



Parent & Student Handbook

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Dear Parents,

We cannot express how excited we are to begin the process of caring for your child in our school. Building this program has been a satisfying challenge, and personally, challenges like these drive us to become better professionals and educators. Thank you for allowing us this opportunity to better ourselves and make a difference in your child's life. This is our passion and we take your child's care as seriously as if they were our own.

Our program was founded on the fact that all children learn uniquely and require individualized care to strengthen their abilities. This is why we chose to follow and use Montessori educational techniques to benefit each child. Using this well tested strategy, our goal will be to continually engage your child and maintain a positive learning environment.

So, we welcome you to the Family, and we look forward to the future success of your child here at Growing Hearts Montessori.

With warmest regards,

Jason & Diyanira Richards

“FREE THE CHILD’S POTENTIAL, AND YOU WILL TRANSFORM HIM INTO THE WORLD.”

—MARIA MONTESSORI

Welcome to Growing Hearts Montessori Preschool!

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Growing Hearts Montessori preschool is to utilize proven Montessori tools and modified techniques to provide a premium education experience designed to foster a life-long love of learning through teaching, demonstrating the interconnection of all life, and to promote value of the whole through the development of individual potential.

PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

We strive every day to create a safe, fun, educational environment in our classroom. The purpose is simple: to provide top tier bilingual education to each student and provide the best education possible. Our goal is to help your child succeed, enjoy learning and enjoy school while providing long term curriculum strategies.

PHILOSOPHY ON EDUCATION

Our underlying philosophy is “Constructivist Model Education” influenced by Maria Montessori. The construction model is a discovery concept where students learn from working with materials rather than direct instruction.

Our plan is to inspire students to think for themselves and to learn at their own personal pace. No grades or red marks on papers, just a fresh start each day to continue their education. This philosophy helps students learn the value of their own successes. Additionally, students are placed in a mixed age classrooms which allows for an additional dimension of educational growth. Our students are all free to move about within the classroom to discover at will, in a positive and discovery based environment. The teachers in the class acts as guides in the process, observing and tracking student progress to meet our students long term educational goals.

PROGRAM GOALS

We focus on five key areas at Growing Hearts to develop well-rounded learners: **Sensorial, Practical Life, Language Arts, Mathematics, and Cultural Studies**. Each area uniquely shapes the child and allows them the satisfaction of self-awareness. Our goal is to allow each child to shape their educational day (with minor guidance) so that the knowledge is discovered naturally. Self made learners are often peer teachers. The end result: independent thinkers and lifelong learners.

CURRICULUM

Our daily curriculum is centered on three basic ideas: drive students to think, get them to move, and have them interact. The student's year will a compounding study across a variety of topics covering the sciences, social studies, and the arts. Each of the underlying contexts will give an opportunity to introduce mathematical and language art concepts and lessons. This way, each learning period touches on the five areas of Montessori education. Our monthly rotational curriculum will also introduce new Montessori materials to the shelves of the room, allowing for an even wider variety of interaction and engagement.

REGISTRATION

A non-refundable registration and material fee of **\$50.00** will be due at the time of registration. Registration is on a first-come, first-served basis. Our group classes are limited to include ages 2 - 5 Years of age and are full day or Half day (Monday - Friday) only.

MONTHLY TUITION RATES

Tuition rates are set by the contract provided by Growing Hearts. Please refer to our most up to date contract to find current rates.

All tuition will be paid via our **Smartcare Application**; details will be provided once enrollment paperwork has been received. This is an application that will be available on your phone for a wide variety of school usage including: attendance tracking, parent – teacher communication, and payments. Payments can be made each month via checking account, debit, or credit cards.

For our **monthly contract**, payments made after the 5th of the month will be assessed a late 10% fee based on current months tuition and added to the current statement period.

A **bi-monthly contract** is also available where the month's tuition is divided in half, and billed on the 1st and the 15th of every month. A three day grace period is given for each payment to accommodate weekends and paydays. The three day period begins on the day immediately following the date payment was due. Each payment, if not met by the 4th and 18th respectively will be subject to a 10% late fee schedule based on the amount owed.

If payment is not received by the end of the current month, the child will not be allowed to return to Growing Hearts Montessori until all debts are paid in full. Parent(s)/guardian(s) assume the obligation to pay by this schedule or to inform the preschool director if obligations cannot be met. **Tuition is required regardless of absenteeism or vacations.**

Notice of the withdrawal of any student from Growing Hearts Montessori by the Parents/Guardians will be in writing sent to the schools current physical or email address. This letter is to be received no later than thirty (30) days before the date of withdrawal. No mid-month withdrawals are accepted and all must be received before or on the first (1st) of each calendar month. Failure to give sufficient notice will result in payment due for the thirty days tuition and fees following the date that either the notice was made, or the child was withdrawn, whichever is earlier.

We are open all year! Summer Enrichment will take place during June and July. Summers include a broader focused curriculum, and changes on a yearly basis. Your child will still be engaging in our daily Montessori program; however, we expand our class times to include other fun activities such as a water day, bringing in guest speakers, and tending to our garden.

ADMISSION

The process begins with a personal interview and appointment between the staff of GHM, the parent(s)/guardian(s), and all children prospecting enrollment. We complete all interviews after business hours, after 5:30PM Monday through Friday.

