



Families Handbook

Revised April 6, 2023

Fairbanks Montessori School
2014 30th Avenue
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Welcome to Fairbanks Montessori School

Fairbanks Montessori School has been serving families in the Fairbanks community since 1965. We provide a secure, inviting learning environment for all of the children in our care. Our highly trained staff encourage our students to have healthy independence, a positive attitude about the learning process, and respect for themselves and others.

This booklet is a reference guide to our program and policies. We are committed to making your Montessori experience as positive and rewarding as possible.

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Mission Statement

Our mission is to provide exceptional early education according to Montessori principles and pedagogy, allowing each child to maximize their growth and fostering their independence through a nurturing environment.

This handbook is a working document that may be amended.

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The Montessori Method

Maria Montessori was an Italian physician, educator, and innovator, acclaimed for her educational method that builds on the way children learn naturally.

Dr. Montessori graduated from medical school in 1896, where she was among Italy's first female physicians. Dr. Montessori opened the first Montessori school, the Casa dei Bambini (Children's House) on January 6, 1907. The students were under-served children, ages 3 – 7, who were left on their own while their parents went out to work.

Using scientific observation and experience gained from her earlier work with young children, Dr. Montessori designed learning materials and a classroom environment that fostered the children's natural desire to learn and provided freedom within limits.

A foundational element of the Montessori method is the belief that all children are born with the potential to absorb and gain what they need from their environment for their social, emotional, and cognitive development. Very young children spend tremendous effort learning to walk and talk, regardless of the instruction provided them. Building on this innate desire to learn, the Montessori method honors each child as a person who experiences joy in accomplishing real work, for the sake of the work itself, not due to external rewards or punishments.

By 1910, Montessori schools could be found throughout Western Europe and were being established around the world. In the United States, the first Montessori school opened in Tarrytown, NY, in 1911.

The Montessori Method includes the following key principles:

The Prepared Environment - Classrooms are clean, peaceful, beautiful spaces with child size furniture and materials. Lead Teachers and classroom assistants are prepared to guide children through each day

Independence - Children are encouraged to be independent as is appropriate for their individual development. For example, in the classroom children select and put away their work, wash their dishes, and generally dress themselves for outdoor play.

Observation - Each child is carefully observed by the Lead Teacher and given individual lessons based on these observations.

Following the Child - Each child's areas of interest, learning styles, and sensitive periods are honored. (Sensitive periods are developmental windows of opportunity during which the child can learn specific concepts more easily and naturally than at any other time in their lives.)

Positive Discipline - Children are taught to respect themselves, others, and their environment through daily grace and courtesy lessons. Lead Teachers and classroom assistants also model appropriate behavior and language. Peaceful conversations, guided meditation, and conflict resolution are all part of positive discipline.

The Absorbent Mind - Maria Montessori's theory of the Absorbent Mind, developed scientifically through her observation, experimentation, and analysis, recognizes that until age 6, children absorb knowledge from their environment. After the age of 6 the brain transitions to a reasoning mind, which remains with the individual for life. After age 6 children can no longer effortlessly absorb information from their environment.

An Emphasis on Beauty - Maria Montessori believed children needed to experience beauty in the course of each day. Many traditional Montessori materials that you will see in our classrooms are made from natural materials.

The team at Fairbanks Montessori School (FMS) is committed to the Montessori method of teaching. The classrooms are organized into five curriculum areas: Practical Life, Sensorial, Language, Math, and Culture, with the materials carefully ordered on the shelves. Lead teachers introduce lessons at the proper time and in the proper sequence.

The Montessori primary classroom serves children ages 3-6. Three-year olds enter the classroom as the youngest students, needing more guidance and assistance. By age five, in their Kindergarten year, students have gained self-confidence and leadership skills which they practice and hone by caring for the classroom with special jobs and modeling proper behavior for younger students. Practicing these skills is an important part of the third-year program, and the skills the children acquire will help them throughout their lives. *We encourage all families to consider the importance of the full three year Montessori primary cycle.*

Student Eligibility

Fairbanks Montessori School is licensed by the State of Alaska Child Care Program Office to serve 92 children ages 19 mos - 6 years. **We currently serve only preschoolers, aged 3-6. Our preschool classrooms are mixed age rooms. Students must be three years old and fully toilet trained to attend FMS.**

Please keep in mind that Montessori education is a specific style of learning that does not always meet the needs of every student, but we will communicate with you regarding how to best set up your student for success.

Prior to applying for enrollment, please contact the school to set up a tour, and ask any questions.

If you are aware of or have concerns regarding your child's development, please communicate with the Director regarding these. The Director will work with each family to share resources. Together, parents and the Director can decide if FMS will be the right setting for your student or how to best accommodate your student at FMS.

Inclusion Policy / Students with Special Needs*

FMS honors the Department of Education's guideline that "all young children with disabilities should have access to inclusive high-quality early childhood programs, where they are provided with individualized and appropriate support in meeting high expectations."

If your child displays physical, emotional, or social behavior(s) that prevent them from making academic progress and becoming more comfortable interacting with their peers, we may suggest that a child care professional from Thread (an Alaska organization which supports young children and early educators) come to observe your child in the classroom. The observation will occur only after parents / guardians have granted written permission. The observer can recommend further resources for your family.

FMS staff will also connect families to Fairbanks North Star Borough School District's Child Find, which provides free screenings for children ages 3-5 to assess if children are meeting age appropriate milestones in all areas of their development. Child Find can be reached at 907-452-2000 ext 11448.

Additionally, FMS staff will:

- Offer families information on additional local support services for young children

- Refrain from labeling / diagnosing any child
- Accommodate any child's aide in the classroom
- Follow the recommendations of the child's Physical, Occupational, or Speech Therapist and make adjustments to the classroom environment if possible

*This policy does not supersede our Discipline Policy, see page 36.

****FMS admits students of any race, color, national, religious or ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. FMS does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarships or other school-administered programs.****

Additional Eligibility Information

- FMS accepts students receiving tuition assistance (see our Financial Policies section)
- All children enrolling in primary classrooms **MUST** be toilet trained before attending. See Toilet Policy below.

Toilet Policy

Children entering preschool classrooms are required to be fully and independently toilet trained upon starting at FMS. *The bodily autonomy that comes with independent toileting is foundational to each student's success at Fairbanks Montessori.*

Please note that all children toilet train at different ages, and please set your student up for success by enrolling them after they can meet the guidelines below.

What does it mean to be fully toilet trained?

- The student is able to recognize the feeling of needing to use the toilet and does not need to be reminded or adhere to a specific schedule in order to avoid accidents.
- The student no longer wears diapers or pull ups during the daytime.
- The student is able to pull their pants and underwear down to use the toilet and back up when finished.
- The student is able to independently wipe themselves clean after toilet use.
- Accidents are few and far in between and are not a common, daily, nightly or weekly occurrence.

- If, on the rare occasion an accident may occur at school, the student can independently clean themselves, use flushable wipes, change their clothes, and put soiled clothing in a bag to be sent home.

Five accidents occurring within a two week period will result in your child spending one week (five consecutive school days) away from school, in order to resolve any toilet training issues.

