



Parent Handbook

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FAR HORIZONS MONTESSORI SCHOOL

PARENT HANDBOOK 2019-2020

Hopefully, this handbook will enable you, the parent/guardians, to work with us in providing the best Montessori experience for your child/children. Should you have any questions concerning this information don't hesitate to call.

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INTRODUCTION

Although the entrance age varies in individual schools, a child can usually enter a Montessori classroom between the ages of two and one half and three, depending on when he can be happy and comfortable in a classroom situation. She will begin with the simplest exercises based on activities which all children enjoy. The equipment which he used at three and four will help him to develop the concentration, coordination and working habits necessary for the more advanced exercises he will perform in the elementary. The entire program of learning is purposefully structured. Therefore, optimum results cannot be expected for a child who misses the early years of the cycle, or for one who is withdrawn before she finished the basic materials.

Parents should understand that a Montessori school is neither a baby-sitting service nor a play school that prepares a child for traditional kindergarten. Rather, it is a unique cycle of learning designed to take advantage of the child's sensitive years between three and six, eventually leading to the elementary class. A child who acquires the basic skills of reading and arithmetic in this natural way has the advantage of beginning her education without drudgery, boredom or discouragement. By pursuing his individual interests in a Montessori classroom, he gains an early enthusiasm for learning, which is the key to his becoming a truly educated person.

SCHOOL PHILOSOPHY

Far Horizons Montessori School follows the teaching methods developed by Maria Montessori (1870-1952). We are also dedicated to maintaining the high academic standards established by the Oregon Department of Education. We at Far Horizons create a non-violent, non-sexist, non-racist environment in which cross-cultural ideas and values are presented and valued. The Montessori method is based on a respect for children and the individual's desire to learn.

The children at Far Horizons are aided and directed in the process of self-education by trained Montessori teachers and the Montessori learning materials. A natural inner order leads the child from interest to interest and subject to subject. The curriculum is individualized, although small & large group lessons are regularly scheduled to present new subjects.

Our Montessori classrooms develop the privileges and responsibilities of freedom. The child learns care of the environment and the person as well as following his or her sensitive learning periods to more specific types of knowledge and subject matter.

Montessori learning materials and apparatus help the child master practical life experience's building concentration which progress to math, language, geography, history, etc. The materials are sensorially based, aiding the child to develop a well-defined concrete concept which leads to abstract concept formulation. Far Horizons Montessori School offers a curriculum including art, music, drama, Spanish, computer use, and physical education as well as the traditional subjects; mathematics, reading, social studies, handwriting, health and science.

Far Horizons Montessori School is a family-oriented school. We offer two weekend days a year for working parents to come in to visit their children in the classroom, as well as an open-door policy to all parents to visit and observe at any time.

The children at Far Horizons truly do feel “at home” in this nurturing environment. The families who choose to be here believe in our approach to education, classroom learning, family and community inclusiveness.

THE MONTESSORI METHOD

Dr. Maria Montessori believed that no human being is educated by another person. She/he must do it for themselves or it will never be done. A truly educated individual continues learning long after the hours and years spent in the classroom because she/he is motivated from within by a natural curiosity and love for knowledge. Dr. Montessori felt, therefore, that the goal of early childhood education should not be to fill the child with facts from a pre-selected course of studies, but rather to cultivate the child’s own natural desire to learn.

In the Montessori classroom this objective is approached in two ways: first, by allowing each child to experience the excitement of learning by choice rather than by being forced; and second, by helping the child to perfect all her/his natural tools for learning, so that her/his ability will be at a maximum in future learning situations. The Montessori materials have this dual long-range purpose in addition to their immediate purpose of giving specific information to the child.

QUIET RULE

While in school, hallway and elsewhere – please adhere to our general quiet rule. Always use a soft voice. As a courtesy to the teachers, children and others please turn off your cell phone while in the school building.

No smoking of any kind at any time on school grounds.

SUMMER CAMP

Summer camp runs June 19th- August 30 from 9:30 am to 1:00 pm. Childcare hours will continue through the summer from 8:00 am to 6:00 pm.

TEACHER WORKWEEK

The teacher workweek is August 26th to August 30th.

We have Parent Orientation on August 29th from 10:00 am to 11:00 am and 5:00 pm to 6:00 pm. This is a time to go over details and ask questions. Please avoid bringing your child to this parent orientation if possible.

We will also have a Parent/Child Visiting Day on August 30th from 10:00 am to 11:00 am. This is a time that you can visit your child's classroom and meet their teacher. New parents, please take this opportunity to visit with your child. We'd love to see returning children too!