The child must be in good health and pass a physical examination by a medical doctor or healthcare provider prior to the start of preschool. The State of Missouri requires that these forms be on file at the Preschool on the first day of school. If paperwork, including medical forms, authorization for pick up form, and enrollment form, is not turned in the child may be asked to stay at home until all paperwork is at the Preschool. The child must be current on all required immunizations and immunization forms must be completed and signed by health care providers and parent(s)/guardian(s) and on file at GHM by the first day of class.

HOURS OF SERVICE

Growing Hearts Montessori is open from **7:30 AM to 5:30 PM**, Monday through Friday.

We will be closed the following holidays: Martin Luther King Day, Presidents Day, Labor Day, Independence Day, Memorial Day, and Good Friday.

Out of respect for our families and well being of the facility we will take: Winter Break, Thanksgiving Break, Spring Break and Summer Deep Clean.

Please refer to our attached **calendar** that provides all dates when school is not in session and a reminder that all breaks and holidays are included in the price of tuition.

EARLY DROP OFF & LATE PICK UP POLICY

Parents dropping off and picking up children must accompany them into the building and notify a teacher that they are dropping off or picking up the child. Anyone not recognized by GHM staff will be required to present a valid picture ID. In order to receive the full benefits of our program, as well as to help your child adjust accordingly, we ask that your child maintain a regular school schedule. **Please have your child arrive no later than 8:20 AM.** Rest time (starting at 11:00 AM for Early Primary students) is also a crucial part of our day. Please avoid dropping your child off during this time. We understand that special circumstances do occur, and your child will be welcomed regardless of what time they arrive. If attendance does become a problem, a conference may be called to discuss resolutions for the benefit of the child.

Please turn cell phones to silent when inside the facility, and end all calls prior to entrance. Our playground is very close to our parking lot, please upon exit of your vehicle turn off the ignition for the children's safety.

Growing Hearts closes promptly at 5:30 PM each evening. All children and parents must exit the building by this time. The daycare's clock (set with the atomic clock in Colorado) will serve as the "official clock" for determining time. Most cellular telephones are synchronized to this exact clock. A "No Exception Policy" is in place for several reasons:

Teachers give their best to your children each day. They also have responsibilities to their own children and family. They need to know they can end their school day reliably at 5:30 daily.

Most children's internal body clock knows when their usual pick-up time is! Children can become nervous or fearful when they are at school later than normal. Please know that your child will always be comforted and safe, even in the event of an emergency.

A \$10 per ten (10) minute late fee will be charged for students who are not picked up from school by 4:30, 5:00, or 5:30 respectively to your pickup time choice. Time is rounded up in 10 minute increments and the charges are due within 24 hours of the late drop off.

A \$10 per ten (10) minute early fee will also be charged for students who are dropped off before 7:30 am if a teacher is present, we cannot guarantee service until 7:30 am each morning. Time is rounded down in 10 minute increments and the charges will be added to the next month's bill.

Unfortunately, except for a serious medical emergencies or sudden severe weather, there can be no other exceptions or warnings. If you are late for **ANY** reason, a charge will be issued. This policy makes it easier for us to apply our late policy to everyone consistently and fairly. It will be greatly appreciated, however, if parents call to notify us if they will be late and give an approximate arrival time so that we can better comfort your child. If this becomes a frequent problem, Growing Hearts reserves the right to dismiss a family from the program.

FIELD TRIP POLICY

Field trips which are activities that take place outside of the preschool building sometimes will be planned to enhance your child's learning and bring authentic and relevant experiences into your child's school life. Field trips will be scheduled in advance and will be coordinated with our curriculum. They may include trips to a bank, the State Capitol, or even the Fire

Department. Permission slips will be sent home in advance and must be signed if you would like your child to participate in the field trips. For most field trips, Growing Hearts will provide parents with information regarding the cost of any transportation and if field trip transportation is necessary.

A bus or car with appropriate seats and restraints may be used to transport the children. Children will not be seated in the front seat of a vehicle. We welcome your presence on field trips and may ask for volunteers to ensure an adult-student ratio that is safe for the proposed environment. If you choose to have your child not participate in the field trip, you may be responsible for the child's care during the scheduled field trip.

UNAUTHORIZED PICK-UP POLICY

Any adult picking up a child must provide identification upon request and input the family's front door access code. Under no circumstances will children be released to a person who is unauthorized, under the age of 18, intoxicated, under the influence of a narcotic, or suspected of child abuse. No child will be released to anyone without explicit authorization in writing by the parent(s)/guardian(s). If for some reason no one picks up their child from school then school staff will attempt to notify:

- Parent(s)/guardian(s)
- Emergency contacts
- Other individuals authorized to pick up the child

In the event that the staff is unable to contact any of these individuals and no contact has been made within one hour after closing by the parent or anyone else, the child will be considered abandoned. The Cole County Sheriff or Child Protection Services will be contacted.

Please note: Parent(s)/guardian(s) must give the preschool director a copy of any restraining orders that may be in effect.

CHILDREN REQUIRING SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

Growing Hearts Montessori promotes an inclusive practice when enrolling children with special needs and strives to provide appropriate learning opportunities for all children regardless of their disability. Growing Hearts staff will evaluate student needs and assess if we are able to benefit the child without compromising the education and safety of the other classmates and will discuss with parents during the initial interview.

