

# Wilson Montessori Academy

## Parent Handbook

### Statement of Purpose

Wilson Montessori Academy provides an academically enriched program for children aged two to five years old, based upon the philosophy and teachings of Dr. Maria Montessori. At Wilson Montessori Academy each child is respected and treated as an individual. The Academy fosters independence, self-discipline and acceptance of others, while instilling in each child a love of learning that will last throughout his or her lifetime.

The Academy is a full member school, in good standing, of the American Montessori Society.

### Non-Discrimination Policy

Wilson Montessori Academy admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students of the Academy. Wilson Montessori Academy does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies or other school-related administered programs.

### Description of the Programs

**Preprimary Program:** The Preprimary children attend three or more mornings a week. Each day when the children arrive they are walked to their classroom and then hang up their outerwear, with help from a teacher if necessary. The children are free to choose their own activities. The children work individually or in small groups under the supervision of a Montessori-trained teacher and her assistant. They have the opportunity to choose language or math activities, work with manipulative material, participate in imaginative or block play, paint or scrub, work with sounds or textures, etc. Mid-morning the children put away their work and come together as a group. The children enjoy large-motor activities, listen to music, work with musical instruments or participate in group games during this time. The children are served a healthy snack, with attention being paid to any food allergies, followed by a short story time. At the end of the work period the children prepare for dismissal.

Children wearing diapers will be changed when necessary. We ask that you supply diapers and wipes for your child, as well as a change of clothing. Children wishing to use the toilet may do so at any time with the help of a teacher. Drinking water is available for the children during the session.

**Primary Program:** Wilson Montessori Academy has a morning and afternoon Primary Program. The daily schedule is the same for both programs. Primary children attend three or more days a week.

When the children arrive, they hang up their coats before choosing their first work of the day. Areas of the environment are: Practical Live, Sensorial, Math, Language, Geography, Science or Art. A Montessori-trained teacher or assistant will help the children with their work. Restrooms and drinking water are freely available to the children throughout the session. Each child is free to have a snack at a time they choose. As with the younger children, food allergies are taken into account. The children participate in a short group activity that begins when the work period ends. When the group activity concludes the children put on their coats and prepare for dismissal.

### School Calendar

The school year begins the Tuesday following Labor Day and ends in late May or early June. The school calendar is posted on our website.

## **Weather Related School Closures**

In the event of inclement weather, Wilson Montessori Academy follows the policies of District 205. If District 205 is closed due to snow the Academy will be closed as well. Any changes will be notified by email.

## **Application and Registration Process**

Reregistration of current students takes place in January. Once current students and their siblings are registered, the Academy will begin open enrollment for new students.

## **Fees and Payment Schedule**

The registration fee is separate from tuition and is non-refundable.

- Returning Students Registration Fee: \$65
- New Student Registration Fee: \$130

Tuition information is available during the application process. Nine tuition payments are due the first school day of each month September through May. A discount of 10% is given for a sibling, or siblings, attending concurrently with another child. Your check can be handed to any staff member during drop-off or pick-up. If arrangements have not been made with the Academy, a late fee of \$25 will be charged after the 15th of the month. A \$30 fee will be charged for checks returned as NSF.

Non-payment lasting more than 60 days may be cause for dismissal of the child. Adjustments cannot be made due to holidays, days of non-attendance, snow days, vacations, illness or other events beyond the control of the Academy.

## **Financial Commitment**

A Financial Commitment statement is signed during the application process. The financial commitment is for the duration of the academic year.

For new students, upon acceptance into Wilson Montessori Academy, you will be asked for an enrollment deposit. The amount is equal to the first month's tuition. This deposit reserves your child's placement in our program for the current academic year, and will count as September's payment. Enrollment deposits are non-refundable and non-transferable.

