

# Walnut Farm Montessori School

**2016 -2017**

## Community Guide

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August 2016

WFMS families,

We are proud to welcome you to the first and only accredited Montessori school in the state of Arkansas. Walnut Farm is an extraordinary learning environment that will give your child the tools for life-long learning. We offer a quality, authentic Montessori education, and we are excited that you have joined our community.

WFMS is a community of students, parents, and staff, working together to meet the needs of each child. We strongly encourage open and respectful communication among staff members and parents. Our administration, Montessori teachers, and staff desire to partner with you as together we provide an environment that allows each of our students to develop to his/her fullest potential.

We ask that you read this guide carefully to ensure that you are aware of current policy. Additionally, we hope this guide will answer any questions you might have. This handbook represents the spirit of the positive expectations of everyone in our community. Please feel free to contact me at any time should you have questions or concerns.

We are looking forward to a productive and enjoyable school year filled with discovery, learning, growth, and celebration of community!

Sincerely,

Ellen Beach  
Head of School  
479-271-9424

# Our Mission

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**The nationally accredited Walnut Farm Montessori School provides a Montessori education honoring community and individuality by promoting peace, and empowering children for life-long learning.**

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## About the Montessori Method



Nearly 100 years ago, an Italian physician inspired the birth of a worldwide educational movement. Dr. Maria Montessori, one of Italy's first female physicians, became interested in education while caring for mentally challenged children in a psychiatric clinic in Rome. There she combined sensory-rich environments and hands-on experiential techniques in the hopes of reaching children previously labeled "deficient and insane." The experiment was a resounding success. Within two years, the children were able to pass Italy's standardized public school tests.

More importantly, Montessori's innovative practices had elicited positive learning behaviors from children previously left behind by society.

In 1907, Montessori continued shaping her learning model by opening "a Children's House" for pre-school children living in the slums of San Lorenzo. With her scientific background to guide her, she observed how young people learned best when engaged in purposeful activity rather than simply being fed information. She drew upon her clinical understanding of children's cognitive growth and development in constructing an educational framework that would respect individuality and fulfill the needs of the "whole child." Dr. Montessori's pioneering work created a blueprint for nurturing all children—learning disabled to gifted—to become the self-motivated, independent and life-long learners that are the ultimate goal of today's educational reform movement.

Since that time, Montessori's philosophy, materials and practices have spread around the globe and have been implemented in a variety of cultural settings. Following Dr. Montessori's death in 1952, the practice enjoyed a renaissance in America as parents sought new learning options for their children. In 1960, parent and teacher Dr. Nancy McCormick Rambusch founded the **American Montessori Society (AMS)** to meet an overwhelming public demand for more information on Montessori education.

Today, Dr. Montessori's visionary ideas flourish as the cornerstone of a thriving educational practice. There are thousands of Montessori schools in the U.S. including hundreds of programs in public and charter schools, where the interest in enrollment often results in long waiting lists. However, because any school can call itself "Montessori" – there is no trademark on the name– AMS can only vouch for the authenticity of the programs as practiced in schools that are members of the Society.

As more and more schools incorporated core elements of her model—multi-age classrooms, early childhood education—Montessori became widely recognized as being ahead of her time. Remarkably, her visionary ideas remain viable concepts that have profoundly influenced the entire educational landscape.

Walnut Farm Montessori School is accredited by the American Montessori Society.

*"During this early period, education must be understood as a help to the unfolding of the child's inborn psychic powers. This means that we cannot use the orthodox methods of teaching, which depends on talk."*

*- The Absorbent Mind*

## Suggested Readings

**Lilliard, Paula Polk.** *Montessori—A Modern Approach* (Schocken)

An Introduction to the Montessori approach to education at the preschool level.

**Montessori, Maria.** *The Absorbent Mind* (Schocken)

A discussion of the development of infants and young children, birth to three years.

**Montessori, Maria.** *The Discovery of the Child* (Kalakshetra)

Early writings of Dr. Montessori (updated in 1948) highlighting the materials and the works of the child in primary class, ages 3 to 6.

**Montessori, Maria.** *Education for a New World* (Kalakshetra)

Deals with the role of education in a changing world.

**Montessori, Maria.** *The Formation of Man* (Kalakshetra)

Includes material concerning Dr. Montessori's approach to world literacy.

**Montessori, Maria.** *From Childhood to Adolescence* (Schocken)

Addresses the development and education of the child from age seven through adolescence. Includes "Erdkinder" and "The Function of the University."

**Montessori, Maria.** *The Secret of Childhood* (Balantine Books)

An introduction, both practical and theoretical, including observations and insights into the nature of young children.

**Montessori, Maria.** *To Educate the Human Potential* (Kalakshetra)

Outlines the needs of the elementary age child regarding the acquisition of culture.

**Montessori, Mario.** *The Human Tendencies and Montessori Education* (AMI, Second Edition)

A classical essay on the imagination, the natural characteristics of the child, and the integration of human development and history.

**Montessori, Mario M., Jr.** *Education for Human Development* (Schocken)

Deals with the ideas of Montessori from a philosophical, psychological and educational point of view; foreword by Buckminster Fuller

**Seldin, Tim.** *How to Raise an Amazing Child The Montessori Way*

A practical parenting program to build a calm and happy home life with your child, from birth through age six.

**Standing, E.M.** *Maria Montessori: Her Life and Work* (New American Library)

A biography, including Dr. Montessori's life, her development of material, the child's work in the class and the growth of the Montessori movement.

## History of Walnut Farm

History often reveals that legacies are born of humble beginnings and human desires to make the world a better place in which to live and nurture our families. In 1991, Maren Schmidt founded Walnut Farm Montessori School (WFMS) in response to a local cry for an alternative to traditional public education. The first primary class served ten families and operated out of an old two-story house on Moberly Lane in Bentonville, Arkansas. During its first five years, the school grew steadily and expanded to two primary classes of 24 students each. In 1996, with parents now firmly convinced of the value of Montessori education, an elementary class was added for children ages 6-9.

Defining moments are rare. Rarer still are the organizations and individuals that rise to the challenge and establish a legacy that has the potential to stand the test of time. It was in 1996 that Maren and Mark Schmidt did just this! With assistance from Tony Potochnik, builder, and David Swanson, architect and dedicated parent, they took an incredible leap of faith by relocating the campus to 4208 East Central Ave. and constructing our current primary and administration building. This building and the beautiful 3-acre campus that surrounds it have served our school well for the past 20 years. Since its construction student enrollment has doubled in size, from less than 50 to over 100.

Through more than two decades of employing the Montessori methodology, WFMS has succeeded in fulfilling the promise of its founder, Maren Schmidt, honoring the philosophy of Dr. Maria Montessori, and evoking the self-confidence and independence of Northwest Arkansas children. It is with this same passion and enthusiasm that the school successfully completed the self-study and standards necessary to be granted full accreditation by the American Montessori Society. In March 2010, Walnut Farm Montessori School became the first accredited Montessori school in the state of Arkansas. In 2013, the board of trustees purchased the school's north building expanding the campus to nearly six acres. At a time when mainstream schools are limiting or eliminating outdoor spaces altogether, WFMS has expanded the idea of Montessori nature education. In 2014, WFMS expanded the program to include two toddler environments allowing more students to begin their Montessori journey at Walnut Farm. With a rich history, academic achievements, and beautiful acreage, WFMS proudly offers an authentic Montessori education for children 18 months to 9 years of age.

***“Never doubt that a small group of people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.” -Margaret Mead***

## Absences

Please call the school office to inform administration of any absence. This will help the teachers plan the lessons for the day more efficiently.

Also, only ten days of absence are allowed during the school year, unless special arrangements have been made with the Head of School.

WFMS is supportive when families choose to take children out of school for an extended vacation. We ask that you please inform your classroom teacher and the administration office prior to departure.

\*\*Please note that the risk of falling behind when a child is away from school impacts some children more severely than others. If teachers determine that a child's academic progress has been jeopardized, it may require extra work outside of school at the parents' expense.

## Early Morning Care

Early Morning Care will be offered before each school day from 7:15 a.m. to 7:40 a.m. Children will be cared for in Toddler A. These services are available for additional fees. Please note that space can become limited and is available on a first come, first served basis. If you are interested in these services, please contact the administration office.

## After School Care

(Direct Line: 479.321-4440 from 3:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m.)

