



*The goal of early childhood education should be to  
activate the child's own natural desire to learn.*  
*Maria Montessori*

# **North Star Montessori Academy**

## **Preschool Handbook**

### **2021-2022**

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Marquette, MI 49855  
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#### Notice of Nondiscrimination

It is the policy of North Star Montessori Academy district that no person on the basis of race, sex, color, religion, national origin or ancestry, age, marital status, disability, weight, or height shall be discriminated against in employment, educational programs, or admissions. Questions or concerns regarding the policies should be directed to the CEO/Superintendent at 3030 Wright St, Marquette, MI 49855, and (906) 226-0156.

# **Our mission is to cultivate blended learning and success by inspiring every child in a student-centered community.**

This handbook pertains to specific Preschool requirements, licensing laws and best practices. More information about NSMA can be found in the full handbook at: <https://northstaracademymqt.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/NSMA-2020-21-K-12-Handbook-Google-Docs.pdf> or by requesting a copy in the office.

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*The greatest gifts we can give our children are the roots of responsibility and the wings of independence.*

*Maria Montessori*

## **Program Philosophy**

Preschool children possess a remarkable ability to absorb the world that surrounds them. Maria Montessori believed that the years from three to six are the most critical period for nurturing a child's natural curiosity and for laying the foundation for future development.

The goal of North Star Academy's Primary Montessori program is to foster independence and to support children in moving toward a mastery of self and the environment. The classroom is a prepared Montessori environment designed to encourage children in their self-directed discovery of the world. Interest based activities encourage children to develop a love of learning and trust in their own ability to learn.

The classroom includes children aged three to six, and children may work individually or in small groups, learning and sharing with one another.

Our program will help children develop a rapport with their environment and support them as they develop physical, social and intellectual independence. The Montessori teacher intensely follows each child, presenting carefully designed lessons and materials, on a one-to-one basis as the child is ready to develop his/her skills.

## **Criteria for Admission and Withdrawal**

Montessori Pre-K Applications must be completed and returned to the NSA office with a \$50 non-refundable application fee. Students will be admitted to the program based on application date and age limitations. Class size is restricted to 20 students per classroom. Wait list applicants may be admitted later in the year if a position becomes available.

### **Admission Requirements**

- Students birth certificate to verify age
- A copy of immunizations or waiver from the health department
- A copy of the child's most recent Well Child visit signed by their physician
- The admission form and non-refundable admission fee of \$50
- The child must be toilet trained

If any of these are not available a student may be denied admission.

### **Withdrawal**

Please submit a letter of withdrawal to the office with your child's name and the date of their last day as soon as you know you will be withdrawing.

## **Scheduling**

Students should be at school by 8:30am. Please do not drop children off before 8:15am as supervision is not provided and the classrooms are not open. Classes begin at 8:30am. Students should be picked up from school no later than 3:40pm unless they are enrolled in the NSMA after school program.

The Montessori preschool program will follow the school calendar. The program will not open on snow days, professional development days, or vacation days.

### **Academic Calendar: 2021-2022**

- **August 26** - Open House 4:00 – 7:00
- **August 31** - First Day of School - 8:30am - 3:40pm
- **September 3 & 6** - No School for students
- **September 15** - Half Day for students - Early Release - 1:00pm
- **October 8** - No School for students District Professional Development
- **October 20** - Half Day for students - Early Release - 1:00pm
- **October 29** - Half Day for students - Early Release - 1:00pm
- **November 5** - End of Marking Period One
- **November 17** - Half Day for students - Early Release - 1:00pm
- **November 22 & 23** - Parent Teacher Conferences
- **November 24, 25 & 26** - Thanksgiving Break
- **December 15** - Half Day for Students - Early Release - 1:00pm
- **December 23 - January 3** - Holiday Break
- **January 4** - Students and Staff Return
- **January 17** - Holiday Break
- **January 19** - Half Day for Students - Early Release - 1:00pm
- **January 21** - End of Marking Period Two
- **January 24** - Start of Second Semester
- **February 16** - Half Day for students - Early Release - 1:00pm
- **February 21** - Holiday Break
- **March 16** - Half day for students - Early Release - 1:00pm
- **March 25** - End of Marking Period Three
- **March 28** - Semester Two Begins
- **April 4 - April 11** - Spring Break
- **April 20** - Half day for students - Early Release - 1:00pm
- **May 18** - Half day for students - Early Release - 1:00pm
- **May 30** - Holiday Break - Memorial Day
- **June 3** - End of Semester Two
- **June 9** - Last day of school - Early Release - 1:00pm

