



# **FMS PARENT HANDBOOK**

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*We welcome your child and your family to our Montessori community. We feel privileged to be a part of your lives. This handbook will help foster the best possible communication between the school and the home.*

*This handbook provides important information on school policies and programs. Please read it carefully, keep it handy for reference, and contact us if you have any further questions or concerns.*

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# INTRODUCTION

## ***History***

Foothills Montessori school was founded in the home of Leanne Jorgensen. It has grown from 16 students to a school of over 300 students ranging in ages from 3-14 years old.

## ***Description***

We currently have 10 classrooms servicing preschool through eighth grade. We offer a wide variety of enrichment courses including a beautiful and rich outdoor environment, as well as a multi-purpose room and office area.

## ***Commitment***

Foothills Montessori School was founded to be a world-class private school using the Montessori method. We constantly strive toward this goal guided by our mission and our four pillars. Our program is a cohesive and comprehensive program, and our environment is set up to foster respect for the individual child and a sense of community that brings out the best in individuals.

# EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

## ***Mission Statement***

The purpose of Foothills Montessori School is to provide an educational environment which serves the whole child – intellectually, physically, emotionally, and spiritually, cultivates a life-long love of learning and inspires a passion for excellence, makes it possible for children to learn to their highest potential, and nurtures the curiosity, creativity, and imagination born within us all.

## ***Our School Rests on Four Pillars:***

1. Excellence – the desire and commitment of doing ones best in every possible area of life.
2. Universal Values – habits and ways of thinking and acting which exhibit deeply held values including honesty, integrity, responsibility, compassion, peacefulness, respect for self and others, and a love of community.
3. Global Perspective – understanding, extensive knowledge, and respect for our world and all those in it.
4. Service – a lifelong commitment to giving something back through service to others.

## ***Essential Elements of a Quality Montessori Program***

- Montessori schools are based on the principles of respect and independence.
- Montessori programs teach children to think and discover for themselves.
- Children and teachers work in a carefully prepared environment.
- Curriculum is organized into a spiral of integrated studies.
- Montessori materials are a road from the concrete to the abstract.
- Montessori schools give children the sense of belonging to a family and help them live with other people.
- Multi-age classrooms foster a sense of collaboration and mentoring among students. Older students are encouraged to be role models for younger ones.
- Montessori teachers incorporate a second language, music, movement, and art into the curriculum.
- Montessori teachers have the ability to work with children of different learning styles.
- Montessori teachers strive to awaken the child's spirit and imagination and encourage a normal desire for independence.
- Montessori teachers help the child learn how to observe, question, and explore ideas independently.
- Montessori teachers help develop the kindness, courtesy, and respect that will help the child become a member of society.
- Montessori teachers rarely present a lesson to more than a handful of children at one time and limit their lessons to brief, efficient presentations.
- Montessori parents value an educational system that reaches the whole child.
- Montessori parents participate in the education of their child and support the school community.

## ***Maria Montessori***

Dr. Maria Montessori (1870-1952) was the first female medical doctor in Italy. Dr. Montessori was responsible for treating and caring for a group of low-income children in Rome. It was there that she founded the first “Casa de Bambini.” Through her deep respect for children and her outstanding skill of observation, she created a child-centered method of education. Today, Montessori schools are highly regarded throughout the world.

## **CURRICULUM**

We offer children a carefully prepared environment, rich in learning materials and experiences. Students are grouped in mixed-age classes (3-6 yrs), (6-9 yrs), (9-12 yrs), and (12-14 yrs) that allow them to interact with each other on a variety of levels. The teacher is a facilitator in the learning process. Through careful observation and guidance, children are directed toward meaningful activity, which helps them discover and develop their own interests and abilities.

In all grade levels, children follow an enhanced Montessori Curriculum, which includes:

Language	Botany	Arts	World Cultures/History
Mathematics	Zoology	Performing Arts/Music	Environmental Education
Geometry	Science	Foreign Language	Peace Education
Geography	Practical Life	Computer Literacy	Physical Education

### ***Primary Program***

The Primary Program consists of five main areas:

1. The Practical Life area helps children develop order, concentration, coordination, and independence in the care of self and the environment.
2. The Sensorial area offers children a chance to develop their sensory acuteness with materials relating to color, size, shape, sound, smell and touch.
3. Language Arts activities include pre-reading activities, vocabulary development and introduction to reading and writing.
4. The Math area provides concrete and manipulative materials through which the children discover the meaning of quantity, gain an overview of the number system and learn mathematical operations.
5. In Geography, History, Botany, and Zoology the children explore the physical, cultural, and natural worlds.

Also included are art, music, movement, performing arts, and foreign language. Communication, grace, courtesy, problem solving, and other social skills are integrated throughout the curriculum.

### ***Spanish Immersion***

We currently offer a 50/50 dual language Spanish Immersion Program for the primary age group (3-6 years) and lower elementary age group (6-9 years). This program allows children to receive 50% of their lessons in Spanish and 50% of their lessons in English throughout the day.

### ***Kindergarten***

This class is an extension of the Primary Program for 5-6-year-old children (5 years old by September 30<sup>th</sup>) who show academic and social readiness. These students have the opportunity to interact in the mixed-age group classroom during the morning work cycle. In the afternoon, Kindergarten students work with their peers and have the opportunity to pursue academic and cultural subjects in greater depth.

### ***Elementary & Middle School Program (Ages 6-14)***

Through personalized instruction and planning, students are encouraged to pursue studies independently and take responsibility for their learning. They are encouraged to make choices and work cooperatively. Curriculum follows state guidelines and includes Math, Language, Science, Geography, and History. The natural and cultural worlds are studied in depth. These students are refining their ability to obtain knowledge through research. The students develop an understanding of the relationship between all subjects. The students are also developing their capacities to move from concrete to abstract.

As part of the Montessori experience, students develop important interpersonal skills, become responsible members of a community and establish a code of conduct. Classroom learning is enriched by field trips, guest speakers, theatrical productions, simulations, community service, and other special events.

### ***Computers & Tablets***

FMS provides technology resources and internet access to students and has taken precautions to restrict access to objectionable material. Our policies are intended to promote the most effective, safe, productive, and instructionally sound uses of networked information and communication tools. However, we cannot guarantee that the network will be without error. We expect students to exercise appropriate personal responsibility in their use of these resources including the following:

- Students may not chat, instant message, text, play games, access music/videos, hack/prank, or visit social network sites i.e. My Space, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, Pinterest, etc.
- Students may not download software or change network settings and passwords.
- Students may not password protect files. Teachers and administration always have access to student data.
- Students may only use computers and printers as related to the curriculum as assigned by FMS teachers and not for personal use.
- FMS has the right to look at any data, email, logs, or files that exist on USB flash drives and hard drives without prior notice to users.
- Students may not copy, save, plagiarize, or redistribute copyrighted material.
- Students may not eat or drink while using technology equipment.
- Students agree to notify a teacher immediately if they mistakenly access inappropriate information.
- Parents will be held financially responsible for any intentional damage to FMS laptops, computers, network, etc. including vandalism, downloading viruses/worms, etc.

