



Parent Handbook

702.451.9801 Phone
702.451.0049 Fax
info@montessorivisions.com
www.montessorivisions.com

Primary Campus
3551 E. Sunset Rd.
Las Vegas, NV 89120

Elementary/Middle School Campus
2560 N. Green Valley Pkwy.
Henderson, NV 89014

MONTESSORI VISIONS ACADEMY
PARENT HANDBOOK

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WELCOME TO MONTESSORI VISIONS ACADEMY!

A. PHILOSOPHY:

Montessori Visions Academy guides students to **Academic Excellence** through:

- ◆ **Montessori Curriculum** designed to support in the development of the whole person, build a sense of community, and ignite a lifelong love of learning.
- ◆ **Hands-on learning** using multi-sensory, sequential, and self-correcting materials which provide a concrete learning experience, then moving to abstract memorization.
- ◆ **Individual instruction** by caring and devoted educators trained to develop instruction specifically suited to each student's needs and learning pace.
- ◆ **Self-confidence** with a personal-best approach in a non-competitive atmosphere and by providing uninterrupted time to complete an activity successfully.
- ◆ **Responsibility** using the pursuit of self-direction, self-discipline, individual mastery, consistent work habits, and respectful behavior.
- ◆ **Independence** by developing academic, social, and practical skills to last a lifetime.

1. Academic Program

At *Montessori Visions Academy* campuses, students from age two years through high school experience an academically enriched atmosphere embedded in a well-ordered social community. Students learn by using manipulative classroom materials as well as through teacher guidance. In a peaceful environment teachers work with students individually and in small groups with learning materials designed to interest and entice the children. Students practice in order to master concepts in context and depth, then move through the sequential curriculum at their own rate of understanding.

2. Maria Montessori:

The Montessori Method of Education was developed by Dr. Maria Montessori through her extensive scientific observations of children. Dr. Montessori created what she called the 'prepared environment' which helps the student develop according to his or her own capabilities in a noncompetitive multi-age atmosphere. Independence and self-motivation are the cornerstones of each student's academic learning process and social/emotional growth. The students learn to respect themselves, others, the materials, and the environment through this global philosophy. The curriculum provides opportunities to gain knowledge and learn life skills, which supports the development of the whole person and builds the foundation for purposeful, responsible, fulfilling lives.

3. Curriculum:

Our campuses offer a broad curriculum in multi-age classrooms, designed for the development of the whole person – mentally, physically, and emotionally. All students participate in the academic program and are presented with materials designed to ignite the innate and life-long joy of learning. Curricular materials and activities are interrelated and are arranged into the following areas: Practical Life, Sensorial/Geometry, Language, Mathematics, and Cultural.

Practical Life

Proficiency in every day life skills is developed through the use of reality based activities, enabling the student to gain self-confidence, concentration, coordination and independence. The student is encouraged to develop a sense of responsibility for care of self and care for the environment.

Sensorial / Geometry

Students are continually surrounded by new sensations. The sensorial materials activate the child's absorption of these new impressions. Included are exercises to develop and refine the senses - tactile, auditory, visual, olfactory, gustatory, and stereognostic. These skills translate into the geometry curriculum in the elementary classroom.

Language

The child learns language naturally from his environment. In order to develop these skills in language, pre-reading and pre-writing exercises begin with the concrete and move to the abstract. The alphabet identified by its sounds is presented with sandpaper letters that provide a phonic base for reading. Students then advance through the curriculum, developing skills in reading, writing, and grammar.

Mathematics

Using concrete materials designed to encourage understanding of quantity to numeral relationships, place value, and mathematical functions, the child moves to a new level of understanding.

Cultural

Students gain a global perspective of the universe through exploration and research in these areas:

Anatomy	Geography
Astronomy	History
Botany	Physical Science
Earth Science	World Cultures
Environmental Education	Zoology

Special Curriculum includes:

Art	Yoga	Library Science	Physical Education
Computer	Gardening	Music	Spanish
Electives	Health/Nutrition	Peace Education	Theater

Extra Curricular Activities:

Additional activities are offered after school for an additional fee, and may include:

Art	Dance	Piano	Soccer	Student Government
Chess	French	Science	Spanish	Tennis
Choir	Gymnastics	Scouting	Speech/Debate	Theater
Cooking	Karate	Sign Language	Sport Teams	Yoga

4. Staff:

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Our Montessori certified teachers are dedicated professionals who develop an in-depth relationship with each student, modeling respectful behavior and individualizing instruction in order to maximize the realization of each child's potential.

5. Parent Commitment:

Please read these policies, fee and tuition schedules carefully. Your commitment and adherence to them is necessary for the smooth, successful operation of our school.

By signing the enrollment application form, you acknowledge you have read and understand the admissions, tuition, behavior and other policies set forth in this handbook and you agree to abide by these policies.

B. ADMISSIONS:

1. Enrollment Criteria:

Montessori Visions Academy considers all applicants without regard to anyone's gender, race, color, religion, national, or ethnic origin or disability. *Montessori Visions Academy* accepts students age birth through grade 8. Students must be confident in independent toileting and be weaned from nursing or drinking from a bottle or sippie cup to enter the Montessori primary level. Elementary students should be six years of age by September 30 of the year they enter first grade. Developmental readiness is also considered.