Staff members working with special needs children will concentrate on the following areas: early identification and early intervention, inclusive education, physical environment, partnerships with parent(s)/guardian(s) and multi-agency collaboration.

UNAUTHORIZED ACCESS

Growing Hearts is responsible for ensuring the safety of children at the center as well as preventing harm. We do this by being proactive and diligent in supervising not only the children, but the people present at the facility. Any person in the center who is not a director, staff member, substitute, or subcontracted staff or volunteer will not have unrestricted access to children.

It is our policy that Growing Hearts will not allow staff to work at our facility unless they have passed a federal background screening. Someone who is awaiting results of that check will not have unrestricted access and will be supervised and monitored by a paid staff member at all times. The primary responsibility of the supervision and monitoring will be assumed by the Director of Growing Hearts or another teacher or teaching assistant.

PARENT/SCHOOL COMMUNICATION & CONFERENCES

Communication between parent(s)/guardian(s) and staff is a vital part of your child's education. We encourage you to be involved in your child's education and meet with our preschool staff regularly. We will do our utmost to keep you informed of the activities and projects that involve your child. Our teachers are encouraged to communicate with the parents on a

daily basis about child growth and development. For any questions about development, please send an email to welcome@growing-hearts.com – this way, we can take analysis of the situation and provide a more detailed synopsis of current educational goals than a short conversation could provide.

Each 6 month period we will have a parent-teacher where we can sit down together and assess goals and successes. A sign-up sheet will go up a month in advance for time scheduling. These days have no class scheduled so that our staff can dedicate their time to working with parents.

PARENT/GUARDIAN PARTNERSHIPS AND OBSERVATION

We recognize the importance of the relationship between home and school. We encourage parent participation within the classroom and during special events. Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be entitled to unlimited access to their children when at Growing Hearts Montessori (unless parental contact is prohibited by court order). Growing Hearts must be given a copy of any existing restraining orders that may be in effect.

We ask that when you do come, you respect the environment by following the guidelines below. In addition, please be just that: an observer. The environment of a Montessori room is very delicate and is not to be taken for granted. Please be courteous of the others working in the room by silently watching rather than interacting within the environment.

Observation Guidelines:

- Observations **MUST** be scheduled with the Director or Head of Curriculum
- Each family may observe once every 6 months.
- Please be prompt. If you are late you will be asked to reschedule.
- You may stay as long as 30 minutes. If the teacher observes or you think that your child or classmates seems to be having a hard time while you are there, it may be wise to leave sooner.
- Observations are for no more than 1 member of a family at a time and are for adults only.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Parent(s)/guardian(s) are encouraged to participate in special events, some of which are during the day class time. . . Some of these include:

- Grandparent's Day
- Mother's Day
- Father's Day
- Thanksgiving Potluck

The days specified, for example Fathers Day, can be attended by any one of importance in the child's life. We have Mothers, Fathers, Aunts, Uncles, Friends, and others join us for these events; what really matters is that someone is here for the child. If the child will not be participating, our classroom staff will be dedicating their time to the event instead of regular class routine. Please have your child picked up prior to the events starting time – this can be viewed on the current GHMS school calendar.

PHOTO USE POLICY

Growing Hearts Montessori may use photos of children for many purposes. They may be used for a special project/craft, identification of personal belongings, or classroom/hallway decorations. Parent(s)/guardian(s) may request in writing to

the director that their child not be photographed for one of all of the mentioned purposes; however parent(s)/guardian(s) will be asked to sign a photo release form along with their registration packets. Photos of students will not be posted to social media sites, and parents can choose not to allow photographs of their children on our Growing Hearts Website. Please note: No child will ever be identified on any site, or any identifying information given to anyone. Photos of children will never sold to stock houses or used for commercial purposes. A photo release form will be provided for parent(s)/guardian(s) who wish to allow pictures of students to be used.

BIRTHDAY POLICY

Birthdays are very special to our Montessori School. We celebrate all the years of your child's life, and we ask that one or two parents join for the occasion. With our ceremony, you will be asked to recall events from each key year; ranging from birth to the current age of the student. Feel free to bring items and photos that you feel are special to your child, as everything is better with visual aids. We will sing songs together and then break for a group birthday treat. **We ask that all birthday treats are fruits, vegetables, cheeses, or dry healthy goods.** Things to avoid: foods that require complex preparation, icings, and other items that take more time to clean up than to eat.

Birthday celebrations need to be scheduled in advance, and are held each Friday upon request at either 2:30 PM or 3:00 PM depending on the child's classroom. Contact the Director to schedule the Birthday Event!

PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

MOTOR LEARNING EXPERIENCE

During the preschool years, a child's work is playing. Play is an important part of your child's development. Staff will engage children in various forms of work and play that will work on fine motor skills and gross motor skills. It is our goal that preschool students will spend time working on gross motor skills in a structured play setting. Please make sure your child is dressed appropriately for outdoor play and movement. It is very important that children participate in outdoor play; staff and students will be outside often, weather permitting. Dress your child accordingly!

