



# Parent Handbook

## 2016-2017

16716 E. U.S. 40 Highway  
Independence, MO 64055

Welcome to Sunrise Montessori Academy of Independence, llc. We are so pleased that you have enrolled your child into our school. We believe you will find our school to be a fun and desirable place for your child. We look forward to getting to know you and your child better while working as partners with you during this early education process.

To help get you better acquainted with our school, we have put together this School Handbook. This information is a collection of the most important items a Sunrise family should know and have access to throughout the year. Please read it, and keep it as a resource. If you have any questions, feel free to let us know. We wish for this to be a positive experience for you and your whole family, so don't hesitate to let us know if you have a question.

The education of your child will require involvement from each of us. It is truly a partnership. Some families may volunteer, others may wish to donate items, or visit our class to share some area of your interest or expertise. The more your child sees you are involved and interested in his/her education, the more s/he will become interested, resulting in success!!

Again, thank you so much for being here with us. Let's have a happy, healthy, and productive year together.

Sincerely,

Sunrise Montessori Academy of Independence owners,

Lori Smart & Stephen Ward

## **Mission Statement:**

**It is our mission to provide a nurturing environment with endless opportunities of exploration and to cultivate within each child a natural desire to learn each and every day throughout their life.**

## **Curriculum**

The core curriculum of Sunrise includes the Montessori Method, Lessons in Living and Global Peace. Together, they weave through all the many varied programs and activities that help children experience and relate to self, society and the universe as a whole. This is the intrinsic fabric of Sunrise. The three components of the core curriculum are integrally related and together form a wheel that guides the entire Sunrise program and the development of the whole child.

## **Montessori Method**

For over a century, the approach pioneered by Maria Montessori, Italian physician and educator, has consistently fostered self-confidence, self-esteem and genuine joy of learning in our young people. In addition, Montessori students develop such important capabilities as a love of order, and appreciation of silence and the ability to make choices.

In Montessori education, it is the process, not the product that is key to learning. From start-up to completion, the student experiences a sequence and chronology of thought, movement and consequence that can be transferred to all areas of life. The Montessori Method provides the groundwork for individual self-awareness and self-appreciation.

Sunrise Montessori provides early education at the Primary level (ages 2 ½ to 5 years old). These children freely explore new areas of interest by experiencing a variety of attractive materials. They work at their own pace during the Montessori work time within the following areas:

## **Practical Life**

The activities offer opportunities for the child to develop practical life skills as well as increasing his/her level of concentration, coordination, independence and sense of order. These skills are developed indirectly while performing the practical life activities such as buttoning, buckling, zipping, tying, sponging, scrubbing, polishing, hammering, drilling, lacing, sewing, etc. These activities are enjoyed by the very young child as they imitate adult-like activities that the child observes those important adults in their life performing.

## **Sensorial**

Sensorial exercises use the senses, including smelling, hearing, tasting, touching, etc. Refinement of the child's senses through matching or grading sights, sounds, textures, temperatures, weight, and many other activities. Concepts include basic geometric shapes and the complete color spectrum. Sensorial offers activities that also assist in mathematical preparation of the mind.

## **Math**

These activities introduce the concept of the base 10 number system, number symbols of the numerical system, mastering concepts of teen and tens, basic addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. Other activities include fractions; skip counting, multiplication, division, and geometry. These skills are practiced using hands on manipulatives which help

children understand these concepts, first very concrete and later applying them in the abstract. The hands on approach of manipulating items that are appealing to the young child such as colorful or golden beads offers children opportunities that have proven to be successful as they work independently on them after being offered a lesson from the teacher.