2. Application/Registration Process:

Montessori Visions Academy does require an application fee. Upon receipt of application and non-refundable fee, an interview will be scheduled to determine acceptance of a student. Upon acceptance, the annual registration will be due as well as enrollment documents.

3. Enrollment Documents:

Montessori Visions Academy enrolls students who have applied for enrollment and been accepted to our campuses. Before the student's first day of attendance we must have in our possession, the following information, dated and signed:

___ registration form	___ immunization record
___ financial agreement/initial fees	___ pre-admit health evaluation
___ previous school records	___ copy of birth certificate

4. Records:

All information in the enrollment packet must be kept current. Montessori parents must notify the school of any changes concerning phone number, address, and any other emergency information. The only persons permitted to see your child's record will be the parent or legal guardian who enrolls the child, appropriate school employees and licensing agency personnel.

5. Re-registration:

An annual non-refundable re-registration fee will be charged each spring to ensure the enrollment of your child for the following school year. Updated records and a new financial agreement will also be required.

C. PROGRAM:

1. Hours of Operation:

Montessori Visions Academy follows an academic year calendar with an optional summer camp program utilizing traditional guidelines for grade level achievement. Our school maintains a high quality of Montessori philosophy, programs and teaching staff along with its curriculum year round. *Montessori Visions Academy* is open Monday through Friday and our academic program is from 8:30am to 3:30pm, serving children from birth through grade 8. Our expectation is that all children will attend these hours, five days a week, to receive maximum benefits from our academic program.

2. Extended Care Programs:

We offer extended care before and after school for Montessori parents who work varied hours.

3. Arrival and Departure:

Students younger than elementary level are to be signed in and out with a legible full name and the time on the attendance sheets located at the front desk as required by Child Care Licensing. You must escort your children to their classroom. Further, staff must be notified by the parent or authorized escort when the student arrives and departs each day. Students of all ages must be escorted by the parent to a staff member upon arrival and escorted from a staff to their car upon departure. Due to limited parking, parents should not linger on the premises. Students are not permitted to enter or exit the building unescorted. If students arrive late to school or are picked up early from school, parents will remain in the lobby and the office staff will escort the students in or out of the classroom. If parents need to enter a classroom during school hours, they are required to maintain an atmosphere of respect and quiet voice in order to model and promote appropriate classroom behavior.

Students will be released to only those persons who are named on the identification and emergency information form. Identification will be required of persons picking up the student. Parents must advise the school in advance, (in writing) if a person that is not listed on the enrollment form is to pick up the student. When calling, the parent's driver's license number will be required for identification.

4. Food:

Eating is limited to the scheduled times for snacks and lunches. Please do not enter the school with food or drinks, as they are not permitted in the classroom except during scheduled times. Infant/Toddler Parents are required to provide bottles, formula, food and snacks for their children. Primary parents are required to provide a healthy snack for their child's classroom for one week during the academic year for primary students to access during the morning work cycle. Elementary, middle, and high school students are encouraged to bring a healthy snack of fruits or vegetables to enjoy during the morning work cycle. An additional snack will be available for students enrolled in the extended curriculum program. Food may not be shared among students, unless specified in writing and approved by school personnel. At no time may food with nuts, chocolate, candy, soda, or gum be shared at school. For safety reasons, we offer a peanut free environment and recommend Sunbutter as an alternative.

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When lunch is brought from home, all lunch containers should be reusable so we can create a “no-waste” environment, must be clearly labeled with the child’s name, fit in the child’s cubby, and contain ready-to-eat items only. We do not open cans, heat or thaw foods, or keep lunches cold. If there are items that need to be kept cold, please put an ice pack in the lunch container. Nutritious foods are preferred and no candy, gum, peanut products, red juice or soda is permitted in order to maintain a healthy atmosphere for our students. Please supply enough food to keep your child satisfied. If parents provide a food item for the class, it must be approved and include no nuts, no sugary foods, no chocolate or cake.

If available, school lunches may only be purchased by the 1st of each month for any lunches desired for the entire month. You may choose which days you wish for your child to have lunch. We do not issue credits for absences. Lunches may not be purchased on a daily basis.

D. FINANCIAL

1. Tuition:

Montessori parents must sign a financial agreement each year based on the current tuition schedule. A family discount of 10% is available for each additional child, with equal or lower tuition, after the first child enrolled from the same immediate family. Credit cards, debit cards, checks or cash are acceptable forms of payment and should be presented to *Montessori Visions Academy* for the exact amount owed. Any checks returned for non-sufficient funds will be assessed a \$25.00 fee that must be paid in cash or money order. If two checks are returned for non-sufficient funds, we may request that all future tuition payments be made by money order.

Statements will only be given when tuition is late. If another person brings your child to school or your child is absent, the tuition payment must still be made on time. Please make appropriate arrangements in advance. Any account balance must be paid at the time of the notice of withdrawal. Tuition is due regardless of attendance throughout the academic year. We do not prorate or adjust tuition and we budget accordingly. Summer attendance is optional and we offer camp programs throughout the summer for a specific rate. If students enroll after the first day of school, tuition will be prorated and a prorated start-up fee will be due, then the selected installment plan will go into effect following the prorated start-up fee.