CLOTHING

The responsibility for dress and clothing rests with the parent(s)/guardian(s). The following list of outlines our suggestions that apply specifically to preschoolers:

- Provide clothing that is loose and has simple fasteners.
- **All removable clothing should be labeled with your child's name.**
- Expect your child to get messy at times "playing" since playing is a big part of development. Three complete changes of clothes are required on site at all times for these instances.
- Please ensure that your child has proper shoes so they can participate safely in outdoor activities (closed toe only please).
- Please make sure you inspect your child's clothing cubby weekly to replace any articles used during the week.
- Replace clothing sent home soiled or dirty as soon as possible to ensure we enough at GHM at all times.
- Please be sure to dress your child appropriately in clothing suitable for play. There may be times when our play gets messy or dirty. We try our best to keep clothing clean, but accidents do happen.

PROGRAM POLICY

DISCHARGE POLICY

A student may be discharged from preschool for the following reasons: preschool policies are not being followed, or tuition is not being paid. The child is not ready for a group learning experience. On-going disruptive behavior or physical aggression cannot be tolerated. Teachers will document any incidents of unreasonably unacceptable behavior, reporting

to the preschool director and to the child's parent(s)/guardian(s). The parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified if a student cannot return to the preschool until a behavioral plan has been formulated.

If the child continues to be disruptive, perhaps his/her needs are not best met in the group setting and the director may ask for the removal of the child in a confidential conference with the parent(s)/guardian(s). Pre-admittance to the preschool at a later date may be considered.

ABSENTEE POLICY

If students are absent from preschool for a day, parent(s)/guardian(s) must let the teacher or director know. Parent(s)/guardian(s) can email, call, or text the school to let the staff know why your child will be absent. It is important that staff know where students are at all times. During school days if your child has an illness a note from a doctor may be needed to allow the child to return to school-especially if the illness is/was contagious. If a call isn't made to the appropriate party before the start of class at 8:20AM for two consecutive days a conference will be called to discuss and action plan to resolve the issue.

DISCIPLINE POLICY

The preschool discipline policy includes positive reinforcement, redirection, and clearly stated expectations. If a child misbehaves in preschool, verbal instruction is used to assist the child towards appropriate behavior. The instructor may redirect play or separate two children and have them play in different areas if necessary. If verbal correction and play redirection are not effective, the child will be directed to a "thinking time" area. Thinking time will consist of a child sitting quietly for a short period of time to reflect on the situation and to independently select a more positive solution. If misbehavior continues, parent(s)/guardian(s) may be notified to pick up their child.

Teachers will supervise students play and may join in to encourage appropriate play. Any inappropriate behaviors such as shouting, fighting, playing roughly with toys, throwing toys or hurting others will be redirected. Teachers will also suggest activities for children who are not playing. Corporal punishment, humiliation, mechanical restraints, verbal abuse, threats, or derogatory remarks are not acceptable forms of discipline at our preschool. Our goal is to teach children how to make good decisions for themselves, love others, and develops self-discipline.

POTTY TRAINING POLICY

When you feel your child is ready for potty training, we ask that you begin teaching at home during a weekend or vacation. PLEASE NOTE: We will only assist your child in potty training if you have successfully begun training at home for one week prior.

We will follow through and encourage your child while in care. Potty training will be done in a relaxed manner with the cooperation of the family. Students can be any age but must also show signs of **readiness**. Positive reinforcements and consistency must be continued at home.

The child must be kept in pull-ups at all times. **GHMS does not allow cloth / reusable diapers for sanitary reasons**. Please keep in mind that the activity level here at the center can distract your child from responding to an urge to use the potty, more so than at your home. Therefore we will use pull-ups until your child can and will announce that he/she must use the bathroom and can control his/her bladder and bowels for a few minutes beyond that announcement. It is required that parents provide pull-ups, wipes, and a two extra changes of clothing in addition to the usual amount on site.

Do not bring your child in underwear until he/she has daily bladder and bowel control established. During potty training your child needs to be dressed in "User friendly" clothing as much as possible. The best items are shorts and pants with elastic waist. Please **DO NOT** dress your child in the following:

- No tight clothing
- No shirts that snag in the crotch
- No pants with snaps & zippers

- No overalls or bib type clothing
- No belts
- No one piece outfits

The clothes listed above can make it difficult for your child to reach the potty in time. Your child also needs to be able to pull his/her pants up and down and these items will hinder your child's ability to do so.

TOYS FROM HOME

To avoid interruptions throughout the learning experience and other possible problems, toys from home should be left a home (unless previously discussed with the director and approved). If a toy is brought for comfort or other purpose like show and tell the toy must be placed in the student's cubby at arrival time for use later in the day.

BITING POLICY

Biting other children cannot be allowed to occur, but sometimes young children get frustrated and will bite other children. We want to be supportive of parent(s)/guardian(s) as they teach their children not to bite, but at the same time we need to protect all children in our care.

A bite that leaves red marks, bruising or broken skin will be reported to the children's parent(s)/ guardian(s) and an Incident Report will be written. Growing Hearts will suggest that a parent seek medical attention-for a child if the bite they receive breaks the skin. If a child bites other children twice within two weeks (14 calendar days) a conference with the parent(s)/guardian(s) and site director will be scheduled as soon as possible (usually within 24 hours of the second bite). The child may stay in preschool only if biting does not continue and a behavioral plan is developed.