This policy is not intended to be a punishment for your child. It is a recognition that your child needs time and one-on-one attention to successfully use the toilet.

This policy also highlights that regularly assisting a child who has toileting accidents takes Lead Teachers and classroom assistants away from their primary duties. **During mandatory time away from school due to toileting issues, parents are still accountable for the payment of tuition and the child's classroom place will be held until they return.**

Fairbanks Montessori School Organizational Structure

Board of Directors

Fairbanks Montessori Association, which operates Fairbanks Montessori School, is a private, non-profit corporation organized under the laws of the State of Alaska. The corporation's affairs are governed by a volunteer Board of Directors, which is composed of parents and community members. Board members are not compensated for their service on the FMA Board.

It is the Board's responsibility to fulfill the legal obligations of the corporation and to hire and oversee the employment of the School Director. The School Director serves in an ex-officio capacity. The Board is elected by the membership (parents) who attend the Annual Meeting in either late September or early October.

The Board collaborates with the Director to fulfill the mission, set the strategic plan, and ensure the financial viability of the Fairbanks Montessori Association.

The Board meets a minimum of 6 times per year, Board committee meetings are set by each committee. Board meeting months are coordinated around the annual needs of the school. Parents are always notified in advance regarding board meetings. Parents/legal guardians, staff members, and members of the community are welcome to attend and provide public testimony at any board meeting (except when the Board votes to go into executive session). Only Board members may vote.

School Director

The School Director is hired by the Board to administrate, manage, and operate Fairbanks Montessori School. The School Director is responsible for programming, personnel management, enrollment, and communication and relationships with FMS families. The School Director oversees fundraising, community outreach, and the school's compliance with the State of Alaska Child Care Office, as well as other local authorities.

Lead Teachers

Our Lead Teachers come from diverse educational backgrounds. All of our Leads are Montessori Certified or becoming certified and all hold a minimum of a Bachelor's Degree. The primary goal of the Montessori Lead Teacher is to serve as a link between the classroom environment and materials and the child. The Lead observes, reflects, and guides the child along a path to reach his/her fullest potential. Our Leads and their assistants provide our students not only a rich academic foundation, but also teach practical life skills, social norms and manners, and emotional regulation.

Staff

In accordance with State of Alaska Child Care Licensing requirements, all of our staff who have direct contact with children are cleared through fingerprinting and background checked through the State of Alaska. Each of these staff members is also

- Trained as a Mandatory Reporter for Child Abuse and Neglect
- Certified in Infant and Child CPR (recertified every two years)
- Trained in State of Alaska health and safety best practices for childcare workers (6 training hours)
- Receiving 24 hours of continuing early childhood education annually

After our classroom assistants have been with our program beyond their 90 day probationary period, we highly encourage them to participate in a Montessori Assistant training program (50 training hours, equivalent to 5 continuing education units).

FMS Hours of Operation and Programs

Preschool Full Day	9:00am - 4:00pm	Before School Care	7:30am - 9:00am
Preschool Half Day (AM)	9:00am - 12:30pm	After School Care	4:00pm - 5:30pm
Preschool Half Day (PM)	12:30pm - 4:00pm		

**FMS observes a 10 month academic school year,
from August 2023 through May 2024.**

Enrollment

See current enrollment policies [here](#).

Classroom Assignments & Staff to Child Ratios

Assignments are made based on availability, parental requests, and by balancing ages and genders in each classroom. To ensure the best Montessori experience for each child, siblings are typically separated unless parents specifically request that they be together, and the staff determines that having them together will not adversely affect their education.

We recommend that students remain with the same teacher for the duration of their three-year program. However, circumstances may arise in which a change in classrooms is advantageous. When there is a request for a change of classroom, the Director and Lead will meet with parents to discuss the request and all available options.

Each Preschool classroom has no more than 20 children at a time and will be staffed at a ratio of 1 adult for every 10 children. Before and After School Care Programs maintain staff to child ratios of 1 staff member per 10 preschool children.

Family Code of Conduct

FMS is a family-oriented organization, a professional workplace, and a safe learning environment for young children.

Our campus is drug, alcohol, tobacco, and weapons free. (See AAC10.1080 & 10.1085).

When a family enrolls their student at FMS, they are agreeing to interact politely, respectfully and professionally with FMS staff members and other families.

When a parent makes the decision to run for a position on the Board, they must have adhered to the Family Code of Conduct, have not demonstrated a pattern of disruption, disrespect, or disregard for the code of conduct or other expectations regarding parent interactions with staff or other families.

Inappropriate behavior or language on the part of a student's family members or caregivers is unacceptable and may warrant the withdrawal of the student or make a student ineligible to attend. Violations of our Family Code of Conduct will make a parent ineligible to run for Board membership, and will result in removal from the Board of Directors if exhibited by current board members.

Financial Policies

Payments made with credit / debit cards or electronic transfers are subject to transaction fees, which can be found [here](#).

To avoid a transaction fee, please pay with cash or check.

Rates for Summer 2023 & School Year 2023 - 2024

Service		Annual Cost	Monthly (Aug - May)
Academic Year Tuition, which is a 10 month academic year, from August through May.	Full Day (9am-4pm)	\$9950	\$995
	Half Day (9am-12:30pm) or (12:30pm-4pm)	\$6650	\$665
Before & After School Care (10 Month Academic Year)	Before Care (7:30-9am)	\$1500	\$150
	After Care (4:00pm-5:30pm)	\$1500	\$150
Student Fees	Annual Enrollment Fee	\$50 / Returning Family \$100 / New Family	
	Volunteer Hours	\$20 / hour if not fulfilled	
Summer 2023 Tuition		\$1990	\$995 / June \$995 / July
Summer Activity Fee		\$100 / per student	
Summer 2023 Before Care		\$300	\$150

Summer 2023 After Care

\$300

\$150

Other Billable Items		Daily Rate	
Early Drop Off	Prior to 8:45 if not enrolled in Before Care	\$30	
Late Pick Up	After 12:30 enrolled in AM Half Day, after 4:10pm if not enrolled in After Care, or after 5:30pm if enrolled in After Care	\$30	
Drop in Rate (Before or After Care)		\$15 (Number of days used x \$15*)	
Drop in Daily Rate	(Only applicable if a student has prorated attendance days, that have been approved by the Director).	\$50	

Payment Options

FMS accepts cash, check, credit or debit card card, and bank transfer. Checks can be placed in the lockbox in our foyer. ***Payments made with credit / debit cards or electronic transfers are subject to transaction fees.***

Billing

Annual school year tuition is divided into 10 equal monthly payments for the academic year.

- Tuition invoices are sent the week before the next month of school, and will be due the 1st of the month.
- Tuition invoices include a grace period of one week. Late fees begin to accrue on the 8th of the month. Late fees will be assessed in the amount of \$30 per week, per overdue invoice, until the balance is paid in full.
- Drop in Before or After Care charges are invoiced after the end of the month in which drop ins were used, and are due by the 1st of the following month.*
- Merchandise and fundraising invoices will be due 14 days after the invoice is sent.