Montessori Visions Academy collects tuition for the Primary and Elementary academic school year on an annual basis beginning the first of August each school year, which may be paid in one installment, four installments, or nine installments with a payment processing fee. If tuition is paid in nine installments, a deposit of ½ of one installment is required with the first installment. Infant and Toddler Tuition is paid on a semi-weekly basis.

The Materials Fee is an annual fee that covers paper supplies and booklets provided by the school to students. Activities and incidentals such as yearbooks, field trips and pictures are optional and additional. Your child may participate in additional programs or field trips and any additional fees will be due before the activity. We encourage families to support the school through participation in our Scrip program.

Infant and Toddler tuition is due on the Monday of the installment week and late if not paid within two days. Primary and Elementary tuition is due on the 1st of the month for any installment plan and late if not paid within 5 days of the due date. A \$25 late fee will be

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assessed on a tuition balance not paid in full by the late date. Any account past due is cause for dismissal and may be referred to a collection agency. For families paying semiweekly, or the four or nine installment plan, we require a pre-authorization to charge your credit card if payment is past the due date and withdrawal may be required. If, after normal channels of collection are followed, we are forced to refer your account for collection, you agree to pay the cost of collection, including but not limited to attorneys fees.

2. *Extended Curriculum Policy:*

Extended curriculum tuition is contracted and is added to the tuition plan. To withdraw or change from any extended curriculum program, one month advance written notice is required, prior to the beginning of a new month. Pre-arranged occasional overtime use is charged at an hourly rate per hour or portion thereof that a student is in attendance beyond contracted hours. After the closing hours of the school, overtime fees are charged for every 15 minutes or portion thereof that a student is at the school. Once the school closes, attempts will be made to contact parents or other authorized escorts. If a student is not picked up within 30 minutes of closing, the proper authorities (i.e. Police, Child Welfare) will be called.

3. *Holidays and Summer:*

We follow an academic calendar that includes no school during winter and spring break, traditional holidays, and teacher training days. We offer optional camp programs throughout the summer for an additional rate. Tuition is due regardless of time school is not in session and tuition free vacation may only be utilized during the summer months, two weeks advance written notice is required. From time to time it may become necessary to vary school scheduling. Please review the school calendar and be advised that any changes will be communicated in advance through the newsletter. We do not prorate or adjust tuition and we budget accordingly.

4. *Termination of Contract:*

If it becomes necessary for you to withdraw your child from our school program or extended care programs, at least one month advance written notice is required, and tuition through the final calendar month will be calculated based on the 9 installment plan (i.e. January 15th withdrawal letter received, 7 installments due, 8/1-2/1). The deposit will be applied to the final month and the balance will be due by the 1st of the final calendar month. No refunds will be available after April 1st. A credit card authorization form is required for families selecting the four or nine installment plan due to the burden placed on the school by non-payment or late payment of funds.

Montessori Visions Academy reserves the right to terminate any student's enrollment at any time for any reason, not prohibited by law, if in our sole judgment the student is not meeting the program's goals or standards, endangers the safety of others, or if the school is not able to meet the needs of the student. *Montessori Visions Academy* also reserves the right to decline services to parents or guardians who, in our sole judgment, are uncooperative, abusive to school staff, or will not be satisfied with our best efforts. Withdrawal may also be required if tuition and late fees are not paid on a timely basis per the financial agreement. Records will not be released unless all obligations are current.

E. ATTENDANCE

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Regular attendance at school is a necessity if students are to achieve to their fullest potential. Consistency with Montessori materials creates the most successful learning environment for the students. If a student will be absent we request notification by phone call the day of absence, followed with written notice the day the student returns. Please notify the school in advance in writing for any extended absences.

1. Elementary and Middle School Attendance Requirements:

Excessive absences, excused or unexcused, may result in loss of grade level completion. The tardy and absence policy utilized at *Montessori Visions Academy* is consistent with the Clark County School District code which states that tardy is defined as when a student is not physically present in the classroom at the start of the instructional day. A tardy becomes a ½ day absence if more than 1 hour and 55 minutes are missed and becomes a full day absence if more than 3 ¾ hours are missed of the instructional day. An elementary or adolescent community student may be required to repeat the current grade if the total number of absences exceeds twenty (20) for the school year. Absences are calculated by combining the number of excused and unexcused absences. There will be no financial allowances made or any credits given for absences.

2. Tardiness:

Students are required to arrive to school on time in order to start their day in the most successful manner. Please call the school to notify us if your child will be tardy. If your child is tardy, the office staff will escort the child into class in order to limit disruption. Excessive tardiness creates a disruptive atmosphere to the learning environment and does not allow the student to begin the day with important activities. Therefore, tardiness will be monitored within each quarter for students from first grade through eighth grade. Within each quarter, students will receive a verbal warning for the first tardy, a written warning for the second tardy, a detention at expense to parent (held after school the following Friday from 3:30-4:30) for the third tardy, and a parent conference for the fourth tardy to determine further recourse. If a student does not attend detention, a parent conference will be held. Further recourse may include, but is not limited to, being withheld from field trips or special activities, and/or suspension.