The director will review all recent incident reports involving the child and look for patterns or other information that might be useful. At a parent conference an intervention plan will be developed. The age of the child, the child's background, the classroom setting, and other extenuating circumstances will be considered. If the child does not stop biting, the child may be temporarily removed from our program; the length of this removal will be determined based on severity. Tuition may be adjusted for long breaks from the center with the director's approval. Readmission to the center will be at the director's discretion.

NUTRITION POLICY

Meals and snacks served at Growing Hearts Montessori will be well balanced and nutritionally focused. We strive to provide top quality meals and snacks that encourage our students to try new things, and fulfill daily requirements. Our snack menus will be posted on our Website weekly and available in paper form upon request.

Students will be served a mid-morning snack no later than 9:00AM and a mid-afternoon snack between 2:00 – 3:00 PM. **Lunch will be brought from home and should arrive in a single lunch box or bag labeled with the students name.** Lunch is served at 11:45AM and Growing Hearts supplies whole milk for each student. Please prepare items that are easy to reheat and serve. Growing Hearts will **supply all cups, plates, bowls, and silverware required** as meal times are also regarded as learning time in the Montessori Method. We ask our parents to please wash and sanitize lunch bags and boxes on a daily basis.

Food allergies must be listed on the child's health evaluation sheet. Exceptions are allowed for students with allergies or medical conditions if the parent(s)/guardian(s) wish to provide appropriate substitutions. Any special dietary needs will need to be met by the parent(s)/guardian(s) and brought on a daily basis unless agreed upon by the facility director for arrangements.

Birthdays are special times for children and will be celebrated with his or her classmates. Your child may bring **fruit and cheese** to provide to his/her classmates, and those treats will be shared at PM snack time at 3:00 PM on Fridays only. The monthly newsletter will list the dates we will celebrate each child's birthday.

PROGRAM HEALTH POLICY

MEDICAL INFORMATION

Required Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be required to complete and return all documentation presented in the registration packet to Growing Hearts. Information will be kept on file and will be considered confidential.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be responsible for obtaining a physical and statement of health from their physician. Parent(s)/guardian(s) must identify student's dental and medical provider and written consent for emergency care. Parent(s)/guardian(s) must update immunization, physical and health records regularly.

Growing Hearts must be notified in writing of any allergy a child has and what medication is being taken. If your child does have an allergy to food served at Growing Hearts Montessori, please provide a substitute based on the nutritional needs of the child.

In order to keep Growing Hearts Montessori as safe as possible, we do not accept any students that are not fully immunized by their first day within the program. Please help us also by keeping any child or adult off of our campus that does not meet this requirement.

HAND WASHING REQUIREMENTS AND CLEANLINESS

Students, staff and visitors will be required to wash their hands upon arrival, before and after snacks, and other times as needed. Staff will show children by example how to wash their hands. Tables and bathrooms will be disinfected and cleaned daily. Universal precautions will be followed when dealing with any blood or bodily fluid. If a child has an accident of either wetting or soiling their clothing the preschool staff will assist the child in the changing of their clothes in the restroom. (If your child is prone to bathroom-related accidents, please make certain extra clothing is provided to have on hand). Staff will put rubber gloves on to help remove the clothing, clean the child, and assist them in putting on clean clothes. The soiled clothing will be placed in a plastic bag. Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified about the soiled clothing.

ILLNESS AND INJURY

Children showing any signs of illness should be kept home until a proper diagnosis is made and treatment of health condition is completed. A child must be free from vomiting and diarrhea for 24 hours before returning to school. A fever of 100 degrees Fahrenheit is cause for parent notification, and the child will be sent home as soon as possible. Growing Hearts must be informed if a child develops any communicable disease (Examples: pink eye, ring worm, chicken pox, head lice, etc). Please notify the director or your child's teacher if your child is infected with any communicable disease. Infectious Disease Control

If a child becomes ill while at preschool, staff will attempt to make the child as comfortable as possible and separate them from the rest of the children as long as they stay within the ratios of child monitoring. The teacher will then call the child's contacts as listed on the student profile. The child must be picked up within one hour of notification. Notes will be posted on the board and information emailed home if children are exposed to any communicable diseases.

A First Aid Kit will be kept and maintained in each classroom. If we are outdoors a significant time and for summertime, outdoor's sunscreen should be applied by parents prior to attendance in the morning before dropping the student off for school. Sunscreen cannot be reapplied during the day without completion of a Medication Authorization form, please see the director if you wish to complete the document to keep those items with the school.

The entire indoor and outdoor campus is nonsmoking, and signs to that effect are posted at each entrance and exit. No smoking will be permitted at Growing Hearts Montessori.

MEDICINE AND PRESCRIPTION POLICY

Prescriptions can be administered at Growing Hearts Montessori School, but will need a completed Medication Authorization form filled out before medication can be administered. Any new prescriptions will need to be first

administered at home with a 24 hour window of time to guarantee no allergic reactions are present. The Prescription brought to school will need to be in its original bottle, indicating the name of the child it is for, its dosage and times administered, and when it will conclude. Any prescription administering devices, such as syringes for liquids, will need to be for the exact dosing amount and unique to each medication. Any liquid syringes will be sent home to be sanitized each night. If any of the criteria are not met, we cannot administer the medication to the child and we appreciated your help in this process.