ALL STUDENTS BEGIN

Our first day of school is September 4th. All children arrive at 9am and FINISH AT NOON the 4th, 5th, and 6th. Childcare will be available on these days from 8:00-9:00 am and 12:00-6:00 pm with prior sign up.

REGULAR SCHOOL HOURS

Regular school hours will begin the week of September 9th. Half day Primary students come from 9:00 am to 12:30 pm and full day from 9:00 am to 2:30 pm. Elementary students come from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm.

CHILDCARE

The regular morning childcare hours are 8:00-9:00 am. The regular after school hours are 2:30/3:00-6:00 pm. **A late fee past 6:00 pm will be charged at a rate of \$3.00 per minute, to be paid directly to the teacher staying late with your child.**

We will keep a record of your hours via the time clock and the school will issue a bill at the end of the month, to be paid with your tuition. Activities and art projects as well as free play will be part of the childcare program.

Contracted childcare will be available on all No School Days if there are enough children. We must have a minimum of 5 children sign up to be open on No School Days. Look for sign ups via email and the clipboard which will be located by the time clock when it is time to sign up. Once you sign up for the hours needed, you are committing to pay for those hours even if you don't use them. We staff for No School childcare days based on our sign ups.

PARKING & ENTRANCE

Far Horizons entrance can be accessed from the driveway off 25th Place. Please do not enter the parking lot from Hilyard Street. To exit our parking lot, please use Hilyard Street only. We will have the safest parking lot if we are consistent in how

we enter and exit, as well as how we use Hilyard Street. Be mindful of busy drop off and pick up times, and exit onto Hilyard turning right only. Roosevelt Middle School uses an exit directly to the north of ours and are also instructed to turn right only.

The crosswalk is always to be used to cross the parking lot with your child. Four spaces to the side of the crosswalk are not to be used for parking. (You will see they are filled in with lines and marked by cones.)

We keep Hilyard Street doors and 25th Place doors locked at all times for security, as well as parking lot entrance doors 9:30am-2:30pm. Call us or tap on the window to enter.

Please always turn off car engines.

You may not leave other children in vehicles unattended.

ARRIVAL PROCEDURE

Children will be dropped off in the multipurpose room between 8:00 am and 8:50 am. Children will be dropped off at their classroom entrance any time after 8:50am. *Make a connection with the teacher. *Do not ever just drop children off and leave.*

Please sign your child in on the sign-in sheets and use the time clock in the hallway.

If you need to communicate with teachers before school please use notepaper and place in the basket.

DISMISSAL

Dismissal time is 12:30 pm for half day Primary students, 2:30 pm for full day Primary students and 3 pm for Elementary students. If you are late your child will be continuing in childcare. The children will be using the crosswalk for crossing. Parents are asked to pick their children up promptly and not linger more than 5 min. Please wait by the playground gate for a teacher to bring your child to you.

Children's work may be picked up in the hallway cubbies or Elementary backpacks. Please look daily to see if extra clothes need replacing and read bulletin boards.

LUNCH AND SNACK

All children will need to bring a lunch box, basket, or sack lunch labeled with her/his name, with an ice pack when needed. We strongly encourage you to send a “balanced meal” in your child’s lunch. The children will be learning how to make healthful food choices and should be encouraged to pack their own lunch. Please no candy, soda pop, gum, fast food lunches, or single use items. Think about using all reusable containers. Our licensing requires us to check lunches, add to, and send notices if lunches are deficient. Drinks need to be contained in reusable containers so the lids can be closed tight.

Some parents have been concerned that their children have not eaten their lunch. If that happens consistently let us know. Also, if your child stays for childcare, we encourage them to eat leftovers as a p.m. snack.

A healthful snack will be served daily in the morning and in after school childcare. Daily snack will be posted. Let us know about dietary do’s and don’ts, and food allergies. If you would like to bring a special snack from time to time contact your child’s teacher.

REST TIME

If your child is under five, resting is required, and nap is available. No stuffed animals or pacifiers at nap. Please send a nap blanket to be kept at school and take it home on Fridays to wash and return on Monday mornings. Nap blankets are kept in the cubbies in the Multipurpose Room.

TOILET TRAINING POLICY

All children attending Far Horizons must be toilet trained when they begin school. We realize there are often setbacks, or the child is still working on mastery. Should this be the case, we will set a 30-day trial period to be evaluated by the teachers. *No pullups are allowed at school, training pants only please. We are not licensed for “diapers.”

SHARING

The children are welcome to bring sharing items on Monday. Since some children do not come on Mondays, there will be sharing for them on Tuesday. Our hope is that if you have enjoyed a special activity on the weekend, there will be a chance for immediate reinforcement through sharing at school. Please do not bring toys.