3. Illness or Emergencies:

By law, any student showing signs of illness is not allowed in school. Please phone the school if your child will be absent. In the event of illness or serious accident during school hours, you will be called to pick up the student within one hour of notification. In the event a parent, guardian, or authorized escort cannot be contacted immediately or shall fail or refuse to remove the student affected, the appropriate authorities may be contacted to remove your child from the premises of the school. If the accident or illness is deemed serious, the staff will secure any necessary aid and/or treatment from the appropriate medical facility.

During school and playground activity accidents may occur, however the school assumes no liability. If a student is involved in an accident on our premises, or away from the premises while under the care of supervision of the school, the parent's/student's personal insurance must be utilized first, and then our insurance may be available, under certain circumstances. As the parent, you agree that you are responsible for any accidents your

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child might be involved in and you agree to accept responsibility for any expenses connected with the accident including, but not limited to, examination, diagnosis, treatment, and/or removal of your child. Should any accident occur while your child is away from the school on a field trip or excursion, you also agree to not hold the school, facility, staff or employees, nor any participating adult liable.

4. Medication:

Prescribed medication may only be administered when accompanied with written parental permission and the prescription must be in the original pharmaceutical container. Over the counter medicine will be administered when accompanied by a note from the doctor and with written parental permission. Lip balm may only be brought to school for an obvious medical concern and will be treated the same as any other medication. Parents must fill out a medication log and give the medicine to office personnel ONLY, and medication will be administered at lunch time, though we do not accept responsibility for missed doses or for adverse reactions caused by the administration of medication. Knowledge of exposure to communicable diseases must be reported to the persons in charge of the school. Sunblock should be applied at home prior to arrival at school. Reapplication of sunblock will only be offered to students enrolled in extended after school care with parent written permission and provision of sunblock.

F. PARENT INVOLVEMENT

1. Parent Meetings:

All parents enrolling their children in *Montessori Visions Academy* agree to involve themselves in their children's education by attending all parent teacher conferences and at least one Parent Education Night per year. By enrolling your child in Montessori education, you have committed yourself to embrace the Montessori philosophy in your home and family lifestyle. Parents should become informed in order to implement the Montessori philosophy and support their children's success.

2. Communication with School:

Montessori parents will be regularly informed of the program's plans through a daily schedule given with the enrollment package, a tentative year long calendar, a monthly newsletter, posted notices, and memos sent home. Parent/Teacher conferences are scheduled as needed and with specific progress report reviews. All incidents, illnesses or injuries that occur are reported on an incident report, to be signed by the parent/guardian. Progress reports are available during the year to review your child's progress.

We encourage Montessori parents to make an appointment with the teacher to discuss the progress the student is making. It also is imperative that the school be notified by the parents of any family, work or lifestyle changes that may affect the student's attitude or behavior. We respect the privacy policy by requesting that parents schedule a conference or appointment with a teacher or the director, rather than discussing your child's progress or concerns with the teacher or other parent or office staff in a public location, classroom, playground, or front office area.

Should you have a compliment, concern, or complaint about our school, please contact our

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Director. Verbal requests are welcome, however if your child has any special needs or you have a personal request, please fill out a Montessori Parent/Teacher Communication Form and give it to the office staff as this will help ensure that your request is accommodated. We believe that, with communication, most problems can be resolved. If further communication is needed, the office staff will be happy to connect you with our administrative director. If you are still concerned, or wish to compliment our school, you are encouraged to call licensing numbers listed at the end of this handbook.

3. Parent Teacher Organization:

We invite Montessori Parents to become involved members of *Montessori Visions Academy* and support our school through community development and fundraising.

4. Birthday Celebrations:

Montessori celebrates the life of the child in relationship to the earth's travel around the sun in a program entitled "Circle of the Sun". This celebration varies slightly based on the age level of the child. The Primary and Lower Elementary birthday student carries the earth around the sun for each year of his or her life. While this is taking place, the teacher mentions one thing that was special during that year of the student's life. Prior to the student's birthday, we ask that the parents provide a note that describes a special event for each year of their child's life as well as a picture for each year, including birth, so the child can create a timeline and personal history lesson. The student will receive a birthday song and "Circle of the Sun" celebration, giving every student the same opportunity. The Upper Elementary and Adolescent Community birthday student may choose to participate in a varied "Circle of the Sun" or enjoy a simplified celebration.

Although there is no obligation, if you have a strong desire to provide a treat, we have a few options: Parents may choose to provide a healthy treat for snack time that must be approved by the administration in advance and include no nuts, peanut butter, sugary foods, chocolate, cake, or red punch, and juice boxes preferred. The snack should be dropped off at the front desk on the morning of the birthday celebration. Parents may also choose to donate a book to our library for a special remembrance of the student's birthday. Please confirm with the office staff regarding birthday plans at least one week before the birthday.

If you choose to have a party outside of the school celebration, and you wish to hand out invitations at the school, please provide enough invitations for every child in the class. It is our policy that invitations may not be brought to school unless all of the students in your child's class are invited, in order to avoid hurt feelings and class disruption.