The Academy must commit to facilities, salaries, materials, insurance, and other expenses on an annual basis, based on enrollment. For this reason Wilson Montessori Academy requires a financial commitment for the full nine months of the academic year. Tuition is calculated in nine equal payments. Enrollment deposits are applied to September's tuition. Eight additional payments are due on the first school day of each month, October through May. A 3% discount is applied to all paid in full tuitions. Monthly tuition cannot be reduced if attendance days are decreased during the year.

Adjustments cannot be made due to scheduled Academy holidays or personal holidays, illness, vacation, closure due to weather or other circumstances beyond the control of the Academy, or withdrawal from the Academy. The Academy reserves the right to cancel classes at any time it feels it is in the best interest and safety of the students and staff. Cancelled classes will not be made up at the end of the year. You may be billed for any remaining tuition should you choose to withdraw your child from the Academy prior to the end of the current academic year.

## **Insurance**

The Academy maintains liability insurance as required by law. No other insurance coverage is available through the Academy.

## **Emergency Procedures**

In the event of an emergency a staff member will call 911 and contact a parent or other emergency contact immediately.

## **DCFS/State Required Paperwork**

The Illinois Department of Children and Family Services requires that the Academy have a copy of each child's birth certificate; current health form; permissions for walks, photos, late pickup policy, discipline policy, etc.; and verification of receipt of the Summary of Licensing Standards for Daycare Centers handbook.

The Academy is required to provide information on immunization compliance to the State of Illinois, therefore a health form must be in each child's file. If your child is exempt from an immunization for medical or religious reasons please provide written and signed documentation. Children are required to have a physical prior to the start of the school year.

The Academy has chosen to adopt a policy similar to that of the Elmhurst public schools. If a disease for which there is an immunization is reported in an Academy student (e.g. measles, pertussis, etc.), any non-immunized students will be asked to remain at home for a period of two weeks as a precautionary measure.

## **Medication Policy**

Wilson Montessori Academy will not issue any type of medication to your child while they are in class. However, all students who require an inhaler or Epi-Pen during school hours must have a completed Medical Authorization Form on file, which is signed by the doctor and Parent/Guardian. This form must be signed annually or when there is a change in medication. ***All medication needs to be in the original packaging.***

## **Sick Child Policy**

Children should be kept at home if they are ill, have a fever or are not feeling well. A child is required to be fever-free for 24 hours before returning to school. A child should not be sent to school if he or she has vomited or had diarrhea in the past 24 hours. Any child who appears ill, who becomes sick, develops a fever or shows any sign of infection while at school will be sent home. For the sake of the other students and staff the Sick Child Policy must be strictly enforced.

## **Release of a Student**

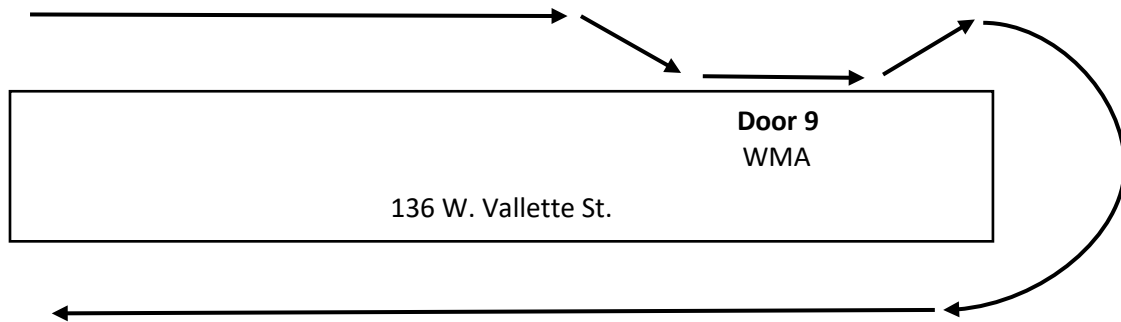
The Academy will release a student ONLY to a parent, or to a person authorized in writing by the parents. A list of authorized persons is kept in each student's file. If a child is to be picked up by someone not on the list, a parent is required to provide a signed and dated note giving permission. If a child says he or she is going home with someone else and we do not have a note, a parent will be called and the child will not be released until we have verification.