## **Typical Daily Schedule**

- 8:15-8:45 students arrive at school and begin their independent morning routine. Breakfast is available. Students should be in their classroom for attendance by 8:30am
- 8:45-9:00 Morning meeting
- 9:00-11:00 Work Cycle (including morning snack)
- 11:00-11:25 Clean up and prepare for lunch, story and singing time
- 11:25-11:55 Lunch
- 12:00-1:00 Recess
- 1:00-2:15 Rest/nap time, quiet indoor play
- 2:15-2:30 Snack time
- 2:30-3:30 Various specials (art, music, gym, Spanish, and technology)
- 3:40 Dismissal

## **Rest**

Rest is required by licensing standards for each preschool child. Children must rest quietly for 30 minutes. Napping is encouraged, otherwise looking at books or quietly coloring will be granted on individual rest mats. Every child must provide a small pillow and blanket to rest with. These will be sent home regularly for washing.

## **Recess**

Outdoor free play provides the children a chance to work on large and small motor skills, as well as social skills. We will go outside daily unless the temperature is below (feels like) 10 degrees or it is too wet. Please send your child with weather appropriate clothes each day. You may keep winter gear at school on your child's hook.

## **Meals and Snacks**

The school participates in the National School Lunch Program and makes lunches available to students for a fee or at an adjusted cost if the student qualifies for free or reduced lunch. Students may also bring their own lunch to school.

Applications for the free and reduced price meal program are distributed to all students. If a student does not receive one and believes he/she is eligible, please contact the Food Service Coordinator at the office.

Breakfast is provided, but not required. The school's breakfast program is available at no cost. A small morning and afternoon snack can be brought from home, or supplied by parent donations. Food must be in original packaging for the safety of students with food allergies.

## **Curriculum**

Our Primary Montessori program blends a hybrid of Montessori philosophy and methods, Common Core State Standards and Michigan standards. Children are met at a developmentally appropriate level on an individual basis. Some primary students may begin working on academic work, but the focus is on pre-academic and social skills. These include (but are not limited to): patterning, sequencing, matching, grouping, sorting, counting, fine motor skills such as grasping and pinching, large motor skills such as running, skipping, jumping and throwing, social skills such as communicating, waiting and trying your best, and practical life work such as pouring, serving, and taking care of the environment.

## **Tuition and Fees**

A non-refundable application fee of \$50 is due with the completed application. Tuition for the 2021-2022 school year is \$6000. A 5% discount will be applied if tuition is paid in full by September 1, 2021. Monthly payments of \$600 for ten months may also be made starting September 1, 2021. Non-payment of tuition will result in dismissal from the program. Payments may be made via check or cash either mailed or turned in at the front office. All tuition payments are due in full and in advance of the month services are rendered. This includes whether your child attends or is absent. Tuition credit is not given nor is it refundable for holidays, sick days, inclement weather days or any other absences that may occur.

## **Exclusion Policy for Child Illnesses**

Because a school has a high concentration of people, it is necessary to take specific measures when the health or safety of the group is at risk. The school's professional staff has the authority to remove or isolate a student who has been ill or has been exposed to a communicable disease or highly-transient pest, such as lice. Specific diseases include (but are not limited to): conjunctivitis (pink-eye), diphtheria, scarlet fever, strep infections, whooping cough, mumps, rubella and other conditions indicated by the local and state health department.

A parent or guardian will be called to come and get a student if a student is experiencing any of the these health concerns:

- Fever - a temperature of 100°F taken orally or 99°F taken underarm
- Diarrhea - if a child has two loose or watery stools, even if there are no other signs of illness
- Vomiting
- Unexplained/sudden rash
- Any serious accident or injury

A child must be free of fever, vomiting, diarrhea or pink eye symptoms without the aid of medication for 24 hours before returning to school

## **Accidents, Injuries and Incidents**

In case of an accident or illness, NSMA will contact the parent, or a listed emergency contact. If the injury is minor an ice pack and/or band aid will be applied and parents will be notified by the end of the day. If the injury needs immediate attention their parents will be notified immediately and 911 will be called if necessary. In the event of an incident, parents will be notified by the end of the day and an incident report may be filled out.