**After school care is offered daily from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. This program allows children to remain at WFMS and enjoy a snack and supervised time with other students until parents arrive. Parents are asked to arrive no later than 6:00 p.m. as the school closes each evening at this time. Parents arriving after 6:00 p.m. will be fined \$25.00 after one minute of lateness, and \$5.00 per minute thereafter.** In the event that the parent is late picking up a child more than 3 times, WFMS reserves the right to remove the child from the program. If you are interested in these services, please contact the school administrator.

After School Care details:

1. Parents may contact the aftercare staff during the aftercare program hours (3:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m.) by calling: **479.321-4440**
2. There is no reduction in fees due to temporary absences of any nature including and not limited to vacation, illness, inclement weather and medical emergencies.
3. The after-care program calendar follows the WFMS school calendar. **If school is closed due to scheduled calendar events or inclement weather, there will be NO afterschool care program.**
4. A two-week notice is required to cancel an afterschool care program.

5. Contracted days are non-transferable. If additional days are needed on a one-time basis they will be billed as drop-in afterschool care at \$30 per day. Payment must be made prior to the drop-in date to ensure availability.
6. A **non-refundable fee of \$250.00** will be charged if at any time during the school year the after-care program contract is cancelled.
7. Parents should be aware of local weather conditions and make arrangements to pick-up their child early from aftercare if severe weather threatens the Bentonville area.

## Drop-in Care Program

On occasion there are openings for drop-in care. There is a \$10 fee for early morning care and a \$30.00 fee for each afternoon drop-in session. Afternoon session options are 11:20 a.m.-3:00 p.m. and 3:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. **The \$30.00 fee is charged for each session regardless if a child stays 30 minutes or 3 hours of the designated session.** Arrangements and payments must be made prior to the date contracted through the administrative office. No child will be allowed to attend the drop-in care program unless payment has been made prior to attendance. Please contact the administration office if you are interested in these services.

Programs	Fees per year	Monthly Auto-debit
Early Morning Care 7:15 a.m. - 7:40 a.m.	\$900.00	\$90.00
Afterschool care 3:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.	\$2,600.00	\$260.00

## Arrival and Dismissal Procedures

Your child is now forming habits that last a lifetime. Punctuality and respecting the time of others are two qualities that we want to promote for future success in life. To allow a safe and smooth transition for your child and others, please respect the following guidelines while in the car line:

- ***Vehicle video equipment is off during arrival and dismissal.***
- ***It is a state law that cell phone use is prohibited in a school zone.***
- ***Vehicles should progress no faster than 10 mph in our car line and parking areas.***
- ***Students must remain INSIDE the vehicle until a greeter opens the door. Parents do not allow your child to stand out of the sunroof of your vehicle or extend his/her arms out of the windows while waiting to be greeted.***

### Arrival Procedure

Doors open at 7:40 a.m. Our staff will approach your car, greet you and your child, and escort your child into the building from 7:40 a.m. until 8:00 a.m. Please have your child unbuckled before the greeter

opens your car door. Greeting time ends at 8:00 a.m. For school safety, the greeters will then lock the front doors to each building at 8:00 a.m. and report to their next assignment.

Class promptly begins at 8:00 a.m., and we ask that you make every effort to be here on time to ensure that your child has a full three-hour work cycle. We recommend arriving as early as possible as this will ensure your child has adequate time to transition. We strongly encourage consistency in this process, as it will help your child acclimate to the expectations of coming to school. Also, please encourage your child to give proper and cheerful greetings. This is important for setting the theme for a smooth transition. Additionally, please make every effort to not block the circular drive.

**Anyone arriving after the doors have been locked will be considered tardy (See tardy policy). There is no need to contact the office if you will be tardy. Instead, please only contact our office if your child will be absent for the day.** Being notified of an absence will help our staff to properly plan the activities of each classroom. Additionally, parents are encouraged to schedule doctors and outside appointments after school, when possible.

### **Tardy Policy**

Tardiness interferes with a child's progress in school and causes a disturbance for all members of the class. While we understand that sometimes circumstances happen and occasional tardy arrivals are unavoidable, being tardy should be a rare occasion for your child. **You are setting the example for your child. Please set a character-building example by arriving to school on time daily.**

- Toddler A families that arrive after 8:00 a.m. will need to escort toddler students to the Toddler A door facing Central Avenue and sign-in their child. A Toddler A teacher will greet your child at the door and allow you to sign the tardy log. Toddler B families that arrive after 8:00 a.m. will need to escort toddler students to the side door of the Toddler B classroom. A Toddler B teacher will greet your child at the door and allow you to sign the tardy log.
- Primary families that arrive after 8:00 a.m. will need to escort their child/children to the front door of the primary building and ring the doorbell. An administrator will allow you to sign the tardy log and will escort your child to their class.
- Elementary families arriving after the elementary door has been locked will need to escort their child to the front door of the elementary building and ring the doorbell. A staff member will greet your child at the door and allow you to sign the tardy log.
- If you are tardy bringing your child to school **5 times** in a semester, documentation will be made in your child's school record. Additionally, the Head of School will schedule a conference with you to help create a plan to remedy the problem.
- Excessive tardiness will hinder your child's ability to progress academically, possibly prevent academic promotion, and may hinder the renewal of your child's re-enrollment student contract.

## Dismissal Procedure

**Toddlers enrolled in the half-day toddler program will dismiss at 11:15 a.m. Toddler A and Toddler B students will dismiss from the Toddler A building.** The teacher will bring your child to the car. We ask that you move forward toward the elementary building drive to buckle your child in his/her car seat. Communication with your child's teacher should be brief. This will help to prevent backups in the car line. **It is the law that the parent or driver is responsible for buckling the child into the seat. At 2:55 p.m., parents should park and walk to the door facing Central Ave. to pick up their child.**

**Primary dismissal will also begin at 11:15 a.m.** We will bring the children out to the front hallway for morning dismissal. Staff will escort your child to your car. We request that the driver please pull forward, to the staff parking lot, and buckle your child into his/her car seat. Communication with your child's teacher should be brief. This will help to prevent backups in the car line. **It is the law that the parent or driver is responsible for buckling the child into the seat.** If you need to come inside the building, please park in a parking space, so that a steady flow of traffic can be maintained. We ask that everyone follow this procedure so that we can assure a timely and safe dismissal for all our children. At 3:00 p.m., students will be dismissed at the following areas:

Toddlers A and Toddlers B: Toddler A Building

Primary: Primary Building

Lower Elementary: Elementary Building

If you need to pick up your child early, please call ahead and we will try to have your child ready. This will help keep classroom disruptions to a minimum.

Please make sure you pull up as far as possible in the pick-up circle to prevent the car pool line from blocking the street.

- Toddler A and Toddler B half day dismisses at 11:15 a.m.
- Primary half day dismisses at 11:15 a.m.
- Toddler A and B full day dismisses at 2:55 p.m.
- Primary A full day dismisses at 3:00 p.m.
- Primary B full day dismisses at 3:00 p.m.
- Primary C full day dismisses at 3:00 p.m.
- Lower Elementary dismisses at 3:00 p.m.

If you have a change in the person designated to pick up your child you are required to inform administration. If someone other than the person(s) listed on your release record is to pick up your child, you must first call the school or give a note to the greeter. Please note: The driver will be asked for ID.

**If you do not pick up your child within 15 minutes of his/her scheduled school day dismissal time, your child will join the aftercare program until your arrival for a charge of \$30.00.** Parents that fail to pick

up their child from the after school care program by 6:00 p.m. will be fined \$25.00 after one minute of lateness, and \$5.00 per minute thereafter. In the event a parent is late in picking up their child more than 3 times, WFMS reserves the right to remove the child from the program.

## Back and Forth Bags

We will provide each newly enrolled child with a small canvas bag to carry home papers, newsletters and soiled clothing. Make sure your child's bag contains a Ziploc bag with a complete change of clothing, including shoes (toddler and primary). All items should be marked with your child's name. Learning to get their things together is a very important developmental process for our children. Please help your children remember their bags until they can do it themselves. Replacement bags are available for \$15.00 each.

**Please, no backpacks or other bags, as space is limited and backpacks are difficult for us to monitor.**

## Birthdays

### Toddler Birthday Celebration

Birthdays will not be celebrated in the toddler classrooms. For this tender age, it is too disruptive to the children's day. Consistency is very important.

