Please contact the school Director if you'd like to donate your time or that of a family member.

Enrichment Programs

Each term, We plan for an **in school** enrichment for our students. The planned program will serve to expand on the current curriculum and will be presented by a member of the community. The special talents and skills shared give the children a greater understanding of how a collaborative community functions and highlights future opportunities for their own role in their community. Parents will receive advance notification and will be required to fill out a permission form along with program payment. These programs also provide parent volunteer opportunities.

Discipline and Behaviour Management

Montessori discipline is gentle and respectful. We see behaviour issues when we err on the side of too little or too much freedom. When children are given responsibility and independence, they will grow in self-confidence. They also need to know that they are loved and valued for who they are, and not for their actions or what they have achieved.

The Montessori approach does not punish unacceptable behaviour and we do not offer prizes or rewards for good work or behaviour. We believe that children derive internal satisfaction from their own achievements.

Students at the school learn self-discipline through the enforcement of three simple rules:

- **Respect of Self**
- **Respect of Others**
- **Respect of the Environment**

Children are encountering new emotions every day and require guidance that will provide them with the tools and understanding to express these feelings in ways that are healthy and productive for themselves and the people around them. Our teachers manage behaviour in a non punitive, age appropriate manner. Wherever possible, we will use positive discipline which instructs the child on what they should do rather than what they should not. The students will begin to learn self control by observing the natural consequences of their behaviour. Montessori guides quickly intervene if the solution is beyond the child's resolution abilities and redirect the child to a more productive activity. Effective expressive language and conflict resolution skills are modelled and practiced in the classroom.

Support and Advice

When a child is experiencing behaviour that is repeatedly unmanageable within a group setting, parents are consulted and an individual behaviour plan implemented. We believe that it is vital that we support your child as a collective, with parents and teachers working together to best serve the child at every developmental stage. Parents are instrumental during this process by providing insight and home support that can help with the behaviour challenges. With parental consent, we will seek the consultation and guidance of an outside specialist if your child's behaviour outgrows the classroom. Every effort will be made by the school to work with parents and child to achieve a favourable outcome. As a last resort, the Director may request temporary or permanent withdrawal of the child from the program.

Parent Conduct

Pure Montessori is responsible for protecting the students in our care and for providing a safe workplace for our staff members. All adults present at our school serve as role models for our students. It is critical that, while in our school, parents and caregivers conduct themselves with respectful and rational behaviour at all times.

In our commitment to model life long learning, our school seeks out and welcomes feedback from parents that will assist us in improving our program. However, we will not accept threatening or harassing behaviour regardless of the nature or import of the concern. We expect everyone to treat staff with courtesy

and mutual respect. We reserve the right to immediately terminate the registration of a child whose parent behaves inappropriately.

The following actions will be considered grounds for immediate dismissal (this is not an exhaustive list)

- Acts of violence
- Harassment or threats against students, staff, or other parents
- Possession of illegal substances while on school property
- Verbal or physical abuse of any child
- Profanity

Parent Confidentiality

Parents in our school community have a mutual responsibility to respect the measures put in place to ensure that any observations made during classroom visits, or any information you may hear about a member of our school community, is kept confidential. Please do not request private information from staff about children or their families or about our staff members. If you have a concern about a member of our school community, please arrange a private meeting with the school Director.

Photos and Social Media

We regularly take photos of your children at work, while they are participating in cultural festivities, enrichment programs, and endeavour to share them through our parent portal with your permission granted in your registration package. To that end, we will only use your child's image on our school's social media platforms with receipt of prior consent. Some students in our school cannot have their photos taken and for that reason, photo sharing of a child other than your own outside of the Pure Montessori parent community is not allowed. We ask that you refrain from taking photos or filming during any class visits. You are welcome to take photos of your own child independent of other classmates.

The early years before the age of six are a special time in your child's life where 80% of their mental development is taking place. We are honoured that you have chosen our school to serve your family and we thank you for entrusting us to guide your child's Montessori early education. We believe that with this choice , you have given your child the gift of life long learning.

Welcome to the **Pure Montessori School** Community!

Warmly,

Your Pure Montessori School team