

BHMS Parent Handbook

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Beverly Hills Montessori School
1105 N. Laurel Ave., West Hollywood, CA. 90046
(323) 650-2922

Beverly Hills Montessori School Philosophy

The School takes a child-oriented approach to learning that deeply respects the uniqueness of each child and fosters progress at the child's own pace. Experienced and understanding teachers provide a setting where each child is valued both as an individual and as a member of a group.

The school's basic philosophy can be defined in our four goals:

- 1) To protect the safety of all children.
- 2) To enhance the self image of each child.
- 3) To aid the child in developing good social skills.
- 4) To support the child in realizing the full potential of his/her intellectual, emotional physical and creative capacities.

Director:	Linda Kaufman
Assistant Director:	Marquetta Rodgers
LAUP Director:	Marquetta Rodgers

Room 1: Ages 2½ -4

Room 2: Ages 4-6 LAUP Class (age 4 by December 2)

Parent Participation

Parents are encouraged to visit the school anytime; however, we ask that you limit your visit to twenty minutes. We only ask that you watch quietly from a seat or the circle. Please do not sit on the tables or bookshelves. Siblings often create a disturbance, so please leave them at home. *Children often do not act in a normal fashion when their own parent is visiting.*

We ask parents to be involved in their child's school experience. We feel five (5) hours a year is a reasonable expectation. The hours can be divided between parent work days, parent education nights, back to school night and class time. We want every parent to participate in the classroom experience for one (1) hour a year, helping with story time, a cooking project, an art project or another project planned with Marquetta Rodgers.

General School Information

School Hours

The school hours are as follows:

Early morning Day Care	7:30- 8:30 A.M.
School Day begins on the playground	8:30- 9:00 A.M.
Classes begin	9:00
Children will not be admitted at circle time if they arrive late	
LAUP hours	9:00-12:30
Lunch	12:30-1:30 P.M.
School Day Ends	2:30 P.M.
Day Care	2:30- 5:45 P.M.

First Day Admittance

Some children, as well as adults, need time to feel comfortable in a new situation. We are asking you to expand his/her world, to live and work with new people and new ideas. To make this transition, your child may need the comfort and assurance of your presence. We ask that you allow time to stay with your child until he/she feel secure, if necessary. Your child's teacher and you together will best make that determination. Immunization forms and Emergency Forms are required prior to admittance.

Arrival

Children enrolled in AM Day care may arrive before 8:30 am. Full day children may arrive between 8:30-9:00. LAUP children arrive at 9:00. The first few minutes of the day are important and we ask that children arrive on time. If your child is late he/she must be left in the office and escorted to class after circle time.

Drop off and pick up time is a busy time for everyone. Please understand that the loading zone in front of the school is for loading and unloading only and cars may be ticketed if left unattended. If you wish to come in and spend a few minutes with your child, please park at the meters.

Dismissal

Dismissal is at 2:30. Children will not be released from the school with any adult unknown to us, or without prior arrangement in writing from the parent/guardian to the school.

Children not picked up promptly at 2:30 automatically become part of the day care program and will be billed for the afternoon, unless previously enrolled in the day care program on a monthly basis. Please remember to pick up your child and leave immediately, as another parent is probably waiting for your parking space. Be considerate.

Extended Day Care

Extended Care has been established for parents needing care for their children after 2:30 PM. The hours of Extended Care are from 2:30 to 5:45 PM. Our extended care program is designed to meet the needs of your children at this time. A brief nap is followed by a snack of fruit. Outside and inside play are both available, as are special projects. Please be sure your child has a sheet and blanket (no pillows) for naptime. Please provide a stuffed toy if they want one to help them sleep. It is the parent's responsibility to take it home weekly and wash the sheet and blanket.

Parents whose children are not contracted for Extended Care on a monthly basis and who need care for their child on an occasional day basis, must phone the school office prior to the day that care is needed to see if space is available. The parent must furnish a sheet and blanket for their child if they want them to stay for day care. We must place a limit on the number of children in Extended Care in order to provide adequate staffing and a quality program. Occasional afternoon days, or any portion thereof will be charged a daily rate.

