

# Alfred Montessori School



Alfred Montessori School

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## Parent's Handbook & Policy Manual 2015/2016

### **Mission Statement**

The mission of the Alfred Montessori School is to create a loving and nurturing environment where the children "learn, grow and become" their own productive being. The School also strives to be flexible regarding our families' needs while having a positive impact on our community.

This handbook contains important information that we hope will answer all the questions you may have about the Montessori philosophy, goals and policies.



**The parent handbook is issued prior to the beginning of the academic year. The parent(s) or guardian(s) must sign a form in duplicate to indicate they have received the handbook, and understand and agree to abide by the contents. A copy of the signed form is kept with the student's file. Please save this handbook for reference as needed throughout the year.**

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## **A Message from the Board of Directors**

*Dear Parents,*

*We welcome you and your family to our School! We look forward to sharing with you the special feeling generated by the warmth and fellowship of our teaching staff, parents, Board and, most of all, the children.*

*The success of a Montessori School is very dependent on parents' involvement. We encourage you to become involved with your child's program, supporting the educational and social experiences, and sharing in the joys and satisfactions the child experiences in his or her own learning. Plan to attend parent-teacher conferences, social and fund-raising activities and any other events. We have always maintained an open door policy and invite you to come to observe your child often. You will discover much more about what your child is learning by observing.*

*Board members are always available to discuss your involvement in the School. Our names and phone numbers are posted at the School. You are also encouraged to attend monthly Board Meetings. Please contact the Director or any Board member with any questions or suggestions you may have. We are glad you have chosen to be a part of the Alfred Montessori School. We will all work together to ensure your child's success.*

*Sincerely,*

*The Alfred Montessori Board of Directors*

## **Mission Statement**

The mission of the Alfred Montessori School is to create a loving and nurturing environment where the children "learn, grow and become" their own productive being. The School also strives to be flexible regarding our families' needs while having a positive impact on our community.

## **Program Description**

The Alfred Montessori School seeks to meet the needs of children and parents who live and work in Alfred and the surrounding areas by providing excellent Infant, Toddler, Pre-School, and School Age programs that can also serve as a day care facility. Centrally located near both Alfred University and Alfred State College, the Alfred Montessori School is an independently operated non-profit organization. An active Board of Directors composed of parents, professionals and community members provide support and supervision to the School. Parents are welcome and encouraged to participate in all aspects of the School. The Alfred Montessori School has an absolute charter from the NYS Department of Education and is a licensed daycare facility by the NYS Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS).

## **Licensing Agency:**

Office of Children & Family Services  
Division of Child Care Services  
Buffalo Regional Office  
295 Main Street, Room 545  
Buffalo, NY 14203  
Tel: (716)847.3828  
Licensor: Dennis Huff: (716)847.3146

To access NYS Day Care regulations, go to: [http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/childcare/regs/418-1\\_CDCC\\_regs.asp](http://ocfs.ny.gov/main/childcare/regs/418-1_CDCC_regs.asp). Regulations also available in school foyer.

Child Care Complaint Line: Toll free at 1-800-732-5207

## **History of the Montessori Approach**

The Montessori approach to education takes its name from Dr. Maria Montessori, an Italian physician and educator (1870-1952). Dr. Maria Montessori developed her educational philosophy as a result of her observations of the way children naturally learn. Dr. Maria Montessori's first class consisted of 50-60 children, ages 3-6, most of whom suffered from malnutrition and were shy and fearful since they lived in the slums of Florence, Italy. Montessori found that the children needed very little persuading to do everyday tasks, puzzles or other interesting activities which directed their energy away from destructive behaviors. She described the ages from three to six as a particularly sensitive time during which young children are especially attuned to acquiring knowledge from and about their environment. To enrich their experience, Dr. Maria Montessori developed a "prepared environment" of child sized furniture and material in order to adapt to the surroundings to the child's natural size and behavior. This helped the children to feel relaxed and comfortable which created a will to learn. Through this interaction and experience, the children developed an extraordinarily high level of intellectual and social ability at young ages.

Maria Montessori expanded her study of the young child, and gradually refined her approach to all child development areas through her experience and research in countries as diverse as Spain and India until the time of her death in 1952. The Montessori Method is now being successfully implemented with children in nearly every country of the world. There was a significant influence in the United States in the early 1960's and today there are more than 3,000 Montessori programs in this country. The Montessori Method is applied most

frequently in pre-school and elementary education grade levels but is very effective in the high school setting as well. Montessori education has no religious affiliation, is not a therapy, nor is it an approach useful only with certain categories of children. In addition, Montessori techniques can be used successfully with all children regardless of whether they are gifted, have learning disabilities or other special needs.

### **The Montessori Philosophy**

Dr. Montessori developed her educational philosophy as a result of observations and discoveries she made of the ways in which children learn. She found that they learn in distinctly different ways at different stages of development. She formulated an educational program to meet the particular needs of the child at whatever stage of development, to help him/her reach his/her fullest potential.

Dr. Montessori preferred not to call this a "method," but an "approach" to life. She said, "What I have done is merely to study the child, to take and express what he has given me." She believed that no one is educated by another- he must do it himself, and thus, the goal of early childhood education should be to cultivate the child's own natural desire and ability to learn and to protect the essential nature of the child.

Young children, she discovered, have a unique aptitude for learning not found again at any other period of life. Montessori identified this quality as the "absorbent mind." The young child literally absorbs information from his or her surroundings. During certain periods in this phase of development s/he is more easily able to absorb specific types of learning. Dr. Montessori referred to these as the "sensitive periods." Acquiring information in this way is a natural and delightful activity for the young child who employs all his senses to investigate his interesting surroundings.