### **Language**

Activities include matching, pattering, opposites, rhyming, sequencing items by size or color, working with a movable alphabet and sandpaper letters. Reading activities are introduced through a series of phonetic activities. Individual beginning sounds are introduced in a specialized sequence that aid in the development of reading. The sound of each letter is first introduced with objects or pictures that demonstrate that beginning sounds. As one set has been introduced, sorting by beginning sound begins. After a child has successfully sorting a set, some words can be sounded out and increases with each set of letters mastered. Each set of letters includes one vowel and is color coded for easy preparation and set up by the student. Writing is introduced using metal insets along with work to strengthen the hands and tracing sandpaper letters and writing in sand, creating a very natural progression of handwriting development.

### **Cultural Arts**

Multi-cultural studies, geography, botany, zoology and other related topics for understanding our universe are activities found in this area of the Montessori environment. Many language concepts are taught and/or reinforced through the cultural arts activities. This aids in the development of reading while learning interesting information about the world around them.

### **Music/Art**

Freedom of expression through the use of creative materials and musical instruments is promoted within these areas. Students study various artists, forms of art, the use of many art tools and materials and are encouraged to be independently creative.

### **Lessons in Living**

Positive self-esteem and self-confidence are basic factors in helping children discover their own innate qualities as global citizens. In Lessons in Living, children will experience direct activities that identify values and truths that are essential in character development. This program incorporates five major human values: Truth, Right Action, Peace, Love and Nonviolence. These values encompass a developmental vision of human potential. The pursuit of Truth will lead to Right Action; Right Action promotes Peace; Peace enables one to Love; and Love expands into Non-violence.

### **Field trips**

Field trips provide opportunities for the child to expand their knowledge and awareness of the world around them. The Montessori Method is designed to provide learning through experience. We will include field trips to various places throughout the year and/or guest speakers. We will keep you notified about upcoming trips as the field trip time approaches. Often times, we find that guest speakers are able to present experiences for our students here within our school to enhance the educational process and simulate other 'out of school' experiences of field trips without taking students outside of their comfort zone. Annual activity fees support these types of enhancements to our program.

### **Celebrations of Life**

A celebration of life is the method of recognizing the birthdays of individual students. Families and/or students will have the opportunities to share pictures and tell stories about each year

of the child's life. This helps children to become consciously aware of their own self development and demonstrates the concept of time. Children may bring a healthy treat to share with the class during their celebration of life. Let us know if your child's birthday is near.

### **Cultural Celebrations**

We will learn about and celebrate various holidays and cultural celebrations from around the world to assist children in developing an awareness of cultural differences and a respect for them as well. Our goal is not to promote any religion, culture or holidays, but rather to offer students the opportunity to learn about other people from around the world and their traditions so we can better understand people and accept their differences from our own; and celebrate as a part of our educational cultural curriculum. Please let us know if you would like to share cultural traditions with us in our classrooms if you have visited another country or are educated about a particular culture that we are studying.

### **Discipline**

The Sunrise Montessori Academy of Independence considers problem solving as a method of teaching personal responsibility. Children are encouraged to solve their own social problems at the Peace Table by verbally talking about their feelings and using conflict resolution techniques to resolve social issues. Teachers will assist students as needed until they have gained the skills necessary to resolve their own conflicts. This has been noted in studies as one of the positive effects of Montessori education in students with a Montessori background.

Please plan to support our method of discipline by becoming familiar with the terms and strategies used at school and expect your child to have some conflicts with friends at times. Remember that children at this age are most often involved in conflicts with peers whom they are choosing to interact with the most. Demonstrate confidence in your child by suggesting that s/he talk to his/her peer and utilize the peace rose and teachers to assist in this process. It is important to understand that children enter a very social phase around the age of four when they are often obsessed with who their friends are and how they are interacting with them and their feelings regarding their interactions are heightened. This is very normal and last until about the age of six. Suggesting 'not being friends' or 'not playing with that person' is not a helpful solution. Children need to tell you about it just to be heard. Express empathy towards the situation they are facing. Offer a hug. Ask your child how s/he handled it and did they fix the problem while at school. If not, how about asking your child how s/he thinks they could handle the issue. Children are able to resolve conflicts peacefully. We must have faith in them and teachers will always be offering guidance as the child is developing independence. Students need us to allow them to think of solutions. Here at Sunrise, we have a peace curriculum that is presented to every child in every group each and every week. Stories, songs, games and role play activities are presented and practiced in order to allow children to gain independence in this area. If you have a concern, please let your child's teacher know, and we will most certainly follow up on the situation and aid in the solution.