## Drop Off and Pickup Procedure

Transportation to and from the Academy is the responsibility of the parents. When dropping off or picking up your child:

- Enter the parking lot and form a line.
- Pull up parallel to the curb when it is your turn.
- Put your car in park. Please remain in your car.
- A teacher will help your child from the car to the door or from the door to your car at pick up.
- Drive around the building and exit on Vallette. When leaving the carpool line, **LOOK LEFT** before pulling out. Please do not pull around another car.

New families will be given a carpool number. This number should be placed in your window so it can be seen by the staff.



## Late Pickup Policy

If a parent or person responsible for your child arrives after the designated pickup time, they will need to park their car and come to the front door to get the child. A fee of \$10.00 for every 15 minutes late may be charged.

If a child has not been picked up on time, the teacher will call the parents first, then emergency contacts as listed on the child's registration. If the child has not been picked up after one hour and there has been no contact with the parents or emergency contacts, Wilson Montessori Academy is compelled to call the appropriate authorities and the child will be removed under their protection.

## Tardiness

Arriving on time to school is appreciated. When your child arrives late to school it is both disruptive to your child and it disrupts the other children in the classroom. **If you arrive after the normal drop-off time you must get out of your car and walk your child by the hand to the door.** Please knock and wait until a teacher can open the door to let your child in. Parents must never allow their children to exit the car and go to the door by themselves.

## Nut Free School

Because of the number of children with severe tree nut and peanut allergies, Wilson Montessori Academy is peanut and tree nut free. We do not serve snacks with peanut or tree nut ingredients.

## Other Food Allergies

The Academy will compile a list of the names of children with food allergies and their specific allergies. This list is posted in several places around the Academy. Please keep the Academy updated with any changes.

## Daily Snacks

The younger children in the Preprimary Program have a snack at the same time mid-morning as a group. The Primary Program children are allowed to have one snack during their session, at a time of their choosing. Each child washes their hands or does another work involving soap and water prior to having a snack. The snack is kept on a snack table and each child retrieves his or her own snack. Typical snack choices would be healthy crackers, fruits, vegetables, or cheese.

## Outings

Walking excursions may take place on occasion during a school session. Permission for walks away from school property is kept in each child's file.

## Personal Belongings

We ask that all personal belongings be kept at home. Items that should remain at home include backpacks, jewelry, toys, money, sunglasses, umbrellas, water bottles, etc. It is very helpful if you talk to your child ahead of time and let them know that they will not be allowed to bring these items into school. It is not necessary for your child to bring a backpack to school unless they go directly to another school via carpool or other non-parent pick up.

## Clothing and Foot Wear

Clothing should be practical and easy for the child to loosen or undo prior to toileting. Elastic waists are better than snaps or buttons. Overalls, "onesies" and belts should be avoided. Clothing should not interfere with school activities, please avoid "tutu's" or other clothing that can get snagged or caught on something. Please label all of your children's coats, hats, gloves/mittens, etc.

For the safety of your children, Wilson Montessori Academy asks that your child wear only "practical" shoes. The best choice for school would be fully enclosed gym shoes, or something similar. **No flip-flops, open-backed shoes or sandals, clogs, or crocs.**

Please do not send your child to school in snow boots or snow pants. During the winter months, the sidewalk is cleared, salted and passable.

## Integrated Pest Management Policy

Wilson Montessori Academy has employed Anderson Pest Solutions to perform pest management at our school. Anderson Pest Solutions pioneered Integrated Pest Management (IPM) in Illinois schools. Anderson's IPM program for schools addresses all the key requirements by law. Their approach stresses preventive measures and non-chemical pest control. Wilson Montessori Academy will notify all families by email only if a non-natural solution to pest control is needed. We will only allow our provider to perform said service when there are no children at school.

## Cultural and Religious Diversity

The Academy does not provide religious instruction, but does discuss different events, celebrations and religious holidays at the appropriate time of year. We encourage the children to share their particular family practices or special events so that we may all learn more about those around us.