Since the child retains the ability to learn by absorbing until s/he is almost seven years old, Dr. Montessori reasoned that a classroom where s/he could handle the materials that would demonstrate basic educational information could enrich his or her experience. Montessori designed just this kind of classroom, and she called it the "prepared environment." In this environment everything is scaled to the child's size; the material is attractive, didactic, and presented in an orderly manner. The materials cover the areas of practical life (care of the person and the environment); sensory awareness; language; mathematics, and cultural subjects (art, music, geography, history and science). In the classroom the environment is the real teacher; the child, the central focus.

The task of the Montessori Teaching Staff is:

- ❖ To awaken children's spirit and imagination.
- ❖ To encourage their normal desire for independence and high sense of self esteem.
- ❖ To help them develop kindness, courtesy and self discipline that will allow them to become full members of society.
- ❖ To help children learn how to observe, question, and explore ideas independently.
- ❖ Having created a spirit of joyful learning, to help children master the skills and knowledge of their society.

Within the prepared environment children of different ages and abilities work at his/her own rate, never under pressure to compete with other classmates. Children refer to their activities as "work." They speak of their "work" with pride, equating it to their parents' work.

The program is designed to help the child to develop concentration, coordination, inner discipline, and good working habits. As the child grows to self-discipline, s/he is allowed greater and greater freedom to move about the environment and work with whatever materials s/he chooses, provided they are appropriate to the child's developmental level and that they are used in a constructive way.

The children in a Montessori classroom learn by doing; they pursue their tasks independently either in a group or alone. The Montessori Teaching Staff acts as a guide and a stimulus to their never-ending curiosity. Montessori materials are designed to be self-correcting, which encourages independent problem solving and eliminates the correctional, disciplinary role of the traditional teacher. Montessori Teaching Staff and students are fast friends with a healthy respect for one another.

Montessori believed that a child who is allowed to develop his or her personality freely and independently, who is encouraged to investigate and try new things would grow to be a far more responsible and creative adult than one who is heavily suppressed and disciplined. Her philosophy is not to be confused with over-permissiveness. There is an order in a Montessori classroom that works to the advantage of everyone. Children quickly learn that if they care for their environment and their fellow human beings, they themselves will have a richer variety of experiences. They learn that freedom is precious, but to retain it we must assume certain responsibilities.

The Montessori environment is a highly social one in which the children are continually interacting with and caring for each other. They are proud of their environment because they are directly involved with caring for it and contributing to it. There is a great deal of material available to them concerning plants and animals throughout the world. Artists and musicians are represented through reproductions and recordings of their works, and children enter the world of the arts through participation in arts and crafts and musical activities.

The Montessori environment is designed to be a total environment, representing the child's world. It is hoped that each child will achieve a feeling of self-confidence, enthusiasm and responsibility about his/her world, and a sense of satisfaction about him/herself.

### **Montessori Goals Summarized**

The primary goals of the Montessori Method are:

1. To promote the growth of a positive self-image in each child and satisfaction about him/herself, which is the key to the development of a person's full potential.
2. To promote feelings of enthusiasm and responsibility about one's world.
3. To create an awareness of one's own feelings and sensitivity to the feelings of others.
4. To encourage the natural desire, ability, self-discipline, and independence inherent in learning.
5. To ensure mastery of the basic skills required to pursue knowledge.
6. To teach physical coordination and control.
7. To develop the ability to concentrate and to attend to details.
8. To develop a sense of order.

### **The Alfred Montessori School offers the following programs:**

#### **The Infant Program**

Our infant program is designed for children 6 weeks to 18 months old. This program is designed to provide the loving care and gentle stimulation that an infant needs to grow and develop their potential. Flexible scheduling allows each child to eat, sleep, or play according to their own natural timetable. After his or her 1st birthday the child will begin to prepare for the transition to the toddler program at 18 months. At their own pace they will begin to have meals in a group at the table and take a group nap after lunch on a cot. Infants will nap in the infant classroom, in a crib, unless otherwise specified. Children in the toddler and preschool classrooms will nap on a cot and will nap in their respective classrooms. All infants and children will be directly supervised by staff, in compliance with supervision of children regulations.

## **The Toddler Program**

In the Toddler Program, children use hands-on materials. They are given opportunities to begin building the foundations of social skills including manners and building independence and self-confidence.

## **The Pre-School Program**

Our Pre-School program, for children aged 3-6 has been the Alfred Montessori's flagship program since 1983. Teachers act as facilitators, stimulating interest in the child-centered learning environment. An emphasis on order and completion balances their freedom of choice, resulting in a calm, yet active atmosphere.

## **The School Age Program**

We provide quality after school care to children between the ages of 4 and 12 years. Children are given a warm and caring atmosphere where they are allowed freedom within reasonable limits. Daily activities include homework assistance, crafts, reading time at the Box of Books Library, and outdoor play on the playground.

## **Montessori Materials & Activities**

The materials in the classroom can be divided into five main areas. Activity with these materials involves physical and mental action, linking body and mind.

1. Practical Life Exercises such as pouring, grating, polishing, sorting, washing, buttoning, etc. help the child learn to function in his own environment, and are preliminary to more advanced learning. The child develops an attention to details, a lengthened span of concentration and muscular control and coordination through the successful completion of these basic exercises.
2. Sensorial Activities are designed to isolate and sharpen each of the five senses. Grading and comparing sounds, sizes, colors, textures and shapes help organize the impressions a child receives. The materials have a built-in control of error so the child can correct his own mistakes. Sensorial materials are sequential and provide a foundation for mathematics and language.
3. Language Materials are presented individually to take advantage of the greatest interest on the part of the child. Children are taught the sound and formation of the letters kinesthetically through the use of sandpaper letters and similar materials. Word building activities of increasing difficulty are done over a long period of time. Reading follows naturally.
4. Mathematical Concepts are presented through extensive use of concrete materials. The child's sensorial training enables him to identify and differentiate the idea of quantity that is built into the Montessori materials. The child gains the conception of numbers and their application on arithmetical operations.
5. Geography, history, botany, biology, music and grammar are introduced through the use of concrete materials.
6. Enrichment activities are offered when available. Volunteers among parents and community members may provide special interest units.

