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SECTION I: SCHOOL AND PROGRAM INFORMATION

Introduction

Welcome to Lighthouse Montessori School! The *Parent Handbook* has been developed to provide you with the basic guidelines for policies and procedures to follow while your child attends Lighthouse Montessori. This is not a contract of attendance and is for informational purposes only, so the policies may be adjusted as necessary. We will seek to keep you advised of any changes through email, and posted notices of revised Handbook pages.

Please take time to familiarize yourself with these policies and procedures. Full copies of Lighthouse Montessori School's policies, including the Pesticide Policy, Health Policy and the Emergency Preparedness Plan are available upon request and through Transparent Classroom. If you have questions about them, or any issue, ask the Head of School and Lighthouse Montessori will endeavor to answer those questions in a timely manner. We believe that each family contributes directly to the success of the school and we value your input. We take pride in having you as a member of our community.

Our Mission

To nurture the love of learning & compassion in every child.

That's it. Short and sweet. This simple mantra shapes everything we do.

The Montessori Approach

Dr. Maria Montessori viewed education as an aid to life. Her years of observing children of all ages allowed her to create an environment where children master inner construction as they progress from childhood to maturity. The Montessori method is based on the child's natural progression through the planes of development, encouraging the child to engage in spontaneous and meaningful work. A challenging and nurturing environment allows the child to develop positive self-discipline, and a sense of social community and a life-long love of work.

Characteristics of the Developing Child

Through her scientific observation of children, Dr. Montessori discovered the characteristics of the developing child. These characteristics were a genuine revelation in her day and remain largely unrecognized even today.

Love of Order - This extends itself to minute particulars and is expressed in an intense love of the environment and the desire to preserve the order in it. The intellect is the principle of order, so that the child's internal order goes to meet the external order.

Love of Work - Work in this sense means any activity with a purpose, involving the child's whole personality. In the primary environment, the child uses their hands and concrete materials to accomplish work. The child's love of work has an unconscious aim at the construction of personality and is a form of self-expression that brings a corresponding joy. It is true creativity.

Profound Spontaneous Concentration - This is a biological phenomenon. It is the child constructing him/her self through contact with the outside world. Concentration is unmistakable, characterized by an intense interest and repetition in the child's work.

Attachment to Reality - The mind constructs itself through contact with reality, not make-believe. Contact with the real external world forms the foundation, taken in by the senses, and results in great imagination.

Love of Silence and Working Alone - This does not mean that the child likes solitude, but rather enjoys the psychological isolation which is the result of concentration. As the child progresses through later planes of development, she will more frequently work together in spontaneously formed groups.

Sublimation of the Possessive Instinct - Children love the environment enthusiastically, and their aim is not possession, but use. Their interest in any object leads them to a stage where it is no longer the object, but the knowledge of it, which fixes the attention.

Power to Act From Real Choice and Not From Whims - It is not "doing as you please", but doing what you really want to do.

Spontaneous Self-Discipline - This is one of the features that usually surprises visitors when they see a Montessori School for the first time. Discipline and freedom cannot be separated; they are opposite sides of the same coin.

Obedience - This is not blind obedience or submission to stronger will, but the recognition of freedom and discipline. The Montessori child shows obedience through having the self-discipline to respect the free will of others. To carry out the command of another now becomes a joyful exercise of the will.

Independence and Initiative - The child should acquire as much independence as possible at each stage of development. In a class of developing children there will be much mutual aid, and the children will understand and sense how much aid should be given to one another.

Joy - The children form a cohesive community and share wordlessly the pleasures of development. It is more than the pleasure of being entertained. It is the joy that nature always grants as the accompaniment to the right use of the laws of our own nature.

Planes of Development

As children age, Dr. Montessori observed, they show characteristics of their Plane of Development. Each Plane is a span of six years with physical and psychological components. Each Plane of Development has powers that motivate behavior, lead to self-

construction, and have special needs from the environment. Successful work in one Plane is essential for subsequent Planes. For optimal development to occur in a given Plane, three conditions are necessary: 1) An environment which is adapted to the needs and tasks of that Plane. 2) Liberty to act in that environment towards self-construction. 3) A linking adult - who prepares that environment while guiding and facilitating activity within it.