*Before and After Care drop ins are charged at the daily rate regardless of the number of drop ins used, unless the student is enrolled in Before and / or After Care. If you need to enroll your student in Before or After Care after the academic year has started, please contact the office.

Tuition Assistance Programs

FMS works with federal, state, military, and tribal tuition assistance and reimbursement programs to give every child the opportunity to experience a Montessori beginning. Please contact our office if your reimbursement program requests additional information or attendance verification. We will complete any necessary paperwork to assist in setting your family up with tuition assistance, an FSA, or an HSA.

Families receiving tuition assistance are required to meet with the Director for a financial meeting prior to the start of the academic year. If your reimbursements for tuition assistance are modified, canceled, or not paid for any reason (such as non-attendance or loss of funding from your assistance program), you are responsible for paying tuition in full. Your authorization letter may indicate a co-pay, if tuition is above the stated amount of your assistance program any additional charges above the combination of the reimbursement and your co-pay are your responsibility.

After we receive an assistance authorization letter, we will make every effort to communicate with you the projected amount owed on each tuition invoice. The notes on your invoice will state your assistance amount and your portion. If you have questions, please contact us. Late fees are not charged on balances for which FMS has documentation that an assistance program will be remitting payment.

Any additional fees or charges are your responsibility. Examples of additional fees may include late fees, fundraiser purchases, or additional care outside of your authorization agreement. If payments become late, a notice will be sent and a payment plan can be arranged. If your fees become 45 days past due a payment plan agreement will be arranged. If your account becomes 60 days past due, withdrawal procedures will begin. Please remember tuition is due for the 30 day period following notice of withdrawal.

Changes to Enrollment Status

Please submit page 1 of the Fillable Changes or Withdrawal Form, to request changes to your student's schedule.

In order to ensure the financial stability of the school, FMS maintains a specific number of full day and half day (am and pm) preschool students. **You may not change your child's enrollment status (switch from full day to half day position) without providing 30 days notice on the Change of Enrollment form and authorization from the Executive Director.** Such requests for changes to a child's enrollment status will be considered on a space available basis.

The following considerations for Before and After School Care also apply:

- Drop-ins are allowed at the drop-in rate (see current tuition rates), *when notification is given prior to the start of Before / After Care, to ensure availability.* When you schedule your student to attend a drop-in day, you are responsible for that day's fee.
- FMS does not reimburse or credit accounts for school days not attended

Withdrawal Policy

Please submit page 2 of the Fillable Changes or Withdrawal Form, available [here](#), to notify FMS of your student's withdrawal.

In the event that you choose to withdraw your student from school, please note:

- If the Withdrawal Form is provided 30 days before the next billing cycle (or earlier), the final tuition invoice will be prorated to reflect the final 30 days of attendance.
- If the Withdrawal Form is provided less than 30 days prior to the next billing cycle, tuition will be billed for the following month.
- Withdrawing after March 1st will result in the remainder of the academic year's tuition being due. When choosing to enroll at FMS you are committing to a full school year.

FMS does not enroll new students after March 1st of each academic year.

- Families are responsible for any amounts due to FMS, including any unfulfilled volunteer hours, which will be prorated and added to the final invoice.

If a student has been placed in a classroom and provided a start date, and is then withdrawn by their family prior to attending, but notice has not been provided to FMS prior to 30 days ahead of the start date, one month's tuition is owed.

If FMS initiates a student withdrawal, no refunds will be given for tuition that has been paid. We will ensure that open communication occurs in order to greatly reduce or eliminate the situation in which any child is withdrawn by FMS.

Late Fees and Finance Charges

A late fee of \$30.00 will be imposed on payments received after one-week past due date unless a prior arrangement has been made with the Executive Director. Invoices are sent on the 1st of the month of service. Late fees begin to accrue on the 8th and are recharged weekly until paid in full.

Non-Payment

The following procedures apply to delinquent invoices:

- At 30 days delinquent, the director will contact the family in writing to communicate the full amount due, including any fees, and to assist in a payment plan if necessary.
- Payment plans will not be made for longer than 60 days and will require a signed agreement by the family and the ED prior to reaching 45 days delinquent.
- At 45 days delinquent a 15-day notice will be given
- **At 60 days delinquent late fees will cease and your child(ren) will be immediately unenrolled from the school.**
- Only one payment plan per family, per academic school year, will be signed.
- A second occurrence of 30 days delinquent will result in immediate unenrollment from the school.
- Collections procedures will begin one month after unenrollment to provide an opportunity to clear the remaining debt.
- Collections will be sought through a third party for all accrued tuition and fees in addition to all court and filing related costs. Favorable judgements will be followed by interest allowable by the State of Alaska statutes and when necessary a *writ of execution* will be filed to clear any outstanding judgment.

Non-Sufficient Funds Fees

There will be a \$40 charge for all NSF checks received by the Fairbanks Montessori School.

Confidentiality, Custody, and Safety

Confidentiality

Records and information, including vaccination and health records, pertaining to an individual child and their family members are treated as confidential except as required by staff in working with the child and the family, by the State licensing representatives in licensing the facility, or by the staff in the case of reporting situations which may require protective services.

Custody Arrangements

FMS observes the following guidelines that relate to custody of a child:

➤ The parent(s) / guardian(s) who enrolls a child is financially responsible for all tuition unless the other parent has also signed the Intent to Enroll form, which includes a statement of financial responsibility.

➤ Only persons listed on the emergency card will be allowed to pick up children. If a listed individual is picking up a child for the first time, a staff member will ask for their government issued photo id and copy it. The photocopy will remain with the child's emergency card.

If a custody arrangement is in effect, a copy must be provided to the Director, who will review and discuss the details of the arrangement with parents / guardians.

Please note that in custody situations, FMS' first priority is the safety of children and staff. If a parent / guardian who does not have custody arrives at FMS to pick up their child, FMS staff will not refuse the parent. Authorities will be notified immediately that the parent who does not have custody has picked up the child from school.

➤ When custody is shared, enrollment documents must be signed by both parents / guardians. While FMS will happily discuss your child's schedule, etc., with anyone picking up or dropping off your child, please note that FMS will not be responsible for maintaining internal communication between parents / guardians who share custody. Please keep us informed about drop-off and pick up schedules, phone numbers, email addresses, and preferred methods of contact. It is our preference to communicate with both parents at the same time whenever possible (e.g., conferences, emails) to avoid misunderstandings.

Release of Student Records

Parents must make written requests for the release of student records. If the records are to be sent to a third party (e.g. another school) the request must be specifically made for that party.

Virtual Participation / Observation Policy

Depending on safety constraints, your family may be invited to participate in virtual classroom events, such as circle time or birthday celebrations, via Zoom or other online gathering spaces.

- Staff will provide digital access credentials for these events.
- By accessing a virtual classroom event, you are agreeing that only intended recipients are viewing or participating in the virtual classroom activity.