In addition to activities involving the materials described above, the full Montessori day includes a lunch period, a listening period, rest period, and individual and group activity periods. These include art and craft projects, special interest units, cooking, music, games, and outdoor activities. The children also enjoy field trips throughout the school year. Parents must sign a permission slip before any child is allowed to participate in a field trip.

## **Montessori Classroom Guidelines**

The word "rules" often seems negative because it usually includes a lot of "don'ts" and connotes authority. However within the Montessori framework, ground rules have evolved from a much more positive base. Dr.

Maria Montessori believed that “education centers upon the care of the living being...the total person including the biological and social.” Education is a natural process which develops spontaneously. It is acquired by experiences in which the child acts on his environment. The guidelines or "ground rules" have evolved to provide a balance of rights and responsibilities. Without them, there would be confusion and disorder. They are ways of saying to the child, "I know you can and expect you will." The adult is there only to see that the limits are respected; the limits themselves are not within the adult, but within the situation.

### 1. Rights of the Child

- a. To program his/her own day (during the work period) and choose his/her own friends to work with.
- b. To work alone if desired.
- c. To repeat an activity as many times as needed or desired.
- d. To observe others in an activity (with their permission) without participating.
- e. To ask for and receive help from an adult.
- f. Not to join a group activity if s/he prefers.

### 2. Responsibilities of the Child

- a. To respect the rights of others.
- b. To respect the environment.
- c. To complete the work cycle of the activities s/he has chosen (including project storage for completion at a later date).

### 3. Role of the Adult

- a. To respect the child.
- b. To prepare the environment.
- c. To act as an appropriate model.
- d. To observe the child at work.
- e. To reinforce the guidelines.
- f. To intervene if the child is disturbing, dangerous or destructive to him/herself or others.

Children move their bodies slowly and quietly, using "quiet voices". Children walk around someone's work (denoted by a mat or rug) and walk when moving anywhere through the building. Children ask to join someone's work and move away when another child prefers to work alone. Children return the materials to the shelf from which the work has been taken before choosing another activity.

We view the roles of the teacher and the parent as complementary, and may consult with you to determine optimal approaches for working with your child. Our goal is to communicate with you in an open and honest way.

## **Staff**

The staff consists of OCFS (Office of Children and Family Services) Qualified Teachers, Classroom Assistants, and Interns participating through Alfred University and Alfred State College. Classroom Assistants and Interns are screened and supervised.

## **Admission Criteria**

- Our School admits children of any race, creed, national or ethnic origin.
- Children age three through six years are eligible for acceptance into the Pre-School program. Children ages 18 months through 36 months are eligible to attend the Toddler program. Children 6 weeks to 18 months are eligible to attend our infant program
- All parents are required to fill out and sign a Payment Agreement, Student Registration card, a Photo Release form, an Emergency Medical Permission Form, and an Authorization to Remove Child Form.
- Each infant, toddler and preschool parent must furnish the school with a written statement signed by a health care provider stating that the child is able to participate in child day care and currently appears to be free

from contagious or communicable diseases. Such documentation must also state that the child has received age-appropriate immunizations in accordance with New York State Public Health Law.

- Each parent must sign the Handbook receipt.

### **Trial Period for Acceptance into Infant, Toddler and Pre-School Programs**

All students new to the program are accepted on a 30 day trial basis. The purpose of the 30 day trial period is to ensure that this is an appropriate program for your child. For instance, many Montessori materials contain small parts and a child who is not developmentally ready may put these objects in their mouth. After alerting the parents of this problem and if no progress is made with the child's actions, it is at the Director's discretion to withdraw the child from the program. Other instances of developmental readiness may pose a problem for the child's safety and will be dealt with on an individual basis with the Montessori Teaching Staff.

### **Arrival and Departure Procedures**

**Morning Arrival:** The Montessori day begins at 9AM. Supplemental care is available between the hours of 7:30- 9:00 a.m. (see Program Hours, Tuition & Fees page for appropriate charges) prior to the start of the school day.

**Pick-up Time:** Morning sessions end at 12 noon and all day sessions at 3:00 p.m. Supplemental childcare is available between the hours of 3:00 and 5:30 p.m. (see Program Hours, Tuition & Fees page for appropriate charges). It is very important that you sign your child out with a teacher when you are leaving so we can account for the children. State law requires that we maintain a list of names of persons to whom your child may be released. Please list their names and addresses on the Authorization to Remove Child form, which will be kept on file. Failure to pick up your child by 12 noon for half day sessions and 5:30 pm for full day sessions (or other designated closing time) will result in an additional late fee of \$10.00 per quarter hour being assessed to your monthly tuition bill.

**Sign-In/Out:** Children must be signed in upon arrival and out each time they leave the classroom with someone other than the teacher(s). A sign-in sheet is located in each classroom near the door. Classroom teachers will have the sign-in/out sheet with them if they are anywhere other than the classroom (i.e. playground, or on a walk). Failure to sign your child in or out for the day will result in a charge of the maximum daycare time (7:30am or 5:30pm). If you anticipate the inability to pick up your child by 5:30 p.m. (e.g.: snowstorm or other emergency), please call the School. In the event that the School is not notified, a staff member will wait with your child at the School for 30 minutes. In addition, the staff member will try to telephone both parents and the emergency contact person. If neither can be reached by telephone, the staff member will notify the police and Child Protective Services. The Staff member will then call the Director to inform them of the situation. The staff member or Director will stay with the child at the school until the child is picked up.