First Plane: Birth to 6 years Creation of the Psychic Being/Formation of the Individual

<i>Powers</i>	Absorbent Mind, Sensitive Periods
<i>Characteristics</i>	Learns through unconscious absorption, concrete manipulation, and sensorial exploration
<i>Needs</i>	Physiological and psychological nurture and protection, Primary environment with a consistent caregiver, Safety, security and order with consistency, Physically and socially limited environment, Opportunities for sensorial exploration and social interaction with families and friends, Opportunities to observe and absorb the elements of material and social culture, Liberty to move and manipulate objects, Exposure to language, Opportunities to explore with all five senses, Opportunities for communication, Opportunities to develop the skills for functional independence.
<i>Creations/Tasks</i>	Functional independence, Coordination of movement, Intellect, Mental classifications, Cultural adaptation, Will, Neuro-psychological growth, Language, Refined sensorial perceptions, Points of consciousness, Sociability, Capacity for obedience.

Second Plane: 6 to 12 years Development of the Individual/Acquisition of Culture

<i>Powers</i>	Reasoning and Imagination
<i>Characteristics</i>	Conscious learning through intellectual exploration, Felt need to escape the closed environment, Passage of the mind to the abstract, Birth of a moral sense, Intellectual exploration
<i>Needs</i>	Security of home and family, Movement out into the world, Social interaction with a peer group, Opportunities to explore all aspects of the natural world including human tendencies, Concrete materials as a basis for abstract studies, Physical exercise tied to purposeful activity, Collaborative work, Opportunities to explore roles in a fixed society along with ethics and morality, Ideal exemplars of behavior and achievement, Excellent and trustworthy role models

<i>Creations/Tasks</i>	Intellectual independence, Physical strength, Mental stability, Love of the abstract, Vivid imagination, Gregariousness, Relationship with peers, Valid sense of justice and morality, Conscience, Understanding of the universe, Ecological awareness
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Third Plane: 12 to 18 years *Formation of the Socially Conscious Individual/Search for One's Place in Society*

<i>Powers</i>	Physical – The Sexual Transformation Psychological – Exploration and Experimentation
<i>Characteristics</i>	Physical and hormonal changes of puberty, Physical instability, Mental instability, Lessened intellectual capacity, A “social newborn” – the end of childhood and formation of the adult, Humanistic exploration of humanity and all aspects of human social life
<i>Needs</i>	Opportunities to explore all aspects of interpersonal relationships, Opportunity to make a meaningful contribution to society, Exploration of a wide variety of economic contribution occupations, Real-world hands-on opportunities, Economic experience of earning and managing just compensation for labor, A self-sustaining environment of peers apart from the family, Adult guidance for exploration, Opportunity to construct personal validation through work and direct experience, Opportunities for physical activity, Opportunities for restful calm – processing, integration, reflection
<i>Creation</i>	Emotional independence, Understanding of human behavior, Abstract love of humankind, Ability to create and orient self in human society, Philosophical ideals

The Prepared Environment

The classroom at Lighthouse Montessori School follows Dr. Maria Montessori's guidelines for the creation of a beautiful and prepared work environment that inspires the child's natural tendency to work. The Prepared Environment is not a carbon copy – it is a unique, thought-out environment that can change and will evolve over time. It takes us into the real world and is designed for a particular kind of work that matches the natural interests of the child at a particular stage in life and in growth. Some common elements of any Montessori Prepared Environment are to assist, nurture, and protect development, and to ensure that each individual has the liberty to follow their natural course.

Characteristics of the Primary Prepared Environment

The working materials here have been used for many years, in many cultures, so we can truly say that the children have chosen them. The room is clean and orderly. Each object

has its place on the shelves and remains there unless in use. The environment is completely proportionate to the size of the children. It is simple, limited, and comfortable. Everything is within reach. There is a teacher, well trained and cheerful, ready to put the children in contact with the material that has so much power.

Children enter the classroom with lessons in Practical Life: pouring, washing, polishing, and sweeping, to practice hand coordination and to practice the activities of real life. These give tremendous satisfaction and will carry over at home. In addition, the Primary Prepared Environment includes Sensorial Materials, designed to refine the senses. At this age the senses are especially keen; it is the time when the artist's eye and the musician's ear are developed. The materials are not designed to give new experiences, but to refine the sensory impressions they already have. The children study sizes, shapes and colors, learn their names and how to compare them.