5. Parent Helper / Open Door Policy:

After your child is comfortable in the new environment, you are welcome to observe your child's class at any time as long as your presence in the room does not disrupt your child or any other child's ability to learn, please make arrangements in advance with the office staff. When visiting the school, please check in at the front desk for a visitor badge and our observation policy. We ask that if visiting at rest time, you do not wake your child unless your child is leaving for the remainder of the day. We encourage you to be involved in your child's education by volunteering at our school as a parent helper. All

volunteers or chaperones are required to attend a volunteer in-service prior to assisting.

6. Media Release:

Parents and guardians give *Montessori Visions Academy* and its publishers, licenses, and legal representatives the irrevocable right to use their child's picture portrait, or photograph in all forms and media, and in all manners, both in printed form and online, and waive any right to inspect or approve the finished product, including written copy, that may be created in connection therewith and waive any right to compensation for use of the same.

G. BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE

Montessori Visions Academy staff promotes an environment of peace and respect. Our staff assists each child in becoming a productive member of our learning community. We establish the classroom environment to encourage cooperation and sharing, with no tolerance for aggressive behaviors. Discipline and behavior guidance will at all times be constructive, positive and suited to the age of the child. We utilize a guidance program that centers around positive role modeling by adults, intervention techniques, redirection and positive reinforcement. There are times when students, because they are "testing the limits," may actually endanger themselves or others by their actions. Due to these actions, specific behavior guidance techniques have been set up and will be followed by the staff.

1. Guidance Techniques:

These behavior guidance techniques are: **Modeling**, **Redirection**, **Logical Consequences**, (encouraging the student to assist with resolution in order to develop responsibility), **Verbal Guidance** (talking with the student to develop conflict resolution strategies), **Break** (an opportunity to calm down and redirect thinking in order to develop inner peace).

2. Conflict Resolution Strategies:

In order to empower students, we encourage them to resolve conflicts by following these conflict resolution strategies: Talk it out; move or walk away; get a peer mediator; ask a teacher for assistance. We offer peace areas in the classroom to assist students in the development of peace and conflict resolution.

3. Bullying:

Montessori Visions Academy has a zero tolerance for bullying behavior. The legal definition of bullying in Nevada, per [NRS 388.122](#), now goes beyond just physical acts of violence to include:

"...a willful act or course of conduct which exposes a pupil repeatedly and over time to one or more negative actions which is highly offensive to a reasonable person and is intended to cause and actually causes the pupil to suffer harm or serious emotional distress."

If a student engages in bullying behavior, a conference will be scheduled immediately with the parent to discuss solutions. Continued bullying behavior may result in suspension and/or expulsion.

4. Guidance Partners:

We will notify the parents if the student has received excessive breaks within a day, or within a week. If necessary, a conference will be scheduled with the parent to discuss

solutions to assist the student's behavioral choices.

Montessori Visions Academy believes that parents and staff must work together to address persistent behavioral issues. Parents will be contacted for a conference when a student chooses repeated aggressive behavior or appears to be unusually stressed, anxious or otherwise motivated to engage in negative behaviors. If the child is having difficulty meeting our behavior standards, we will work with the child and the parent to resolve the situation. If this is not successful, withdrawal may be required.

Montessori Visions Academy complies with all federal, state and other relevant laws which prohibit corporal or abusive punishment in a school setting.

H. SCHOOL PROCEDURES

1. New Students:

For new students, transition periods may be difficult. Transition periods that take place quickly work best for the first few weeks of school. Always say goodbye and be firm, but friendly, about leaving. We assist new students with transition by helping them feel welcome, orienting them to the classroom, and introducing them to new friends. Your demonstration of confidence will also assist your child in adjusting to this new environment.

2. Resting:

All students under Kindergarten level are given an opportunity to rest for approximately 30 minutes and if they are not asleep at that time, they may resume working with the materials. Those who do sleep may resume work whenever they wake up or will be gently awakened at the end of rest time. Students will be provided with a mat or cot, and a sheet and blanket, which will be kept at the school and washed weekly.

3. Toilet Training:

All students enrolled in the Primary level at *Montessori Visions Academy* should be confident in all aspects of using the toilet on their own, including caring for themselves after using the toilet. Students from birth to toilet trained will follow the guidelines in the Infant/Toddler Section of this handbook.

4. Transportation/Field Trips:

Montessori Visions Academy does not transport students to or from school, individual homes, or other locations. Occasionally, your child may participate in special programs, educational excursions or field trips. Additional fees, if any, resulting from these activities are due before the scheduled activity. In the event of a planned field trip, parents will be required to sign a field trip transportation and authorization form in order for the student to participate. Students may be transported by bus, private car, or on foot. Students will be chaperoned by a responsible adult at all times away from the school. Should any accident occur while your child is away from the school on a field trip or excursion, you also agree to not hold the school, facility, staff or employees, nor any participating adult liable.

5. School Supplies/Personal Items:

Montessori Visions Academy provides all the necessary learning materials for students' progress in the curriculum. Additional items, such as notebooks and pencils, may be requested for parents to supply as needed. Toys and items of value are to remain at

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home; we do not assume responsibility for items brought from home. Please check daily in the student's file, cubby, and coat rack for any items to take home. Also check periodically in lost and found for any items belonging to the student. If a student damages or destroys school property, parent will assume full responsibility.

Cellular phones and personal electronic devices are not allowed in the school as they are a disruption to the learning environment. Parents can call the school telephone and messages will be delivered to students. If a cellular phone is brought to school, it will be kept in the school office to be picked up by a parent at the end of the school day.