When behaviors that are disruptive, destructive or harmful a teacher will intervene, the child may be removed from group temporarily; Teacher/Director may notify parents if behaviors continue; A conference will be called if notification to parents does not resolve issues; Termination of student may be necessary if behaviors continue to be disruptive, destructive, or harmful. These steps will be followed according to the child's specific behavior; the child's responsiveness; and whether or not harm is being done to others or the environment. Children will not be allowed to threaten, hurt, or to be destructive anyone or anything.

### **Toilet training**

Each student is required to be toilet trained (with the exception of pre-primary) before enrolling into the school. Students are allowed a two week grace period to adjust to a new environment. After two weeks, if a student has more than 3 incidents of urination within a week or 2 incidents of uncontrolled BM, then a child will be asked to stay home until such matters are resolved. We will work with each child/family to resolve these matters the best that we can. It is of utmost importance to us to provide the quality care and education and this type of incident can be quite disruptive and take a great deal of a teacher's time away from the care and education of other students. Students between 2 – 3 ½ that are enrolled in pre-primary are not required to be toilet trained.

### **Personal Care**

Please be sure to send students to school dressed in shoes and clothes that they can manage independently. This should be a practice at home to set children up for success by providing clothing that they can learn to manage, and is required at school. Teachers will assist as needed, however we are always working with children to develop independence as this builds self esteem

### **Outdoor Play**

Each day children have an outdoor playtime as well as outdoor classroom time so long as weather permits. State guidelines will be followed. Students will need to wear jackets, coats, mittens, boots, etc. in order to play outside in various weather conditions. We will go outdoors to get fresh air and exercise every day unless it would pose a health risk to class and/or if it would not be in accordance with Missouri Licensing Regulations. Students should wear tennis shoes for outdoor play rather than sandals and flip flops in order to keep them safe and to better aid them in developing good motor control while playing outdoors. Students will not be allowed to be excluded from outdoor play. If a child is not well enough to play outdoors they are not well enough to attend school according to State of MO licensing guidelines.

### **Physical activity:**

- At least 120 minutes of active playtime each day (*for children enrolled full day*)
- Children will participate in structured physical activities (*teacher-led*) two or more times a day
- Children will participate in outdoor active play two or more times a day (*weather permitting*)
- Television or videos are rarely or never shown in our school and used only to support the educational curriculum.
- A wide variety of portable play equipment available for children to use at the same time.
- Receive training on physical activity (not including playground safety) at least twice per year

### **Lunch and Snacks**

Lunch and snacks will be provided to students each day in the morning. Students will be encouraged to eat the lunches and snacks provided and alternatives will not be available

unless a specific plan is decided upon due to a medical need of a child as recommended by their pediatrician. Students may bring a lunch if required by his/her special diet needs however pop, candy, cake, treats, etc. will not be allowed.

### **Nutrition**

- Drinking water is available at all times for self-serve, both indoors and outdoors
- 100% juice is offered no more than three times a week
- Only skim or 1% milk is served to children as state law requires
- Staff members allow children to decide how much to eat. Children are never forced to eat or to try new foods
- Staff members encourage children to try new or less favorite food but never force them to try new foods or to eat something they do not like
- Staff members join children at the table for meals and snacks
- Staff members consume the same food and drinks as children. Staff member do not consume unhealthy food choices (junk food) in front of children.
- The school displays pictures or posters that support healthy eating
- Staff members receive on-going training on nutrition

### **Toys**

Toys, candy, gum, pets or money need to be kept at home. Students may bring in a personal item on designated share days only and must pertain to the specified subject of share day.