Upper Elementary and Middle School students (4<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade) may bring a personal laptop, Chromebook, or tablet to school for their use with a signed release from a parent. They are not to be shared with other students and must have appropriate firewall, parental controls, and active antivirus software. Personal device use on campus falls under the aforementioned policies and user guidelines. FMS is not responsible for lost, stolen, or damaged personal property and is the sole responsibility of the student.

## **GETTING READY FOR SCHOOL**

### ***First Day***

The first day of school is an important experience in the child's life. His or her adjustment to this new environment depends in a large part on the attitudes of the parents, and their awareness of the program and its goals. Here are a few ways to ease the transition.

It is best to avoid excessive discussion about starting school. The child should feel it would be a normal and natural part of his or her growth and an extension of home life. If parents are calm and positive in their approach, the child will sense this, which will help ease the transition into this new experience.

Upon arrival, bring your child into the classroom entry where you will be greeted by one of the teachers. It is best to leave promptly after saying your good-byes. Parents should have a matter-of-fact attitude, which gives the child greater security. It is best to show confidence in the staff. Most children have separation problems on the first days, and sometimes weeks of school. Try not to be too anxious about this, realizing that children need time to bond with the other children, the teachers, and the environment. The teacher will give you an accounting during the first weeks of your child's day.

### ***Social Situations***

The developing and refining of social skills is part school experience and an important part of the child's work. The teachers are there to assist this process. During the year, children may become involved in friendships that form triangles, or have difficulty with a particular child. If you feel a situation of this type may be causing problems, please contact us so we can attempt to help the child through the transition period of making friends and practicing conflict resolution strategies.

When a student leaves midyear, it is of real benefit to the child and his/her classmates to plan to say goodbye. All children are made to feel they are part of our “family” at school. When a child leaves, the other children frequently wonder what happened to their classmate.

Often the atmosphere of a school is influenced by wonderfully positive people. Unfortunately, the opposite can also be true. Please remember that the children are influenced by our attitudes. If you have a problem or concern, please go to the source, and discuss it with them directly in order to resolve it. Please use discretion and refrain from negative discussions and criticism in front of parents and children. Above all, we ask that you never speak negatively of your child or any other child within his/her earshot. If you are concerned about your child’s development or behavior, please talk with the child’s teacher without the child present. If you need to speak to the child about something of this nature, it is best to do so out of earshot of others. As you know, children are sensitive beings, as we all are, and should be treated with ultimate respect and dignity, even when being taught better ways of behaving.

***Talking With Your Child About School***

Parents of primary and elementary age children are frequently frustrated when they receive no response to the question “what did you do today?” Children do many activities throughout the day, and it is sometimes difficult to articulate them. Also, Montessori typically emphasizes the process over the product, especially in the primary program. One strategy may be to ask something specific like “did you cut carrots today, or did you work with the bead chains?” Another suggestion is to ask about closing circle or end of day activities and work backward. In addition, you might find that after an hour or more at home the child may spontaneously share something from the day. This is especially true if he/she does not perceive talking about school as opening the opportunity for criticism or pressure. We also encourage parents to schedule a classroom observation, from which you will come away with greater insight of your child’s day.

**DAILY PROCEDURES**

***School Hours***

<b>Program</b>	<b>Begin</b>	<b>End</b>
Preschool Half Day AM	8:30 AM	11:15 AM
Preschool Half Day PM	12:15 PM	3:00 PM
Preschool Full Day & Kindergarten	8:30 AM	3:00 PM
Elementary Full Day (1 <sup>st</sup> – 3 <sup>rd</sup> )	8:15 AM	3:15 PM
Elementary Full Day (4 <sup>th</sup> – 6 <sup>th</sup> )	8:15 AM	3:30 PM
Middle School (7 <sup>th</sup> – 8 <sup>th</sup> )	8:15 AM	3:30 PM
Extended Day	7:00 AM	6:00 PM
Lunch Bunch	11:15 AM	12:15 PM

***Arrival and Departure***

Saying “goodbye” tips for young children:

Initially it can be difficult for parents of young children to separate at the beginning of the school year. We have found that a short and positive good-bye is easiest for the child. Prolonged or inconsistent goodbyes often make the separation more difficult. The school attempts to call all parents of upset children when the child has settled down. You may also feel free to call the school for reassurance that your child has settled in and is adjusting well.

Early Care:

Parents and children arriving between 7:00 am and 8:15 am (Primary) and 7:00 am – 8:00 am (Elementary) should only be those who are using the extended care service. If you are using this service please park your car, walk your child to the designated Early Care area and sign them in. You will be greeted by a staff member.

Primary:

Please park in the designated parking area. Walk your child into school between 8:15-8:30 am, holding his/her hand through the parking lot. Outside the classroom door, the teacher will greet your child and welcome them into the classroom. This is the time for you to say your good-byes. If each day is consistent the child feels more comfortable. It is also best to discuss how your departure will be handled beforehand, so your child knows what to expect. We have found that when children are walked in and out by their parents, the transitions are gentler, more child-friendly, and begin the day in a more positive manner. Students with siblings in the Elementary program may arrive at 8:10 am. We thank you for taking the time to escort your child to his/her classroom.

In cases of extenuating circumstances, we will provide curbside drop-off and pick-up. Please reach out to us if you need this assistance.

#### Elementary & Middle School:

Please either walk your child to class in the morning or drop them off curbside (8:00- 8:15 am) and watch him/her pass through the gate. Your child should then be able to safely walk to his or her classroom where the teachers will be waiting.

We will provide curbside drop off (8:00-8:15 am) and pick-up for elementary students as of the first day of school on the east side of the school (Stephanie Street). Curbside pick-up will be between 3:15-3:30 pm **only** for 1<sup>st</sup> through 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and 3:30-3:45 pm **only** for 4<sup>th</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Middle School students can be picked up between 3:30-3:45 pm in the front of the school. If your child is tardy (after 8:15 am) you must come into the office and get a tardy slip to take to your child's teacher.

#### **Keyless Entry System (KES)**

A keyless entry system is located at the front office door. Each parent is assigned a code in the system which is the last 5 digits of their social security number provided on your child's emergency form. All parents and students should enter the campus through the front office door, as the front gates will remain locked and secure. The east gate will be open during curbside drop-off and pick-up times only with staff present to monitor appropriately. Parents may exit through the front double gates or the office; however, please make sure the gate is closed properly as you exit to ensure the safety of our campus. Please do not allow others to enter through the gate as you exit.

KES instructions for use:

- Press "start" – red light will appear to indicate the system is "ready"
- Enter the last 5 digits of your social security number (provided on the student's emergency form)
- Press "open" – green light will appear as "accept" if code is entered properly
- Push door open and enter

#### **Other Important Tips**

1. Because the teachers are greeting the children and helping them to begin their day, it is not an appropriate time to converse extensively with your child's teacher.
2. If you wish to speak with a teacher, leave a message at the office, record your request in the communication notebook kept with the sign-in sheet (primary only), or send a note on Procure asking for an appointment. Please refrain from the practice of conversing for more than a few moments with the staff members while they are in contact with the children. Lengthy conversations distract the staff members who need to be giving 100% of their attention to the children. The staff members will be happy to respond to email communication, as well.
3. When picking up your child, please do not encourage him/her to continue to play on the playground while you wait. This is confusing to the staff regarding safety and supervision (i.e. "Who is watching the child?"). Children should be picked up and/or signed out from their classrooms or curbside promptly unless you are utilizing extended care services.
4. Please always watch your child(ren) carefully when on campus and in the parking lot.