6. Library

Each classroom visits the library weekly for story time and lessons on the Dewey decimal system, library research, and library behavior. All students in the library must be attended by a teacher or parent at all times. Library visitors must use a quiet, whispering voice at all times when in the library to show respect to those in library as well as students and staff. Students may check out books for one week at a time with a limit of one book for students under 3rd grade and three books for those over 3rd grade. Parents are also encouraged to check out Montessori or Parenting Information books for one week at a time from our professional library. There are no fines, however new books may not be checked out until current books are returned or paid for at replacement value.

I. SCHOOL ATTIRE

In our Montessori school, we help students develop an attitude of respect in a safe and enjoyable environment. As we develop respectfulness and implement safety, we have established a dress code policy that supports these concepts.

1. Standard School Attire:

Primary, Elementary and Middle School students should dress in the school dress code as follows: Girls may wear khaki or navy blue shorts, skorts, skirt, jumper, or pants and boys may wear khaki or navy blue shorts or pants as demonstrated in our standard attire brochure. These items are to be of school attire material, no jeans, cargo, or corduroy. Shirts and outerwear with our Montessori approved logo are required within the classroom environment and may be ordered by contacting the front office staff. Shirts without approved logo or outerwear are not to be worn in the classroom and no undergarments should be visible. All clothing should be of good repair. Primary students should keep a complete change of labeled clothing at school for emergency use. Shirts and outerwear are also available for Montessori parents.

Shoes and socks that cover the entire foot are required and should be a solid color of uniform matching or neutral tones such as black, brown, navy, light blue, white, and grey; no roller shoes, party shoes, or boots allowed. Montessori administration has final decision over questionable items. Students not in compliance with the school dress code will be given a written notice. If concerns continue, the parent will be contacted to bring in appropriate attire or pick the student up from school.

2. Other Attire Items

All attire is to be of a respectful nature in compliance with our philosophy. Therefore, hair

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color and cut must be of a natural shade and common style for childhood, maintaining a philosophy of respect and must not be a distraction to the student or students. No make-up is allowed for students under 6th grade. Additional bodily adornments such as tattoos, face paint, or nail polish are not permitted. Jewelry and accessories are to be kept to a minimum and must not be a distraction to the student or students. Hats are permitted outside for students under 6th grade and inside for students over 6th grade (except during meals). Hats must be solid color with no inappropriate logos, and may need to be removed if they become a distraction or safety hazard.

3. *Outerwear*

Please label all extra clothing, coats, sweaters, backpacks, etc. in a clearly visible location on the outside of the item. We do not assume responsibility for any lost or missing items.

4. *Physical Education Attire*

Students should wear tennis shoes or shoes that cover the entire foot which are appropriate for physical education so that they may be able to participate in all activities. Girls choosing to wear dresses must have shorts underneath for modesty during physical education activities. Students in the Adolescent Community are required to wear a PE uniform.

5. *Infant/Toddler and Summer Attire/Special Occasion Attire*

During summer or announced special occasion attire, students may wear free choice attire but this requires modest wear, including no visible midriff, shoulders must be covered, and shoes and socks covering the entire foot must be worn. Infants and Toddlers also may wear free choice attire based on their individual needs and development. We do encourage young children to learn to be independent and so we ask them to wear clothing that is easy to pull up and down. We also encourage the infants and toddlers to wear clothing similar to the standard school attire in order to develop a more cohesive atmosphere. Students enrolled in Scouts may wear the official scout uniform to school on days that have scouting events scheduled after school. The approved scout uniform is delineated in the scout handbook at the “official” uniform. Any other scout clothing may be worn during the scouting event after school hours, but may not be worn at school during school hours.

J. SAFETY PROCEDURES

Montessori Visions Academy has Emergency Preparedness Plans in effect for fire, natural disaster, and other emergencies. All staff members are certified in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and First Aid

1. *Emergency Preparedness:*

We practice safety drills for fire, earthquake, flood, and shelter in place on a regular basis. In the event of an emergency requiring evacuation, we will attempt to contact parents by phone or e-mail. In case an evacuation, we will relocate to the following location:

Green Valley Library, 2979 N. Green Valley Pkwy, Henderson, NV (702) 507-3790

2. *Smoking Policy:*

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Montessori Visions Academy is smoke free facility. There is no smoking allowed on the premises or school grounds. Please ensure that all smoking materials are extinguished prior to arrival.

3. *Commitment to Health Policies:*

We practice and encourage green living habits. Along with teaching and participating in reduction, recycling, and reusing, we do our best to purchase and utilize green products in our school. Cleaning products, pest control, and air fresheners are utilized in the facility to maintain health and safety standards, and are environmentally friendly.

4. *Safe Facility:*

Montessori Visions Academy maintains a strong commitment to ensure a safe and healthy environment for all students, staff and guests. Parents and/or guardians have the right to request and review any complaints this facility has received within the last 12 months of their child's or children's enrollment.

K. LICENSING

1. *Regulations:*

As required by Nevada Revised Statute 200.502, "All child care workers are mandated reporters of suspected child abuse and neglect."