### Primary Birthday Celebration

We have a special ceremony for birthdays. **Please ask your child's teacher for a birthday celebration handout about two weeks before your child's birthday. Birthday celebrations are to be scheduled in advance with the child's teacher.** Please send along photos and a sentence of what your child was doing at each of their previous birthdays (such as walking, living in a certain place, favorite books, etc.) We will include it in the celebration. **Parents are welcome to attend this special moment with their child.**

Elementary students plan their own celebrations. Please check with your child's teacher.

## Board of Trustees

Walnut Farm Montessori School, Inc. is a non-profit corporation with 501-(c)(3) tax-exempt status from the Internal Revenue Service. We have a Head of School and Administrator for the day-to-day administration of school business, and a Board of Trustees to help give direction in policy formation and long-term planning. Our Board consists of:

Kevin Steele, President

Elizabeth Barr, Vice President

Kristopher Fritsche, Secretary

Jason Cartee, Treasurer

Jamie Henry

Nick Arnold

Leila Runyan

Tracey Crowe

Katie Bloodworth

## Child Abuse Reporting

The child abuse hotline is 1-800-482-5964.

Children may be subject to interviews by licensing staff, child maltreatment investigators and/or law enforcement officials for the purpose of determining licensing compliance or for investigative purposes. Child interviews do not require parental notice or consent.

## Classroom Pictures

School pictures will be taken in the second semester. Look for announcements in class and school emails for picture dates for your child's class. A school yearbook will be available for purchase in the spring of each year. In addition to your child's individual and class picture being featured, the school's photographer captures candid pictures from all WFMS events to include in the school yearbook.

## Cold Weather

At Walnut Farm, we believe there is rarely inclement weather, only improperly dressed people. Children will be taken outside almost every day. If for medical reasons your child should not go outside, it is best to keep your child home from school that day.

## Cold Weather and Coats

- Children will be asked to put their coats on when they go outside to the outdoor classroom or playground.
- A child who chooses to remove his coat while working or playing because he is too warm will hang up the coat in the outdoor space. If he should become cold again he will put on his coat. If not he will bring his coat inside when he returns to the classroom.
- On rainy days children are required to have a raincoat with them and wear it in the outdoor classroom and on the playgrounds.
- If there is lightening, extreme wind, or extreme cold, the children will work indoors.

**Please make sure you label all coats, hats, and mittens with your child's name. If your child is unable to locate a clothing item, please remind your child to check the school's lost and found bins located on the east end of the primary building just inside the privacy fence gate.**

## Communications

Please call the school's main number (479-271-9424) to communicate with your child or their teacher during the day. The administration will take a message or forward your call to the classroom as needed. **You may also hand a note to the greeter in the morning.** Please reframe from giving verbal instructions or requests to the morning greeters.

Email is also a way to contact us; however there are times we are not able to check our email at regular intervals.

Below are the emails for administration:

Ellen Beach- [ellen@walnutfarm.org](mailto:ellen@walnutfarm.org)

Karel Hayre - [karel@walnutfarm.org](mailto:karel@walnutfarm.org)

Leslie Johnson - [leslie@walnutfarm.org](mailto:leslie@walnutfarm.org)

Below are each classroom web links that you can review weekly:

Toddler A Classroom – <http://www.walnutfarmmontessori.com/toddler.html>

Toddler B Classroom-<http://www.walnutfarmmontessori.com/toddlerb.html>

Primary Classroom A – <http://www.walnutfarmmontessori.com/primarya.html>

Primary Classroom B-<http://www.walnutfarmmontessori.com/primaryb.html>

Primary Classroom C – <http://www.walnutfarmmontessori.com/primaryc.html>

Lower EI – <http://www.walnutfarmmontessori.com/lowerel.html>

## Community Conflict Resolution Policy

From time to time questions or disagreements may arise concerning the interpretation and/or implementation of the policies, practices and daily operation of Walnut Farm Montessori School. In keeping with our mission to provide a peaceful, cooperative and collaborative environment, parents are encouraged to make every effort to resolve issues and disagreements directly with the person involved in a timely confidential manner using the peaceful conflict resolution process as follows:

- ***I think we have a problem.*** Please let your fellow community member know what you are feeling
- ***What is the problem?*** This involves a statement of commitment from all parties involved to come to a peaceable and win-win situation.
- ***What are all the solutions to the problem?*** Allow one another to offer solutions to the problem that may work for both parties.
- ***What is the best solution?*** Try to come up with the best solutions.
- ***Is it working?*** Check in with each other on occasion to make sure it is still a good solution.

**Discussions should be limited to the parties concerned without involving additional WFMS community members.**

Walnut Farm will not tolerate discrimination or sexual harassment. Situations that appear to involve discrimination or sexual harassment should be reported immediately to the Head of School or, if that is inappropriate, to the Board of Trustees President.

## Problem Solving

Our school has an open door policy on problem solving. When encountering a problem with a staff member, we ask that you follow the following procedure:

1. Address the concern with the staff person that can best solve the problem.
2. Use the conflict resolution techniques discussed on the previous page.
3. If you feel your conflict was not resolved by meeting with the staff person or it is inappropriate to approach the staff member directly, please utilize our grievance policy procedure below.

Direct, open, and respectful communication is necessary for a healthy school community.

Feel free to contact the school Head of School, Ellen Beach, via email at [ellen@walnutfarm.org](mailto:ellen@walnutfarm.org), or via the school phone: 479.271.9424.

## Grievance Policy

If a parent or guardian believes an action by a teacher or school employee is unfair or inappropriate a written grievance may be filed with the Head of School. Details of the incident or problem should be factual and concise. Include what outcome with regard to the child, teacher or school you are seeking. The Head of School will make the final decision in all grievance matters exercising his or her sole and absolute discretion. Grievance decisions by the Head of School cannot be the subject of a new grievance. Participation in the grievance process will not supersede or replace any requirements for withdrawal from Walnut Farm Montessori School.

## Discipline Policy

At Walnut Farm Montessori School, we see discipline as helping the children to develop an internal focus and control to enable them to make positive choices. Through the use of the materials, the child develops concentration, and through concentration comes inner discipline. We establish necessary boundaries to give the children methods and techniques to control their own behavior, through consistent modeling and dealing constructively with problems. We strive for a balance of freedom and structure, linked with a high level of responsibility. That balance is individualized based on the needs of the child. Our goal is an internalized level of obedience, wherein the child behaves because it is the right thing to do, whether or not the adult is directly monitoring. This is the kind of citizen we hope for in the world. Positive discipline is a process that takes time; it begins at birth, and continues through the four planes of development, until around 25 years of age. Discipline to us is not something that is done to the child, but is developed within the child. It may not be as immediate as a rewards/ punishment model, but its outcomes run deeper.

Please note that all children experience conflict with peers. Children are learning to cooperate and socially interact. As they practice social interaction, conflicts with peers naturally occur. They are still learning self-control and the sense of personal space. Further, in the early elementary years relationship struggles often occur as the children become more independent and want to handle friendships and group activities on their own terms.

As parents, you can assist your child by considering their conflicts learning opportunities for your child and teachable moments for you. You can model various healthy reactions to frustrations and your own conflicts. You can also discuss and role-play with your child proper ways to build trust, show respect, give empathy, manage anger and practice forgiveness.

### **Classroom expectations:**

1. Everyone must keep their hands to themselves.
2. Everyone must use a quiet indoor voice.
3. Everyone must walk.
4. Everyone must choose appropriate work, use the work, then put the work away ready for the next person.
5. Everyone must work at a table or a floor rug.
6. Everyone must show respect to others through words and actions.

Violation of these rules will be addressed with redirection or the problem-solving process.

### **The conflict resolution process follows:**

***Stop! I think we have a problem!*** Adult helps children realize they are in a conflict situation.

***What is the problem?*** The adult through observation and questioning helps children verbalize the problem. This also involves a statement of commitment from all parties involved to come to a peaceable and win-win situation. For example, if two children want to work with the same materials at the same time, we would agree to come to some solution that both were happy with or no one would get to use that piece of material.

***What are all the solutions to the problem?*** The adult guides the children through possible ways to solve the situation.