#### **Extended Care**

Children attending the extended day program are escorted to a designated room at the end of the day and signed into the program by their teacher. Picking your child up from extended care requires walking into the building and signing your child out on the extended day sign in/out sheet. Drop-ins will be accepted in the Extended Care program. Please notify the office to take advantage of this service.

#### **Procedure for Releasing Children**

Frequently, relatives or friends will come to pick up children. We will not release a child to anyone without permission from the parent. Communication to this effect must be given to administration, and identification must be shown. Otherwise, the child will only be released to a parent and/or authorized individuals listed on the emergency release form provided at the beginning of the year. Please note even if the person is listed on the form, he/she will have to show identification the first time he/she picks up the child. It is also helpful if the usual person who picks up the child would inform the teacher if there will be a change from the ordinary, even if the individual is listed on the emergency release through Procure messaging.

This helps the pickup process go more quickly and smoothly. If the child is in a carpool, all members must be listed on the emergency release form.

### **Attendance**

All FMS students, even our youngest, are expected to attend school daily, arriving before the start of the school day. Consistent attendance and prompt arrival are essential. Nothing is more disruptive to a child's education than irregular attendance. Consistency and routine are important to every child's development, including preschool students. We depend on our families' full support in this area. Students and parents who are often arriving late or frequently absent from school may be required to withdraw from FMS.

### **Absences**

It is important for the school to know if your child is ill, if the illness is communicable, if your child is taking a day off, or if you are taking a vacation. Frequent absences, tardiness and/or early departure from the classroom impede children's academic progress and cause children to miss important experiences. **Please notify us via Procare messaging if your child will be absent for any reason by 9:00 am.**

If parents know of an absence in advance, such as a vacation or scheduled medical procedure, parents should pre-arrange the absence by sending communication to the head teacher and administration.

Approved absences are those that have followed the above procedure. Kindergarten, elementary and middle school students should not have more than 20 absences per academic school year (10 per semester). Unless otherwise approved by the School Leader, students who exceed these guidelines, including excessive tardiness and early departures, may be withdrawn from FMS, lose preferred enrollment status, and/or not advance to the next level. This policy allows us to do all we can to ensure that each child grows and learns to his/her potential. Absences, tardiness, and early departures will be noted on all report cards.

Elementary and middle school students begin instruction promptly at 8:15am. Therefore, we recommend students to arrive no later than 8:10am to allow ample time for them to put away their personal items and to get ready for their lessons. Primary students should arrive in class no later than 8:30am. Valuable experience is lost for everyone if your child is late for class. Please be on time.

### **Parking Lot Procedures**

Please enter at the Amador Lane entrance if you are parking at the front of the facility. Enter at the Stephanie Street entrance to park on the east side of the campus or if you are dropping off at our curbside service at the side gate entrance. All vehicles should exit onto Amador Lane. When dropping off your child, please park if you are walking him/her to class and do not stop at the curb or park in the thruway. The curb is for quick pick-up and drop-off only, and not for parking of any kind. Unattended vehicles are subject to ticketing by the City of Henderson. Please drive slowly and cautiously through the parking lot. Please hold your child's hand in the parking lot. In addition, please use the designated crosswalks in the parking lot and at the corner of Stephanie and Amador when crossing traffic flow areas.

## **CLOTHING**

### **Primary**

Clothing for school should be comfortable and help create a feeling of independence in your child. All clothing should be easy for the child to remove. We encourage parents to place the responsibility of choosing clothes on the child. We suggest that you have the child make choices about clothing and outerwear the night before. This will make your mornings go much more smoothly.

Footwear is especially important. It is difficult and unsafe for children to run, climb, or walk in flip-flops, clogs, backless shoes, crocs, and shoes with heels. Therefore, we ask that you refrain from sending your children in these types of shoes. Additionally, all children who would like to work in the outdoor environment and/or utilize the Exploratorium must wear closed toe shoes.

Primary children will need a plastic zip-lock bag containing a change of clothing (3 pair of underwear, socks, shirt, and pants). All clothing must be well labeled with the student's name. Also, label the bag with a permanent marker with your child's name.



We ask parents to give careful consideration to the clothing being worn. Avoid clothing that depicts current popular cartoon and movie characters especially those that could encourage aggressive play/behavior, and refrain from flip sequin shirts. This type of clothing is often a distraction to other children at school. Our goal, to provide an environment that encourages respect for each other, cooperation, and concentration, is best served without these types of influences.

### ***Elementary & Middle School***

Students need to dress in a way that is conducive to learning and P.E. activities. FMS reserves the right to determine if any hair or clothing style is distracting or inappropriate. The following guidelines help keep the focus on learning rather than what someone is wearing:

- No clothing that depicts negative, distracting, or inappropriate messages.
- Tennis or athletic shoes must be worn on physical education days to participate in P.E.
- No sleeveless shirts, spaghetti straps, flip sequin shirts, see-through, or low-cut shirts. Tank top straps should be 3 finger widths.
- Nails should be kept at a length conducive to writing/typing.
- No bare midriffs.
- No cut-offs or jeans with holes or rips, or sheer yoga pants.
- No shorts with less than a 5" inseam or skirts shorter than 3" above the knee.
- No accessories (watches, belts, etc.) that can be construed as a game, toy, or otherwise inappropriate object.
- Watches should not be worn to school that have phone or internet access.

A parent or responsible party will be contacted to bring a change of clothes, or the student will be provided a change of clothing kept on campus, should a child come to school in any of the above. Repeated dress code violations may result in withdrawal from the program.

## **FOOD & WATER**

Foothills Montessori School is committed to teaching the whole child, which requires us to take nutrition very seriously. The snack that is provided at the school will be nutritious and wholesome. If your child has a food allergy or food sensitivity, please inform the child's teacher in writing prior to the first day of school. Also, indicate all allergies on the Emergency Form provided in the registration packet. Students are also encouraged to bring a refillable water bottle, especially during warmer weather. Please make sure the bottle is labeled with the child's name in accordance with licensing requirements.

Elementary and middle school students may bring an individual daily snack that should be of a nutritious value and does not interfere with the student's ability to continue with their work.

We strongly encourage nutritional lunches. Things to avoid are artificial flavoring, excessive amounts of salt and fat, preservatives (BHA, BHT), and excessive amounts of refined sugar. **Please do not send Lunchables and snack items that list sugar as one of the first few ingredients. No candy or soda will be allowed.** Lunches should be packed with an ice pack. Please do not send items in glass containers for the safety of the children. It is best to pack items in reusable plastic containers.