CLOTHING

Children in the Primary classrooms need 2 full sets of extra clothes and two pairs of underwear. Each item must be labeled with your child’s name. When clothes are used please refill. Please house these items in a container in their cubby, labeled with your child’s name.

Please check our lost and found from time to time for missing items.

INDOOR SHOES

All children will be wearing an indoor shoe during their school day. No outdoor shoes will be worn in the classrooms. We ask that the indoor shoe has a solid sole for use outside during our monthly fire drills, and not be distracting to other students.

BIRTHDAYS

Parents and children have enjoyed bringing a snack on the child's birthday. We appreciate **healthy snacks** i.e; fruits, veggies, nuts, cheese, banana type cakes. PLEASE NO FROSTED CAKES OR CUPCAKES. We also would like a short, written biography with highlights of your child's life and baby photos, one photo for each year of age. **Please do not bring birthday invitations to school.** It's too hard on those not invited. Use the school phone book and ask for a new copy if needed.

SIBLINGS

Siblings not enrolled must always be supervised by their parents. Siblings may come to childcare with the enrolled student once we receive the required paperwork.

SCHOOL FORMS

Please make sure all your registration and immunization forms are at school by your child's first day of attendance. Children will not be accepted without completed forms.

If someone new is coming to pick up your child, please send a note or call. Notes are best. There will be note paper near the time clock. We will not release any children unless we receive authorization from you, and we will ask for I.D. if we do not know the person.

HEALTH

We STRONGLY urge you to keep your child home when ill. You know best when your child is not up to par. Please keep your child home for the following reasons:

| | | |
|------------|-----------------|-------------|
| fever | persistent pain | chills |
| diarrhea | enlarged glands | rash |
| earache | inflamed eyes | cough |
| runny nose | vomiting | temperature |

We will call you if your child has any of these symptoms. Your child will need to stay home for 24 hours with any of these symptoms, as outlined by OCC licensing.

There will be outdoor play daily. In general, a child too ill to partake in this activity should be home.

MEDICATION

Sometimes, it is necessary for your child to have medication while at school. It must be in the original bottle with both the child's name and doctor's name, and directions for use. You will also need to use a medical authorization form to authorize us to administer it. Ask your teacher for a copy.

VOLUNTEER POLICY

We are asking that each Far Horizons household plan to spend 15 hours of time per student helping (volunteering) for the school. The assistance has come in the form of time, playground work, fundraising projects, classroom supplies, etc. We really appreciate the work our parents have done for Far Horizons and urge your support. Hours will be tallied, and should you not complete your hours you will be charged \$10 an hour at the end of the school year.

CONFERENCES AND OBSERVATIONS

We schedule one conference a year. However, anytime you need to talk with us, call or email for a conference appointment or come in and make an appointment. The fall conference will be in person, getting to know each other and checking in. A written report will be issued in May with conference in addition if necessary.

After about the third week of school, we will begin to take appointments for classroom observations. An adult chair will be placed in an inconspicuous place for you to observe. We have found it best that observers remain seated, keep talking to a minimum, and should a child come to talk with you send her/him off to work. This enables you to see most clearly what occurs when you are not present. If the children go outside for recess, then you may look at the materials and walk around. When a teacher is free, she/he may come over to talk with you while the children are working. Otherwise, please save your questions for after the children are dismissed. Our first responsibility is to the children.

SCHOOL CALENDAR

We follow Eugene School District 4J's calendar --- with some exceptions. We take several workdays for teachers to come in and ready the Montessori environment. There is no school on these days, but childcare is available with sign up.

We take all regular school holidays including Winter and Spring vacations. Please mark these days on your calendars and keep Far Horizons' calendar to refer to throughout the school year. Childcare is available on most extended holidays if there are enough children.

We close school for weather if Eugene School District 4J closes. Please tune in to your radio or computer and listen for school closures so you won't be inconvenienced. Please do not call the school.

HOLIDAYS, ILLNESS & VACATIONS

There will be no credits or "make-up" days for holidays, illness, or vacations. Tuition is computed on a yearly basis as stated in the enrollment agreement.

BILLING QUESTIONS

Lynn is available at 541-485-0521 most business hours, and at 541-606-4487 evenings until 9:00 pm. Email is also a great way to get your questions answered.