***What is the best solution?*** The adult guides the children to agreeing on a solution and implementing it.

***Is it working?*** The adult checks back through observation and questioning to make sure that the solution agreed upon is meeting the needs of the children.

This model of problem solving also helps our children learn critical thinking skills. We hope you will use this model of problem solving with your child. We think you will be amazed at how well a three or four-year-old can be stepped through this process. And it is heartwarming to see a five-year-old use it with no adult guidance!

### **Behavior Policy**

The following action will be taken in the case of disruptive behavior, which includes but is not limited to: not following the instructions of the teacher or assistant, physically harming another person, repeated disruption of others work, teasing, harming school materials, fleeing the environment, name calling, obscene language or gestures, mistreating school property, bullying, or sexual harassment.

**For toddler and primary children:**

1. First offense: The teacher will remind the child of classroom expectations, help to mediate the conflict resolution process (if needed), and offer alternative options for behavior.
2. Second offense (same day): The child will be asked to sit in the waiting chair or asked to sit next to the teacher or assistant until the child is ready to work again peacefully.
3. If in primary, Third offense (same day): Child will be sent to the office and parent will be called. The child may be sent home.
4. If a child reaches more than 3 offenses in a 2-week period it may be considered a severely disruptive behavior pattern. A conference will be scheduled to devise a behavior modification plan.
5. If a child flees the designated environment without the permission of the teacher or assistant, the child's parents will be contacted and the child may be sent home.

**For elementary children:**

1. First offense: Teacher will remind the child of the classroom expectations and offer alternative options for behavior.
2. Second offense: Teachers will help to mediate the conflict resolution process, if needed, child will be asked to sit alone (in classroom) or near a teacher. Teachers will assist student in filling out a behavior reflection that will be shared with their parents. If the behavior is severely disruptive and/ or disrespectful, the child will be sent to the office.
3. Third offense, (same day) child will be sent to the office and parent will be called. In severe cases, the child may be sent home for the day.
4. If a child reaches more than 3 offenses in a 2-week period it may be considered a severely disruptive behavior pattern. A conference will be scheduled to devise a behavior modification plan.
5. If a child flees the designated environment without the permission of the teacher or assistant, the child's parents will be contacted and the child may be sent home.

Consequences to disruptive behavior that continues over a period of time include, but are not limited to:

- Removal of child from the classroom and sent to the office
- Parents notified and asked to pick up child from school or event
- Conference with parents
- Requirement for specialized support
- Behavior plan developed that may include but is not limited to: recommendations for evaluations, diary journal by parents, plan of action for when the behavior occurs, journaling of behaviors by parent and teacher.
- Possible dismissal

## Toddler Biting Policy

Biting is part of toddler development. It is usually a result of not enough and/or ineffective use of language. We will always work to give the words to the child who is biting. Coaching of the appropriate words is the best way to resolve the problem quickly. **If a child bites three times in one day, or if the skin is broken, they will be sent home.** The parent of the biter and the parent of the child who has been bitten will be called by the teacher or administration if the skin has been bruised or broken. The teacher or witness must fill out a behavior report for the biter and an incident report for the child that has been bitten. If a child becomes a chronic biter, the parents may be asked to remove their child from the school until the behavior disappears.

## Primary and Elementary Biting Policy

If a primary student intentionally bites another student, the child's parents will be contacted. The parent of the biter and the parent of the child who has been bitten will be called by the teacher or administration if the skin has been bruised or broken. The teacher or witness must fill out a behavior report for the biter and an incident report for the child that has been bitten. If a child becomes a chronic biter, the parents may be asked to remove their child from the school until the behavior disappears.

If an elementary student intentionally bites another child, the child's parents will be contacted AND he/she will be sent home for the rest of the day. The parent of the child whom has been bitten will be called by the teacher or administration if the skin has been bruised or broken. The teacher or witness must fill out a behavior report for the biter and an incident report for the child that has been bitten. If a child becomes a chronic biter, the parents may be asked to remove their child from the school until the behavior disappears.

## Bullying Policy

Walnut Farm is committed to a safe and peaceful educational environment for all students, employees, volunteers, and patrons, free from harassment, intimidation or bullying. Bullying is repeated, purposely cruel incidents, or threats of harm that involve the same people, in the same roles. Preschool children are typically not developmentally capable of carrying out bullying because of its deliberate and intentional nature.

Bullying of any kind will not be tolerated at Walnut Farm. If a child is participating in bullying, he/she will be sent to the office to conference with the Head of School. Parents will be called and child will be sent home for that day. Additionally, elementary children will fill out a behavior reflection and be asked to contribute a solution to make amends with the offended party.

### DEFINITIONS:

**Classroom Disruption-** Temper tantrums, running, interrupting the work of others, excessive loud noises, screaming, disorderly conduct

**Teasing** – name-calling, insulting, or other behavior that would hurt others' feelings or make them feel bad about themselves

**Exclusion** – starting rumors, telling others not to be friends with someone, or other actions that would cause someone to be without friends

**Fleeing Environment**-leaving the designated environment without permission from the teacher or assistant

**Physical Aggression**- pushing, slapping, grabbing, flicking, poking, pinching, tripping, or other violations of personal space

**Severe Physical Bullying** – punching, kicking, and similar behavior that could result in injury to others

**Threat of serious violence** – threats of using a weapon, or other conduct representing a direct physical threat to anyone; may require a report to authorities

**Harassment** – racial, ethnic, or sexual name-calling or other severe harassment as defined in the WFMS harassment policy

**Thank you for helping to provide a safe environment for our children.**

## Home expectations

Please remember that sending a child home is a last resort due to inappropriate behavior that has been redirected many times. We greatly appreciate your support in helping your child understand what behaviors are acceptable and appropriate.

**Please Note: Physical punishment shall not be administered to children.**

**(State Minimum licensing requirements for child care centers 500.2)**

**(State minimum licensing requirements for child care centers 501.1)**

## Dress Code

Please mark all of your child's clothes, jackets, mittens, hat, etc. with your child's name.

When selecting school clothes, help your child choose pants that they can get up and down easily. We will be gardening, painting, and using scissors, so it is best to send children to school in practical work clothes. Children should be dressed appropriately for all weather conditions. All classes play outdoors daily except on days with extreme inclement weather.

**Cowboy boots and flip-flops are NOT acceptable footwear at school as they are slippery outside, noisy inside, and dangerous.** In addition, we have found that children who wear sandals to school are the ones who fall and skin their knees on the outside concrete porch. **Your child should only wear soft-soled, closed toe shoes free of lights or characters for school, so that the children can run and play safely.**

**Please refrain from wearing clothing with characters of any kind, as this type of clothing is very distracting.** Children wearing clothing with characters may be asked to either turn clothing inside out or

change their clothes. It is also important for grace and courtesy that non-religious hats be removed when entering classrooms.

**We request that you refrain from using pull-ups for toddlers and primary children. Non potty-trained toddlers must use diapers. Primary children must be potty-trained and wear cloth underwear.**

## Outdoor Shoes

We require that each child have a pair of rubber boots marked with their name to be left at school. The children use these boots when doing work in the outdoor classroom and when it is wet and muddy during recess times. We believe there is rarely inclement weather, only inappropriately dressed people!

## Emergency Procedures Guide

Walnut Farm has plans and procedures in place for emergencies, crisis, and disaster. The faculty is trained and updated in the emergency procedures. If you would like a copy of the complete Emergency and Procedures Guide please ask for a copy in the administrative office.

## Enrollment Policies

### Admission Procedure

We believe that choosing a school is a process that takes time. We recommend that families do the following:

- a) Request information by mail, email, or pick up information at school
- b) Tour our building and classrooms while classes are in session
- c) Submit the WFMS waitlist application and a copy of the child's immunization records to the administration office
- d) Complete a student visit session (primary and elementary only)
- e) Complete the enrollment contract

Prior to being admitted to our program, all children must be registered by a parent or legal guardian. Pre-registration (Re-Enrollment) for children currently enrolled in the program is in February. Applications and waiting list forms for new students are available in the office after touring the school. In the event of reaching maximum class size, first preference will be given to families already in attendance at Walnut Farm Montessori, and then enrollment will be open to the community.