## **Use Of Medications**

In those circumstances when a student must take prescribed OR over the counter medication during the school day, the following guidelines are to be observed:

- A. Parents should, with their physician's counsel, determine whether the medication schedule can be adjusted to avoid administering medication during school hours.
- B. The Medication Request and Authorization Form 5330 F1, F1a, and F1b must be filed with the respective building principals before the student will be allowed to begin taking any medication during school hours.
- C. All medications must be registered in the main office and will be administered based on the directions provided by the physician.
- D. Medication that is brought to the office will be properly secured.
  - a. Medication may be conveyed to school directly by the parent. A two to four (2-4) week supply of medication is recommended.
  - b. Medication MAY NOT be sent to school in a student's lunch box, pocket, car or other means on or about his/her person, except for emergency medications for allergies and/or reactions.
- E. Any unused medication unclaimed by the parent will be destroyed by school personnel when a prescription is no longer to be administered or at the end of a school year.
- F. A log for each prescribed medication shall be maintained which will note the personnel giving the medication, the date, and the time of day. This log will be maintained along with the physician's written instructions and the parent's written permission release.

### Asthma Inhalers:

Students, with appropriate written permission from the physician and parent, may possess and use a metered dose inhaler or dry powder inhaler to alleviate asthmatic symptoms. Students may possess and self-administer a metered dose or dry powder inhaler for relief of asthma, or before exercise to prevent onset of asthma symptoms, while at school, on school-sponsored transportation, or at any school-sponsored activity in accord with the CEO's guidelines, if the following conditions are met:

There is written approval from the student's physician or other health care provider and the student's parent/guardian to possess and use the inhaler (Form 5330 F1c), and the building administrator has received a copy of the written approval from the physician and the parent/guardian.

Non-prescribed (over-the-counter) medications (including lotions and creams):

Parents may authorize the school to administer a non-prescribed medication using a form which is available at the school office. A physician does not have to authorize such medication. If a student is found using or possessing a non-prescribed medication without parent authorization, s/he will be brought to the school office and the parents will be contacted for authorization. The medication will be confiscated until written authorization is received. Any student who distributes a medication of any kind to another student or is found to possess a medication other than the one authorized is in violation of the school's Code of Conduct and will be disciplined in accordance with the drug-use provision of the Code.

Before any prescribed medication or treatment may be administered to any student during school hours, the school requires the written prescription and instructions from the child's physician accompanied by the written authorization of the parent. Both must also authorize any self-medication by the student. Before any non-prescribed medication or treatment may be administered, the Board shall require written consent of the parent along with a waiver of any liability of the District for the administration of the medication.

## **Transportation Policy**

North Star Montessori Academy offers transportation services within Marquette County through Checker Transport. The office provides detailed route information and bus stop request form. All parents and students must sign a bus policy agreement form before riding the bus. In addition, many students also use the Marq Tran, public transit system. For questions on routes, call MarqTran at (906) 225-1283. Please note that any change/request for route drop off location must be received by the main office by noon of the day change. Please see the full K-12 handbook for information on bus infractions and consequences. Field Trip notifications using bussing will always be sent home ahead of trips for parental consideration.

## **Discipline Policy**

Because of the carefully designed environment and range of hands-on, interest based activities available, Montessori children are less likely to exhibit chronic behavior problems. However, with young children, discipline and redirection are a part of the learning process.

The Montessori classroom is a community of learners with rules very similar to real society. Children and teachers are required to abide by a few simple rules:

- There is typically only one of each material in the classroom, so you must wait your turn and respect the concentration of the individual using the materials. You may ask to share a material, but only if the other student agrees.
- You can only use materials that have been presented to you by the teacher.
- If you misuse a material you will be asked to return it to the shelf.
- You must return a material to the same place on the shelf and in the same condition in which you found it.
- You must abide by all grace and courtesy rules which are role modeled and taught daily, including, but not limited to: hands to self, kind words, respect quiet/concentration of others, take care of your own belongings/space, follow safety rules in the classrooms and on the playground.

If any of the above rules are broken, the participating children will be first asked to correct the mistake or be retaught the rules through modeling.