### **Items needed**

All students will need a tote bag to transport his/her blanket that is needed for rest/story time. We will provide sheets, but families should provide a cozy blanket and it should be washed each week. All blankets are required to be brought in tote bags to prevent the spread of germs, head lice, etc. This is mandatory. A spare change of clothing is required in cubby. All students will need rain boots and rain coat for drizzly days that are safe for outdoor play as well as snow gear such as snow pants, boots, hats and gloves to play outdoors when snow is on the ground as long as it is not too cold to go outdoors according to State law.

### **Programs**

The regular school program operates mid-August through May and the summer program operates June through August. School hours are 8:30 am to 3:30 pm, Monday through Friday. See Calendar for holidays and special events. There is no price reduction for holidays since these will be paid holidays for employees. This is a necessary benefit to provide in order to maintain quality staff members within the school. If we do not provide these benefits, teachers will go to a Montessori school that does. Sunrise offers a Half Day Program; Full Day Program; Part Time; Before Care; After Care; Extended Care. Families are free to choose the program that best suits the needs of their family.

### **Tuition**

Tuition is due on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of the month prior to service. A late fee of \$25 will be charged after the 25<sup>th</sup>. If you become faced with a serious situation, please contact us to assist you with a plan before the 22<sup>nd</sup> of the month. Together we will come up with a solution. Otherwise, if tuition is not paid by the 25<sup>th</sup> day prior to the month of service, the student may not be allowed

to attend that month until payment is made. If you are in need of a weekly or bi-monthly payment plan, please let us know. A \$2 fee per payment is assessed to process additional payments since this entails additional work on the part of our accountant. Enrollment fees are due at time of enrollment each year. Activity fees are due with the first month tuition each year. **Thirty days written notice is required before changing schedules or dropping from the program** so that Sunrise will have ample time to contact the next family on the waiting list to enroll. Please plan to submit 30 day written notice and leave in payment box. Please do not send an email notice or verbally notify teachers. Office staff need the written notice, please.

### **Summer Program**

Sunrise offers a year round program to our families. Families have the option to choose an academic year, or a year round enrollment for their child. If a family wishes to have their student drop for the summer program, and return the following academic year, a monthly 'hold fee' is required to ensure a student's space for fall. Likewise, student's must enroll for the summer program no later than February 15<sup>th</sup> in order to ensure a space for summer and a deposit for that space will be required at that time. It is necessary to retain a hold fee to assist us in the process of making all necessary adjustments to accommodate the needs of the program. Families making a commitment to us, just as we make a commitment to each of them are a very important part of this process and aid in effective planning. If your child drops or reduces schedule for either June or July, a \$50 per month hold fee will be required. Sunrise does not pro-rate during summer months for vacation time.

### **After Care/Extended Care**

**Morning Care** is available in the mornings from **7:00am to 8:30 am**. **After Care** is available in the evenings from **3:30pm to 5:00pm**. **Extended Care** is also available from **5:00pm to 6:00pm**. Students arriving before 8:00am or being picked up after 4:00pm will need to be enrolled in one of these programs even if it is only for a portion of the time. A late pick up fee of \$1 per minute will be charged for students picked up after 4:00pm unless they are enrolled in after care. Children in attendance after 5:00pm will need to be enrolled in Extended Care even if only for a portion of this hour so that we may staff accordingly. The late fee is \$1 per minute, per child. An additional late fee of \$2 per minute will be charged after 6:30pm. Late Pick up fees must be paid directly to the closing teacher at the time of pick up after 6:00 pm. There is a \$10 drop in rate for students needing occasional after care as long as it is scheduled in writing and in advance, so long as space allows for an additional child so that the school does not exceed ratio guidelines as set forth by our policy and the State of Missouri. If a child is not picked up on time, parents will be called and if they are not reached, persons from the emergency contact list will be contacted to have the person assist in contacting parents or pick up the child. If parents or emergency contacts are not located by 7:00pm, DFS and/or police will be notified.