The following documents are needed for enrollment:

- a) Application and Waiting List form
- b) Registration fee of \$350.00 per child (non-refundable and non-transferable)
- c) Current immunization records (presented at time of enrollment)
- d) Emergency information and immunizations required by Arkansas Licensure Division

## Application

The following admission policies and criteria are to maximize the compatibility among selected students, their families, and our school within Montessori philosophy and values. We take into account evidence of a student's academic achievement, long-term commitment to enrollment in the program, and commitment to a school-family partnership.

1. We practice a policy of non-discrimination relative to race, ethnicity, gender, religion, and national origin regarding the receipt and review of applications for admission.
2. Admissions decisions require, and are made contingent upon receipt or completion of, all requested tests, screening, student records, student and family visits and interviews, and other forms included in our application/admission package.
3. We respect the rights of privacy of all prospective students and families, and honor the confidentiality of all reports, records, interview information, and any other information or materials obtained as part of the admission application process.
4. While embracing the philosophy that each child develops in a unique way and welcoming applications from a wide variety of students, we also recognize our limitations in meeting some highly complex or specialized learning needs. Our admissions procedure will therefore take into account our ability to accommodate particular student's learning needs without disruption to our program as one factor when evaluating applicants. Students who have special needs that fall within our ability to address may be accepted on a provisional basis, with additional stipulations (such as a requirement for specialized and/or therapist assistance.)
5. An Admissions Committee, consisting of the Head of School, the administrative staff, and classroom teachers will make all admission decisions. Admission decisions are based on the following general criteria:

### Primary Students

- Able to cooperate in a social group
- Shows respect for authority
- Shows respect for other children
- Independent in toileting skills
- Able to understand and follow school and classroom rules and guidelines
- Demonstrates an eagerness to learn
- Developmentally functional in all aspects of daily school routines

### Elementary Students

- Able to cooperate in a social group
- Shows respect for authority
- Shows respect for other children
- Demonstrates an eagerness to learn
- Capable of working independently
- Understands and follows school and classroom rules and guidelines

- Developmentally functional in all aspects of daily school routines
- Possesses current academic and life skills at level commensurate with targeted class

### Families

- Understanding of and commitment to Walnut Farm Montessori School philosophy and principles
- Understanding of and commitment to long-term participation in the Montessori education process
- Understanding their role in partnering with the school (e.g. volunteerism, attendance at school meetings and functions, support of school's vision and growth)

### Contracts

Enrollment is secured by a binding contractual agreement with the school. We will begin to re-enroll current students for the 2017/2018 school year in February 2017. To secure your enrollment for the next school year, we must have a contract signed by the end of the designated re-enrollment period.

If your circumstances are such that you do not feel comfortable signing a contract, for example, a possible job transfer, please contact the Head of School for more information on how to handle your enrollment.

### Eligibility

Our toddler community is available to children ages 18 months to 3 years, regardless of race, color, religion or creed. DHS requires that a child be 18 months of age before they may enter our program and not older than 36 months prior to the first day of the school year.

Primary classrooms are open to all children between the ages of 3-6 years, regardless of race, color, religion or creed. To be accepted into the primary program, all children must be toilet trained. For enrollment details, please refer to our admissions procedures.

Our lower elementary classroom is open to all children between the ages of 6-9 years, regardless of race, color, religion or creed. For elementary enrollment information, please refer to our admissions procedures.

Class placement will be determined based on the child's chronological age, maturation level, and recommendation from any previous teacher. The needs of the child will be of primary importance in every decision made.

Children with challenges will be accepted into the program upon medical recommendation **only** if we can provide the necessary accommodations within the context of our current Montessori environments. In such cases, in addition to the completion of the basic required forms, parents or legal guardians will be required to provide medical documentation of any special conditions, including a description of any special care requirements. The Head of School and parents will work closely with the teachers.

## Tuition

Tuition is based on our ten-month school year. Payment may be made in full or monthly payments can be arranged via automatic bank draft on the 15th of each month, August through May. No reductions are made for illness or absences. A one-time enrollment fee of \$350.00 is due upon admission and is non-refundable.

There is a yearly materials fee for Toddler students of \$250.00. Primary students have a yearly materials fee of \$275.00. Elementary students have a yearly materials fee of \$275.00 and a yearly enrichment fee of \$175.00.

When entering our program after August, tuition will be pro-rated at a monthly rate. Tuition rates given are subject to change without notice.

## Tuition Fees for Academic Year 2016-2017

Program	*Tuition paid in full	**Monthly Payment Plan (10 payments)
Elementary 8:00 to 3:00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$7880.00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$798.00 (\$7980.00) Tuition Insurance: \$391.00
Primary Half day 8:00 to 11:15	<input type="checkbox"/> \$5900.00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$600.00 (\$6000.00) Tuition insurance: \$294.00
Primary Full day 8:00 to 3:00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$7500.00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$760.00 (\$7600.00) Tuition Insurance: \$373.00
Toddler - 3 Half day 8:00 to 11:15	<input type="checkbox"/> \$4300.00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$440.00 (\$4400.00) Tuition insurance: \$216.00
Toddler - 3 Full day 8:00 to 3:00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$5300.00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$540.00 (\$5400.00) Tuition insurance: \$265.00
Toddler - 5 Half day 8:00 to 11:15	<input type="checkbox"/> \$6100.00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$620.00 (\$6200.00) Tuition insurance: \$304.00
Toddler - 5 Full day 8:00 to 3:00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$7700.00	<input type="checkbox"/> \$780.00 (\$7800.00) Tuition insurance: \$382.00
Early Morning Care	\$900.00	\$90.00
Afterschool Care	\$2600.00	\$260.00

## Tuition Insurance

We offer tuition insurance to help protect your investment in the school and the school's investment in your child. **It is required if making monthly payments. It is optional when paying in full.** A copy of the insurance brochure is available in the office.

## Financial Aid

The Board of Trustees will allocate up to 1% of each year's budgeted tuition income to be available for use as financial aid to designated recipients. Application for financial aid will be submitted to the Schools and Services Provider (SSS) or other designated service provider that will review the submitted information. Applicants may incur processing fees by SSS. Parents may apply online during January and early February to be considered for the following school year. For more information, contact the school administrator.

## Probationary Enrollment

New students are accepted into WFMS on a 6-calendar week probationary period beginning with the students first day of classes. **Parents will receive a daily verbal report from their child's teacher regarding adjustment to the classroom environment.** Any behavior that is disruptive to the successful workings of the classroom will be reported to you on a daily basis and recommendations will be made on how to help your child adjust. Most children are working comfortably in the classroom after six to eight weeks. When we observe a student having difficulty adjusting to a classroom environment we will have a conference with the parents to develop a home/school strategy to assure success. Further, we strongly recommend that parents attend all parent education meetings to strengthen the partnership between home and school.

## Termination of Enrollment

Every effort will be made to avoid terminating a child's enrollment in the school. However, termination of enrollment will be considered under the following circumstances:

- Failure of the parents to cooperate with the school's policies
- Failure by the parents to provide health forms and other paperwork required for enrollment
- Excessive biting
- Uncontrolled hitting
- Behavioral problems that are disruptive to the classroom atmosphere and other students
- Parent's refusal to seek professional help when suggested as being in the child's best interests
- Inability of the school to meet the apparent needs of the child, as determined by teaching staff consensus
- Parent's disrespectful behavior toward other parents, children, teachers, administrators or any other staff
- **Physical, academic, or emotional issues that require excessive one-on-one attention**

## Evaluations and Conferences

There will be a conference as well as a progress report given to parents in the fall semester as well as in the spring semester. However, feel free to schedule a conference with your teacher when needed.

## Elementary Going out/Enrichment Activities

Our elementary students are offered a variety of field trip and enrichment opportunities throughout the school year. Volunteer parents serve as drivers for these activities. All elementary parents are required to sign the necessary forms in order for their child to participate in field trips as well as forms necessary to chaperone. All elementary parents must sign-in and get a volunteer badge before driving on a field trip.

## The Role of the Chaperone

The role of the chaperone is to provide a means of transportation for the students. The chaperone ensures that the students carry out the going out activity safely. The decisions of where to go and how to carry out the going out activity are the responsibility of the teachers and students. All chaperones must have copies of current vehicle insurance record, current driver's license, and individual record check on file in the office **before** they may drive children to an event.