Food

We are a peanut free school (no peanut butter or peanut products)

BHMS encourages well-balanced lunches and snacks. Children bring their own lunches and we provide a morning snack. We discourage sending sweet snacks or snack food with chemical additives. Soft drinks of all kinds, candy and gum are not allowed at school. Please send thermoses, canned or box juice, no glass bottles. Hot water for instant soups or cooking is not provided by the school. Please mark your child's name on his/her lunch. We ask you to please use lunch boxes to help our efforts in recycling. (Field Trip days are the exception to lunch boxes- we want only disposable bags.)

Health

If your child is ill, please call and inform the school office. For your child's protection as well as for others, please do not send him/her to school if there are any symptoms of illness. If your child is complaining or displaying symptoms of illness at school, you will be called to pick him/her up immediately. After a fever has subsided your child should remain at home for 24 hours. We can keep outbreaks of communicable diseases to a minimum if you will help by notifying us immediately of your child's diagnosis, so that we can request other parents to contact their pediatrician.

Should it be necessary to continue doctor prescribed medication past the symptoms of an illness, please note that we only administer medication left in the original bottle, with the child's name, date, dosages listed on the bottle. Parents are responsible for filling out a medication form and delivering the form to the teacher prior to the start of class. All medications are kept in the

refrigerator, and need to be picked up daily by the parent. The school will not administer any non-prescription drugs.

In the past decade, lice out-breaks have been commonplace in Los Angeles area schools. In cooperation with the L.A. County Health Department, we will follow suggested preventative routines at school. These will include periodic head checks and disinfecting of all necessary areas in the school. Children with eggs (nits) or lice in their hair will be sent home. Children may return to school only after adequate treatment, and the removal of all nits. Please notify us if your child has head lice.

Please dress your child appropriately in clothing that is clearly labeled with your child's name. If there are food restrictions of any kind, allergies, asthma or any other persistent conditions, please notify the office.

Conferences

Your child is in a constant state of development. It is usual for developmental changes to occur in spurts; sudden, often remarkable accelerations are followed by plateaus which may have frustratingly long duration. Experienced teachers are well aware of this process, know what to look for, and can effectively nurture the child along from one stage to the next.

Formal and informal conferences are the best way to keep parents apprised of the stages of development. A child's performance is not nearly as significant as the interpretation of that performance. Each child is dealt with as an individual and measured against his or her own capacities rather than artificial statistical parameters.

Twice yearly, parents and teachers will have formal conferences. We ask you to please be on time as a courtesy to the Teachers and the Parents with appointments following yours. Please arrange for siblings to be cared for at home. We will answer all your questions to the best of our ability. We will not be able to tell you your child's intelligence quotient (i.q.) as we do not do any testing. Children do not need labels.

Each child is an individual and is so respected. We hold conferences during the day, around a teacher's working schedule. Many schools close for conferences, we do not. Conference planning slips are sent home approximately two weeks before conferences begin. The scheduling is done through the office, so schedules can be juggled to meet the needs of the children. Most conferences are scheduled for Friday.

Teachers and/or the Director are more than happy to provide time for you outside of the formal conference time. Please contact them for an appointment if you wish to schedule such a conference.

Behavior Issues

Many times during your child's academic career, you will be faced with issues that concern you or your child's teacher. It is our intent to help establish procedures for dealing with these concerns, both behavioral and academic.

Teachers are observers of behavior. They are not in a position to diagnose the cause of either the academic or behavioral problems. The staff's position is to observe and make suggestions including but not limited to referrals or handouts.

If we bring to the attention of the parent any situations or perceived problems, we expect the parent to be fully involved in helping their child meet their goals.

The first meeting or two will be verbal. If the problem continues after discussions with the parent, we will hold a formal conference. Our discussions will be documented and a plan of action will be jointly formed with the parent, including referrals to outside specialists.

If satisfactory improvement is not made, then the parent may be asked to find a new school, because we would not be meeting "the needs of the child".