Medication authorizations are needed for any substance with active ingredients. It is recommended these common items be applied before school (such as sunscreen, insect repellent, lotions, and chap stick) to prevent interruptions during the day. We encourage the use of items without active ingredients that together we can teach your child to use them responsibly at school

ILLNESS EXCLUSION POLICY PRINTABLE

OTC – Over the Counter

EXCLUDE IF:	READMIT IF:
1. Temp of 100.4° F	1. Free of fever for 24 hours w/o OTC medication
2. Temp of 100.4° F plus one of the following: <input type="checkbox"/> Cold with yellow-green nasal discharge <input type="checkbox"/> Cough <input type="checkbox"/> Sore throat <input type="checkbox"/> Sneezing <input type="checkbox"/> Swollen glands <input type="checkbox"/> Skin rash	2. Free of fever for 24 hours and <u>note</u> from clinic or physician stating child is not communicable
3. Conjunctivitis (pink eye) bacterial and/or viral	3. All discharge has ceased and <u>note</u> from clinic or physician stating child is not communicable
4. Head and body lice	4. After treatment and free of lice and nits
5. Ringworm of body	5. After treatment and lesions are covered
6. Ringworm of head	6. After treatment, lesions are covered, and <u>note</u> from clinic or physician stating child is not communicable
7. All Skin lesions, impetigo, and scabies	7. Skin sores are healed or <u>note</u> from clinic or physician stating child is not communicable
8. Vomiting	8. Free of upset stomach and vomiting for 24 hours w/o OTC medication and a normal diet.
9. Diarrhea (two or more loose watery stools per day)	9. Diarrhea free for 24 hours w/o OTC medication
10. Fainting or seizures or general signs of a communicable disease to which the child has been exposed	10. Free of symptoms or <u>note</u> from clinic or physician stating child is not communicable

SAFETY POLICY

INJURY AND MEDICAL EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

If an injury occurs at school, an incident report will be filled out and be filed. Parent(s)/guardian(s) will be notified of the injury as soon as possible by phone or e-mail. In the case of an emergency, Growing Hearts Montessori will follow the outlined responses in our Disaster and Emergency Plan. This manual contains emergency procedures, phone numbers, and proper protocol in the event of many different types of emergencies.

ACCIDENTS

In case of an accident, the teacher will care for the child and administer first aid when necessary. Staff not administering first aid will call the child's parent(s)/guardian(s), 911 or the clinic or hospital if needed. An accident report must be filled out by the person who witnessed the incident and given to the parent(s)/guardian(s), or the person who picks up the child that day. A copy of the report must also be kept on file.

POISON

All substances considered poisonous to children will be locked up, however, if a child somehow swallows poison or gets a poisonous substance in his/her mouth or eyes, staff will call the Poison Control number immediately. Growing Hearts will provide all pertinent information to the Page 15

Poison Control staff to better treat the child. After contacting Poison Control and doing exactly what they advise, staff at Growing Hearts will then contact the child's parent(s)/guardian(s). POISON CONTROL: 1-800-222-1222.

DAILY INSPECTION FOR HEALTH & INJURY PREVENTION

The playground equipment, classroom environment, and classroom materials will be monitored and surveyed regularly. Materials posing any kind of a hazard will be disposed of or repaired.

CHILD SAFETY POLICY

All employees at Growing Hearts are required to complete an in-house training which provides information concerning child abuse. If a teacher or director feels there is evidence of abuse, they are required by State Statutes to contact the Children's Division Child Abuse and Neglect Hotline at **1-800-392-3738**.

CAMPUS ROLE MODEL POLICY

When you are on GHMS campus at any time you are a role model to all students in your presence. We do not allow smoking, illegal drugs, alcohol, and/or weapons at any time in or around this facility. That also refers to any contraband, clothing, visual examples, or audible discussion that represents the aforementioned items. This policy also refers to the use of offensive or derogatory language, remember these students are 3 months - 6 years of age, they tend to pick up the words and ideas used around them. This facility is designed to represent a safe haven and positive atmosphere for all, please help us keep it that way.

As this policy is very important to the safety and wellbeing of our students we have implemented the following rules for a violation:

1st offense: verbal warning

2nd offense: written letter stating the violation and corrective action

3rd offense: expulsion of student based on previously discussed terms

EMERGENCY POLICY

MISSING CHILDREN

If a teacher cannot find a child (which is highly unlikely), the teacher will confer with other children and teacher(s) as to the exact time and location the child was last seen. If a child is truly missing, the teacher will call 911 to report the missing child and provide pertinent information (e.g., what the child was wearing, last time seen and by whom, etc) then call the parents(s)/ guardian(s) to report the missing child. The director will stay with the other children, so the teacher can aid in a search until the search is taken over by police or until parent(s)/guardian(s) arrive. Then the teacher will call the other parent(s)/guardian(s) to pick up their child immediately.

FIRE DRILL/TORNADO DRILL

Tornado drills are taken very seriously by Growing Hearts. These drills will be held monthly. Please discuss them with your child prior to starting preschool. Staff will teach children the proper procedures to follow and be with them throughout the drill. It is important that children are given several opportunities to practice these drills so they feel comfortable in following emergency procedures.