In addition to Practical Life and Sensorial Materials, the Primary Prepared Environment has materials to enhance understanding of Language, Mathematics, Science, Geography, Music and Art. As children move through the classroom, they may choose to work with a puzzle map or models of land forms, play the bells or walk on the line, trace metal insets or manipulate materials that sink and those that float. For language, children may choose nomenclature cards, sandpaper letters, and the moveable alphabet. For mathematics, the child has the opportunity to count with the spindle box or use the golden beads to explore the decimal system up to the thousands. The Primary environment has been created with concrete materials that the children may manipulate with their hands and minds.

SECTION II: GENERAL INFORMATION

Admission and Enrollment Procedures

Lighthouse Montessori School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, religion, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin in admission or hiring policies. In its hiring practices the school will further not discriminate on the basis of age or economic status. Lighthouse Montessori follows all ADA requirements.

Lighthouse Montessori does not support any one denomination or religion.

Parents of children interested in enrollment may email the school at info@lighthousemontessori.com to obtain information about Lighthouse Montessori School. An appointment is scheduled for a classroom observation, an opportunity to see the facilities, and an interview with the head of the school. To register, the application, immunization status form, contract and registration deposit must be complete and returned to the school.

Enrollment Procedures

Children are enrolled in the Primary at about age 2 ½ to 3 ½. It is highly recommended that children be toilet trained before enrolling. Children will be assisted in do toileting, if

they require assistance. Enrollment for children over age 4 is determined by spaces available, balance of ages and genders as well as an interview with parents and a visit by the child to the classroom.

Re-enrollment

Re-enrollment for the next school year is done annually in March. Current families will receive a contract and will be asked to return it, along with a re-enrollment fee of \$500 to hold their place for the upcoming school year. The re-enrollment fee is non-refundable and will be applied to the final Kindergarten year. Updated health and identification information is due prior to the beginning of school in September. Siblings are enrolled at the time of re-enrollment and have priority over new students entering the school.

Withdrawal

Enrollment is for the entire school year. A one month written notice is required before withdrawing your child, as well as your tuition contract responsibility.

A child may be asked to withdraw if the school cannot meet the needs of the child or if the behavior of the child continuously disrupts the class such that the needs of the other students cannot be adequately addressed. If a question arises as to whether a child can function successfully in the school, the parents, teacher and head of school will hold a conference to discuss ways in which the needs of the child might best be met. A trial period in which to work through the situation will be determined. At the end of the trial period the parents, teacher, and head of school will again confer and come to a decision.

If a parent engages in behavior that is destructive, disruptive or undermining to the school environment, to the children or staff, the family may be asked to withdraw their child from the school.

Multi-year Commitment

Lighthouse Montessori's Primary program is a three – four year curriculum, and includes the kindergarten year. We ask all parents and guardians, to the best of their knowledge, to commit to this cycle, leading up to 1st Grade. To support our community in this decision, Lighthouse Montessori School will give a \$100 / month discount during the kindergarten year. If you choose to withdraw your child prior to the kindergarten year siblings will not have priority to other new students when enrolling for the next contract year.

Financial Aid & Scholarship Policy

Lighthouse Montessori wishes to offer scholarships and financial help to students and their families who could not otherwise attend the Primary program. The school intends to start these programs. Your financial support and donations will go to these programs.

Scheduled School Closures

A school calendar may be found on Transparent Classroom.

School holidays, when possible, will coincide with those of Seattle Public Schools. The classroom will be closed on legal holidays, 6 in-service days, eight days the last two weeks in December, and 5 days during the 4th of July or the week before the 4th of July if the 4th of July falls on a weekend.

School may close due to snow conditions. “No school” or delay announcements will be made via email.

Unexpected School Closures & Inclement Weather Policy

School may close due to inclement weather. Lighthouse Montessori School follows Seattle Public Schools closures and late starts in relation to weather. An effort will be made to open the school for childcare on closure days if there is staff that can safely get to the school. Due to the licensing requirement of the ratio of 1 Adult to 10 children, space may be limited on these days. Hours may be limited at these times as well due to the importance of keeping all individuals connected to Lighthouse safe. If it is not safe a staff member to transport themselves to Lighthouse, then the school will remain closed. No school, delay announcements and unexpected early dismissal will be made via email. If school is delayed in opening, all classes will begin at 10:00a.m. If the school is forced to close early, families will be contacted immediately. Every family is encouraged to have an emergency plan in place in the event of school closure so each child may be picked up quickly. It is the practice of Lighthouse Montessori to provide the most comfort possible in an emergency situation. There is a copy of the Emergency Preparedness Plan on Transparent Classroom for families to read.