Having your child help you prepare their lunch the night before will help him/her have positive feelings for the food packed. Discuss the nutritional value of each item and perhaps where it comes from or how it is made. Finger foods are especially helpful for younger children, such as fruit cut into bite size pieces, or carrots or green pepper strips. We suggest that parents try to keep the experience positive and allow for limited choices.

Some other ideas include yogurt, salad, fruit, sandwiches, vegetables, and leftovers.

All uneaten foods, which can be contained, will be sent home. You will want to monitor your children's lunch boxes to see what they like and dislike.

As a part of our curriculum of grace and courtesy, we encourage that each child preferably brings a cloth napkin with his/her lunch. We actively teach manners and appreciate your support in this area.

## HEALTH & SAFETY

### **Health Immunizations**

Foothills Montessori School is required to follow Nevada State Law regarding immunizations of all students. Immunizations must be completed prior to attending any public or private school or preschool. Health records/immunization copies must be on file with the school prior to attending class. State law does provide exemptions for religious or medical reasons. Please contact the office for further information regarding exemption.

### **Health Education**

The State Department regulations specify that students, kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade, may be excused from physical education for the following reasons:

- a. Non-participation for physical reasons as certified by a physician's statement.
- b. Non-participation for religious reasons as certified by a written statement.

### **Illnesses and Emergencies**

If an illness or emergency arises, we will attempt to contact a responsible party. We will follow these procedures:

- a. Your child will be taken to an area away from the other children.
- b. **A parent or responsible party will be contacted to pick up the child within 45 minutes.**
- c. We require three telephone numbers to call in case your child gets sick or there is an emergency. Usually the numbers are for their parents and a relative or a friend. Some parents have occupations where it is difficult to be contacted and/or leave on short notice. If you have such a job, please provide the names of individuals who have the flexibility to pick up your child.
- d. If a serious illness or emergency occurs and we are unable to reach a responsible party, we will contact your personal physician, or if necessary, call an ambulance or other emergency service. It is absolutely imperative that you keep the school up to date on any changes in telephone numbers, emergency contacts, and other pertinent information.

If your child has any of the following indications, he/she is not healthy enough to attend school.

- Fever of 100 degrees or higher
- Deep coughing
- Yellow or green nasal or eye discharge
- Upset stomach
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- Unidentified rash
- Any signs of COVID or if a member of the household is exhibiting any COVID symptoms.

If your child has one or more of these symptoms, ***please keep them home***. If a child exhibits any of these symptoms at school, a parent will be notified to make arrangements to pick up the child from school. The child may return to school after they are symptom free for a minimum of 24 hours. We are aware that this can be a burden. However, keeping the child home when they are sick not only makes the child more comfortable, but also prevents exposure to the rest of the students and staff.

Given the nature of children, accidents will happen. Hopefully, they will always be minor bumps and bruises. In the event of an accidental injury, the staff member present will care for the child and notify other staff members and the administration. In the event of a serious accident, the family of the child is notified, and arrangements are made for the child to be taken from the school. In an extreme emergency, FMS will call 911. For all accidents of more than a very minor nature, an injury report will be completed and signed by the attending staff member and the parent. The report will be kept in the child's file and parents will be given a copy.

Participation in FMS activities and use of any recreational equipment/facilities involves a risk of accidental injury despite all safety precautions. Parents and/or guardians of the student enrolled at FMS assume all risks and hazards incidental to the activities, and release from responsibility and agree to indemnify and hold harmless FMS, its officers, Directors, independent contractors, and all employees for any illness or injury to the child or family members occurring during their participation in any activities, trips, or use of any facilities conducted by FMS.

## ***Medication***

Schools are required to follow stringent procedures concerning medications to be administered at school. They are as follows:

1. All non-prescription medication must be accompanied by a note from the doctor stating the times, dosages, and length of treatment. **This includes over the counter medication.**
2. Prescription medication must remain in the container bearing the original label that shows the prescription number, name of medication, date filled, physician's name, child's name, expiration date, and directions for dosage. **Medication may only be administered one time per day (lunchtime) per Child Care Licensing.**
3. A release from a parent stating that Foothills Montessori School has your permission to administer medication (form available in the office).
4. **All medications should be handed from a parent to an office staff member and enclosed in an appropriate container. Do not give medications to your child's teacher.**
5. Whenever possible, we prefer that the parent administer nebulizer treatments before school or make arrangements to come to the school and administer the treatments.
6. Parents must check and confirm the medical dosage sheet in the office and discuss any problems with the staff member in charge.

## ***Toilet Mastery***

Our licensing requirements preclude us from having any children in our care that have not acquired toilet mastery. Included in this mastery is the ability to care for themselves after using the toilet. Please dress children so they are confident they can succeed (avoid pants/shorts with difficult buttons or hooks to manipulate).

## ***Emergency Plan***

Foothills Montessori School has comprehensive plans in place to respond to emergencies including active threat, fire, and natural disaster. Fire drills are conducted and recorded monthly. A drill for natural disasters and active threat are conducted and recorded quarterly. These drills are typically facilitated by the local fire department with the support of the FMS staff.

In the event of an actual emergency, an all-school text message will be sent to parents to notify them of the emergency and other important information. It is imperative that parents provide current cell phone numbers and the name of the cell provider on the emergency form for FMS to communicate with parents via text. Please be aware that text messaging will only be used in the event of an actual emergency, and not to be used to relay information of less importance. An emergency ticker will also appear on the home page of our website which will only appear in the event of a true emergency. Certain emergencies may require the staff and children to be evacuated from campus. Procedures have been established through Clark County School District to provide transportation and relocation to a local public school. The site for reunification, along with instructions, will also be posted to the emergency ticker on the website.

## ***CPR Training***

All staff members of Foothills Montessori School have received training and certification in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and First Aid.

## ***Pest Control/Air Fresheners***

FMS employs a pest control company to service and treat our campus on a bi-monthly basis. Service is performed when students are not present on campus and appropriate precautions are taken regarding the use of pesticides.

Air fresheners and diffusers are also used at times in the restrooms and classrooms.

## ***No Smoking, No Alcohol, No Pets***

Smoking and the use of alcohol is strictly always prohibited in the classrooms, on the campus/parking lot, and on field trips (local or long distance) of Foothills Montessori School. In addition, we have a strict no pet policy on school grounds or in any building located on the FMS campus in compliance with SNHD regulations.

## ***Reporting of Child Abuse or Neglect***

State law requires that any staff member who has reasonable cause to know or suspect that a child has been subjected to abuse or neglect, or who has observed a child being subjected to circumstances or conditions which could reasonably result in abuse or neglect, shall immediately report to the Department of Human Services, or the local law enforcement agency.

## **SHARING**

Occasionally, children may bring treasures that are important to them to share with the class. These may include objects from nature, such as shells or rocks, something they have made, or a cultural item. Please keep toys at home. If your child brings a toy to school, please tell him/her that toys must stay at home or in the car. Toys at school are a disruption in many ways. If you have questions about the appropriateness of an item, please check with your child's teacher before sending the item to school with your child in order to avoid disappointment on the part of the child. Sharing policies such as days or times will be explained by individual teachers during the first month of school.