While in the vehicle:

- The chaperone will provide seats in the vehicle that have appropriate seat belts.
- The chaperone will expect the children to speak softly, face forward, and keep hands and body to themselves while riding in the vehicle.
- The chaperone will make sure that any T.V. equipment in the vehicle is turned off.
- The chaperone will make sure cell phones are used for emergency purposes only.
- The chaperone will, as much as possible, stay with the car caravan while traveling.
- The chaperone should always make sure they have a field trip bag with them before departing on any field trip.

On arrival and during the event:

- The chaperone will take frequent head counts of his/her group of children.
- The chaperone will stay with the group at all times.
- The chaperone will ask children to follow the rules, if necessary.

## Guidelines for student behavior during a field trip

### During Transportation

- The children should wear a seat belt at all times while in the vehicle.
- The children must face forward.
- The children should speak in soft voices.
- The children must keep their hands to themselves.
- The children may not disturb the driver in any way.

### During the Activity

- The children must keep their hands to themselves.
- The children must stay with their designated driver or group.
- During the trip, the children will show respect to the teachers, presenters, volunteers, and classmates.
- The children will speak in soft voices.
- If in a restaurant, the children will use proper table manners.

If the child is unable to meet the behavior expectations they may be denied future going out privileges.

## Fire and Tornado Drills

**The Head of School/Administrator is responsible for initiating a fire or tornado drill on a monthly basis.** Children are coached frequently about how a fire drill and tornado drill will be handled.

### Fire Drills

Fire Drills are conducted every 30 days. Evacuation routes must be posted in each room. A written evaluation of each fire drill will be kept on file for 12 months. When the fire alarm rings, the teacher or assistant teacher will:

1. Teacher must make sure all students exit building to the designated meeting area.
2. Assistant must check the bathrooms. Classroom A is responsible for checking the library.
3. Assistant will close the back door after all areas (including behind shelving) have been checked.
4. Administration will recheck all areas of the building and exit to the designated area.
5. Teacher or Assistant must check class roster and take a head count to report to the Head of School/Administrator.
6. Teacher/Assistant must take with them: walkie-talkie, attendance book, information book, and cell phone.
7. Head of School/Administrator will give the all clear for classes to reenter the building.
8. Teachers will submit their drill log sheet to administration immediately following the drill procedure.

### Tornado Drills

1. The Head of School/Administrator will announce the tornado drill.
2. Children should move quickly to the bathrooms. If not all students can fit in bathrooms; they will be escorted by a staff member to overflow to the laundry room.
3. Children will stand quietly or sit bent over their knees, on the floor, hands covering their heads.
4. Teacher/Assistant must have with them: walkie-talkie, attendance book, information book, and cell phone.
5. Teachers/Assistant will count all children.
6. Head of School/Administration will alert when all is clear.
7. Head of School/Administration will document date and time of drill.

## Fundraising

Walnut Farm maintains a culture of giving. **Because tuition and enrollment fees do not cover our operating costs, it is necessary for our community to raise additional money for school operations, materials, growth, and enhancement projects.**

**Each year, WFMS has two large fundraising events (Annual Fund and Clubs and Crawfish) as well as a few smaller fundraising efforts. All families are expected to participate in these events. This is a great way to get involved in our school community and offer your time, skills, and talents.**

# Harassment Policy and Procedures

## PHILOSOPHY

Walnut Farm Montessori School affirms the dignity of every man, woman and child, and is committed to an environment in which all individuals are treated with respect and dignity. Each individual has the right to work or learn in an atmosphere that is free from discriminatory practices. Therefore,

### I. HARASSMENT POLICY:

THE SCHOOL STRONGLY OPPOSES AND PROHIBITS ALL FORMS OF HARASSMENT (e.g. harassment based on an individual's race, color, age, religion, sex, marital or veteran status, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, and disability), WHETHER VERBAL, PHYSICAL, OR ENVIRONMENTAL. ANY PERSON WHO VIOLATES THIS POLICY WILL BE SUBJECT TO DISCIPLINARY ACTION, UP TO AND INCLUDING TERMINATION FOR EMPLOYEES AND/OR REQUIRED WITHDRAWAL FOR STUDENTS.

- A. It is the policy of the educational programs of the school to maintain a productive working environment that is free from any type of harassment. No employee, volunteer or student associated with these programs shall be subjected to any type of harassment.
- B. It shall be a violation of this policy for any employee, staff member, volunteer, parent, or student to harass another employee, staff member, volunteer, parent, or student through conduct or communications as defined in Section II below.
- C. Each administrator shall be responsible for promoting understanding and acceptance of and assuring compliance with local, state, and federal laws and school policy and procedures governing harassment within his or her educational program or office.
- D. Violations of this policy or procedures will be cause for disciplinary action.

### II. DEFINITION OF HARASSMENT

- A. Harassment on the basis of race, color, age, religion, sex, marital or veteran status, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, and disability constitutes discrimination and, as such, violates civil law and the policies of the school.
- B. Harassment is verbal or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of his/her race, color, age, religion, sex, marital or veteran status, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, or disability, or that of his/her relatives, friends, or associates, and that:
  - 1. has the purpose or effect of creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment;
  - 2. has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's performance;
  - or
  - 3. otherwise adversely affects an individual's opportunities.
- C. Harassing conduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:
  - 1. epithets, slurs, negative stereotyping, or threatening, intimidating, or hostile acts, that relate to race, color, age, religion, gender, marital or veteran status, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry

2. written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group because of race, color, religion, gender national origin, age, or disability and that is circulated within or placed on walls, bulletin boards, or elsewhere on premises where the educational program operates.
- D. The standard for determining whether verbal or physical conduct relating to race, color, religion, sex, marital or veteran status, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, or disability is sufficiently severe or pervasive to create a hostile or abusive environment is whether a reasonable student or person in the same or similar circumstances would find the conduct intimidating, hostile, or abusive. The "reasonable person" standard includes consideration of the perspective of persons of the alleged victim's race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, or disability. It is not necessary to make a showing that the victim was psychologically harmed.
  - E. Prevention is the best tool for the elimination of harassment. Walnut Farm Montessori School recommends an educational program so that the school maintains an environment free of harassment on any of these bases.

### **III. PROCEDURES**

- A. Any person who alleges harassment by an employee, volunteer, or student files a complaint in writing directly to his or her teacher, immediate supervisor, or Head of School. The complaint shall describe the perceived violation, name the perpetrator, and identify any potential witnesses to the incident.
- B. The filing of a complaint or otherwise reporting of sexual harassment will not reflect upon the filing individual's status, nor will it affect future employment or work assignments. Retaliation against a complainant is strictly prohibited.
- C. The right to confidentiality, both of the complainant and of the accused, will be respected consistent with legal obligations and with the necessity to investigate allegations of misconduct and to take corrective action when this conduct has occurred. If the allegation is one of sexual misconduct, the school policy on sexual misconduct will be followed.

### **VI. SEXUAL HARASSMENT BY OR TOWARD SCHOOL EMPLOYEES**

For employees, sexual harassment is defined as illegal sex discrimination and includes unwelcome advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature which meets any one of the following criteria:

- A. Submission to the conduct is made explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of the individual's employment status or promotion
- B. Submission to, or rejection of, such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting the harassed employee
- C. The conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment
- D. Submission to, or rejection of, the conduct is the basis for any decision affecting benefits, services, honors, programs or other available activities.

## V. HARASSMENT BY OR TOWARD STUDENTS

Sexual harassment toward students is defined as including, but not limited to, unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual conduct or physical conduct of a sexual nature directed toward a student under any of the following conditions:

- A. Submission to or toleration of sexual conduct is an explicit or implicit term or condition of any services, benefits, or programs sponsored by the school
- B. Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as a basis for an academic evaluation affecting a student
- C. The conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a student's academic performance, or of creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.

## VI. EXAMPLES OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT

Sexual harassment includes, but is not limited to the following forms:

Verbal: Sexually demeaning comments, sexual statements, questions, slurs, jokes, anecdotes, or epithets

Written: Suggestive or obscene letters, notes, e-mails, or invitations

Physical: Sexual assault, touching, impeding or blocking movement

Visual: Leering gestures, display of sexually suggestive objects or pictures, cartoons, or posters

## VII. SANCTIONS

- A. A substantiated charge against an employee or volunteer shall subject such employee or volunteer to disciplinary action, up to and including discharge.
- B. A substantiated charge against a student of the school shall subject that student to disciplinary action that may include suspension or expulsion, consistent with the student discipline code.