## **Birthdays**

Children having a birthday will be recognized near the end of their daily session during a special line time activity. The class will also sing "Happy Birthday".

## **Release of Personal Information**

Wilson Montessori Academy will not share information about your child without written parental consent. The request for information should include the name, address, phone number and contact person of the school or other entity to whom the records are to be sent, along with the date and parent's signature.

## **Discipline and Guidance Policy**

Dr. Montessori taught that every person, regardless of age or ability, should be treated as an individual and with respect. It is very important that your child's spirit is nurtured through caring, patience and understanding.

Children and teachers alike are expected to treat one another, the materials, and the school itself with care and respect. Children are not to hurt one another or the materials. If a situation arises or a conflict occurs, the child or children involved will be asked to explain their actions or behaviors as best they can. A child who has pushed or hit another child will be asked to apologize. If a material has been mishandled, the child will be asked to return it to its proper place or give it to a staff member. If a child is acting in a manner disturbing to others, he or she will be asked to sit down and take a few moments to think about the behavior. When the child feels that he or she can return to the activity without disturbing others he or she may do so. At no time will a child be made to feel bad in either word or action. Corporal punishment has no place whatsoever at Wilson Montessori Academy.

In response to misbehavior we will: respect your child; establish clear rules and be consistent with the rules; use positive language to explain desired behavior; speak calmly at eye level with your child; give clear choices; and redirect your child to a new activity. If a child misbehaves, we will not use: threats or bribes; physical punishment; humiliation or isolation; or deprive your child of food or other basic needs.

## **Dismissal of a Child**

In the unlikely event that a child repeatedly acts in a disruptive manner, harms other children or damages Academy property, the parents will be notified and asked to meet with the appropriate teacher. Parents and the teacher will work together to develop a plan to deal with the behavior. It is always the goal to help the child discover his or her own self-discipline and keep the child in their classroom. However, if ongoing efforts do not appear to help and the child continues to show inappropriate or harmful behavior, it may be necessary to ask the parents to discontinue their child's enrollment at the Academy. Occasionally there is a child who does not appear to benefit from the Montessori environment. If this appears to be the case with a student, a meeting will take place with the parents and teachers to discuss the situation. It may be decided to continue the child in the Montessori setting. It may also be necessary to refer the child to another program which would better suit the child's needs. The final determination will be made by the Academy, always with the best interests of the child in mind.

## **Conferences**

Parent/teacher conferences will be held during the year. This is an opportunity to meet with your child's teacher, discuss your child's progress and view your child's work. While Montessori classes do not use a "report card", there will be a written progress sheet to review with the teacher during the conference. If at any time you wish to talk about your child's progress, or have a concern that you would like to discuss in person, please contact the Academy and we will be glad to arrange an appointment.

## **Box Tops for Education**

As an ongoing project, Wilson Montessori Academy participates in the Box Tops for Education program. The program is handled by parent volunteers and provides funds for the Academy to use for supplies and materials. You can help by collecting Box Tops from cereal boxes and other products. You can send them into school at any time.

## **Scholastic Book Orders**

Scholastic book orders will be open to order online the first week of every month. Books are available at reasonable prices and ordering is convenient via their website. The Academy receives bonus points for every order placed. We redeem these points for materials and supplies for our school.

## **Social Media**

All issues regarding Wilson Montessori Academy as a whole, its policies, teachers and the workings of the school shall be handled by the administration and the parent. We agree as parents not to post any grievances of any type on social media.

## **Communication**

Newsletters will go out each month during the year. General information will also be sent via email.

Please feel free to contact the Academy at any time with a question or concern. You may email the Academy at **learn@wilsonmontessori.com** or phone at **(630)279-5300**. If you call during class time and we are unable to answer the phone please leave a message and someone will return your call as quickly as possible.

Thank you for entrusting the education of your children to Wilson Montessori Academy. Working with your children is truly a privilege.

Susan Wilson