Contagious Disease/Pandemic Flu Policy

When a contagious disease and/or pandemic flu is announced in our area Lighthouse will follow and/or put into place the following:

- Wash hands well and often
- Remind parents/guardians that emergency contact information and immunization forms must be current and complete
- Enforce exclusion policies for children and staff - insist that sick children and staff stay home or go home
- Keep ill children away from well children while they are waiting to go home
- Maintain accurate and up-to-date illness logs for staff and children
- Close classroom as necessary due to staff illness in order to maintain safe ratios
- Reinforce teaching about good respiratory etiquette:

- Use a tissue (or and elbow or sleeve, in a pinch) to catch a sneeze or cough
- Throw used tissues into a hands-free trash can
- Wash your hands after using a tissue or coming in contact with a sick person
- Head of School will monitor local and state Public Health websites and other news media for current pandemic flu status information, recommendations and instructions
- If required, Head of School will contact the local health department and licensor to report the situation
- Head of School will submit illness logs at the earliest opportunity; illness logs are available in the school office
- Head of School will keep parents informed about the situation

SECTION III: GENERAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Lighthouse Montessori School is licensed by the state of Washington as a childcare and educational facility. Full copies of Lighthouse Montessori School's classroom curriculum and policies; including the Pesticide Policy, Health Policy and the Emergency Preparedness Plan, are available on Transparent Classroom. If you have questions about them, ask the Head of School and Lighthouse Montessori will endeavor to answer those questions in a timely manner.

Staffing Requirements

All staff members at Lighthouse Montessori School are interviewed, hired and trained in compliance with the guidelines set by the state of Washington. The staff members at Lighthouse Montessori are aware of state policy, have training and/or schooling in education and childcare, have undergone a TB test and are certified in CPR, first aid, and blood borne pathogens. It is the policy of Lighthouse Montessori School to facilitate staff and child relations that are nurturing, responsive, supportive and respectful, encouraging creativity and independence in the student.

Head of the School

The Head of Lighthouse Montessori School has experience working with children aged 2 ½ to 6 years old. She is Montessori trained and educated in childhood development. The Head of Lighthouse Montessori School is responsible for overseeing and implementing the programs at the school. The Head of School has the ability to appoint another staff person in charge during her absence, and also serves as staff in the classroom.

Lead Co-Teachers in a Classroom

All lead teachers at Lighthouse Montessori School have extensive childcare and education experience through training in Montessori and/or post-secondary education.

Assistants in the Classroom

Assistants are trained by Lighthouse Montessori and are supervised by the lead co-teachers in the classroom.

Daily Schedule and Hours of Operation

It is essential for children to be dropped-off and picked-up on time.

Parents, or another person authorized by the parent to take the child to or from school, shall sign in the child on arrival and shall sign out the child at dismissal daily, using Transparent Classroom.

7:30 – 8:45 a.m.	Children arrive in the classroom and are signed in by their parents. Children may eat breakfast and attend to their physical needs such as brushing their hair or teeth.
8:45 – 11:45 a.m.	Teachers and assistants give individual and group lessons to students. The remainder of the children have uninterrupted activity time with Montessori materials. Children have individual snack. The class participates in a small group activities (singing, reading, games) and outdoor play.
11:45 – 12:30 p.m.	Children staying at school eat lunch
12:30 – 3:30 p.m.	Children who nap may take a rest. Remaining children have an afternoon work period with the Montessori materials. Teachers give individual and group lessons.
3:30 p.m.	Extended Day children are dismissed from school and signed out by parents.
3:30 – 6:00 p.m	Nappers are all awake. Teachers and assistants assist children in small group activities and outdoor play. Children are picked-up and signed out by their parents.

A \$25.00 late fee will be charged daily for any child picked up from school after the scheduled pick-up time.

Attendance

Lighthouse Montessori School asks that all children are dropped off at the school by 8:45 am. It is very disrupting to the classroom environment when a child enters late. In addition, a child will have a difficult time adjusting to the classroom community if they are often late or absent. If your child will be arriving late or leaving early, please notify us beforehand. Parents are asked to call or email the school office prior to 8:00 a.m. to notify the teachers when a student will be absent from school.