As required by Nevada State Regulation 432.A350, *Montessori Visions Academy*:

1. Provides for the special needs of each child.
2. Requires written parental permission for trips and activities outside the facility.
3. Provides for parental involvement in their child's day.
4. Requires parents to acknowledge that NO SMOKING is permitted in the facility.
5. Staff has current Sheriff's Cards and Health Cards at all times. All have training in CPR/First Aid, Recognizing and Reporting Abuse and Neglect, Recognizing Symptoms of Illness, and Bloodborne pathogens.

2. *Licensing Departments:*

Montessori Visions Academy is licensed by:

BUREAU OF SERVICES FOR CHILDCARE	(702) 486-7918
NEVADA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION	(775) 687-9200

The licensing, health, government, and educational agencies have permission to enter this facility whenever they see fit to perform their duties.

3. *Affiliations/Memberships:*

American Montessori Society
International Montessori Council
Better Business Bureau
Chamber of Commerce

L. INFANT/TODDLER PROGRAM

Infant/Toddler program policies described below are in addition to the information in the previous pages of this Parent Handbook. “The discovery that the child has a mind able to absorb on its own accord produces a revolution in education. We can now understand easily why the first period in human development, in which character is formed, is the most important.” — Maria Montessori, *The Absorbent Mind*

The first three years of life are the most fundamental in the development of human beings and their potential. The infant's physical development is phenomenal and inspires our care and attention. These years are when the core of personality, language, movement and trust are developed. Our classroom environments have been prepared to meet the needs of the infant and foster independence, psychomotor development and language acquisition. Here, the teacher is the facilitator to provide this guidance and the classroom offers examples of how parents can follow through with the learning experience at home.

1. Classroom Composition and Staffing:

Our infant/toddler classroom enrolls students from birth through 36 months and toilet trained. Our caring staff form a caring, nurturing, and responsive relationship with your child. In the classroom, she will be the "expert" on your child knowing pertinent information like your child's individual schedule, developmental abilities and special needs, sleeping needs, and individual interests. The staff will develop a warm relationship with your child and have caring and learning interactions as your child explores the learning environment.

2. Daily Schedules:

The daily schedule for the children is a guide. It provides a framework for planning and organizing the daily routine and play activities for the children. The daily routines for children may be a little different based on the age of your child. Infants follow their own biological needs. They are fed, changed, and nap when they need it. Toddlers are changed/taken to the toilet before transitions in the day and as needed. Adjustments to the schedule are made as your child gets older and his/her needs change. You may also notice that as your child gets older, s/he may alter her/his own schedule to fit in with the group. Some common changes you may notice in your child's behavior after enrollment in any group care situation include altered sleep/wake patterns (staying awake for longer hours or napping more frequently for short periods of time) or changes in appetite.

The daily schedule below is an outline of a typical day with the infants and toddlers. Keep in mind again that, if needed, the schedule will include children's individual needs based on their age. This is a sample that includes the different types of components to the daily schedule.

Typical Daily Schedule:

7:30 - 9:00	Free play and diapering/toileting
9:00 - 9:15	Group Time/Story/Song
9:15 - 9:30	Snack Time
9:30 - 11:30	Free play/art/diapering/toileting

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11:30 - 12:00	Outdoor Play
12:00 - 12:30	Lunch/diapering/toileting
12:30 - 2:30	Naptime
2:30 - 3:00	Transition from Nap/diaper changes/toileting/free play
3:00 - 3:15	Snack Time
3:15 - 3:30	Group Time /Story/Song
3:30 - 5:30	Art/outdoor play/free play/diapering/toileting

3. Food and Snack

There are two snack times and a lunch time every day. We encourage families to provide wholesome, low sugar foods and to introduce their children to a variety of food tastes and textures. Families take turns providing snack foods that include whole grain cereals and crackers, fruits and vegetables, yogurt, cheese, juice, and milk.

Infants

Young infants will be fed according to their own schedule. As they grow and start eating solid foods, their eating needs will change and the eating times will be adjusted toward the group schedule. During lunch, infants not yet eating table food will be served cereals and jarred foods. As infants grow and become more adept at eating, they will be using their fingers for eating "finger-foods" and working on using infant utensils. It is recommended that infants try new foods at home first, then parents can provide the new food in the child's lunch. If your infant (eating table food) or toddler should have a food allergy or a food intolerance, please notify the school immediately.

Bottles

Parents of bottle-fed babies will need to provide 2 - 3 labeled bottles, nipples, and lids, along with the formula. If you are breast feeding your child, all breast milk must be dated and have your child's name on it. Fresh breast milk will be stored for 24 hours in the refrigerator or up to two weeks in the freezer. Milk that exceeds this time frame will be discarded. Contents remaining in any bottle must be discarded within two hours. Only breast milk, formula, or water will be placed in your child's bottle. No bottles will be served with cereal or any other food product in them. Juice can only be served from a sippy cup. Mothers are welcome to come and breastfeed their infants at any time. If a parent chooses, they are welcome to use the nursing room at any time. It is a cozy room with a lounge seat. Bottles are not heated in the microwave, as this will produce "hot spots" in the formula or breast milk, and are warmed by a small crock pot with water. If your child is breast fed and a parent forgets to bring in breast milk or the frozen supply is depleted, the infant will be fed formula. We ask that parents provide formula to have on hand in the event of an emergency. We will try and get in touch with your first to see if breast milk can be supplied by you soon. However, if we are unable to get in touch with you and your child is hungry, we will utilize the formula provided.