### **Home-School Communication**

We want every AMS child and family to have a positive learning experience. It is extremely important that we create open lines of communication between home and school. If you have a question or concern about your child's experience at AMS, please immediately contact the Lead Teacher to schedule a conference. It is essential that we work collaboratively in order to foster a safe, happy, and productive learning environment for the children. If you have additional questions, or are not satisfied in any way, please contact the Director.

Communication between the School and home is essential to both parents and teachers for greater understanding of the child and their development in the Montessori environment. We welcome your involvement, your questions, comments, suggestions, and we want you to join us as full partners in your child's educational experience. Our guidelines for home-school communication include the following:

#### **Observations**

Parents are encouraged to make classroom observations, especially before participation in Parent/Teacher Conferences so that there is a basis for discussion with the teacher. It is through direct observation of your child that you gain an understanding of the Montessori approach to education. We sincerely hope that if you have any

questions about the program, you will take time to observe a full cycle or work activity and then discuss any concern with us. Both scheduled and drop-in observations are encouraged.

Parents and other observers are requested to comply with the following procedures:

- a. Guests are asked to observe the class routine quietly. Comments and questions are encouraged and will be discussed following the observation period.
- b. A meeting between the parent and Director or Lead Teacher can follow the observation, when convenient, to discuss any questions or comments and their child's progress.

One of the basic values at the Alfred Montessori School is to emphasize cooperative, rather than competitive, behavior. We try to encourage the children's academic and social growth in noncompetitive ways as well. Rather than expect the children to measure up to some artificial grade level, we hope to help them develop their skills and abilities on a continuum, a steady pattern of growth. We do not want to compare them to what others in their grade or age group "should" be doing. We do want them to achieve at their own best level.

Parents are concerned, of course, about their child's progress and want to know how s/he is "doing". The very best way to answer that is to come and visit the School and watch your child at work and play. We suggest that you do this at least once each semester. The observation then forms the basis for the conference with your child's teacher.

### **Parent-Teacher Conferences**

A formal parent-teacher conference is set twice each semester. Additional conferences may be set up at the request of the teacher or parents.

To supplement parent-teacher conferences, the Director will have regular office hours, which will be posted each semester. You may phone or visit during this time.

### **Newsletter**

Parents will receive a monthly newsletter and calendar listing important dates, School functions, classroom activities and other important items of interest to you and your child. Please specify if you would like to receive this in a paper copy or electronically through email. The newsletters are also posted on our website for your convenience.

### **Notices and Bulletins**

Please remember to check frequently for parental activities sign-up sheets when picking up or dropping off your child. Important reminders, sign-up sheets and Board Meetings are posted on or near each entrance.

### **Items from Home for School**

**Food:** Full-time children should bring a nutritious lunch, including beverage, from home in a lunch box or bag labeled with the child's name. **Please include an ice pack, as refrigeration of the lunches is not possible.** Lunches should include your version of: meat or meat alternative, vegetable and/or fruit (2), enriched bread and, a simple dessert, and a drink. Please, do not pack any candy. Children have morning and afternoon snacks supplied by the school. The four week rotational snack menu is attached. Please also see the attached brochure containing information on healthy food and beverage choices and the prevention of childhood obesity.

Your child's lunch will obviously reflect his/her tastes, allergies and dietary needs. If any questions about nutrition arise, please contact the Montessori Teaching Staff. If your child does have any allergies (food or other) please be sure to note it on the Blue Registration Card.

**\*Room-based peanut policy\*** The Infant room is peanut-free. If a child in a classroom has a peanut allergy, said classroom will be closed to peanuts. Families will be notified of changes.

The children also enjoy celebrating their birthdays by sharing treats brought from home. You may ask the teacher what treats are appropriate to bring. Please be sensitive to other children's possible allergies when you bring a sharing treat to the School.

Holidays are celebrated with items provided by parents and teachers. Sign-up sheets will be provided for these occasions.

For children in the infant room, parents should pre make and label bottles with the child's first and last name. Bottles will be refrigerated. Children will be provided morning and afternoon snacks (depending on their age, diet and eating schedule) but parents should provide their child's lunch.

**Clothing:** Because many activities are done on the floor, play clothes are appropriate. We suggest slacks for both genders, and sneakers or oxfords. We try to go outside every day, so please send outdoor clothing for whatever the daily weather conditions. Clothing that the children can put on and fasten by themselves should be selected as much as possible to foster independence.

Each child should have a minimum of one complete outfit (shirt, slacks, underwear and socks) all labeled with the child's name to prevent possible loss. A drawstring bag or knapsack should be provided to hold your child's change of clothing. This change of clothing is to be used in case of an accident and should be replaced seasonally as well as on an as-needed basis.

In warm weather, please do not send your child to School wearing clogs or flip-flops, as these are hazardous for outdoor activities. Sunscreen, hats or sunglasses are suggested during warmer weather.

In winter, children will need both shoes and warm boots, and outside clothes, including heavy jackets, hats or hoods, mittens, scarves and snow pants.

For those enrolled in the Toddler and Infant Programs, the following supplies should also be provided to the School from home: diapers or pull-ups, wet wipes, diaper rash ointment, and 3 changes of clothes.