Child Care

Drop-in childcare is not available. Assistants at Lighthouse Montessori School may make themselves available for baby-sitting outside of school hours. Please be aware that when hiring a Lighthouse Montessori assistant, Lighthouse Montessori School is not responsible or liable for any outside of school activity.

Meals and Snacks

Lunch

The school does not provide daily meals. Each child should bring a box lunch. We encourage good nutrition and would appreciate your cooperation in sending nutritious lunches. Basic to a nutritious meal is eating a variety of foods from the basic food groups: protein, grains, fruits, and vegetables. Fruits are the preferred choice for desserts.

As your child is gaining independence we ask that you invite him/her to participate in preparing the lunch. By giving a few choices of foods in each group and providing containers and supplies for making the lunch, the child will take great pleasure in this daily routine.

Lunch is a special time for the children to socialize. At school the children will have a tablecloth, silverware, a cup, and a plate. The school cannot reheat any lunch food, as this is violating of our licensing requirements. Please plan accordingly and pack hot food in insulated containers.

Uneaten portions of food will be sent home in the child's lunch box. This may indicate too much food and you can then adjust the quantity of food to meet your child's appetite. Trust your child to eat the amount that they desire. If the child chooses to not eat all of their lunch, they will always be given the opportunity to eat more later on in the day.

Classroom Snack

Snacks are served each morning, afternoon and late afternoon. The School provides snack food for the entire class. A snack schedule will be posted near the entrance door to the school and on Transparent Classroom. Snacks are served between 9:00 and 11:00a.m., and between 1:30 and 3:30p.m, and again at 5:00. Snacks will be prepared from nutritious foods from at least two food groups.

Lighthouse Montessori School is unable to serve any snack that is homemade or not in its original package.

Food Allergies

It is the responsibility of the parent to alert the school of any food allergies that their child may have. Children's allergies will be posted in the location where food is prepared. Parents should provide or suggest an alternative to foods that their child is allergic to.

Written directions from the child's health care provider must be presented for children who require nutritional supplements (such as iron) or are on a medically modified diet (such as a diabetic or an allergy diet).

Student Health

For each child we keep up-to-date health information including the last physical examination, immunization records, and consent for emergency care.

Staff and Child Illness Exemption

Lighthouse Montessori School must exempt children and staff from attendance if the following symptoms occur:

1. Diarrhea (three or more watery stools or one bloody stool within 24 hours)
2. Vomiting (two or more times within 24 hours)
3. Open or oozing sores, unless properly covered with bandages
4. Suspected communicable skin infections such as pink eye, impetigo, and scabies. Children may return 24 hours after the start of antibiotic treatment.
5. A fever of 100° Fahrenheit or higher and also one or more of the following:
 - Earache
 - Headache
 - Sore Throat
 - Rash
 - Fatigue that prevents regular activities

Please keep your child home from school if they show any of the symptoms above.

Injury and Illness Policy

Children who show signs of illness will have their temperature taken. If an injury or illness should occur at school, the incident and treatment will be recorded on an incident report form and the parent will be notified through Transparent Classroom. Parents will be notified in writing when their children have been exposed to infectious diseases or parasites. Notification may either be in a letter given to each parent, or will be posted in a visible location.

Administration of Medications

All medications must be in the original container and accompanied by a completed form, available in each classroom. The information on the form includes:

6. Child's first and last name
7. Name of the medication
8. Reason for giving the medication
9. Amount of medication to give
10. Start and stop dates
11. Expected side effects
12. How to store medications.

The parental consent form is good for the number of days stated on the medication bottle for prescriptions. The following medications may be administered with a parent's consent and is subject to the discretion of the staff:

13. Antihistamines
14. Non-aspirin fever reducers/pain relievers
15. Non-narcotic cough suppressants
16. Decongestants
17. Ointments or lotions for itchy or dry skin
18. Sunscreen

All other medications, including vitamins, herbal supplements and fluoride must be accompanied by a consent form from the child's health care provider. Medications will be stored according the package directions with the child's name in a container that is inaccessible to children. Consent from the child's health care provider is required to administer medication beyond the recommended dosage. Unused medications will be returned to the parents or properly disposed of.