### ***Personal Property***

Foothills Montessori assumes no responsibility for any items brought from home. We ask that you leave fragile materials at home so that they will be better protected. There is a Lost and Found box maintained in the front office. This will be placed at the gate periodically. Please check it for any items you may be missing. All items in the Lost and Found box not picked up will be sent to a charitable organization, typically once a month.

Please do not allow students to bring smart devices to school **or** make it clear they need to be shut off and in their backpack during the school day. These items are distracting to the work environment and will be taken from the student if used during class and/or school hours. Items will be held by the teacher for the parent to pick-up if confiscated by a staff member and will not be returned directly to the student. FMS is not liable in anyway and assumes no responsibility for lost electronic devices and personal property of the student.

## **BIRTHDAYS**

Your child's birthday is an important time and a learning experience for everyone. We invite parents of primary students to join us for circle time on this special day for approximately 20 minutes. For birthdays that fall on the weekend or if you are unable to attend circle on the actual birthday, please contact your child's teacher to arrange a different time or day. Summer birthdays are usually celebrated in May and the child's teacher will announce specific dates for these celebrations.

For primary birthdays we will have an activity called "The Circle of the Sun". We ask that parents bring in photographs of your child - one for each year of his/her life. Please be ready to share interesting facts about your child including where they were born, if a sibling arrived during that year, a special trip that was taken, or a special event or accomplishment. For example: "When Sara was three, we moved to Las Vegas. When Sara was four, her new baby sister arrived. Sara thought she was too small" et cetera. Please try to keep the information brief for each year, one to three sentences each. The child will carry the globe around the sun as the year's events are conveyed for each year of his/her life. Students in 1<sup>st</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade celebrate birthdays in various ways depending on the grade level which will be discussed during parent orientation at the beginning of each school year.

Often children will like to share a food on their birthday. An item to be shared for snack is welcome, but we ask that it be nutritious. Examples include bagels, a special bread, a baked item like muffins, or a food that represents a cultural or national origin of the child or someone he/she knows. Please check with the child's teacher before sending any food items to share. Food containing nuts of any kind should be avoided. Please no gifts, sweets, or goodie bags.

Difficulties and hurt feelings can occur when birthday invitations are passed out at school. Unless every child in the class is being invited, please send birthday invitations by mail. Please do not ask the child's teacher to pass out invitations or put them in the cubbies if all children are not invited.

## **PARENT / SCHOOL COMMUNICATION**

Foothills Montessori School strives to be in partnership with parents in the education of their children. We will strive to keep communication lines open between the parent and the school.

### ***Parent/Teacher Conferences (In-person or Zoom-TBD)***

Conferences are held in the fall and spring. It is essential that all parents, preferably both mother and father, attend conferences.

### ***Website/Blog/Facebook***

You will receive consistent communication from FMS regarding information on upcoming school events, such as parent nights, school festivals, holidays, and field trips, as well as other relevant school information. Calendar and event reminders are emailed to parents monthly from the office, in addition to being posted on Facebook and the FMS website. Parents should subscribe to their child's classroom blog to stay connected and current with information regarding the classroom. The PTO also sends monthly communication via email to parents in the form of a newsletter called the PTO Loop.

### ***Parent Nights***

Parent Nights will be held throughout the year. Issues such as discussing Montessori philosophy and parenting materials are sometimes presented. This is an excellent chance to expand your knowledge of how your child learns and how you can carry this philosophy into your home. Other times there is an Open House format followed with your child acting as a guide to his/her classroom. Parents are expected to support school events and parent nights and to make every effort to attend.

### ***Library***

FMS has a school library for the children's use. The school maintains a reference library on Montessori Child Development, and parenting issues. Interested parents may check out books for a 2-week period. The library has limited resources so parents should take ultimate care of the books checked out to them and ensure their safe return. If books are overdue for more than 30 days a \$5.00 charge is assessed. Lost or damaged books must be replaced by the parent.

### ***Parent Involvement***

All parents enrolling their children in FMS agree to involve themselves in their children's education by attending all Parent/Teacher conferences and by attending Parent Child Night and school events. Parents are expected to enforce all homework policies and ensure required assignments are completed and paperwork returned.

### ***Parent Volunteers***

We strongly encourage every parent to volunteer in order to feel like a part of our school community and be an active participant in your child's educational experience. We will do our best to provide you with creative and broad opportunities for involvement so that there will be "something for everyone." Involvement does not need to be extensive or time consuming in order to be meaningful to you and your child. Often just the sharing of an experience, cultural information, travel experiences, or career expertise at circle time can enrich the children's learning. We also have a Parent/Teacher Organization (PTO) which helps build community, supports the teachers, and conducts fundraising for the school. The PTO always encourages involvement and offers a wide variety of opportunities. Parents volunteering in the classroom must obtain a visitor's badge while on campus (see "Visitors" section below).

Participation/volunteering in any FMS activities and the use of any recreational facilities involves a risk of accidental injury despite all safety precautions. Volunteers assume all risks and hazards incidental to the activities, and release from responsibility and agree to indemnify and hold harmless FMS, its officers, independent contractors, and all employees for any illness or injury occurred during voluntary participation in any activities, trips, or use of any recreational facilities conducted by FMS.

### ***Visitors***

All adult visitors to the school, including parents of enrolled students, must come to the office and sign in unless at designated pick-up and drop-off times. All visitors, including vendors and parent volunteers, will need to provide a valid driver's license to the office to be scanned and placed on an approved list. In addition, a visitor badge will be generated

and must always be worn while on campus each visit. Visitors not wearing a badge will be asked to go to the office to sign in properly. Anyone not presenting a valid driver's license will be denied access to the campus.

On occasion friends, relatives, and former students ask to visit the school during school hours. Although we strive to have a warm and welcoming campus, this can be very distracting to the learning environment. All visits must receive prior approval from the administration and will only be approved for the end of the school day, except under rare circumstances. No drop-in visitors will be permitted.

### ***Observation***

Our doors are always open, and we encourage you to visit the school. We ask that each parent observe a classroom at least once a year. Formal observations do not begin until after the first six weeks of school and are not scheduled the week before a major holiday. You may call the office to schedule an observation time. Please check in at the office any time you visit the school before proceeding to your child's class. It is important that we are always aware of all adults on campus. We will give you a visitor badge and observation guideline sheet upon checking in. This is for the safety of our students and keeps the disruption of the work cycle to a minimum.

### ***Field Trips***

Your child will have the opportunity to go on field trips. The parents' written parental permission slip, signed during registration, is used for the entire year. Parents will be advised about trips involving transportation off premises usually provided by chartered buses, but on rare occasion by parent owned vehicles. The notice will give complete details. Parent owned vehicles must be covered by private liability insurance and parents must have a current driver's license and proof of insurance in their car or possession. Each driver will have a list of the children being transported in their car with the names and phone numbers of parents and or guardians. The driver of the privately owned vehicle and all passengers must wear seat belts or be in car seats if required by law. In addition, parent chaperones must sign up in advance of the field trip with their child's teacher as space is typically limited.

Each year, students are given a field trip t-shirt which must be worn during all off-campus outings for safety purposes. The shirt may be from the current school year or previous years. FMS and Be Kind sweatshirts and t-shirts are also acceptable if the FMS logo is present on the shirt. Unfortunately, students will not be able to attend a field trip if they are not wearing FMS apparel.