Additionally, FMS classrooms may be virtually observed from time to time. Virtual observations assist:

- State of Alaska Child Care Licensing
- College students enrolled in an education major or related program
- FMS staff as they complete training and earn credentials
- Students who may need access to support or early intervention programs

Parents will be notified of these scheduled observations ahead of time, and FMS may ask for a signed release form when appropriate. *You may opt your child out of any virtual event, and we will continue to follow any other privacy requests or preferences.*

Supervision of Children

FMS staff ensure that they can see and hear children at all times. This includes outdoor recess, gym time, scheduled nap times, and in the classrooms and hallways. Staff members do frequent head counts to ensure that all children are accounted for, especially during transition times.

Please be prompt when picking up your child from the playground, gym, or classroom. Upon your arrival for pickup, you are responsible for the care and well-being of your child. Please be sure that your child has been checked out by a staff member. FMS ground rules and staff directions are to be followed while on the premises. Please do not enforce your family's rules or preferences upon another family's child(ren). Questions or concerns should be brought to the Director.

Release of Students

In order to protect each child, it is FMS policy to refuse to release a child to anyone other than those individuals listed on the Emergency Card.

If any person other than the parent or parent approved individuals is to pick up the child, staff must be notified ahead of time by the parent. A valid ID must be presented at the time of pick-up.

Parents are responsible for the transportation of their child to and from FMS each day.

If a staff member suspects a person picking a child up to be under the influence of alcohol or any illegal substance, we will immediately contact authorities and give a description of the vehicle.

Insurance & Inspections

Our building has been inspected for asbestos by certified inspectors, and all samples were declared negative. In addition, the Fire Marshall does a yearly inspection to ensure that all our fire detection and alarm systems meet code and are functioning properly. Our liability insurance carrier is Northland Casual Company, carried through our insurance broker Hale & Associates.

Safety Policies

Explosives, firearms, or other weapons are not, under any circumstances, permitted onto school grounds. Drugs, alcohol, and all other illegal substances are strictly prohibited.

To maintain and enhance the health of students and staff, FMS is entirely smoke free. Smoking, vaping, and any other use of tobacco products on school property is prohibited. This includes the FMS parking lot and playground areas.

School Day and Classroom Information

Arrival and Departure

The school opens at 7:30 am, for Before School Care. While there may be staff present in the building prior to this time, **the doors will not open for arrival until 7:30 am.**

The speed limit in our parking lot is 5mph. Please observe the 5pmh speed limit when entering, exiting, and driving across our parking lot - even if it is empty. Young children and their families cross this space at all times of the day.

The speed limit on 30th Ave is 20mph. Our school is located in a neighborhood and we observe our responsibility as good neighbors by driving the speed limit on 30th Ave.

Dropping off Your Child

A quick drop-off, happy or not, is generally the most productive for your child.

FMS works to provide a consistent environment for students, encourage their independence, and ensure peaceful transitions. This process helps achieve these goals:

- Students are dropped off at the front door / foyer area and greeted by a staff member.
- If your child has trouble separating during drop off, please speak with your child's Lead Teacher or classroom assistant.
- Children who are not enrolled in Before Care but are enrolled in Half Day AM or Full Day class, may be dropped off at school no earlier than 8:45am.
- Our classroom assistants will help children put away their things at their cubbies and transition to before school or classroom activities.
- Messages for Leads or classroom assistants can be left with the office staff. If your family has an urgent communication, your child's Lead or assistant will be happy to speak with you at drop off.

In accordance with Montessori philosophy, which emphasizes respect for the environment and the natural development of children's independence, we ask that in general parents do not walk their children to their cubbies or enter the classroom at the beginning of the school day.

Picking Up Your Child

Upon pick up, please ensure that contact with your child's classroom staff is made and that your child says good-bye to one of their teachers, so that they may sign them out for the day.

Pick up should occur at the end of your child's enrolled day. If you are picking up your child and need to engage in conversation beyond a brief farewell with your child's Lead Teacher, please schedule a meeting with them or send them an email.

Please do not be alarmed if a staff member asks to see your identification prior to you leaving with your child. Due to illness, emergencies, or other circumstances, a staff member who has not met you may be in charge of signing your child out for the day. Our staff follows this policy to ensure the safety of all of the children in our care.

Late Child Pick-Up Procedures

It is parents' responsibility to notify the office in advance of any changes in their pick-up arrangements. Please call the school to notify us of these changes. If we are unable to answer, please leave a message on the answering machine.

The time when the child greets the parent is when FMS considers that responsibility for the child has transferred to the parent or individual picking up. This time is recorded as the time of pickup and this information becomes part of our attendance record and is used to assess amounts due for late pick up fees.

If a child has not been picked up by closing time (5:30 pm) staff will follow this procedure:

- 1. REMAIN AT THE SCHOOL WITH THE CHILD.** We will ensure that two staff members remain with the child.
- 2. Try to contact parents at work locations.** Each child's emergency card has this information and phone lists are available in each classroom too. If unable to contact them, then go to # 3.
- 3. Call the individuals listed as emergency contacts and/or persons authorized to pick up the child from the school and ask them to come pick up the child as quickly as possible.** Obtain an estimated time that the child will be picked up. If unable to reach anyone, then go to #4.
- 4. Call the Director.** Whenever possible, the Director will return to the School to remain with the child. If the Director is unavailable they will contact the Assistant Director.

5. After an hour of waiting at the school, and doing all of the above, the Office of Children's Services (907-465-1650) will be notified of the situation. They can take the child into protective custody until parents / guardians can be located. The FMS representative will leave a note on the outside door of the school for the parents with the whereabouts of their child and phone numbers they may call.

Attendance / Absence Policy

- All students benefit from regular, prompt attendance, which enhances learning outcomes.

Please bring questions or concerns to your child's Lead Teacher.

- FMS does not require a minimum number of days of attendance per school year, and understands that many families leave Alaska for longer vacations in winter. Families are responsible for paying tuition for all school days, even those not attended.*

- FMS requires students to remain home from school when ill (see Illness Policy)

- FMS requires that families notify us of single or multi-day absences using one of the options below:

- Notify your child's Lead Teacher
(via their classroom email)

- Complete this [form](#)

- FMS voicemail (907-451-8485)

- If a student is absent and we have not received notification, we will contact parents / guardians, within 3 hours of the start of the student's enrolled day.

*For families receiving tuition assistance, the number of days / hours per day attended can impact the amount of assistance that FMS receives and thus increase the amount of tuition for which a family is responsible. Please bring questions to your assistance program.

Lunch Guidelines

Please note that for student safety FMS is an entirely nut-free school. Items containing nuts in any form will be sent home unopened.

- Lunch is provided from home, in a lunch box, daily. If possible, please send lunch items in containers your child can open.
- **We encourage healthy lunch choices to ensure that your child is as successful at school as possible. Please provide a few nutrient rich choices and limit or avoid sugary snacks. Please balance processed foods with fresh fruits or vegetables.**
- **Please do not send energy drinks, soda, or other high sugar beverages. Water and plain milk are preferred. 6 oz. of fruit juice per day is the recommended maximum juice intake for this age group.**

Nap Time

Naps are monitored by at least two staff members at all times. Our required ratio of staff members to children is 1:15 when the children are asleep. The preschool children's nap time is scheduled from 12:30pm to 2:30pm in the gym. This time includes preparing to rest and transitioning from lunch time.