The school reserves the right to terminate the enrollment of any child who the staff feels presents a health or safety risk to any children and or staff.

Please note that the teachers and director are available to meet with you to discuss any issues you wish to raise. Don't feel you have to wait for us to approach you. It takes a joint effort to provide your child with the best possible education.

Classroom Placement

One of the responsibilities we take most seriously is the proper class placement of each student. The one word which might best explain our approach is "individualization". On the one hand we have a classroom which is a community in microcosm. It has its own distinctive character and the members of each classroom, teachers and students, interact in ways that are both marvelous and unique.

Then, there is the individual student, a human being unlike any other. This person, with all of his or her special needs, strengths and weaknesses, must be placed in a classroom community which, for him or her, will prove to be a proper growth environment. Each child is dealt with separately and in depth. We consider personality, development and peer requirements. In short, we look at the total child, professionally and compassionately, as we determine his or her placement.

Admission priority is given to matriculating full time children then new full time children followed by part time children both returning and new.

Telephone

If parents need to communicate with their child during the day, we will be happy to take a message to the child. However, we cannot call children to the phone except in the case of an emergency, (such as who is picking them up and why). Children are not permitted the use of the school phone except in the case of an emergency. The office phone is not available for personal calls- please use the public phone located across the street in the French Quarter. ***Please turn off all cell phones before entering the school.***

Emergency Form Changes

Please send us a written notification of the following: a) change of home address or phone number; b) change of employment phone number; c) change of pediatrician and phone number; d) persons authorized to contact in case of emergency and phone number; e) persons authorized to pick up child from school.

Birthdays

Birthday celebrations at school will be incorporated into our master calendar. We celebrate once a month, with a school wide party. If you wish to hold a party outside of school, please bring in stamped invitations and a list of the children to be invited two weeks prior to the party. Invitation will not be given out at school under any circumstances.

Birthday Books

We encourage children to learn the art of giving as well as receiving by donating a book of their choice to their classroom library on their birthday or any special occasion. This sharing experience is a great source of pride for the child.

Field trips

Field trips are an exciting and integral part of our curriculum. For some class and school trips the school hires a bus to transport the children or we may use public transportation. We ask parents to help us defray the cost of hiring transportation by providing the bus fare whenever necessary.

On many occasions we ask for parent volunteers. The extra hands are greatly appreciated.

Earthquake Procedures

The school has an earthquake/disaster procedure which involves all aspects of earthquake preparation and organization for short-term care of students, possible evacuation, first-aid treatment, etc.

Should an earthquake or disaster occur, parents on site will be expected to help out as directed. Parent not at school and coming to pick up their children should observe the following:

1. **DO NOT CALL THE SCHOOL!!!** Phone lines will be needed for emergency communication with city officials, etc.
2. Listen for information about school closings and evacuation on KFWB and KNX news stations.
3. Come to pick up your child as soon as possible.
 - A. Park on the street where possible.
 - B. Check in at the office for instructions.
 - C. Check out at the office when leaving.
 - D. Proceed to evacuation site as named on door if the school has been evacuated.

PLEASE NOTE: Children will be released to the first person listed on the emergency form who comes to the school.

Earthquake Emergency Packs

BHMS has an Earthquake/Disaster Plan. This plan includes packs of food and water for each child. We ask each child to bring a completed pack on the first day of school. Please follow the directions below in preparing your child's pack:

FILL A ONE-GALLON ZIP LOCK BAG WITH THE FOLLOWING ITEMS:

- One 5x7" file card with your child's name written with marking pen in large letters, the child's class and the date. Place this card facing out so it can be easily read to identify the bag.
- a space blanket, which can be purchased from any sporting good store.
- a mini-flashlight with extra batteries
- Wet wipes and/or waterless antiseptic soap
- If your child frequently requires special medications, please include a 3-day supply with directions for administration.
- If your child wears prescription glasses, and you have an old pair, please include these in the bag.
- a pre-addressed postcard to your out-of-state contact, as well as our earthquake form
- a family photograph

THINGS TO REMEMBER

- Only use one-gallon zip lock bags. They should be able to fully seal; it is possible.