In the event you do not want your child to participate in any field trip or the student is not wearing appropriate FMS logo wear, the school will make every effort to find classroom space. If no such space is available, it may be necessary to keep your child home. There is no reduction of tuition for this absence. Children who arrive late for trips will remain in the office or in another classroom until their class returns. No transportation will be provided to and from school.

### ***School Directory***

We distribute a school directory in October of each school year. All parents/students who have agreed to be in the directory will be listed unless an objection is on file. The directory is to be used for social or child related purposes in relationship with FMS. The directory may not be used for solicitation of any kind.

### ***Who To Ask?***

Questions relating to your child's classroom, events, progress, or curriculum should be directed to your child's teachers. All inquiries relating to operations and policies/procedures of FMS and the PTO should be directed to the administrative team.

### ***Social Networking***

Students and parents social networking in any form at any time and in any place are not to mention classmates, families, teachers, staff, or the administration of Foothills Montessori School in a negative manner or to talk in a derogatory way about the school and/or its' families. Sites include, but are not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, Pinterest, etc. Please also refrain from being critical, judgmental, and infringing on others privacy. Doing so may result in suspension or withdrawal from the school.

## GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

### ***Admission***

Foothills Montessori School accepts children aged 3 years through 14 years. We admit students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally made available to all students at the school. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in administration of our educational policies, admission policies, and other school administered programs.

### ***Tuition***

Tuition is based upon a traditional 10-month school year (180 days). We follow an academic year calendar, which includes no school during winter and spring break, and select holidays. No refunds will be given if a child is sick, or time is missed because of vacations. A financial agreement must be signed before your child is enrolled, accompanied by the non-refundable enrollment fee of \$250.00 and a refundable deposit of \$250 if enrolment is cancelled by July 15th. Tuition is due in three payments on August 1<sup>st</sup>, October 1<sup>st</sup>, and December 1<sup>st</sup>. A ten-payment plan is available payable in monthly installments from August 1<sup>st</sup> through May 1<sup>st</sup>, however, enrollment in the Tuition Refund Plan is mandatory. A \$50 late charge is applied to payments received five (5) days after due date. If the balance is not cleared by the fifth day, it will also be subject to a \$50 late charge as noted above. A \$30 declined payment fee is applied to payments/checks that were declined by the bank. A 30-day written notice is required for change in schedule request; requests are not guaranteed. We reserve the right to increase tuition prices to meet economic changes when necessary. **Student accounts 30 days past due may result in the child being withdrawn from the school.**

A Credit Card Authorization Form is provided in the registration packet. All parents must have a valid credit card authorization on file. You have the option to make automatic payments via the card on file. Please note that we cannot accept American Express, but do accept Visa, MasterCard, and Discover including a 1.5% convenience fee. You may also opt to have tuition payments automatically deducted from the bank account of your choice by signing up for ACH for no additional fee. **Please note any account 10 days in arrears will automatically be charged to the credit card account in addition to a \$25.00 late fee.** Parents electing to pay their tuition in full by August 1<sup>st</sup> do not have to complete this form.

Withdrawal from the school requires at least one month's advance written notice. You must continue tuition payments for the entire school year unless participating in the tuition insurance plan, which will cover a portion of the outstanding tuition. There is no refund of any tuition for the school year and parents will be obligated for tuition for the balance of the academic year.

### ***Court Costs/Costs of Collection***

If, after normal channels of collection are followed, we are forced to refer your account for collection, you will pay the cost of collection, including but not limited to, attorney's fees.

### ***Admissions Process***

Upon receipt of application, birth certificate, non-refundable application fee, and previous school records, parents will be contacted to schedule an interview. The decision to accept the child for a particular program is made after interviews are conducted. Upon acceptance, an acceptance letter and financial agreement will be provided. This agreement is to be returned with the non-refundable enrollment deposit of \$500.00. Prior to attending, a registration packet will be provided. This includes enrollment forms, annual calendar, emergency contact information, health requirements, and other information.

### ***Student Files***

Each student will need to have a completed file within the first week of school. This includes:

- Application
- Signed Financial Agreement and Enrollment Contract
- Credit Card Authorization Form
- Emergency Form
- Copy of Immunizations with all shots being current or appropriate waivers
- Copy of the Child's Birth Certificate

- Any previous school records
- Field Trip Permission Slip
- Pre-Admission Physical Exam Sheet
- Permission to Release Information
- Child Care Licensing Statement (primary students only)
- Parent Handbook Receipt

### ***Re-Enrollment Procedures***

Re-enrollment takes place in February. Students already enrolled in the program are given the opportunity to re-enroll before new students are admitted. Elementary students must apply for re-admission each year and receive a letter of acceptance. Acceptance to the primary program does not guarantee acceptance into the elementary program, including the Spanish Immersion program. Siblings of currently enrolled students are given second priority. Open applications are accepted after re-enrollment is made available to currently enrolled families. Parents may request a class, but final decisions are made by the School Leader with input from the child's Head Teacher.

### ***Termination of Contract***

We, as a school, are committed to providing every opportunity for children to feel comfortable and make a positive adjustment to the classroom environment. At times this might include making a transfer to another classroom. However, there are times and circumstances when a child may be asked to leave. These situations may include:

- A child is not able to use the toilet facilities independently.
- A child is not making the adjustment to the classroom environment.
- It is determined that the needs of the child or the parent would be better served in another environment.
- A child is not doing assigned classroom work, homework, or fulfilling other requirements.
- A child or parent's behavior is inappropriate.
- A child is habitually late or absent.
- A child repeatedly violates the dress code.
- Tuition is not paid on a timely basis.

The School Leader, in counsel with parent, faculty, and at times appropriate professionals, will determine the course of action in these cases.

FMS reserves the right to terminate any students' enrollment at any time for any reason, not prohibited by law, if in FMS' sole judgment the student is not meeting the programs goals or standards or if we do not have adequate expertise or resources for the child's educational, medical, or other needs (subject to applicable regulatory requirements). FMS further reserves the right to decline enrollment/services to parents or guardians who, in FMS' sole judgment, are uncooperative, abusive to school staff, or, in FMS' opinion, will not be satisfied with FMS' best efforts.

### ***Special Needs***

Teachers are constantly monitoring students and needs they may have. It is important for parents to be aware that FMS is not a special needs school, nor do we have the resources to adequately support some special needs. If students appear to need possible intervention or additional help outside the range of a normal classroom environment in order to be successful over the short or long term, academically or socially, the teacher refers the child to the Student Services Coordinator. In conjunction with the teacher, the Student Services Coordinator may hold a conference with the parents, sometimes requesting additional testing through Child Find or another applicable testing agency. When appropriate, we require all students, which appear to have special needs or have special needs determined by applicable professionals, submit to the following:

1. Review of re-enrollment on a semester-to-semester basis.
2. Parents must access, if determined necessary, a special assistant paid for by the parent, special classes, or services through the Clark County School District, private practice, or any other intervention that may be required. Parents must access and consistently use these additional resources determined to be needed for their child to remain enrolled in Foothills Montessori School. Parents must also follow up with all testing or resources in a timely manner.
3. All additional resources are the responsibility of the parents to access, and to provide for both through transportation and financially.