For preschool students, please let us know if you would like your child to take a nap or have the option to nap.

Our staff makes every effort to ensure that nap time is peaceful and comfortable. Gentle music or white noise is provided, and staff assist children in falling to sleep by rubbing backs (if the child would like) or sitting near the child to provide comfort.

FMS provides a nap mat for each napper, which is cleaned daily, and a nap sheet for each napper, which is sent home on Friday afternoons for laundering.

Your child may bring a small stuffed animal from home or a small blanket if they wish to have a comfort item at nap time. This item will be kept at their cubby or with their nap mat, and will be sent home on Fridays as it needs to be laundered weekly.

Please label nap items brought from home.

If you need to pick up your child during nap time, please arrange with your child's Lead ahead of time, so as not to disrupt the other nappers.

Clothing

Please label all items with your child's name or initials. Provide the following items of spare clothing to be kept at school at all times. Make sure clothing is the appropriate size and also suited to seasonal conditions:

- Pants
- Socks
- Shirt
- Underwear

Please bring these items to school on the first day of class and replenish them as they are used.

Fire regulations require that children wear footwear at all times. Each student should have a pair of classroom shoes ("inside shoes") which remain at school. Please send inside shoes that children can successfully put on themselves, as this enhances their self-esteem and encourages independence. We ask that boots or shoes worn outside are not worn in the classroom.

Fairbanks Montessori Outdoor Gear Chart

Please note that to ensure student safety in an emergency, outdoor gear is required every day.

Please label all items with your child's name or initials.

Condition / Time of Year	Required Clothes	Required Footwear	Required Accessories	Optional	Additional Notes
Early Fall or Late Spring (40 degrees)	Coat	Sturdy outdoor shoes		Hat, gloves	
Rain / Slush / Breakup	Rain Coat & rain pants or rain suit	Rain boots or winter boots		Water resistant gloves / mittens	
20 to 32 Degrees	Snow coat & snow pants or snowsuit	Cold weather boots	Hat, gloves <i>No thin or cotton gloves</i>	Neck gaiter	Warm, durable, water resistant winter gloves or mittens only
-20 to 20 above	Snow coat & snow pants or snowsuit	Cold weather boots	Hat, gloves, neck gaiter <i>No thin or cotton gloves</i>		Warm, insulated, water resistant winter gloves or mittens only
-21 and colder	Snow coat & snow pants or snowsuit	Cold weather boots	Hat, gloves, neck gaiter <i>No thin or cotton gloves</i>		Warm, insulated, water resistant, winter gloves or mittens only

If your child does not have appropriate gear to go outside, and we do not have extra gear that fits them, we may call and ask you to bring appropriate gear. Your child may need to be picked up if they are unable to participate in outdoor time due to lack of proper gear.

Outdoor Play

Outdoor play is an integral part of our program and all children are encouraged to participate. Outside play will be suspended:

- At the teacher's discretion, OR
- When temperatures reach -20 degrees (adjusted for wind chill), OR
- The Fairbanks North Star Borough's air quality description reaches "unhealthy", "very unhealthy", or "hazardous."
- *Please remember, if your child does not feel well enough to participate in outdoor activities, they should not be at school.*

Field Trips

Parents are required to sign a separate permission slip for each field trip in which a child participates. These permission slips give the school permission to transport your child and gives your child permission to attend the field trip. Transportation will be provided either by an insured transportation company or a parent volunteer.

If a parent volunteer transports children, he / she will provide a copy of their driver's license, proof of insurance, and vehicle information. A staff member will accompany the parent volunteer in the parent volunteer's vehicle. Fees for field trips and transportation are paid by the parents / guardians of the participating child. These fees should be remitted with signed permission slips.

Family Involvement Information

Research shows that caregiver involvement is one of the biggest factors in positive learning outcomes for children. Students whose families participate in their educational experience have higher rates of academic success all through their school careers. To facilitate this family involvement, FMS asks that parents / grandparents / caregivers donate 12 hours of time per family per year. Unfulfilled involvement hours may be billed at the rate of \$20 per hour at the end of the school year.

There are many ways to fulfill your family's hours, including:

- Serving on the FMS Board
- Attending FMS Board Meetings
- Assisting with fundraising activities
- Providing classroom supplies for special projects or holiday celebrations
- Helping at school during special events
- Small repairs in the building or on the grounds
- Preparing classroom materials at home
- Providing library books applicable to a classroom's unit of study
- Spending time in the classroom reading with children
- Helping with cross country skiing

Postings near your child's classroom door and weekly emails from the Director may also include other family involvement opportunities as they arise throughout the year. Every \$20 worth of supplies purchased will equal 1 involvement hour. Families can record their hours online or in the binder kept in the foyer. For each special trip to the store please round up to the next hour for your time.

Please let us know if you have something related to your profession that you would like to share with your child's classroom or the school and we can arrange a time for you to do so.

Classroom Volunteers

If conditions permit, FMS welcomes volunteers in our classrooms. Regular volunteers in the classroom must

- Have an application and three references on file.
- Complete fingerprinting and a background check as required by the State of Alaska Licensing Requirements for Child Care Centers.
- A regular volunteer is defined as a person who works with children several times a week.
- Temporary or short-term volunteers are welcome in the classroom at the Lead's discretion and supervision.
- Parents have a standing invitation to share their expertise, hobbies, family culture and traditions, pictures or stories with their children's class. Talk to your child's Lead to schedule your visit(s).

Classroom volunteers will never be asked to supervise children or stand in for a staff member to provide the correct ratio of staff to children. Any activity that a parent volunteer facilitates will always include a staff member.

If any volunteer would like to work in the classroom as a staff member, the Director always accepts applications for substitute teachers and substitute assistants. In order to work as a substitute staff member, there is additional required training and an onboarding process beyond that which is in place for volunteers.

Parent Communication & Conferences with Lead Teachers

Conferences with your child's Lead are held biannually in the Fall and Spring during the academic year. These are scheduled over two days. Sign up sheets are provided to parents to schedule their conference time. If you are unable to meet during the conference days, please schedule another time with your child's Lead. If you need to communicate with your child's Lead Teacher outside of these scheduled times, please use the classroom or school email.

FMS maintains an 'open-door' policy for communication with parents. Research supports early intervention to address and even correct health and/or behavioral issues, and we encourage parents to contact Leads or the Director when they have any concerns about their child. Similarly, Leads will inform parents if they have concerns about a child's behavior or progress. We also appreciate it when parents inform us about progress or new skills that the child is showing at home.

If during the course of your child's enrollment, you have concerns regarding a Lead's interactions with your child please bring these concerns to the Lead, if you are comfortable, or to the Director, if you prefer. Concerns regarding a classroom assistant's interactions with your child should be brought to your child's Lead.

In general it is not appropriate to discuss concerns in front of your child or other children, thus, if possible, please schedule a time to meet with FMS staff without children present. Having this designated time ensures that we give you our full attention, that your concerns are kept private, and that an action plan can be made to address them.

Snacks, Birthdays, and Holidays

Please remember that FMS is an entirely nut-free school.