## VIII. NOTIFICATIONS

Notice of this policy and procedures will be circulated throughout the school and incorporated in faculty and community guides. Training sessions on this policy and the prevention of harassment shall be held for employees.

## Illness

In order to keep all our children, their families and staff members as healthy as possible, we require that you observe the following:

- If your child has a fever of 99.0 or above, keep him or her home for 24 hours after the fever has broken. Viruses are still active within a 24-hour period.

- If your child has a bout of diarrhea or vomiting, keep him or her home for 24 hours after the last incident. Again, this 24-hour period is a highly contagious one.
- If your child has a runny nose, please be aware of the following:
  - A clear discharge without any other symptoms indicates an allergic reaction. This is not a contagious condition. A clear discharge with fever and or irritability indicates a contagious condition.
  - A discolored discharge indicates an infection and is a contagious condition. A sinus or ear infection may be present, and medication and bed rest may be necessary to clear up the infection. Please keep your child home until the infection is cleared.
- Staff members reserve the right to not allow a child they believe has a contagious condition into the classroom. We realize this might create an inconvenience for you. We have the health of our children and their families at heart, and feel a strong responsibility to do what we can to protect our WFMS school community.

## **Immunization Requirements**

Health records are due when you enroll your child. Children without current immunization will not be admitted to class until they are updated. If in doubt, please consult your child's physician.

## **Inclement Weather/Snow Days**

If Bentonville or Rogers's schools are closed, Walnut Farm will also be closed. We will also announce on TV channel 24/51 (NBC). While we are not required by the state of Arkansas to offer make up days, our calendar has designated make up days for excessive academic days lost. Extenuating circumstances are left to the discretion of the Head of School.

## **Library**

We are fortunate to have a children's library to offer our primary students. Parent volunteers assist our students one day a week in the library. Students are able to have story time and check out a book of their choice. We ask for books to be returned in a timely manner: one week from the time of check out. Please note the overdue library book policy:

1. If a book is not returned within 1, 2, or 3 weeks a notice is given to the parent during morning or afternoon carline.
2. If a book is not returned within 1 month (4 weeks) of the due date, the parents will be charged a book replacement fee of \$15.00.

## **Library Volunteer Expectations**

1. We always use quiet voices. If we are loud the children will be loud too.
2. We use walking feet. Running in the school is not only dangerous behavior, but also, it is disruptive behavior. The children should be walking in a tight line with their hands behind their backs.

3. Gum, food, candy and drinks are not allowed for adults or children during library hours.
4. Each teacher's expectations are a little different when it comes to gathering a group of children to take to the library. **Please confer with your teacher as to what his/her expectations are in the classroom.** No matter what the expectations, we always use a quiet whisper voice so as not to disturb the classroom. Once again, if you are using a normal/loud voice so will the children.

## Lice Policy

It is expected that school age children may get head lice. Lice are not something to be ashamed of and it can affect all people regardless of cleanliness or socio economic background. One of the worst problems with head lice is the attitude of the adults. Please understand that lice are not life threatening, it is an inconvenience. At Walnut Farm, we will do our best to keep head lice under control. Our school policy and plan is based on a 2001 study from *Pediatrics-Official Journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics*.

- If you find nits or live lice on your child please inform the school. It is likely that if your child has lice another child will also have lice.
- You should examine your child's head, especially behind the ears and at the nape of the neck, for nits and lice if your child exhibits symptoms (primarily itching) of a head lice infestation. If nits or lice are found, all household members should be examined for nits and lice every 2-3 days. Persons with live (crawling) lice or nits within 1/4 inch or less of the scalp should be treated.
- If head lice are found, the school will perform head checks in the classroom where a confirmed case of head lice has been reported.
- If the school finds > 5 nits within ¼ inch of the scalp or a live louse, we will call you to pick up your child and treat them. Treatment may or may not involve chemicals but it **must** involve the removal of live lice and nits. (Please see hand out on how to treat lice)
- Eggs that are likely to hatch are usually located no more than ¼ inch (or 1 centimeter) from the base of the hair shaft.
- We expect you to **retreat** your child in 7 to 10 days.
- The child or staff member will be checked on a daily basis for 7-10 days to ensure no signs of re-infestation develop.
- When a child or staff member is identified as having head lice, everyone in the classroom, including the teacher, will be checked weekly for four weeks.
- A notice will be sent home to notify and make parents aware that they need to check their child daily for four weeks to make sure that they do not develop signs of an infestation.
- Upon completion of treatment, authorized school staff will check the child. The student or staff member will be granted re-admission to the school if no live lice or less than 5 nits within ¼ inch of the scalp are found.
- To eliminate head lice successfully, it is very important that all treatment instructions and steps are carefully followed and completed.

- CDC does not make recommendations as to what specific product or products should be used to treat individual patients. You may wish to contact your doctor, pharmacist, or health department for additional information about which product has been successful for treating lice.

We take head lice very seriously, but please understand that treatment and the eradication of head lice are fully the responsibility of the parent. We will do our best to keep you informed, maintain the classroom, and to educate the children.

## Lunches

Lunch costs are included in our elementary, primary, and toddler full day programs. Lunch may not be brought from home unless extreme, special health conditions exist and the change has received approval by the Head of School. We will offer a main dish, fresh fruits, and vegetables each day along with 2% milk and water. A monthly menu is available on each classroom website calendar.

We welcome parents to join us for lunch. It is necessary to schedule a lunch visit a day or two ahead, as we limit lunch guests to no more than 2 per day. Sometimes we can accommodate impromptu lunch visits; however, we greatly appreciate a call by 9 a.m. so we can alert our cook and set a place for you. Please check with your classroom teacher for the exact lunchtime.

Any time parents are visiting our campus, please remember that the work of the children and the teachers' and other staff members' attention should not be disturbed. Parents should walk and speak quietly at all times. **We ask that parents try to limit their stay to a period of 30 minutes while on the campus for lunch or classroom celebrations.** Lengthy visits can disturb the focus of the children and teachers during class and play times.

## Medication

**WFMS does not administer over the counter or prescription medication. If medication is necessary, a parent will need to come to the school to provide their child with necessary medication.**

The only exception will be emergency medications such as EPI-Pens and inhalers. All Epi-pens and inhalers must come with a doctor's instruction for use as well as a permission slip provided by WFMS. The permission slip will need to be completed and put in a zip lock back with the Epi-pen or inhaler and the doctor's instruction. These items should be given directly to the child's teacher.

### ***Sunscreen and Lip Balm***

Sunscreen and lip balm be treated as a medication. Therefore, we kindly ask that you apply sunscreen at home before your child gets dressed as necessary. **All sunscreen must be in spray form only for the body and stick form for the face.** If a child needs sunscreen or lip balm application for medical purposes, a permission slip provided by WFMS will need to be completed and put in a zip lock back with the sunscreen or lip balm and given to a morning greeter.

## **Mission Statement**

**The nationally accredited Walnut Farm Montessori School provides a Montessori education honoring community and individuality by promoting peace, and empowering children for life-long learning.**

## **Newsletters**

Newsletters from the school and teachers will be made available through email.

## **Non-Discrimination Policy**

Walnut Farm Montessori School has a non-discriminatory policy with respect to student admission and staff employment. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, or national origin.

## **Normalization**

Normalization is the first 6 to 8 weeks of school when we are getting to know your children, and they are learning the expectations of the classroom. Here is a list of things that you can do to help your child in this process:

1. Make sure your child gets to bed early.
2. Make sure your child has ample time in the morning to prepare for the day.
3. Make sure your child has a healthy diet.
4. Try to eliminate your anxiety and stress about the new situation.
5. Make positive conversation about school with your child.
6. Try to choose clothing the night before and make sure the clothing choice makes toileting free of extra challenges.
7. Make sure your child has some time after school to just be.

## **Observation of Classrooms**

Observation is an important aspect of the Montessori classroom and profession. Observation is a privilege that Walnut Farm offers to its families to view their child in the context of their education and social environments. Observations are scheduled after the first 6-8 weeks of school. Parents are welcome to observe our classrooms. All of our classrooms have observation rooms that make observations less intrusive. We suggest that you limit your observations to no more than once a month. Please use the following protocol if you wish to observe:

All observations must be scheduled with the administration office.