Emergency Procedures

1. Life threatening emergencies
 - a. One staff member stays with injured/ill child
 - b. One staff member calls 911
 - c. Parent is contacted or other names listed on application if parent is unreachable
2. Minor emergencies
 - a. Staff member trained in first aid takes appropriate steps
 - b. Record incident on class accident report
 - c. Report incident to parent within one hour
3. If parents cannot be contacted
 - a. Call emergency numbers
 - b. Call family doctor

Please make sure that your file is continuously updated with any changes so Lighthouse Montessori staff is able to contact you in the event of an emergency. A full copy of the Emergency Preparedness Plan is available via Transparent Classroom.

Immunizations

The State of Washington requires that all children's immunizations be up to date and current records be on file at the school. Medical, religious and personal exemptions must be stated on the form and signed by the parent. Please notify the school whenever your child is given an up-dated immunization so your child's records can be kept current.

Children's Bedding

A crib sheet and blanket must be provided from home for all children who nap or rest at school. These bedding items will be sent home every Friday to be laundered and returned on Monday. Providing a re-useable bag to send them home in is appreciated, as it will dramatically reduce waste.

School Field Trips and Outings

Walking field trips are taken throughout the school year. A walk to a nearby park or through the neighborhood is thoroughly enjoyed by the children.

Options for the Lighthouse Montessori student community to meet up at various locations accompanied by their parents will be organized by the school throughout the year through the Social and Support Committee. These outings are completely optional. Lighthouse Montessori is not responsible for loss, damage, or injury that occurs on these outings.

Discipline

The goal of the school community is that it functions as a community with each individual respectful of the needs and rights of one another. The basic ground rules of the school are that no child may hurt another in any way and no child is to interfere with the work of another. Lighthouse Montessori School monitors behavior while being aware of the student's individual needs and current stage of development. Children are taught socially appropriate behavior, self-control and respect for others in order to avoid incidents while attending school.

If an individual cannot work within these limits at any time or is acting in a way which is disruptive to the rest of the group, he/she will be asked to work in an area where the disruptive behavior cannot continue until he/she feels ready to re-join the group. If the behavior persists the child may be asked to leave the classroom and if necessary the child's parents may be called to take the child from school. Reoccurring inappropriate behavior will result in a conference with parents, teachers and head of school.

Lighthouse Montessori School prohibits any individual on the premises from engaging in corporal punishment, verbal abuse, physical restraint, or withholding of food or liquid.

No student of Lighthouse Montessori School will be subjected to any form of these while in school. All other discipline related incidents will result in a full report to be placed in the child's file and given to the parent.

Child Abuse and Reporting

Lighthouse Montessori School is required by law to immediately report any suspicious occurrences of physical, sexual, or emotional child abuse, child neglect, or child exploitation by telephone to Child Protective Services or local law enforcement.

SECTION IV: PARENT EXPECTATIONS AND GUIDELINES

Lighthouse Montessori School strives to create a strong community between the students, staff and parents. To accomplish this, we ask that the parents stay active in the school and their child's education through observation, conferencing, volunteering and giving. In addition, we encourage parents to study the Montessori philosophy and to learn how they are able to bring Montessori into the home. When parents follow these guidelines, children see the parent as interested and active in their life and community.

Parent Observations

Parents are encouraged to make at least two observations or visits to your child's class during the school year, but are welcome to observe at any time. Observation is an important teaching tool in a Montessori classroom and is the most beneficial way for parents to understand their child's day. Scheduling a classroom observation prior to a conference with your child's teacher will provide insight to the parents, therefore leading to a more meaningful conference. To make an appointment for an observation please email the school office at info@lighthousemontessori.com

Parent Conferences

Parent/Teacher Conferences are designed for discussion regarding the time that each child spends in the classroom. Conferences are for the parents and teachers only, and children should not attend. Lighthouse Montessori School schedules two conference sessions per school year: in the fall and in the spring. Conferences will occur over two days. Parents must schedule their half-hour conference with the teacher's posted schedule or arrange a separate time with the teacher.

Parent Education Evenings

Lighthouse Montessori School hosts parent education evenings and two open houses for children to share with their parents the works they know throughout the year. These are times for parents to come into the classroom, learn about the Montessori curriculum and meet other members of the community. In addition, these times are designed to teach our

parents about the Montessori method and specialty topics such as the independent child, nutrition, and media. All Lighthouse Montessori parents are asked to attend half of the offered parent education nights, but are welcome to attend all if able.