SEVERE WEATHER & SNOW DAY POLICY

In case of poor weather, please check KOMU TV or another local station regarding “Closing and Cancellations” (or on our Website). Cancellation and delay of classes will follow that of the **Jefferson City Public Schools** in order to allow road crews to get the roads safe for travel. If local schools are released early or canceled due to the weather, Growing Hearts will follow the same schedule. Please feel free to contact Growing Hearts for any additional information or concerns regarding cancellations. Cancellation or early release due to weather will only be done for safety or emergency reasons.

We inform the community of school cancellations via three methods:

- 1) Direct Email Contact**
- 2) Facebook Group Notification**
- 3) KOMU TV School Cancellation Website – this displays on**

INFANT CENTER ADDENDUM

INFANT ENVIRONMENT

Infants are children between birth and about 24 months of age. This is a time of extremely rapid physical and mental development. During this time, babies learn about the world through their senses and through bodily motor activities. They develop close bonds with special adults, and they begin to control more and more aspects of their behavior. Infants are born seeking information about the world. At Growing Hearts Montessori School, we facilitate learning through attentive, educational, affectionate and respectful care.

Our school believes that every infant and toddler starts on their own schedule as they transition to their routine. The day will include: napping, eating, diapering, quiet play & learning, active play and outside time. Your child’s daily report will reflect his/her day.

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 change in appetite.

Planning for infants does not necessarily involve “lessons”, but rather opportunities for experiences in a safe and nurturing environment. We emphasize independence at all stages of development and encourage children to believe they can do it.

When teachers organize materials for the room, they take into account the child's individual differences. Planning is based on observations of the children using their interests, their new skills, and their reactions to materials. As Montessori educators, our job is following the child and aiding in each developmental milestone.

OUTDOOR SHOE-FREE POLICY

With infants commonly on the floor, GHMS will provide a clean, safe and healthy environment in the Infant classroom. We practice an “**outdoor shoe-free**” policy in these rooms. ALL persons entering this environment must slip a pair of shoe covers over their shoes or designated indoor shoes. We take this action to prevent outside contaminants from being brought into the classroom. Infants spend much of their time exploring on the floor. The **Early Primary** and **Toddler Montessori** rooms do not require this.

ARRIVAL

Upon arrival to GHMS, please mark your child in attendance on the tablet and fill out your **Daily Infant Report (DIR)** in full to communicate all necessary information to your child's teacher. Parents will have a clipboard containing a daily log for each child assigned to them that will remain by the cubbies at the entrance of the room. Upon arrival, please populate the form with the appropriate pertinent information. It is important for the teacher to know information about your child, such as how he/she slept the night before, when he/she last ate, if he/she is in need of medicine. The sharing of this information is important in order to meet your child's needs throughout the day. Upon pick up at the end of the day, please take time to look over your child's daily sheet should there be any questions prior to your departure.

It is imperative for the safety of all children within the facility that conversations in the morning drop off are kept to a few short minutes, and essential for the day that the DIR is completed *before* the child is transitioned to the teacher.

Drop off times are best kept consistent for the wellbeing of the child, and kept short to ease transition time and separation anxiety. Our staff is here to welcome your child and professionally manage this separation in an effort to make Growing Hearts Montessori a home away from home.

VISITOR POLICY

Parents of infants are welcome to come and visit their child at GHMS but must adhere to our Observation Guidelines for the safety and comfort of the classroom atmosphere. For mothers who are breast feeding, the infant room provides a comfortable and peaceful area to enjoy during feeding time. Those times specific to breast feeding need to be scheduled on the **DIR** daily and discussed in advance with the lead infant teacher. However, for older infants & toddlers, multiple separations from the parent during the day will make the transition to school more difficult.

Observation Guidelines:

- Observations **MUST** be scheduled with the Director or Head of Curriculum
- Each family may observe once every 4 months.
- Please be prompt. If you are late you will be asked to reschedule.
- You may stay as long as 20 minutes. If the teacher observes or you think that your child or classmates seems to be having a hard time while you are there, it may be wise to leave sooner. Observations are for no more than 1 member of a family at a time and are for adults only.

TRANSITION MEETING

A transition meeting will be set for each child when it is determined that moving from the Infant Room to the Toddler Montessori Room, and again to the Early Primary Room is in the best interest of the child. These meetings are required

before transitioning is complete. One teacher from each environment will present you with transition information. A parent or teacher may request additional meetings as needed.

FOOD POLICY

Parents of bottle-fed babies will need to provide enough bottles daily for their infant's daily feeding schedule (usually 5-6) labeled bottles with nipples and lids. Bottles are **not** heated in the microwave as this will produce "hot spots" in the formula or breast milk.

For **formula** fed infants, each bottle needs to have the correct amount of water for mixing. Our staff will prepare the bottles on site with your provided choice of formula powder.

If you are **breastfeeding** your child, all breast milk must be dated and have your child's name on it. Fresh breast milk will be stored in the refrigerator and sent home nightly. The parents will also provide two feedings worth to be stored in case of any emergencies or extra necessary feedings. This milk can be stored in the freezer for a maximum of two weeks; milk that exceeds this time frame will be discarded.