Sometimes it is necessary to remove the child's freedom of choice temporarily. Teachers may ask a student to follow them around the classroom until they are ready to go back to work (referred to as "glueing"). If all attempts do not successfully redirect the student, a specific area in the classroom is used to further reduce freedom until the child is ready to obey the rules.

Occasionally older students may be asked to fill out a reflection page when a repeated, negative behavior is observed. This provides the child the opportunity to draw and describe the misbehavior and make a plan with the teacher about what should be done differently in the future. These papers (referred to by the children as "uh oh sheets") are sent home to be discussed with a parent and returned with a signature.

Children who do not respond to reduction of freedom after multiple attempts may not be suited to a classroom that relies on independent choices and activities. Those children may be asked to try alternative daycare or schooling in a more structured and unison environment. NSMA will not keep students enrolled who are a threat to others, to the integrity of the program or the

welfare of teachers and staff. All members are expected to behave respectfully. The safety and welfare of our students are always our first priority.

## **Please Note**

There is no smoking, marijuana use or vaping on school property.

## **What to bring**

Please bring (or leave at school) these items everyday, or when seasonally appropriate:

- At least one extra set of clothes in case of accident
- Indoor shoes (no laces please)
- A small pillow and blanket for rest
- Weather appropriate outdoor gear
- Optional :
  - A water bottle, we do have a drinking fountain in our room
  - Snacks and a lunch from home, or you may eat communal snacks/order hot lunch

## **Licensing Handbook**

The licensing notebook contains all the licensing inspection and special investigation reports and related corrective action plans for the last 5 years. The licensing notebook is available to parents during regular business hours, 8:15am-3:45pm. Licensing inspection reports, special investigation reports, and corrective action plans from at least the past 3 years are available on the department's child care licensing website at [www.michigan.gov/michildcare](http://www.michigan.gov/michildcare).

*Our care of the child should be governed, not by the desire to make him learn things, but by the endeavor always to keep burning within him that light which is called intelligence.*

*Maria Montessori*

2021-2022

In case of accident or illness, I request North Star Montessori Academy staff contact me, or the person listed below if I am unavailable. I hereby authorize NSMA staff to secure medical treatment for an acute emergency by calling 911.

Parent printed name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent signature \_\_\_\_\_

Alternate contact

Name \_\_\_\_\_ phone \_\_\_\_\_

Family Doctor \_\_\_\_\_ phone \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred Hospital \_\_\_\_\_

Insurance Company \_\_\_\_\_ Policy Number \_\_\_\_\_

### Transportation Permission

I hereby give my permission to North Star Montessori Academy for my child to participate in field trips and when necessary be transported in an approved vehicle.

Parent signature \_\_\_\_\_

### Immunizations and General Health Assessments

- My child has received a physical evaluation performed with the preceding year, signed by a licensed healthcare provider. Any restrictions should be noted. A copy of this evaluation is on file.
- My child has had all required immunizations and is free from communicable disease, is in good health and is able to fully participate in North Star Montessori Academy activities

Parent signature \_\_\_\_\_

Please check one:

\_\_\_\_ North Star Montessori Academy may photograph my child

\_\_\_\_ North Star Montessori Academy may photograph my child for in school use only

\_\_\_\_ North Star Montessori Academy may **NOT** photograph my child

I understand North Star Montessori Academy maintains a licensing handbook that I can review at any time.

Parent signature \_\_\_\_\_

### Agreement

I have read ALL THE INFORMATION in the North Star Montessori Academy Primary Handbook and agree to abide by all the policies and regulations. Information regarding attendance, behavior, and programing will be shared between program staff and appropriate school personnel when deemed necessary.

Parent signature \_\_\_\_\_

<p><b>What to return:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Registration forms</li> <li>*Child Information Record</li> <li>*Health appraisal or copy of well child exam</li> <li>*Copy of vaccines</li> <li>*Copy of child's birth certificate</li> <li>*Permission form (last page of the handbook)</li> <li>* \$50 non refundable deposit</li> </ul>	<p><b>What to return:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>*Registration forms</li> <li>*Child Information Record</li> <li>*Health appraisal or copy of well child exam</li> <li>*Copy of vaccines</li> <li>*Copy of child's birth certificate</li> <li>*Permission form (last page of the handbook)</li> <li>* \$50 non refundable deposit</li> </ul>
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