Snacks

Typically once per month, it will be your child's snack day. On this day you will be asked to provide the class with a low sugar, nutritional snack. Please see your child's Lead Teacher or classroom assistant if you need suggestions for items to bring, and for the appropriate quantity. The Lead Teacher will have special diet / allergy information for their classroom as well.

Birthdays

If your family observes birthdays, your child's teacher will likely schedule your child's applicable snack day to coincide with their birthday. If conditions permit, parents and family members are welcome to attend the child's brief classroom birthday celebration. Lead Teachers will provide further information and answer questions about birthday celebrations.

Please note that even in the case of birthdays we discourage heavily sweetened items from being provided to the children. Items such as frosted cupcakes or cookies will be individually bagged and placed at each child's cubby out of respect for the individual dietary practices of each family.

Water

Please provide a labeled water bottle for your child to use at school. Water bottles are kept in the classroom so that children have access to them during the day. During the warm summer months, water bottles go outside with students so they may stay hydrated during outdoor play. Water bottles will be sent home daily to be washed, as we do not have the capacity for them to be cleaned at school.

Holidays

FMS observes several holidays throughout the year in a secular way. For example, children are invited to wear a Halloween costume to school and to create various art projects during the winter holiday season. Please let us know if you do not wish for your child to participate in these activities. Your child's Lead Teacher will be happy to discuss your family's holiday observation preferences, and can also let you know ahead of time what is planned for their classroom.

Animals

Animals can be a wonderful part of the educational experience and are integral to the Montessori science curriculum. In the interest of safety, FMS does not allow any venomous, toxic, aggressive or otherwise dangerous animals in the school.

Animals brought in from outside (i.e. for show-and-tell) must be caged, leashed or otherwise under the direct physical control of their owners at all times unless they are professionally trained animals demonstrating the jobs for which they were trained.

The following are specifically prohibited by law: *Parakeets, parrots, pigeons, turkeys, domestic fowl, ducklings, chicks, turtles, ferrets, raccoons, skunks, monkeys, and wild rodents.*

Show-and-Tell

Your child's snack day is also their Show-and-Tell day. Presenting a show-and-tell item to their classmates allows your child to practice public speaking and gain confidence addressing a group of their peers. Appropriate items for show-and-tell include objects from nature, souvenirs from trips, educational products (books, etc.), or family items (pictures, handmade items, sewing projects, etc.).

Parents may come in and help their child with show-and-tell if their item is costly or needs more explanation than the child can reasonably be expected to convey themselves, but we encourage the child to be the presenter.

Lead Teachers will announce the monthly class theme on their class snack calendar or via classroom emails. We encourage show-and-tell items that fit with the monthly class theme.

Toy Policy

FMS provides a multitude of educational materials, as well as many manipulatives (puzzles, magnet toys, etc) for our Before and After School Care programs or temperature necessitated indoor recesses. Personal toys can distract and cause conflict and **should be kept at home**. If your child brings a toy from home we will place it at their cubby so it may go home at the end of the day. Please note that toys and other items (an expensive watch, for example), are also at risk of being misplaced during the school day.

FMS staff make every effort to return each child's belongings to his / her cubby, but FMS is not responsible for any lost / stolen items.

Before and After School Care

Our Before and After School Care programs are managed and facilitated by our classroom assistants. Before Care is from 7:30am-9am, but as long as your child is enrolled in this program, they may be dropped off at any time during this window. After School Care is from 4:00pm - 5:30pm, but your child may be picked up at any time. Classroom assistants maintain required ratios of staff to children at all times during Before and After Care.

The following activities are regularly part of Before and After Care:

- Gross motor activities, such as rock climbing, obstacle courses, footraces, and yoga
- Circle time, singing songs, reading books, practicing greeting each other
- Arts and Crafts activities
- Science experiments

- Free Play
- Scavenger Hunts
- Weather permitting, the Before and After Care programs spend time outside

Television

In general, our curriculum does not include screen time. Research shows that especially for children under age 6, screen time can contribute to learning difficulties and does not promote language development.

FMS owns a television, VCR and DVD player. Once or twice a semester, Leads may use these to show educational videos during class time. Outside of these, children in the After School Program are allowed approximately one hour of movie viewing per week, on Friday afternoons. The movies shown at this time are age appropriate, educational films, Disney productions or similar. Please let a staff member know if you have any objections to your child watching television, as we will make sure your child has an alternate activity to participate in separately. Any child not interested in viewing the film will also be offered an alternative activity.

Classroom Observations

Formal classroom observations are a longstanding Montessori tradition. Observations can be arranged by calling the office or speaking with the Director. One observer is allowed per classroom at a time unless otherwise discussed with the Lead. One-hour observations are typically sufficient, but observers may stay for whatever period of time was arranged with the Lead. If possible, observations will take place in person, otherwise, arrangements can be made for virtual observations.

Peace Room

Our “Peace Room” is used for a number of school purposes throughout the day. This is a quiet space for children who may need some time outside of the classroom setting or in the case of inclement weather may be utilized as an activity room. Children using this room will always be supervised by a staff member. Our library is also in the Peace Room.

End of Year Celebration/Graduation

At the end of the academic year, FMS holds a small graduation ceremony for all students who will be attending First Grade the following fall. If possible, all other students will have a separate end of year celebration that will include a program for their parents and award certificates of attendance.

School Closures and Emergency Procedures

Questions regarding emergency procedures should be brought to the Director.

Fire drills are conducted monthly, and staff calmly guide children through safely and quickly evacuating our building.

In the event of an emergency or unplanned closure, parents will have one hour from the stated closing time to pick up their child(ren).

FMS will follow guidance from the FNSB School District regarding hazardous weather conditions.

- If the temperature recorded by the National Weather Service at the Fairbanks International Airport is –50 degrees or colder at 7:00 am on any given day, FMS will not open. For more information visit www.weather.noaa.gov.

In the event of an evacuation, FMS staff will escort students to

- Alaska Family Health and Birth Center, located at 2054 30th Ave (directly to the west of FMS).
- If the Alaska Family Health and Birth Center is unavailable, FMS staff will escort students to Chinook Elementary School, located at 3002 International Street.
- If FMS is evacuated, a notice will be posted to the front door with the location of students and emergency contact information that will allow parents to reach staff.

In the event of a power outage, FMS will close for the day if

- internal building temperature reaches 60 degrees *or*
- staff determines that there is not sufficient daylight to ensure student safety

*In the event of power outages or other occurrences requiring FMS to close for the day , and as long as student safety can be ensured, FMS will close

- before the earliest scheduled nap time (12pm) if nap time has not yet occurred
- after the latest scheduled end of nap (3pm) if nap time has already begun

In the event of a lockdown, FMS will

- Notify parents and Board members (via email) of the lockdown, if email is available.
- Remain locked with staff and students inside the building until local authorities have notified FMS that it is safe to unlock the school.
- Not allow anyone, including parents or guardians, to enter or exit FMS during a lockdown. Students may be picked up when the lockdown has ended.
- Follow up with families regarding lockdown events.