Contents remaining in any bottle must be discarded within 2 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 or drink product in them. **All bottles are sent home each night to be sanitized at home.**

As your infant grows and becomes more adept at eating, he/she will be using their fingers for eating "finger foods" and working on using infant utensils. As infants gradually start to eat cereals, jarred foods, and table foods, you, as parent will inform the teachers in the classroom as to what your child can eat. It is mandatory that infants try new foods at home first, and then add the new food to the classroom list. When sending food, please be sure all containers are clearly marked with your **child's name** or initials.

For Infants 10 months and older, an AM snack and PM snack will be provided. These items will correlate to food already eaten at home to prevent allergic reactions. After 12 months old, whole milk will provided by GHMS with the lunch brought from home.

Refrigeration for individual lunches is not available; therefore, ice packs and thermoses are recommended for items that need to be kept cool. Microwave usage is also limited. Items that need brief warming (**1 minute or less**) will be accommodated.

So that you will know what your child is consuming and to avoid problems with individual food allergies, children are not allowed to share or trade food. Whatever your child does not eat will normally be sent home in the lunch bag so that you may better gauge the quantity and type of food she/he needs

DIAPERS

Parents will provide disposable diapers or easy on pull-ups and wipes for their child. Please check your child's supply daily and replenish as needed. Due to sanitation purposes, **cloth diapers are not allowed under any circumstances.** A good rule of thumb is to keep about a 2 weeks supply at the school, giving us plenty of time to notify you of our supply being low.

We will not apply baby powder, corn starch or the like to a child's skin. The use of powder has been linked to childhood asthma and other respiratory difficulties. Parents can provide diaper cream which will be used as needed with an appropriate authorization from provided by GHMS.

INFANT CLOTHING AND SHOES

It is recommended that infants **(3 months to 12 months) simply wear a onesie**. These are easy to change and make it easier for children to crawl and move as they explore their classroom and outdoor environments. Sleep sacks are our only other recommended clothing for napping; you can find great ones at www.halosleep.com. Please no jumpers, tights, tutus, overalls, or difficult or constricting clothing as these can lead over heating and / or to unnecessary complications.

With the move into **12 months to 24 months we transition to loose fitting two piece clothing only**. This helps a child become more aware and in control of his/her clothing and allows our staff to introduce pre potty training techniques for future successes in the bathroom. These items will need to be **easy to pull up and down and without buttons, zippers, or latches of any kind.**

A pair of Inside shoes only will be provided for the kids by the parents and change upon arrival. We take this action to prevent outside contaminants from being brought into the classroom. Please refer to our Outdoor Shoe-Free Policy for more information.

Your teacher will discuss appropriate shoe options as your child grows. The following footwear is not permitted due to injuries that can be caused by them. **Please no cowboy boots, sandals, flip flops, dress up shoes, or slides**. For your child's safety children should **wear rubber-soled, closed-toe shoes** only that strap around the back of their feet. Those do not have laces.

INFANT SAFE SLEEP POLICY

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) is the unexpected death of a seemingly healthy baby for whom no cause of death can be determined. Childcare providers can maintain safer sleep environments for babies that help lower the chance of SIDS. Missouri law requires that child care providers caring for children under 12 months of age, implement a safe sleep policy.

In the belief that proactive steps can be taken to lower the risk of SIDS in childcare settings and that parents and child care providers can work together to keep infants safe while they are asleep, the following safe sleep practices will be enforced:

All teachers working, or who may potentially work, in infant rooms are required to attend an Infant Safe Sleep training based on AAP recommendations. New employees with complete this training within 30 days of employment. This training will be completed every three years thereafter as well.

Parents are encouraged to take this training as well and it can be found at:

<http://health.mo.gov/safety/childcare/training/safesleep/index.html>

This training is a wonderful asset to the reduction of SIDS; this will also help you understand why our policies are so crucial to the wellbeing of your infant.

Infants less than 1 year of age will be put to sleep on their back. When, in the opinion of the infant's licensed health care provider, an infant requires alternative sleep positions or special sleeping arrangements, the provider must have on file at the facility written instructions, signed by the infant's licensed health care provider, detailing the alternative sleep positions or special sleeping arrangements.

Sleeping infants will remain in a caregiver's visual line of sight at all times. There shall be no sound devices that interfere with the care givers ability to see or hear a child at all times. Frequent visual checks will take place. Caregivers will check each child's sleep position, breathing, color, and body temperature. If the primary caregiver is absent, the covering teacher will be responsible.

Infants who fall asleep in a location other than their crib will be immediately moved to his/her assigned crib.

Infants will be removed from their crib as soon as they awaken.

Bumper pads, blankets, pillows, stuffed animals, other soft items and loose bedding will not be allowed in cribs. In conjunction, no crib will be covered with any material including but not limited to blankets and bedding.

A safety-approved crib with a firm mattress and tight-fitting sheet will be used.

Only one infant will be in a crib at a time, unless infants are being evacuated for an emergency.

Steps will be taken to keep infants from becoming too warm or over heating by regulating the room temperature (between 68-80 degrees Fahrenheit), avoiding excess bedding, and not over-dressing or swaddling infants.

No smoking is permitted in the infant program or on the premises at all times.

All Parents shall receive this document prior to enrollment for review.