4. FMS requires complete disclosure of known disabilities. We do not have a special education department and it will be critical we know if we can facilitate unique learning or social-emotional needs of a student.
5. FMS requires access to helpful information regarding disabilities and/or support persons who the school can contact and who can contact the school without privacy clause restrictions.

### ***Non-English-Speaking Children***

Children who are not yet able to speak English can sometimes do well in the classroom. However, FMS limits the amount per classroom and requires the parents, upon acceptance, to sign that they will be willing to provide and pay for English tutoring at least weekly and perhaps more if the student appears to the teacher to need such tutoring in order to be successful.

### ***Promotion From One Grade Level to The Next***

Students at Foothills Montessori School work through the curriculum based on individual needs and abilities, and not based on grade level. As a result, the concept that a child is a first, second, or third grader does not have the same meaning as it would in a traditional school. However, we realize that children in our culture are accustomed to referring to themselves by their grade level. Furthermore, students transferring from our school will have a grade level determined for the purposes of placement. FMS has minimum expectations based on those outlined in the Common Core State Standards for the baseline achievement expected of our students. While they may surpass those standards, they represent a normal index of skills and knowledge that we expect most of our students to display. Students are normally promoted from one grade level to the next at the end of the school year if they have accomplished these norms. Advancement to the next level; however, can be adjusted based on social, emotional, or physical/motor development if FMS deems this necessary. Criteria such as work habits, independence, social adjustment, and maturity are also considered. We work with the parents in reaching these decisions, and our focus is on what is in the best interest of the individual child, while still considering the needs of the whole class.

Kindergarten students who are being retained do not take part in the "Moving Up" ceremony.

### ***Transcripts***

Student files are confidential and proprietary records kept secure. Parents have access to their child's file with a written request. Although transcripts including standardized test scores, immunization records and report cards may be copied for the parent by a staff member, no file can be taken off the premises of the school. If the parent disagrees with anything in the file a written note into the permanent file may be added with the parent's comments. All student report cards in the student's cumulative file, as well as any student recommendations, will only be forwarded per a written request from a parent. Copies are then sent directly to the entity requesting the records and are noted in the child's file. Report cards and transcripts cannot be issued if a student has an outstanding balance on his/her account, overdue library books, or outstanding school materials. Student records will be forwarded once the account has been brought up to date and/or items returned to FMS. In addition, all documentation regarding parent conferences, anecdotal records, behavior logs, sign in/out sheets, incident reports, and any other internal communication by the staff of FMS will only be released under court order.

## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

The staff at Foothills Montessori School has established an educational environment in which children can comfortably learn at their own pace. Each student has the right to learn and play without disruption or antagonism from other students.

The staff is committed to teaching and reinforcing appropriate student behavior. Courtesy, respect, and mindfulness are practiced by all staff members and students. Students are encouraged to consistently follow school rules of conduct, set a positive example for others, and always be conscious of how their behavior affects others. With parental support, our goal at Foothills Montessori is to ensure each child achieves success, both academically and socially. We believe the home-school connection plays an important role in achieving our goals. The major role of parents is to continually show interest in and support for their children at school.

Generally, classroom teachers implement natural consequences, but the administration team becomes involved when the situation warrants. Parents are not necessarily contacted at first, as students are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions and practice conflict resolution/mindfulness skills guided by a staff member. We believe each student has the final responsibility for the consequences of his/her behavior. If your child exhibits unacceptable behavior at school, you

may be asked to help us teach your child an alternate, appropriate set of behaviors. With your cooperation and help, we can provide a positive, productive, and safe learning environment for your child.

We strive for a calm and satisfying environment. Classroom rules center on respect for others and our school environment. Grace and courtesy are part of our curriculum. If a child has inappropriate or disruptive behavior, the teacher will redirect the child to a different activity. Usually, this is all that is needed. If the behavior continues, the teacher will talk to the child involved, and discuss and model the appropriate behavior. If the problem persists, the teacher isolates the child for a brief period away from the group and speaks quietly to the child. There is no special place for this in the room. Any chair, mat, or floor space serves the purpose.

Behavior considered unacceptable includes overly aggressive reactions or behavior such as hitting another child, fighting, biting, hitting a staff member, throwing rocks/pencils/materials, verbally abusing others, cursing, hiding, or running from a staff member, stealing, or defacing property, and speaking about inappropriate or lewd subjects or soliciting inappropriate acts (i.e. sexual discussions, kissing). In such cases, the behavior is recorded, promptly reported to the Head of School, and the parents are contacted to schedule a conference with their child's teacher to discuss ways to correct the behavior.

If the behavior continues, parents are asked to explore, with the assistance of the teacher, the reason for the child's inability to function within the school or on the playground. A decision is reached on how to handle any further disturbance or harmful activity. In some cases, it will be suggested that the parents seek professional guidance, and the child may be required to shorten his/her day. The child will be withdrawn from the school if the behavior consistently interferes with the learning environment affecting others' ability to learn even with a behavior plan in place.

Foothills Montessori School reserves the right to require withdrawal of any child if the teachers and administration determine the Foothills Montessori School environment is not a good placement or does not meet the needs of a particular child. Foothills Montessori School also reserves the right to require withdrawal in situations involving repeated violations of school rules.

### **Ground Rules**

Respect for people and property is of utmost importance in a Montessori classroom. We expect a child to be courteous and respectful to both classmates and adults. Lessons in grace and courtesy are a part of our program. We encourage the parents to learn as much of Montessori's philosophy as possible so that they can assist the child in a positive manner.

1. We are kind and gentle to one another.
2. Everyone has a right to privacy and concentration. We do not disturb children who are trying to concentrate on their work.
3. We practice grace and courtesy during lunch using appropriate manners, including care of the environment.
4. We respect the personal belongings of others and do not go into another student's cubby, bin, or locker.
5. Everyone has the right to feel safe and secure. We do not express anger or upset feelings in a way that insults or threatens someone else.
6. Personal belongings such as toys, electronics, balls, bats, trading cards, etc. should be kept at home.
7. Everyone has the right to be physically safe. We follow all policies and procedures so that this is accomplished.
8. We do not do anything that hurts or endangers anyone.
9. We do not allow fighting, pushing, tripping, or use of any other aggressive behavior.
10. The playground equipment must be used as intended. We follow playground policies to ensure safety and comfort for all, including taking turns on the equipment and following line-up procedures for recess.
11. We do not play scary or chasing games with others when asked not to.
12. We keep sand in the sandbox, and never put it in the drinking fountains or sinks.
13. We do not throw sand.
14. We do not tackle one another, roughhouse, or play carelessly. We never touch other students without permission.
15. We do not encourage romantic relations between students and do not allow handholding, kissing, or other romantic displays of affection of any kind.
16. We keep sticks and rocks on the ground and never throw them.
17. We do not leave campus without an adult, and never leave our teacher's supervision without permission.
18. We only use the bathroom one at a time.
19. We take care of our school by never defacing property or tagging, by putting away our outside equipment such as balls or jump ropes, and by caring for our environment within the classroom.
20. We respect our school policies and take responsibility for our education by working positively with our teachers, returning homework or other assignments, doing our best, and arriving promptly and attending regularly.
21. We do the required class work and give our best efforts to all we do.