Discipline Policies and Behavioral Interventions

“Let us always remember that inner discipline is something to come, not something already present. Our task is to show the way to discipline.” ~Maria Montessori

Positive Discipline Policy

Fairbanks Montessori School supports the natural freedom and spontaneity of children, while also recognizing that there is a delicate balance between liberty and discipline. Within this environment, a child is free to explore, but with this freedom also comes responsibility. The success of a Montessori classroom is setting up this freedom within the limits of clear ground rules. (Maria Montessori, [The Montessori Method](#))

The Montessori Method does not use a reward / punishment based system for child behavior, but focuses on natural and logical consequences. Thus, FMS staff practice positive discipline with our students, with the goal of helping each student become a person who can maintain inner discipline and interact kindly with others.

FMS staff adhere to the following positive discipline guidelines:

- Leads and assistants do not offer bribes or rewards as inducements to good behavior.
- Students are not bullied, belittled, or shamed into proper behavior.
- Students are redirected rather than punished; that is, they are encouraged to choose a different activity or focus their energy differently.
- Leads and assistants model respectful, peaceful behavior when interacting with each other, students, and the environment.
- Leads and assistants teach and model appropriate ways of calming oneself and resolving conflicts.
- Consequences for misbehavior are clear, logical, and timely. (For example, if a child refuses to dress in outdoor gear, the logical consequence is that the child cannot go outside for recess).

- Students who are **distracting** (others in the classroom), **disruptive**, or **dangerous** (to themselves or others) may be temporarily removed from the classroom or may be asked to quietly observe, rather than participate.
- Leads may develop individual behavior plans for students.

As highlighted above, conflict resolution and respect for the environment, (both physical and environmental), are important aspects of our approach. One of our ultimate goals is that our students do the right thing, not out of a fear of punishment, but from a desire to peacefully and positively affect the people and world around them.

Staff will intervene when a child's behavior becomes harmful to themselves or others, or violates basic norms of social behavior. Interventions from staff will be clear, calm, and respectful.

As our entire staff works to support each other and your child, a staff member who is not regularly in your child's classroom may work with your child in Before or After Care, or outside at recess, or in the case of staff absences.

Classroom Preventative Actions

I. Observation

The most important aspect of discipline in a Montessori classroom is the teacher's ongoing effort to support the natural unfolding of the child's inner being. Discipline issues often arise because an important need of the child is not being met. Leads respond by following the Montessori method of observing the child, attempting to discern the child's unmet needs, and preparing an environment that invites the child to engage in activities that meet his/her needs so that discipline issues will naturally subside.

Behavioral problems sometimes reflect a child's lack of awareness of basic norms of social behavior. Our Leads and assistants regularly provide lessons in grace and courtesy to help children understand common social expectations and develop good manners.

II. In-class Interventions

- Redirection to a different activity
- Offering a choice between two acceptable options
- Negotiation ("if you do _____ now, we'll do _____ later").
- Requesting that the child move to another supervised area until she can manage her behavior, with an invitation to return when she decides she is ready to do so.
- Teacher Mediation between two or more children.

III. Office Visits

Occasionally, a child may need time away from classmates, the classroom setting, or may need another staff member to intervene in regards to their behavior. This action may occur when the child's behavior is continually disruptive to the classroom environment. Your child's office visit will be documented and a copy sent home, stating the reason why their child was removed from class for that period of time.

Parental Inclusion

Leads may contact parents to make them aware of behavioral issues, to ask for more information, or to arrange a meeting to discuss the student's behavior at school. Parents will be notified immediately in cases of extreme behavioral challenges.

Types of Documents Sent Home

I. Incident Reports

Incident Reports are sent home if a behavioral problem continues in spite of the above interventions or if the behavior of the child makes the environment unsafe for themselves or others, including FMS staff members. Parents will receive a copy of the report and a follow up may be required from both the parents and the Lead.

Depending on the seriousness of the behavior we may ask that your child be sent home after the incident report is filled out. The child will remain in the office with a staff member or the Director while the parents are contacted and until the child has been picked up.

The 1st Incident Report may or may not include a request for parental follow-up concerning the incident. Upon the 2nd Incident Report parents will be asked to have a conference with the Director and your child's Lead. The purpose of this conference is to come up with a mutually acceptable strategy for helping your child overcome his/her behavioral challenges. This conference will occur within a week of the incident or your child may be asked to stay home until you have had the conference.

II. Parent Memos

Parent Memos are sent home if your child has displayed behavior that is concerning to the Lead. This memo is the teachers' way of communicating that these behaviors are not consistent with your child's normal classroom behavior and typically does not warrant office time or an Incident Report.

The following behaviors are considered unacceptable at FMS and will warrant the writing of an Incident Report.

- Harmful behavior towards others, including any physical aggression (biting, hitting, scratching, kicking, spitting, threatening)
- Recurring verbal abuse (including name calling)
- Inappropriate words and cursing
- Inappropriate touching
- Inappropriately exposing parts of their body
- Intentionally destroying of personal or school property

What Warrants an Involuntary Withdrawal from School?

If your child has received a 3rd incident report **AND** there have been at least two meetings between the parents and the Lead and the Director and behavioral issues have not improved, you may be asked to withdraw your child from FMS. In this scenario, you are not responsible for providing a 30 day withdrawal notice.

Please understand that we withdraw students only with the greatest reluctance, however, we do have an obligation to ALL of our students to ensure that they feel safe and secure in their classrooms in order to function productively.

Wellness Policy

Student wellness at FMS is multi-faceted and supported by a number of factors, including:

Nutrition / Hydration

See lunch guidelines. Please provide a water bottle for your student daily.

Rest

- Nap time is available to all students, and encouraged if a student needs to rest. Nap is always optional and we encourage parents to communicate with their child's Lead Teacher regarding whether or not their child should nap.
- Classroom quiet areas. Every classroom has quiet areas for re-regulation.

Movement

- Maria Montessori's original daily schedule for children ages 3-6 includes "exercises in the fresh air," and we observe daily outdoor time, weather permitting.
- Freedom of movement in our classrooms is an important component of each day.
- Students who are dysregulated may be invited on a short walk around the school with a staff member, or may be invited to observe in another classroom or have time to re-regulate in the Peace Room.

Breath work / yoga / observation

- Staff incorporate deep breathing exercises & short yoga sessions with students into our daily curriculum.
- Staff practice co-regulation with students as part of positive discipline.
- Staff model for students how to observe ourselves and our environment, and teach observation as a key part of integrated learning.

Resources outside FMS

- Staff connect families to resources outside FMS as needs arise.

Guidelines for attending and returning to school when ill (see below)

Illness Guidelines

Our goal is to keep all students, staff, and their families healthy. Healthy students learn well, and healthy staff provide consistency of care for students.

This policy includes many common illnesses, but is not inclusive of all illness related reasons that a child may be excluded from school. If your child has a condition that is not described here, please contact us before bringing your child to school.

Whether or not a child can be at school will be decided by staff. Such decisions will be based on inclusion/exclusion criteria, observable symptoms, and if applicable, guidance from our local public health department.

These guidelines mitigate the spread of infection or disease, and follow State of Alaska Child Care Licensing guidelines and recommendations from the American Academy of Pediatrics.