Older Infants and Toddlers

The older infants will be sitting in chairs with trays or a small table with chairs and toddlers will be at tables to eat their meals. Children in the toddler room will be using sippy cups or regular cups and using utensils. It is our goal to work cooperatively with the families and their child's routine; however, bottles are not the common practice as the toddlers get older. The children have access to tap water in the Toddler room at any time of the day through the drinking fountain at the sink.

4. Sleeping

Infants nap according to their own schedules. If an infant should fall asleep while being rocked, lightly bounced, or taken for walk in a stroller, they will be put in their cribs to continue their sleep. As your child grows and matures, cot sleeping will be encouraged. Toddlers also will nap on a cot. All the bedding for infants and toddlers is provided by our school and is washed here.

Safe Sleeping Practices

Infants will be placed on their backs to sleep in a crib. The infants are provided with a firm, tight-fitting mattress in a crib that meets current safety standards. There will be no pillows, quilts, bumpers, comforters, sheepskins, stuffed toys, or other fluffy products in the crib. Two children will never share a crib at the same time. A blanket and sheet will be provided for your infant and toddler. The above practices are supported by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. These practices are required by licensing standards.

5. Diapering/Toilet Training

Parents provide an ample supply of cloth or disposable diapers and wipes for their children in the Infant and Toddler classroom. Your child will be changed at regular intervals throughout the day and as needed. Store-bought wipes are used when changing your child; we will use plain water and wash cloths for children with a diaper rash. We will ask parents to provide Desitin or other cream of their choice in the event of a rash. We will not be applying baby powder on the infants. The use of powder has been linked to childhood asthma and other respiratory difficulties.

Montessori Visions Academy supports and positively encourages the toilet learning of your toddler or preschooler. We support the use of underwear for children who are ready and learning but do ask that you keep three full sets of extra clothing on hand at the school for toileting concerns. We feel that the best way to approach toilet learning is by following the child's lead. When he or she shows interest we provide encouragement, support, and opportunity. And equally as important, we have lots of patience and clean up accidents matter-of-factly. We do not use an external reward system; we support the toileting child in developing a sense of pride and accomplishment through verbal acknowledgment of each effort.

6. Health and Safety Practices

"Shoe-Free" Environment for the Infant Room

With infants commonly on the floor, we do provide a clean, safe, and healthy environment in the Infant Room. We practice a "shoe-free" policy in this room. We ask that adults entering the carpeted area of the infant room please slip a pair of shoe covers over their shoes. We take this action to prevent outside contaminants from being brought into the room and spread onto the carpet. The infants spend much of their time exploring on the floor, so it is best that these areas be kept as clean as possible.

Hand washing

Hand washing is one of the best ways to cut down on the transmission of germs. Teachers follow proper hand washing techniques – including but not limited to: before and after eating or handling food; before and after feeding a child; before and after diapering; after

handling or cleaning body fluids - after wiping noses, mouths, bottoms, sores; after outdoor activities; upon entering the classroom. Children as well engage in hand washing for the same events listed above. We use a sensor sink to turn water on and off, reducing the spread of germs.

Fresh Air/Outdoor Play

The children play outdoors daily, weather permitting. Fresh air in the colder months does not cause or promote illness; it actually facilitates good health. Cold air is not related to making a child sick. All children in attendance during their classroom's outdoor play time will be going outside.

7. Curriculum for Infants and Toddlers

During the first two years of life, children are working on acquiring a sense of trustworthiness of oneself and others. This is the sense of safety and security that comes from responsive and predictable care from familiar others to whom the child is attached. In the toddler years, a strong sense of autonomy is building. This comes from being treated as an individual and being allowed opportunities for independence.

When children feel the sense of independence, power, and competence, they can step out into the world and be active learners and problem solvers. Young children need a safe environment full of opportunities to explore and have fun. They need to be able to see, touch, feel, and move.

The curriculum for the infants and toddlers involves everything that happens to the child throughout the day. Responsive care giving is the key component to setting up a safe and secure environment and trusting relationships. Everything that a child experiences are learning opportunities. For example, diaper changes are perfect opportunities for learning experiences: language, singing gently to a child; showing gentle touches; letting the child know that this is not a hurried or rushed experience and that they are valued and precious individuals; gently moving their legs in a bicycle motion stimulating movement or having them reach and grasp for an object. Throughout the day, teachers will take advantage of these care-giving experiences that are so important in the early years of life and turn them into meaningful and positive experiences for a child's healthy development.

Along with the individual care-giving moments, teachers will also plan and organize their environments to provide experiences which enhance motor development – reaching, grasping, crawling in and out, throwing, pulling; cognitive development – object permanence, cause and effect experiences, language, listening and responding to sounds and voices, and problem solving; social development – playing among others, positive peer interactions, and expressing emotions towards others.

When teachers organize materials for the room, they take into account children's individual differences along with their knowledge child development. Planning is based on observations of the children using their interests, their new skills, and their reactions to materials. As the children grow and change, the teachers change the classroom environment.