22. We use computers, materials, equipment, and books as intended for educational purposes and do not plagiarize material.
23. We do not post, text, or email salacious, racial, or inappropriate material to or regarding classmates or staff.

These ground rules apply even if the child is being supervised for brief periods of time by their parents, such as at drop-off or pick-up times. Parents are expected to enforce these ground rules carefully and conscientiously whenever on campus or at a school sponsored event or field trip. These ground rules are actively taught, promoted, and enforced in a positive way. By holding ourselves to these high standards, we find the best comes out in all of us. Although learning and growth is expected, children who fail to reasonably comply with these ground rules may be withdrawn from the program.

### ***Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying***

Harassment, intimidation or bullying means any intentionally written message or image, including those that are electronically transmitted, a verbal or physical act, including but not limited to one shown to be motivated by any characteristic such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, or other distinguishing characteristic, when an act:

- Physically harms a student or damages a student's property
- Has the effect of substantially interfering with a student's education
- Is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating or threatening educational environment
- Has the effect of substantially disrupting the orderly operation of the school

Harassment may occur off school grounds and outside of the school day. However, if the action results in another student feeling unsafe and unwelcome at FMS, then the administration will become involved. If it is determined harassment has occurred, the student who harassed, intimidated, or bullied will be suspended or expelled. Any instances of sexual harassment of a student or staff member will result in immediate withdrawal.

### ***Weapons***

Foothills Montessori School prohibits the possession of firearms and weapons at school. Possession of lethal weapons will result in immediate withdrawal with notification to parents and law enforcement.

### ***Exceptional Misconduct***

Certain behaviors that are so serious in nature in terms of the disruptive effect upon the operation of the school may be deemed *Exceptional Misconduct*. *Exceptional Misconduct* may warrant immediate suspension or withdrawal.

*Exceptional Misconduct* includes, but not limited to:

- Possession or sale of a controlled substance
- Profane or vulgar language directed to and in the presence of a staff member
- Arson
- All fighting and/or assault and battery
- Harassment
- Defacing, misuse, or destruction of property
- Defiance of school authority
- Possession of dangerous weapons
- Theft

**Action Plan for Misconduct\***

<b>Behavior</b>	<b>Low Severity</b>	<b>Severe</b>	<b>Persistent</b>
Inappropriate Language	Teacher conferences with student	Teacher call/email home and/or parent/teacher conference	Parent conference with administration and behavior plan
Minor Fighting	Teacher conferences with student and sends written warning home	Parent/teacher conference	Parent conference with administration and behavior plan
Disrespectful to adults/peers	Teacher conferences with student; written warning sent home and apology written to the other individual	Parent/teacher conference	Parent conference with administration and behavior plan
Inappropriate Clothing	Call home requesting change of clothes and/or provided a change of clothing on campus	Parent/teacher conference	Parent conference with administration and behavior plan
Initiating or Spreading Rumors	Verbal warning	Parent/teacher conference	Parent conference with administration
Taking Others' Belongings	Teacher conferences with student and notifies parent	Parent/teacher conference	Parent conference with administration and behavior plan
Cheating or Plagiarizing	Teacher conferences with student and notifies parent	Parent/teacher conference	Parent conference with administration and academic probation
Not Following Directions of Staff; Defiance	Teacher conferences with student	Parent/teacher conference	Parent conference with administration and behavior plan
Classroom disruption	Teacher conferences with student	Parent/teacher conference	Parent conference with administration and behavior plan
Incomplete assigned tasks	Loss of privileges; teacher conferences with student	Parent/teacher conference	Parent conference with administration and academic probation
Inappropriate use of technology	Teacher conferences with student; verbal warning	Parent/teacher conference; loss of computer privileges in the classroom	Parent conference with administration and complete loss of computer privileges for the academic year
Major Fighting		Parent conference with administration and behavior probation; possible suspension	Withdrawal
Harassment, bullying, and intimidation		Parent conference with administration and behavior probation; possible suspension	Withdrawal
Sexual Misconduct		Withdrawal	
Weapons on Campus		Withdrawal	
Threats of Bodily Harm		Parent conference with administration and	Withdrawal

		behavior probation; possible suspension	
<b>Behavior</b>	<b>Low Severity</b>	<b>Severe</b>	<b>Persistent</b>
Defacing School Property		Parent conference with administration and behavior probation; possible suspension	Withdrawal
Drugs and Alcohol on Campus		Parent conference with administration and behavior probation; possible suspension	Withdrawal

\*Consequences may change at the discretion of administration based on mitigating circumstances

***Mandatory Withdrawal for Behavioral Concerns***

Behavioral concerns resulting in withdrawal of a student relate to any actions that significantly interfere with the optimum functioning of the classroom, cause regular disturbance of the school’s routine or mission, or interfere in any way with another’s right to a safe and academic environment. If a student has significant behavioral concerns, one or all the following steps may be taken:

1. The child may be counseled by a teacher and appropriate consequences imposed.
2. The child may meet with administration and their classroom teacher.
3. A conference or series of conferences may be held between administration, classroom teachers, and the parents.
4. The child may be given a probationary period which will outline behavior modification guidelines and a specific time period for improvement. According to our Positive Behavior Intervention System (PBIS), we will make accommodations and work to teach the behavior we expect with a formal behavior plan during this period.
5. The child may be required to work under controlled circumstances for a period, commonly known as in-house suspension. This may involve accommodations such as the child working in an isolated area or a parent accompanying the child to school for a period.

Although we strive to teach the whole child, allowing children opportunities to learn and mature, withdrawal may be required at any time at FMS’ sole discretion.

***Mandatory Withdrawal for Lack of Academic Progress or Failure to Meet Program Standards***

A lack of academic progress may occur for a variety of reasons and is usually characterized by a student progressing at a rate that is more than a semester behind standard traditional expectations for a grade level. A student may fail to meet program standards by habitually not turning in assigned work or repeatedly not meeting minimum expectations for work. Each situation is treated individually. In serious cases, determination on a course of action is made by a team of teachers which includes the classroom teachers, other professionals, administration, and the child’s parents. If a special need is suspected, every effort must be made by the parents to assist in the identification of the special need (see section on special needs for more information). FMS reserves the right to require additional tutoring for a student whose progress is of concern as part of an overall remedial plan. Although we strive to help each child reach their potential, withdrawal may be required for lack of academic progress or failure to meet program goals at any time at FMS’ sole discretion.

*Thank you for carefully reading this handbook. Following these guidelines and understanding school policies ensures a smooth year for all of us, and a pleasant and safe environment for your child.*

\*Disclaimer: All policies and procedures may be subject to change at the sole discretion of the Administration of FMS without written or advance notice. This flexibility is necessary to respond to the needs of our students and staff and serve their best interests while preserving the integrity of our programs.