Children should not be in attendance and may be sent home from FMS for the reasons below:

- Illness that prevents the child from participating comfortably in program activities.
- Illness that results in a greater need for care than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children .
- Fever of 100.4°
 - *Any child with a fever of 104° will be isolated from other children and should receive medical attention as soon as possible. This guideline with regards to a high fever is in effect at all times.
- Other symptoms such as lethargy, irritability, constant crying, difficulty breathing, diarrhea, vomiting.
- **Diarrhea** stools with blood or mucus, and/or uncontrolled, unformed stools that cannot be contained in underwear or toilet that is not associated with changes in diet. Children may return once the reason for change in bowel has been resolved and if the change is not due to Salmonella, Shigellosis or E. coli infections.
- **Vomiting** during the previous 24 hours
- **Abdominal pain (persistent)** pain that continues for more than 2 hours or intermittent pain associated with fever or other signs or symptoms.
- Covid 19 - as with all contagious illnesses, a child who is ill with covid 19 may not attend school. FMS recommends following the State of Alaska guidelines for specific guidance on covid exposures and positive cases.
- **Mouth sores** coupled with drooling or child is not able to participate.
- **Rash** with fever or behavioral changes, unless a physician has determined it is not a communicable disease.
- **Purulent conjunctivitis** (defined as pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye

discharge), until the child has been on antibiotics for 24 hours unless there are two or more cases present in the classroom, then all children with symptoms present will be asked to remain home until symptoms have cleared.

- **Impetigo** until 24 hours after treatment has begun.
- **Strep throat** until 24 hours after treatment has begun and the child is able to participate.
- **Head lice** until after treatment has begun and all nits are removed.
- **Scabies** until 24 hours after treatment has begun.
- **Chicken pox** until all lesions have dried and crusted (usually six days).
- **Pertussis** (whooping cough), until five days of treatment with appropriate antibiotics.
- **Mumps** until 9 days after onset of parotid gland swelling.
- **Hepatitis A Virus** until one week after onset of illness, after immune globulin has been administered.
- Any child determined by the local health department to be contributing to the transmission of illness during an outbreak.

Children should be picked up within 1 hour of FMS notifying you that your child is ill. Children will remain away from school for a minimum of **24 hour period after symptoms have begun**. Children who return to school must be fever free for 24 hours without fever-reducing medication, and other symptoms must be resolving.

Children should not return to school until they have begun appropriate treatment and/or no longer have significant discomfort and are able to fully participate in classroom activities, recess time, and outdoor activities.

In the case of a (suspected) contagious illness, continuing symptoms, or a reportable communicable disease, FMS may require a doctor's note before the child is allowed to return to school.

Required Conditions for a Child to Return to FMS

A child who has been excluded due to illness from school may return when:

- he or she is free of fever, vomiting, and diarrhea for a full 24 hours
- he or she has been treated with an antibiotic for a full 24 hours (unless otherwise specified)
- he or she is able to participate comfortably in usual program activities, including outdoor time

Medication

In accordance with State of Alaska regulations, prescription and over the counter medications will only be administered with the written and signed authorization of the parent / guardian which identifies the medication, the dosage, and the time(s) it is to be given, any special instructions and the duration of the authorization. This includes an EPI-PEN Injection.

Children are not permitted to keep medications in their lunch boxes, or to administer medicines by themselves. THIS INCLUDES VITAMINS AND HOMEOPATHIC REMEDIES.

Prescription medications must come in the original package or with the pharmacy label clearly marked with the child's name and directions for administering.

Epi-Pen Policy

In accordance with State of Alaska regulations, FMS does not have a School Epi-Pen. If a child has a life-threatening allergy that requires an EPI-PEN, it is the family's responsibility to provide FMS with a signed Medication Authorization form and an up to date EPI-PEN to be kept, out of reach of children, in the child's classroom. If during the time a child is at FMS the EPI-PEN expires, the family is responsible for replacing it in a timely manner. All student allergies are posted in private locations in the classrooms and staff-only areas at the school, as well as in each student's file.

Injury Policy

If an injury occurs at school, an Accident Report describing the injury is provided to the child's family. FMS calls parents / guardians if a head injury occurs.

If an injury has occurred outside of school and may prevent your child from fully participating in the school day, please contact your child's Lead Teacher or the Director prior to your student returning to school.

Other Information

Complaints and Grievance Procedures

Communication is the most important tool to ensure a successful relationship between the school and parents. FMS staff make every effort to keep parents informed of their child's experience at school, and of events and the school schedule. Concerns regarding your child's school experience should be brought to your child's Lead. He or she is the one most closely acquainted with your child and the workings of the classroom, and can best answer your questions and concerns.

If you have spoken with your child's Lead and feel the matter is unresolved or have further questions, please address your concern with the Director. The Director has the authority to address any issue, and will endeavor to rectify errors or resolve possible conflicts. The Director may schedule a joint meeting with parents and Leads to better address unresolved issues.

If your concern is about the Lead and you do not feel comfortable discussing it with them, please meet with the Director.

Questions or concerns regarding the operation of the school, financial concerns, or matters concerning our program and staff should be addressed to the Director. The FMS board sets policies and makes decisions of fiscal and legal nature therefore the Director may suggest addressing further questions about these policies to the Board.

Issues to be considered by the Board must be put in writing and addressed to the Board President. You may be asked to attend a Board meeting to discuss the issue in person. However, adding items for discussion to the agenda of any Board meeting is at the discretion of the Board. The Board of Directors can be reached via email at fmsboard@fairbanksmontessori.org.

Interactions with Staff Outside of Their Roles at FMS

Social Media

Please know that FMS staff are instructed to refrain from following / friending / adding or accepting follow / friend / add requests from family members of enrolled students. FMS does not prohibit staff from maintaining social media connections that pre-date a child's enrollment.

Babysitting

Please note that if you ask an FMS staff member to babysit for your family, FMS supervises its staff members within the confines of the school and associated activities only. FMS staff are not supervised by FMS during their off duty hours and are not acting within the scope of their employment. FMS is not liable for employee actions outside of duty hours.

The Director does not provide personal staff contact information without the employee's consent, however, the Director may maintain a list of employees who may be interested in babysitting. Families can ask the Director for this information.

Regulatory Role of the Dept of Health and Social Services

The Child Care Program Office has primary regulatory and licensing responsibility for the child care facilities in Alaska, including investigation of complaints. FMS is a fully licensed facility under State licensing requirements, and any complaints regarding the facility or its program which cannot be satisfactorily resolved with the Executive Director may be referred to the Fairbanks office.

State of Alaska Licensing Agency:

Northern Regional Office

Nerland Building
542 4th Avenue #212
Fairbanks, AK 99701
Phone: (907) 451-3198

Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting

FMS conforms to the requirements of the Alaska State laws in reporting suspected incidents of child abuse or neglect. To report child abuse and neglect call

Call: 1-800-478-4444
ReportChildAbuse@alaska.gov
or Fax: 907-269-3939

Notification of Changes

Parents will be provided a written or emailed notification of changes to this handbook, and the effective date of those changes.

(Revisions as of April 2023)