**Blanket:** All-day children can bring a **small** blanket (labeled) for the rest period. You are responsible for laundering the blanket weekly. In the infant room, parents will need to provide blankets and sheets for their child's crib.

### Program Hours, Tuition, & Fees

<i>Please select your enrollment choice:</i>	Semester Tuition	Yearly Tuition	Monthly Payment	Before & After School
Full Time Infant 7:30 AM - 5:30 PM	5 days: \$4,235.00 2.5 % Discount: \$4,129.00	5 days: \$8,470.00 5 % Discount: \$8,046.50	2 days: \$390.00 3 days: \$585.00 4 days: \$736.00 5 days: \$847.00	N/A
Full Time Toddler 9:00 AM - 3:00 PM	2 days: \$1,590.00 3 days: \$2,370.00 4 days: \$2,935.00 5 days: \$3,455.00 2.5% discount on 5 day tuition: \$3,368.50	2 days: \$3,180.00 3 days: \$4,740.00 4 days: \$5,870.00 5 days: \$6,910.00 5% discount on 5 day tuition: \$6,564.50	2 days: \$318.00 3 days: \$474.00 4 days: \$587.00 5 days: \$691.00	\$4.50/hr 7:30AM-9:00AM 3:00PM-5:30PM

Part time Toddler* 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM	3 days: \$1,505.00 5 days: \$2,060.00 2.5% discount on 5 day tuition: \$2,008.50	3 days: \$3,010.00 5 days: \$4,120.00 5% discount on 5 day tuition: \$3,914.00	3 days: \$301.00 5 days: \$412.00	\$4.50/hr 7:30AM–9:00AM
Full Time Preschool 9:00 AM – 3:00 PM	2 days: \$1,475.00 3 days: \$2,175.00 4 days: \$2,755.00 5 days: \$3,120.00 2.5% discount on 5 day tuition: \$3,042.00	2 days: \$2,950.00 3 days: \$4,350.00 4 days: \$5,510.00 5 days: \$6,240.00 5% discount on 5 day tuition: \$5,928.00	2 days: \$295.00 3 days: \$435.00 4 days: \$551.00 5 days: \$624.00	\$4.50/hr 7:30AM–9:00AM 3:00 PM–5:30PM
Part time Preschool* 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM	3 days: \$1,445.00 5 days: \$1,950.00 2.5% discount on 5 day tuition: \$1,901.25	3 days: \$2,890.00 5 days: \$3,900.00 5% discount on 5 day tuition: \$3,705.00	3 days: \$289.00 5 days: \$390.00	\$4.50/hr 7:30AM–9:00AM

**School Age Rates: \$4.50/hr (3:30-5:30), \$35 Full Day Program, \$18 Half Day Program**

\* School Age After-school children will be charged a minimum of 1 hour per day, or a \$60 monthly minimum.\*

An annual non-refundable registration fee is charged for each child. The registration fees are as follows:

**Infant, Toddler and Preschool Registration**

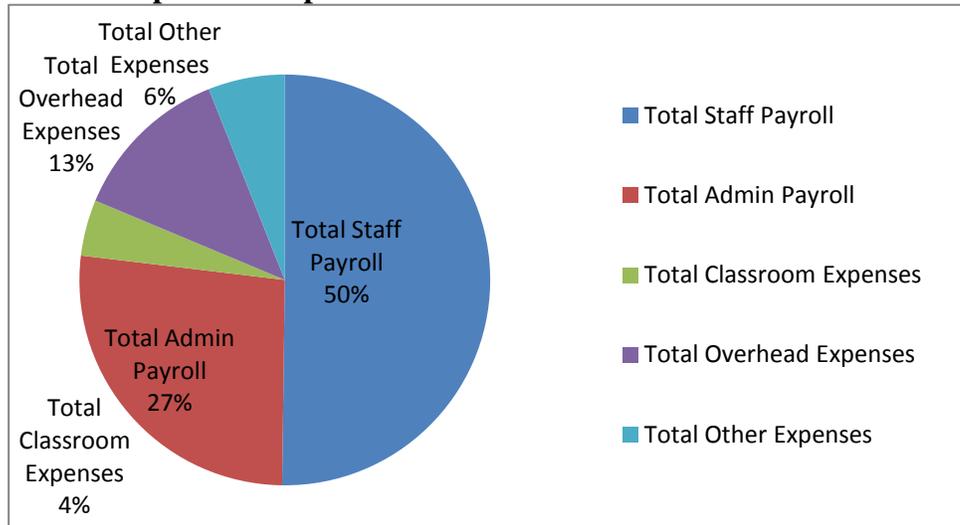
- Full year Single child: \$75
- Full year Family: (2 or more children): \$100
- One Semester Single child: \$40 per semester
- One Semester Family: \$55 per semester

**School Age Registration**

- Full year Single child: \$40
- Full year Family: \$50

Tuition Charges are based on the School’s yearly expenses; therefore we cannot refund a portion of the tuition for days missed due to your child’s illness or due to the School closing for inclement weather.

**Annual Expenses Graph**



Adjustments can only be made in case of disability, a move beyond 75 miles from Alfred, or the Director’s determination of an unsatisfactory adjustment of a child to the school.

**Policy on Attendance/Rescheduling:**

At the discretion of the director, pre-planned student absences may be made up a maximum of four times within

any school year. Each rescheduled day must be made up within a week of the absence and may only apply to instances known to AMS in advance. Missed days due to illness, school closings, or school vacations do not apply. Rescheduling requests must be made in writing via standard AMS form\*, submitted to the director, and must comply with availability of staff and space without changing student/teacher ratios within the classrooms. If there is no suitable day for a reschedule, based on the above factors, the missed day will be forfeited.

\*Available in the office.