INFORMATION ON HOLIDAYS AND SCHOOL EVENTS

PARENTS NIGHT

This is the one night of the year that parents attend without their children. We spend time meeting each other, talking about curriculum, answering general questions and hopefully give you some idea of what we have planned for your children.

HALLOWEEN

Children will wear their costumes to school in the morning of our parade. Please, **no flip-flops** or slippers as they are dangerous on the playground. They should bring a change of clothes with them in the morning. We will have lunch as usual.

After lunch we will have our parade. After everyone is ready the children will parade around the tree by class. This gives all parents an opportunity to photograph their children.

The party will end at 2:00 P.M. Children either go home or take off their costumes and get ready for nap time.

THANKSGIVING

Our Thanksgiving Feast is held the Tuesday before Thanksgiving. The children have been making costumes (Pilgrims and Native Americans), and studying about how early settlers to the United States needed the skills the Native Americans had to survive. We talk about how people must work together.

Each class is responsible for making a part of the snack. The children make cornbread or cranberry sauce. All the classes have snack together. The children wear the costumes they have been making and everyone shares in our great food.

WINTER HOLIDAY ACTIVITIES

Our main emphasis with these holidays is the spirit of man sharing with each other. We ask families to go shopping together for a toy that each child can bring into school to share with a child that is not as fortunate as we are. The cost is not important (\$0.50- \$10.00). The act of going and buying something for another child is what we want to emphasize. We spend time decorating the school, the tree and the windows with holiday designs. We celebrate at least three holidays, Hanukkah, Christmas and Kwanzaa, in order to teach that people everywhere have winter rituals that bring them together to share the meaning of the season.

HANUKKAH

We celebrate the spirit of the Holiday. Menorahs are lit, potato pancakes are made, and the dreidel game is taught.

CHRISTMAS

We celebrate the spirit of the holiday as well. We bake cookies, light candles, decorate and give our presents. We talk about how people all over the world celebrate the holiday from Santa Claus to Saint Nicholas.

KWANZAA

Kwanzaa is an African-American cultural celebration, beginning on Dec. 26th each year. It was created out of rituals borrowed from the African harvest festivals, using the language of Swahili to designate its symbols and customs. One candle is lit each day for seven days, acknowledging one principle each day. The principles are: unity (umoya), self determination (kujichagulia), collective work (ujima), cooperative economics (ujamaa), purpose (nia), creativity (kuumba) and faith (imani). The candle holder is called a kinara.

WINTER HOLIDAY PARTY

The second Wednesday of December is our annual party. This allows parents who are leaving early for vacation to still make our party. The children spend time learning songs and/or skits to perform for their parents.

MARTIN LUTHER KING DAY

We celebrate the peaceful nonviolent goals of the great man. The children learn songs, make art projects and have a good time.

PRESIDENTS' DAY

We remember both Lincoln and Washington. We read stories about each man and the things he accomplished during his life time. We do art projects, cook food, and learn songs.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH

We do a unit on the great black men and women in history. Black history month is celebrated nationwide.

SPRING HOLIDAYS- EASTER AND PASSOVER

Both holidays focus around the rebirth of nature We plant seeds, talk about animals that give birth in the spring, talk about how the days get longer and warmer so that the seeds will sprout faster. We talk about how in much of the country there is snow, and that for them, spring is an important time of the year.

OPEN HOUSE

Parents are invited to join their children for an afternoon of school. This is an opportunity for you to meet your child's friends, find out his favorite activity at school and let him/her really show off what they do during the day.

LAST WEEK ACTIVITIES

Each year we plan a week or sometimes longer of special activities for the children. They vary from backwards day, to pajama day, to stuffed animal day, to picnic day, to art day, to block day, to planting day, bar-b-que day, etc. Whatever we plan it is always fun.

CALENDAR

We publish our tentative school calendar around April 1st of each year. While we try not to make changes, sometimes they become inevitable. Please understand we try our best to work within our published calendar.