### **Sign In/ Sign Out**

Students must be signed in and out each and every day of attendance. Please call or email message teachers via Montessori Compass **no later than 8:30** to notify school that a student will not be in attendance that day. It is very important that we know who will be in attendance each day so we can plan accordingly. After signing your child in, please say a quick good-bye and part ways. We can assure you that prolonging your departure only makes separation more difficult for your child. If a child continues to be upset for a prolonged amount of time and cannot be consoled, we **will** notify you.

After signing your child out each day, check cubby or mailbox for items needing to go home and the news board for important notes. We promise to provide communication and we need you to do your part by taking time to read important information and relay important info to us. There is a 'notes to teachers' clipboard in the entryway near the NEWS bulletin board.

### **Tardy Policy/Early Pick up Policy**

Class begins at 8:30am. We encourage children to be dropped off between 8:00am and 8:15 in order to allow a time for socialization. We ask that you call to let us know if you will be later than 15 minutes for any reason. It is very important that children come to school **on time** each and every day, for their own benefit but also out of respect for the others students and in order to not be disruptive to the class. If your child is late, please sign them in, and quickly leave them with the teacher assisting you. The teachers will all be needed to attend to the class during the academic time. If continued tardiness continues to be a problem, parents will be notified and a conference may be called if problem is not corrected within a timely manner. Likewise, it is also very important that children be picked up at 3:30 and not ten or fifteen minutes early unless required for a specific reason on occasion so that the afternoon academic time will not be interrupted.

### **Sickness, Accidents, and Medication Issues**

As in any school, children are likely to come into contact with germs associated with contagious illnesses such as the common cold, flu, etc. However, we will do our best to prevent the spread of contagious illness by keeping things sanitized and preventing sick children to come into contact with the other children. Children who are visibly ill, running a temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit by mouth or 99 degrees Fahrenheit under the arm, coughing consistently or uncontrollably, vomiting, have a rash, pink or red eyes with or without discharge or are experiencing diarrhea cannot be allowed at school. Children must be fever free and clear of other contagious symptoms for at least **24 HOURS** before returning to school or have a doctor's note stating the child is not contagious and should be allowed in school according to the Health Department guidelines. There is not a reduction in tuition for sick children as we will still be required to be prepared to provide the necessary staffing/teachers, snacks and lunches regardless of attendance.

If your child becomes sick or has an accident, we will attempt to contact the parents, and then emergency contacts listed. It is vitally important that you notify us in any changes in phone numbers, addresses or places of employment so that we may get in contact with you in case of an emergency. The Staff of Sunrise Montessori Academy of Independence will not be allowed to administer ANY medication (non-prescription or prescription) without the written request of a parent or doctor. Please make every attempt to administer medication at home. Food Allergies or Asthma patients will require an action plan from the doctor on file prior to enrollment.

Sunrise will follow the exclusion and re-entry guidelines listed in Prevention and Control of Communicable Diseases manual from the Department of Health and Senior Services.

### **Medication Administration**

Only employees trained with certification on medication administration will administer medication to any student. The required form by state must be completed by a parent.

Child-resistant container; Original prescription or manufacturer's label with the name and strength of the medicine; Name of child on container is correct (first and last names); Current date on prescription/expiration label covers period when medicine given  
Name and phone number of licensed health care professional who ordered medicine is on container or on file; Copy of Child Health Record is on file; Instructions are clear for dose, route, and time to give medicine; Instructions are clear for storage (eg, temperature) and medicine has been safely stored; Child has had a previous trial dose (NO FIRST DOSES AT SCHOOL); Is this a controlled substance? If yes, special storage and log may be needed.

All medications must be kept in medication cabinet or office refrigerator, not backpack or cubby. Sunscreen, Vaseline and other topical non-medicated creams and ointments require written parental consent.