## **Billing**

The due date for the monthly tuition payment plan is the 25<sup>th</sup> of the month, for current month's attendance. For example: September first, billing is sent out and payment is due by September 25<sup>th</sup> for September tuition. The payment due date for Before and After School Program charges is also the 25<sup>th</sup> of each month for services previously used. These charges are reflected on your monthly statement and must be paid with your tuition payment.

- Payment is due by 5:30 p.m. to the locked payment box at the School or as directed on your invoice.
- Late accounts (i.e.: those not paid in full by the 25<sup>th</sup> of the month) will be assessed a fee of \$25.00 for each month the charges remain unpaid. Partial payments received against late accounts will not defray assessment of the \$25.00 fee for each month that a balance is overdue.
- **The returned check charge is \$25.00 per return.**

Refunds of prepaid tuition will only be granted under the following circumstances:

- ❖ If, after the one-month trial period the child is not accepted into the program. This is a decision made by the Director of the School (see p.8 of Handbook).
- ❖ If, according to the written opinion of a qualified physician, a child is unable to attend School for the remainder of the semester due to an extended illness.
- ❖ Due to a move beyond 75 miles from Alfred.

**Children will be allowed to re-enroll for consecutive sessions only if accounts are paid in full.**

## **Eligibility for School Age After-School Program**

Children eligible for the After-School program are age 4 through age 12. Enrollment is subject to the approval of the Director, teaching staff and the availability of space.

School-aged children in the After-School program may attend all day when their school is not in session (including half day AACCS parent-teacher conference days), if space is available. Spaces are reserved on a first come, first served basis. The fee will be \$35 for the day (8 hour minimum). If you sign your child up and fail to notify the school that s/he will not be attending, you will be charged \$35 for the day.

## **Past due accounts**

All past due accounts will receive a written courtesy reminder in the child's mailbox on the 26<sup>th</sup> of each month. If your account is 30 days past due then:

1. You will receive a phone call from the Director to discuss your outstanding balance and plans for payment;
2. If no payment or written/signed payment plan within 1 week of the phone call, you will receive a written letter from the Director and the Board will be notified;
3. If no payment plan or written/signed payment plan within 1 week of the letter, you will receive a certified written letter about your account going to collections and child(ren), if still attending, will be withdrawn.

## **Transportation Policy**

Transportation to and from program is the responsibility of the parent.

## **Disruptive Behavior Policy**

To “discipline” literally means to educate or train. Alfred Montessori School encourages the growth of self discipline within the child. Maria Montessori believed that the only true discipline is “active” or “inner” discipline, developed by the child him/herself as s/he works at interesting tasks at home and/or school. The “joy of obedience” is developed. First, basic classroom policies, school policies and etiquette are explained to the children.

**Children learn best by example. The one simple rule in all Alfred Montessori School classrooms is that ONE MAY NOT DISTURB.**

When disruptive behavior occurs at Alfred Montessori School, the following procedures are enforced:

- 1. Verbal redirection.** When a child first violates the behavior policy, it is assumed that s/he did not know or remember the proper way to behave. The teacher will demonstrate to the child how to behave and what to say in a particular situation.
- 2. Warning & Incident report.** The second incident will result in a conversation with the child to discuss expected behavior. In addition, an incident report will be sent home to a parent/guardian.
- 3. Phone call & conference.** The third incident will result in a phone call to a parent/guardian and the scheduling of a conference between the student, parent/guardian, and Director. The parent will receive a Classroom Behavior Checklist completed by Lead Teacher and Director.
- 4. Dismissal from Program.** When all efforts made have failed to help the child change his/her behavior, and the integrity or safety of the Alfred Montessori School is compromised by such behaviors, parents will be asked to find an alternative learning/child care environment for their child.

The Director may temporarily or permanently remove a child from a program if the behaviors of that child place other children, the staff, or the school in immediate danger.

The Disruptive Behavior Policy is progressively severe and not all of these options need to be exhausted prior to dismissal from the program. The steps in a progressive discipline policy serve as general guidelines and are not mandatory.

Disruptive behaviors are evaluated according to age and include, but are not limited to:

<u>Minor</u>	<u>Moderate</u>	<u>Severe</u>
-Teasing	-Teasing/Taunting	-Inappropriate contact
-Biting	-Fighting	-Hitting, kicking, biting
-Pushing/Shoving	-Misuse of playground	-Verbal abuse, bullying
-Improper manners	-Misuse of materials	-Harassment
-Not following directions	-Insubordination	-Threats
-Disrespect	-Inappropriate language	-Stealing
	-Bullying	- Inappropriate language
		- Defiance
		- Throwing objects
		- Possession of any and all dangerous objects/weapons

## **Biting Policy**

The safety of all the children is our primary concern. Biting is a natural developmental stage that many children go through. It is usually a temporary condition that is most common between thirteen and twenty-four months of age.

In the event that biting occurs, a staff person will immediately attend to the bitten child and remove the biting child to a time-out area. Staff will wash the bite area with soap and water, and apply ice if necessary. If the bite breaks through the skin, the child's parents will be notified and asked to take their child to a health care provider. An incident report will be completed and given to all parents involved.

AMS staff will work closely with the parents to manage & stop the biting behaviors. Following a biting incident, the biter will be closely monitored to prevent further incidents. The staff will work to determine the cause of the biting. Staff will remind the child that biting is not acceptable and give praise for appropriate behaviors.

If the biting is not resolved within 2 weeks from the first incident, a conference will be requested with the biter's parents. If the biting cannot be resolved within 4 to 6 weeks, (depending on age and maturity of child) the child may be dismissed from Alfred Montessori School. The child may be re-enrolled at the start of the next semester, or after 3 months have passed, whichever is longer.