TUITION

Tuition is computed on a yearly basis. You may choose to break this tuition into 10 monthly payments, pay quarterly, or yearly. **IF YOU CHOOSE TO PAY MONTHLY, REMEMBER JUNE IS CONSIDERED A FULL MONTH REGARDLESS OF SCHOOL ENDING MID JUNE.**

Tuition is paid on the **FIRST** school day of the month unless you have made other arrangements. **You have until the 5th of each month before your bill is charged a \$25.00 service charge.** This applies to childcare as well as tuition. If the bill is not taken care of then you will be asked to take your child out of school. Tuition payments should be handed to one of the teachers, placed in the tuition envelope in the main hallway, or paid online.

DISCOUNTS

We offer a \$500 discount for paying in full on or before July 15, or upon enrollment if that occurs after July 15th. We offer a \$250 discount for paying in full on or before August 15.

We also offer a second-child discount of \$250 per year for tuition, and \$2 off the hourly childcare rate.

WITHDRAWAL FROM SCHOOL

Withdrawal procedures are outlined in your enrollment agreement. All students must give a 60-day written notice along with explanation of withdrawal. Withdrawal notice is not accepted after March 15 without employer notice of transfer.

COMMUNICATIONS

Please make appointments to talk with Lynn with any concerns or grievances. We want to work together with you to support your child.

All daily messages should be written and handed to a teacher or put into the message basket by the time clock. Please keep us informed regarding illness, changes in your child's schedule, trips, etc. Also notify us immediately of any change of address, telephone, or authorized persons.

Parent-Teacher communication is very important, and we urge you to call us with concerns (we also like to hear good things you are feeling!).

Parent letters will be written often. These contain a lot of information about the school. **Please provide an email address to receive letters.** Both parents should read these letters so you can gather all school info you need.

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Our complete emergency procedures are posted on our website:
www.farhorizonsmontessori.com

Should we have to evacuate our school, we will take the children to the Amazon Community Center at 2580 Hilyard Street, Eugene OR 97405. We will take our emergency kits complete with emergency contact lists. We will contact you by phone and/or email. We have monthly emergency drills for fire, earthquake, lockdown, and evacuation. If the Amazon Community Center is also unsafe, we will go to Roosevelt Middle School at 500 East 24th Avenue.

SCHOOL DISCIPLINE POLICY

1. Setting loving and consistent limits
2. Dreikerine Philosophy - logical consequences, i.e. a child writes on the walls with crayons, then she isn't allowed to use crayons for a while and clean the walls.
3. Positive Reinforcement
4. Moral Education - discussions about feelings, appropriate behavior and coping skills

5. If behavior is extreme, dangerous to self or others or property then “time-out” is used. Sometimes parents need to be called to pick up their child. Meetings are called with parents. Children may be put on a 30-day probationary period.
6. Peaceable discussion between children involved with a teacher mediating
7. Grace and Courtesy lessons

SPECIAL NEEDS POLICY

We define special needs as either physical, educational, or emotional limitations. As a staff we are not trained in Special Education. However, we are willing to accept special needs children for a 30-day trial period with the limit of 1 or 2 per classroom depending on the needs of the child. Before acceptance we will:

1. Observe the child interacting in the classroom
2. Evaluate whether we can meet her/his needs
3. Obtain professional help if necessary
4. Work closely with the parents

DIVORCED FAMILIES

As advocates for your child we need to set up a peaceful situation at school. Far Horizons needs to have all the pertinent information, i.e. divorce decree, court order, pickup schedules, etc. We must remain neutral; thus, we do not need details of relationships unless it directly relates to your child. We prefer one conference time with both parents. We need you to set up a positive pick-up and drop off situation. There may be no confrontations between ex-spouses on the school premises, especially in front of the children.

TO HELP MAKE SCHOOL A SAFE PLACE

We try very hard to make Far Horizons a safe loving place for your child. At times problems occur at school between the children. We want to be able to have open communication with you, the parents, when this occurs. And perhaps communication between the teacher, the child/children and respective parents. Please expect that we will call and send your child home if violent actions occur. If a child is constantly jeopardizing the safety of the group and, as a staff, we feel we've done all we can, he or she will be asked to leave Far Horizons.

STAFF/CHILD/PARENT CRISIS STRATEGY

A crisis situation is any relationship or behavior (directly experienced or observed) which has become unmanageable. Unmanageable is the inability to confront the situation or person both positively and directly.

When an unmanageable situation occurs;

1. Write down incident as soon as possible, recording objective facts and subjective feelings.
2. Call and schedule a meeting with Lynn and discuss.
3. Plan strategies with Lynn and/or classroom teachers.
Follow up meetings may be necessary
May call in outside facilitator or professional
May call staff meeting
4. Evaluation of situation with Lynn (and other involved parties if deemed necessary).

*Clear, direct, compassionate communication is our goal.

*We reserve the right to refuse service at any time parent behavior is not respectful.