School and Family Communications

Lighthouse Montessori School encourages many forms of communication between the school and the families that attend.

Parents will be given a way to sign into an online account or use the school iPad, while at the school, to look at their child's individual records and pictures of their child via our electronic record keeping system. Parents may also sign up to receive pictures of their child as multimedia text messages to their phones.

Families at Lighthouse Montessori are encouraged to maintain constant communication with the school. Parents and other family members are always welcome to contact the main office with any questions or concerns. Teachers may be contacted via phone, email, or notes left in the classroom.

Volunteering at Lighthouse Montessori School

Volunteering is essential for the school, and helps to maintain a beautiful environment and strong community. This can be done in many ways – school beautification, material making, event planning, to name a few. Families will be contacted as volunteer opportunities arrive via email. Families are also encouraged to offer any special skills, such as playing an instrument, dancing, cooking, a cultural activity, etc., to bring into the classroom.

Before coming into the classroom as a volunteer, we ask that parents and family members either attend a parent education session on being an adult in the Montessori Prepared Environment or speak with the Head of School to receive individual training. We believe that knowing the adult's role in the Prepared Environment will make our volunteers comfortable and bring the most benefit to the children.

Annual Giving

Annual Giving is necessary to maintain the high standards of Lighthouse Montessori. Annual Giving is a way of supplementing the operational budget by means of a tax deductible, charitable gift, and keeps our tuition reasonable for all members of our community.

We expect every family to help either through tax deductible direct donations, school fundraisers, or outside fundraising. Many employers will contribute to Lighthouse Montessori's Annual Giving by means of corporate matching. Please ask your employer if they would match your donation. Our goal for the year averages out to one month's tuition per household.

Montessori At Home

Parents of Lighthouse Montessori School continually ask, “What can we do at home? How can we assist in our child’s Montessori experience?” First of all, *enjoy your children*, they are one of life’s greatest gifts. Share your home with them, teach your child about everything that you enjoy. As they age, continue to share more and more of life’s experiences and simple tasks with them. Help them to gain independence as they progress through the planes of development.

“Help me to do it myself” is the theme song of the child all the way through adolescence. It is so strong that it is the source of many parent-child conflicts. Help the child to be as independent as possible in care of the person, care of the home, doing for others. Dr. Montessori stressed that the greatest obstacles to development is the well-meaning, over-helpful adult. Remember, “Every useless aid prevents development.”

The Primary Child

Children under 6 have a heightened sensitivity to shape, size, color, taste, hearing, etc. They respond strongly to the order and decor of your home with their powerful absorbent minds. Play music you enjoy, show them the art objects you appreciate. Name the things that you love and that will be the foundation for their own tastes and values. Teach them the names of the flowers in the garden, the names of all the tools you use.

If someone in your home or neighborhood speaks a foreign language, encourage your child to listen. The ear then opens to the new system of speaking and will never completely close. It is well known that if the ear has opened to a second language, it will open more readily to a third. At this age, children have heightened abilities; never again will it be so easy to make the sounds of another language.

“Teach by teaching, not by correcting” is one of our maxims. Demonstrate using exaggerated slow movements. Analyze such simple operations as closing a door, folding, etc., and the children will be grateful.

Above all, believe in the developing child. Be aware of their plane of development, and watch carefully as they progress into the second plane.

SECTION V: CONCLUSION

We welcome your family to Lighthouse Montessori School. We are pleased to have you in our community, and we hope that this ***Parent Handbook*** has answered any questions that you may have about our school. Please feel free at any time to contact the office with any questions or comments.

Summary of Policies

Our disaster plan is available to read via Transparent Classroom and includes information on evacuation, temporary relocation, and safety and lockdown procedures.

Our pesticide policy is available via Transparent Classroom and includes procedures and 48-hour prior notification of any pesticide use at our facilities.

Our health policy is available via Transparent Classroom and includes forms for procedures and administration of medications due to allergy, asthma and other medical emergency treatment.

LICENSING POLICIES

Copies of the most recent health care policy, pet policy, disaster plan policy, and pesticide policy are available via Transparent Classroom.

Copies of the most recent childcare records are available upon request. These include monitoring and renewal checklists and all compliance agreements.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

LIGHTHOUSE MONTESSORI SCHOOL does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, religion, sexual orientation, national or ethnic origin in admission or hiring policies. In its hiring practices the school will further not discriminate on the basis of age or economic status.