## **Child Abuse Policy**

All staff are required to take a course in recognition of signs of child abuse with periodic retraining as required by the Board of Directors and OCFS.

Employees of Alfred Montessori School must report any suspected incidents of child abuse or maltreatment of enrolled students to the Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment in the following manner:

1. School staff must report such information to the Director of the program or their designee.
2. When a report of alleged abuse or maltreatment of a child or children in a day care center is being made by a mandated reporter who is a staff member of the day care center, the report must be made by a staff member who has direct knowledge of the allegation(s) of suspected abuse or maltreatment.
3. If the Director of the child day care center is the person allegedly responsible for the alleged abuse or maltreatment, staff must report the alleged abuse or maltreatment directly to the Statewide Central Register of Child Abuse and Maltreatment.
4. The Director or operator of the child day care center is responsible for implementing procedures which ensure the safety and protection of any child named in a report of child abuse or maltreatment involving a situation which occurs while the child is in attendance at the center. Immediately after making a report, the director or operator of the center must take such appropriate action as is necessary to ensure the health and safety of the children involved in a report and as necessary, of any other children in the center. The Director or operator must also take all reasonable steps to preserve any potential evidence of abuse or maltreatment. Insofar as possible, any action taken under this subdivision must cause as little disruption as possible to the daily routine of the children in the center.

## **Corporal Punishment Statement**

Children's Bill of Rights of the American Montessori Society defines the Montessori Mission as protecting "the right of each child to have the freedom and opportunity to develop to his or her full potential". The Montessori approach cultivates a classroom order and the child's responsibility within that order as opposed to overly restrictive or suppressive forms of discipline. As such, there is no place for corporal punishment, nor is it permitted anywhere in the Montessori environment.

## **Policy On External Advertising within AMS**

Regarding advertisement or promotion of outside groups, events, and products, AMS will maintain a singular ongoing source for parent communication. Applicable events, offerings, and promotional materials can be approved by the director for posting on a community bulletin board in the lobby. The Community Bulletin Board will be primary means of external advertisement within the school, and will serve as an unobtrusive method for communication of outside materials. The director will use discretion in the handling of external promotional materials to be sent home via folders, based on appropriateness and frequency.

## **Health & Safety Guidelines**

During the hours when your child is in School, every precaution is taken to protect each child and ensure good health. We are not allowed to administer medication, but we invite you to come to the School to give medications that your child must have during school hours. When medication is given at the School, the name of the medicine, dose, and the parent giving the dose will be logged for the School records.

A list of emergency numbers is filed in the School, which contains parents' home phone numbers, business numbers, and addresses. Should a parent be unavailable, however, it is necessary for the School to have authorization to receive medical treatment for the child. Teachers MAY NOT administer any medication to a child.

## **Contagious Disease**

Whenever a contagious disease or illness has been reported to the School, the School will notify all parents. **If a doctor has diagnosed your child as having any contagious disease or illness, you are required to call the School and inform the Director of the diagnosis.**

## **Injuries**

If your child sustains an injury during the School day, an injury report is filled out describing the situation that resulted in the injury, the injury itself, first aid procedures taken and the name of the adult supervisor who handled the situation. Both School personnel and parent sign this report when the child is picked up. Parents may request a copy of this report.

## **School Insurance**

The Alfred Montessori School does not provide medical insurance for the students enrolled in the program. If your child is injured during the school day and requires medical attention, the parents are responsible for payment.

## **Emergency Drills**

Because it is necessary for all children and teachers to clear the building immediately in any fire, disaster, or emergency, the School will practice at least one fire drill per month.

## **Outdoor Activities**

Throughout the day, students may leave the School to take walks, visit the library, or play at the playground. A sign will be left on the door stating where the children have gone and the answering machine will be on if there is no one in the School.

## **Illness Policy**

To protect children and staff from exposure to infections and contagious disease, the Montessori Teaching Staff or Director will contact you to come and take your child home if your child exhibits any of these conditions during the school day:

### **Key criteria for exclusion of children who are ill**

- The child is too ill to participate in program activities.
- The illness results in a need for care that is greater than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children;
- An acute change in behavior – this could include lethargy/lack of responsiveness, irritability, persistent crying, difficult breathing, or having a quickly spreading rash;
- Fever:
  - Temperature above 101°F orally, or 100°F or higher taken axillary (armpit) or measured by an equivalent method, **AND** accompanied by behavior change or other signs and symptoms (*eg., sore throat, rash, vomiting, diarrhea, breathing difficulty or cough*).
  - Under 6 months of age: Unexplained temperature above 100°F axillary (armpit) or 101°F rectally (*staff are prohibited from taking a child's temperature rectally*) should be medically evaluated.
  - Under 2 months of age: Any fever should get urgent medical attention.
- Diarrhea:
  - Diapered children whose stool is not contained in the diaper or if the stool frequency exceeds two or more stools above normal for the child.
  - Toilet-trained children if the diarrhea is causing soiled pants or clothing.
  - Blood or mucous in the stools not explained by dietary change, medication, or hard stools.
  - Confirmed medical diagnosis of salmonella, E.coli, or Shigella infection, until cleared by the child's health care provider to return to the program.
- Vomiting more than two times in the previous 24 hours, unless the vomiting is determined to be caused by a non-infections conditions and the child remains adequately hydrated.
- Abdominal pain that continues for more than two hours or intermittent pain associated with fever or other signs or symptoms of illness.
- Mouth sores with drooling unless the child's health care provider states that the child is not infectious.
- Active tuberculosis until the child's primary care provider or local health department states child is on appropriate treatment and can return.
- Streptococcal pharyngitis (*strep throat or other streptococcal infection*) until 24 hours after treatment has started.
- Head lice until after the first treatment (*note: exclusion is not necessary before the end of the program day*).
- Scabies until treatment has been given.
- Chickenpox (varicella) until all lesions have dried or crusted (*usually six days after onset of rash*).
- Rubella until six days after rash appears.
- Pertussis until five days of appropriate antibiotic treatment.
- Mumps until five days after onset of parotid gland swelling.
- Measles until four days after onset of rash.
- Hepatitis A virus infection until the child is approved by the health care provider to return to the program.
- Any child determined by local health department to be contributing to the transmission of illness during an outbreak.
- Impetigo until treatment has been started.