The observation windows are limited to one family (not to exceed two people) and a staff member at a time.

If staff members are in the observation room, please allow them to exit before entering.

**The use of cell phones, cameras or video equipment in the observation IS NOT ALLOWED. Parents are not ALLOWED to take photos or videos of children and/or staff unless they have received the expressed permission from the Head of School. All observations will be scheduled so that a Montessori teacher or the Head of School can provide a guided observation.**

### **How to Observe the Montessori Classroom**

- Note the variety of activities offered in the environment.
- Observe your child closely.
- Is your child working alone or with other students?
- Is your child choosing to sit on a rug or at a worktable?
- Note your child's cycle of work from beginning to end.
- Is your child concentrating?
- Is your child demonstrating a sense of order while working?
- What are the expressions on your child's face?

Please plan to spend between 30 minutes and 1 hour when you come to observe primary or elementary students so that you will get a better understanding of the workings of the classroom. Toddler observations are limited to 30 minutes. **Please fill out one of the observation forms located in each observation room during each visit and return the completed form to the administrator.**

**Please do not enter a classroom during class time unless you have the teacher's permission.**

### **Confidentiality**

During your observation you will observe a variety of behaviors and maturity levels. Please be aware that as a school, we respect each child's place in their individual development and respect our staff's expertise in handling situations that may occur during your observation. Please be respectful of the children, their families, and the staff if you share your observations with a friend.

\*If there is a special concern or reason for frequent observations, a conference with your classroom teacher and/or Head of School is required.

\*\*WFMS reserves the right to prohibit observations if the privilege of observation is misused.

### **Outdoor Classroom**

The Outdoor classroom is the patio and outdoor area directly behind the primary building. This area is an extension of our classes. The same rules for the classroom apply here also: walk, sticks and stones stay on the ground, quiet voices. The large playground will be used for running and game playing. Please provide a pair of rubber boots marked with your child's name. These boots should stay at school so the outdoor classroom can be enjoyed even on the muddiest of days.

## Parent Education Meeting and Requirements

Our Parent Education Meetings are vital to your child's success and therefore we **expect parents to attend at least two meetings per year, but we recommend attending as many as possible.** We try to make the meetings brief and highly informative. We think you will find it a wise investment your time. Please check the school calendar for dates and times. Meetings sometimes vary according to developmental levels and themes.

Our school is a partnership of teachers, parents and students. It is through these meetings that our partnership becomes most effective.

## Parking

Parking at the school is very limited. Please park in the spaces first and then use the grassy area across from the toddler A building.

## Ratios: Student to Staff per DHS Guidelines

**Toddler Students: (18 months-3 years) There must be 1 staff member for every 8 students.**

**Primary Students: (3 years-6 years) There must be 1 staff member for every 12 students when 3 year olds are present There must be 1 staff member for every 15 students when 4, 5, or 6 year olds are present.**

**Primary Resting Time: The staff can reduce to 50% (from 2 to 1) when primary students are resting.**

## Recall Notice and Web Link

From time to time, companies that provide equipment, materials, and toys for children will “recall” particular items in their product line. As required by DHS, we have included a web address for all WFMS parents to utilize to discover if equipment, materials, or toys their child/children are using has been recalled. The web address is: [listserv@cpsc.gov](mailto:listserv@cpsc.gov). Additionally, upon request, WFMS can provide a printed copy of recent recalled children’s items.

## Snacks

In the Toddler and Primary classrooms, snack time is a free choice activity beginning at 8:30 a.m. and ending at 10:00 a.m. Parents will provide snacks. Please make sure snack is given to the morning greeter. Teachers will provide you with a calendar of assigned snack days. Please make sure that snacks are nutritious: a whole grain carbohydrate, protein, fruit or vegetable. A list of appropriate snacks to choose from will be handed out during the orientation and the first day of school. Snack is also offered in the elementary classrooms and schedules are provided.

**Due to DHS regulations, snacks MUST BE purchased at a store and not prepared at home. Fruit and vegetables are welcomed and must be brought to school in their original container/bag from the store.**

## Staggered Start

To ensure that each of our new toddler and primary students have a successful beginning to the school year we offer a staggered start. If your child is new to the toddler program, new to the primary program, or a WFMS toddler transitioning to the primary program, your child will experience a stagger start. You will receive a letter stating which day (during the first 10 days of the new school year) your child will begin attending. This allows the teacher's to give each child the special attention he or she needs while transitioning from time at home to the school environment.

## Statement of Rights

Walnut Farm Montessori School, Head of School, and the Board of Trustees retain the right to change, modify, cancel, suspend or interpret any part of the Community Handbook, policies and practices without advance notice within the sole discretion and without statement of cause for justification. All decisions made will be in the best interest of the children, school, and parents. Parents will be notified thru mail or newsletter.

## Tax ID Number

Our tax ID number is 71-0828503.

## Toys

The children are here for only a short time, and a toy from home can keep them from their work. Please encourage any "lovies" to stay at home or in the car.

For elementary students, no balls, jump ropes, etc. are to be brought from home.

## **Transitions and Classroom Placements**

Our goal is for each student to remain in the same classroom for the three-year cycle of that program. However, this is not always possible. Dr. Montessori discovered three-year cycles of human development with marked changes at the end and beginning of each. As trained teachers, we look for these changes and help guide the child into the next level of development.

The transition from half day to full day usually occurs around age four and a half to five years old. Usually your child will ask to stay all day to do “Big Work.” We usually recommend staying two or three consecutive afternoons a week until your child feels comfortable with the transition. This transition will occur under the advice and communication of the classroom guide and/or Head of School. This transition time does require a fee. You will be billed on a monthly basis.

The transition from primary to elementary classroom occurs around age six. Usually a three year cycle in the primary environment prepares the child for the next stage of development in the lower elementary. Your child will usually express a desire to leave the comfort of being the oldest in the primary classroom, to the challenge of being the youngest in the elementary classroom.

Please be aware that once your child transitions you will be billed for the additional fees.

New primary students are introduced into the classroom with staggered starts. Their start times are scheduled through mutual agreement between the teacher and parents. The dates will fall after the first day of returning students. This is to ensure your child has a comfortable and successful start to the school year.

Elementary students may begin with a staggered start. Start dates are based on the number of years a child has been in the classroom. Your teacher will contact you to confirm your start date.

## **Truth in Advertising Policy**

Walnut Farm Montessori School states that the information contained in our advertising, community guide, faculty guide, newsletters, and school communication is true to the best of our knowledge. We reserve the right to amend the community and faculty guides as needed to suit the needs of the school community.

## **Visitors/Volunteers Policy**

All parents and guest visiting/volunteering at WFMS are required to first check in at the administrative office before proceeding to their destination on campus. Visitors are required to sign the visitor’s log and acquire a visitor’s badge that must be worn at all times while on campus. Visitors must sign out in the administrative office and return their badge after they have finished their business on campus. Sign-in is not required for PA or board meetings, social gatherings sponsored by the school such as school celebrations or community events.

Parents have access to WFMS anytime during school hours. However, the work of the children and the teachers and other staff members' attention should not be disturbed. Parents should walk and speak quietly at all times. If you wish to speak with your child's teacher, please call the administrative office to make an appointment. Parents are allowed to stay for a period of 30 minutes in the classroom while on campus for lunch or birthday celebrations. Longer visits must be pre-arranged with the classroom teacher.

## **Volunteerism**

**Each WFMS family is required to give 10 volunteer hours per school year. Please make sure you sign-in in our volunteer book as well as sign-in to receive a guest badge.**

There are many opportunities to volunteer at the school throughout the year, including volunteering with a fundraiser, driving on field trips, making materials, helping with fundraisers, running errands, helping set up for meetings, working in the library, or making phone calls, or helping with facility and grounds updates and repairs.

**Parents are not allowed in the classrooms during class time unless arrangements have been made with the teacher. Always check in with the office before you enter a classroom.**

The Parent Association is a support group to our school community. Everyone is welcome and encouraged to become a part of this organization.

**Walnut Farm Montessori School reserves the right to amend and change policy as needed to ensure and protect the mission of the school.**

*The contents of this booklet can be revised at any time and are not to be construed as a contract, but rather, guidelines for action. These contents are the property of Walnut Farm Montessori School and cannot be duplicated or copied without their permission.*

Updated 7/12/16