### **School Closings**

We will make every effort to keep the school open during the various weather conditions of Missouri. However, if we believe that the safety of our students or staff will be jeopardized in effort to get to the school, we may on occasion find the need to close. We will not make our decision based on the school districts, rather the reports of Mo Dot officials and local authorities and news reports. We will possibly have a 'Late Start' in order to allow staff more time to get to school so that we can provide the needed service of care and education. We will post this on the local news station, Chanel 4 News if needed or send out email/Montessori Compass notifications and Facebook post. In the event that severe weather occurs during the school day, we may need to close early in order to allow everyone time to get home in a safe and timely manner. There is no reduction in tuition in these circumstances. Again, we will make every effort to remain open unless it poses to great of a risk for students, families and staff to commute to school.

### **Participation**

All families are encouraged to participate throughout the year. Participation is an important part of the education process. Your involvement demonstrates to your child your interest in his/ her educational activities and therefore promotes a higher level of interest on his/her part. Participation could include: sharing with the class a special skill or experience; participating in special events at the school by attending and/or bringing an item; assisting with the garden or outdoor classroom; signing up to bring a special item; assisting with field trip, etc. We strongly encourage participation in an effort to create a meaningful, successful experience for your child. A background check is required in order to assist in the classroom or on a field trip.

### **Supplies**

Each year school supplies will be requested at the beginning of the school year, and possibly a modified list at the beginning of summer session. Please be sure to bring in your school supplies the week before school begins on or before the designated day so that supplies may be organized and put away before class time begins on the first day of school.

### **Items you should plan to bring**

- Spare clothing labeled and inside of gallon sized ziplock bag
- Blanket
- Slippers (indoor shoes)
- Rain gear on rain days required including rain boots and coat

- Snow gear on snowy days including snow pants and snow boots

### **Required for Enrollment**

- Enrollment Application (indicating academic year or academic plus summer)
- Financial Agreement
- Medical Exam/ Immunization Records
- Health History
- Asthma Action Plan (If needed) and/or food Allergy Action Plan
- Field Trip Permission/ Photo Release

### **Items you should Receive**

- Parent Handbook (copy available on our website [www.thesunrisemontessori.com](http://www.thesunrisemontessori.com) & printed copies available in the office)
- School Year Calendar
- Supply List

If you did not receive any of these items, please contact us immediately so that we may get them to you as soon as possible.

We thank you again for choosing Sunrise Montessori Academy for your child's early education. We can assure you that we will provide a quality education, a genuine Montessori experience with authentic Montessori materials and trained assistants, interns working under the direction of certified Montessori teachers. We believe that every child should begin their lives with self directed learning through exploration of a fully prepared environment and trained educators to guide them through that experience. It is our commitment to you, your family and your child. We look forward to partnering with you this upcoming year!

### **Poison Control Policy:**

Children are naturally curious and are unaware about what substances may be harmful to their health. Adult caregivers are responsible for safeguarding children from harmful items including medications, plants, chemicals, animal waste and personal items such as purses, bags, etc... ALL staff, parent or volunteer purses and personal belongings will be securely stored to prevent access by children.

The Poison Control Center phone number will be posted on the list of emergency numbers by the telephone. Poison emergencies or requests for poison information will be made by contacting the Poison Control Center Hotline at 1-800-222-1222 first – unless the person who has been poisoned is unconscious, not breathing, having trouble breathing or is having convulsions. If any of these conditions are present, CALL 9-1-1 FIRST

### **Educational Support**

It is the responsibility of each family to register with Montessori Compass, our record keeping software that also provides a parent communication portal. Important information will be provided through the Montessori Compass portal. It is the responsibility of each family to log in each evening to check on the schedule, messages and reports that will be sent via email. You will receive an email inviting you to login to review your messages or your child's report that will contain information about your child's activities that week as well as teacher notes regarding your child. It is also the responsibility of each parent to read the newsletters too.