**Please keep your child home if s/he exhibits any of the above symptoms.** Contagious diseases often begin with symptoms of a common cold. Your child may be refused admission to the classroom or sent home during the day if the staff detects an illness. The Montessori Teaching Staff also may request that the child stay home the entire following day, and/or request from the parent a written opinion from an appropriate health professional when the health of a child is in question. If a child is well enough to attend school, the child will be expected to participate in both indoor and outdoor activities.

***If three or more children have been absent due to a diagnosed contagious illness you will be notified by a note in your child's mailbox.***

If a parent fails to pick up a sick child within one hour from the time they are notified that the child needs to be taken home, a \$10 an hour fee will be levied. The Director and Board reserve the right to request withdrawal of a child whose parents fail to abide by the prompt pick-up policy.

### **When a Sick Child Can Return to School Guide:**

- \* Cold/flu: Your child should be **fever free without fever reducers for 24 hours** and symptoms quieted to a few sniffles or coughs.
- \* Strep Throat: On antibiotics and fever free for at least **24 hours**. S/he should not have a sore throat.
- \* Conjunctivitis: On antibiotics for at least **24 hours** and eye redness has lightened and there's **no** discharge.
- \* Chicken Pox: All lesions should be crusted over (generally 6 days after the rash breaks out).
- \* Ear infection: As long as the child is not in pain and is without fever.
- \* Parasitic infections: As directed by the child's physician.
- \* Vomiting/ Diarrhea: A minimum of 24 hours after last vomiting episode, and stools should have returned to normal.

Please speak with the Director regarding any illnesses not listed.

### **School Age Program- Attendance Confirmation Procedure**

1. All parents of school-aged children will provide AMS with a written schedule noting days their child will be taking the bus from Alfred-Almond Central School to AMS.
2. If a child will not be attending AMS on a scheduled day, it is the responsibility of the parent to call AMS to notify of their child's expected absence.
3. In the event a parent neglects to notify AMS that their child will not be expected to arrive on the AACCS bus, AMS staff will first contact the parents at the numbers provided and record on attendance sheet that the parents have been called. If the parents can not be reached, the AMS Director will contact the AACCS Bus Garage to verify whether the child attended school and which bus they departed on and record contact with bus garage on attendance sheet.

### **Snow Day Policy**

The decision to close or delay opening of the Alfred Montessori School will be made by the Director in consultation with the Board President. When Alfred-Almond Central School is delayed there will be no before school child care, and AMS will open at 9:00 AM. When AACCS closes for inclement weather that affects driving conditions, the Montessori School will also close. Once a decision is made, the Director will notify the following TV stations: WIVB Channel 4      WGRZ Channel 2      WKBW Channel 7

In the event of an early dismissal, parents will be notified via phone at the number(s) they have listed on their child's emergency blue card.

Credit will not be given or days rescheduled due to School closing for inclement weather unless there are extenuating circumstances.

### **Electric Outage Policy**

When an electric outage occurs at the School, the Director and Board president will be in contact to determine if the school will remain open. If the decision is made to close the school, the parent and/or contact on the student's blue card will be contacted by a phone call. Upon notification the parent and/ or contact will be expected to pick up your child within 2 hours. When the school is closed due to an electric outage, it will not re-open until the next school day.

### **Emergency Relocation Sites**

If there is ever an emergency that our school is not safe to go back in to there are cleared relocation sites for staff and children. Our primary relocation site is the Terra Cotta Coffee House located at 34 N. Main Street in Alfred and the phone number is 607-587-8800. Our secondary relocation site is Alfred University's Powell Campus Center, phone number being 607-871-2175. Our staff's primary concern is to get the children safely to the relocation site and then parent or an emergency contact on the child's blue card will be contacted.

### **Parent Activity Requirement**

Maria Montessori believed that a child's education is enriched by parental involvement in the fabric of the school and she saw parental involvement as an essential component of her philosophy. Parent involvement is the backbone of our school community and there are a wide variety of volunteer opportunities with differing time commitments to encourage all parents to contribute their energy and skills. Some activities may include fundraising, school outings, joining the Board of Directors or volunteering at the school. Being involved at AMS is a great way to get to know each other better, and to learn more about the school. Don't hesitate to ask how your talents could be used within our school!

### **Board of Directors**

We are a non-profit School and have a Board of Directors. Members of the Board are parents of children or friends of the Alfred Montessori School. The members direct our operations, goals and finances. Meetings are held the second Monday of each month. If you would like to learn more about serving on the Board, please contact any Board member or the Director.

## **PARENT HANDBOOK RECEIPT**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, acknowledge receipt of the Alfred Montessori School's 2015-2016 Parent's Handbook. I understand that it contains information pertaining to the School's policies and procedures. I agree that it is my responsibility to thoroughly read, to become familiar with, and abide by the contents.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent or Guardian Name (Please print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent or Guardian Signature

Please return this signed Parent Handbook Receipt to the school. Thank you!