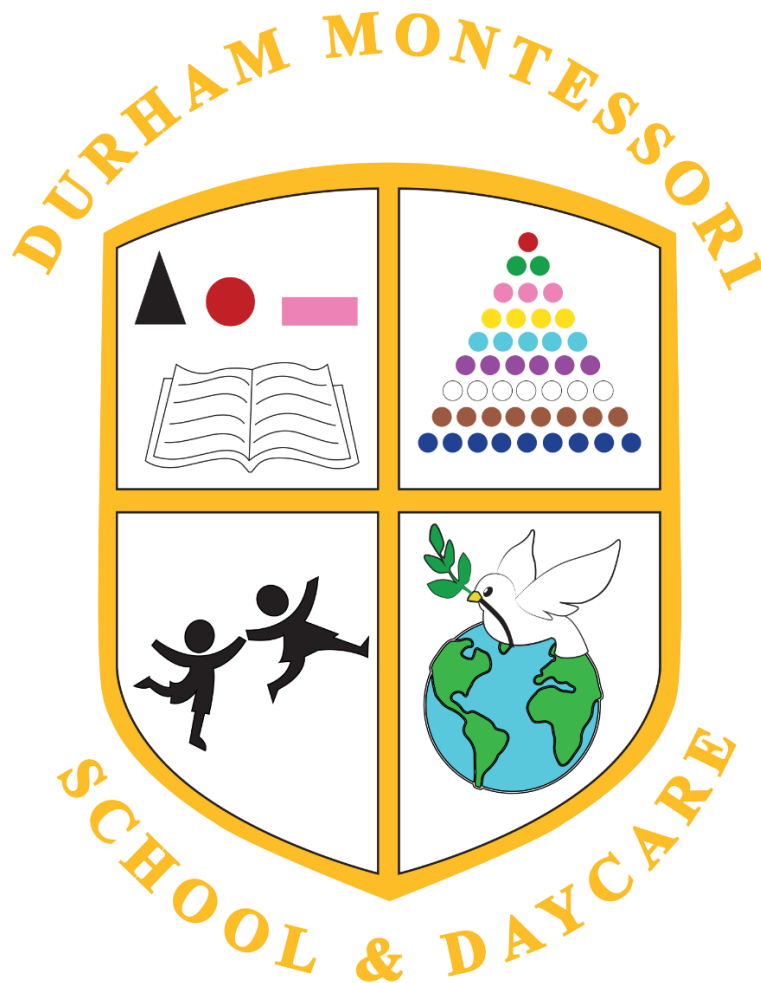


Parent Handbook



Durham Montessori School and Daycare

200 Byron Street South, Whitby, Ontario L1N-4P6

Phone Number: 905-665-0505

Website: www.dmsd.ca

DURHAM MONTESSORI SCHOOL AND DAYCARE

PROGRAM STATEMENT

Durham Montessori School and Daycare value the diverse, racial, ethnos cultural backgrounds of the community, families, staff, volunteers, and visitors involved in the delivery of service and as a result, will provide an appropriate program that contributes to the emotional, social, physical, and cognitive development of the child, free from cultural, gender, religious and ethnic bias, to develop and enhance self-esteem and positive social skills.

GOALS:

At Durham Montessori School and Daycare, we view children as being competent, capable, curious, and rich in potential. As a result, we are committed to helping the whole child develop and reach their full potential. Our mission is to provide opportunities for positive adult-child and child-child interactions conducive to healthy social development, and to offer experiences that support the child's self-esteem and developmental needs.

Durham Montessori School and Daycare encourage and promote positive practices in adult-child and child-child interactions to foster positive learning and a purposeful, developmentally supportive environment for all children and staff at the center. Durham Montessori School and Daycare respects children as individuals with their own interests and strengths, and their right to experience childhood fully. All children are unique, and we believe this is key to understanding, acknowledging, and acting on children's behavior. We commit to supporting and caring for children, their parents/guardians, and families based on their individual needs. We aspire for children to demonstrate socially acceptable behavior and have respect for themselves and all others. We encourage the children to communicate positively, and we support their ability to self-regulate.

PHILOSOPHY:

All children are special, and each has his/her personality, strengths, needs, and learning styles. It is our responsibility to tap into how a child learns and develop strategies to help the child master all basic skills. Durham Montessori School and Daycare provide opportunities to foster each child's emotional, social, and cognitive development. The children will learn and develop in a safe, happy, and comfortable atmosphere. Durham Montessori School and Daycare believe in providing opportunities for the children to manipulate and explore a variety of art, music, science, math, language, dramatic play, and large and small muscle activities throughout the day, and is designed based on the interests of the children within the Montessori approach and ELECT program. Our program will foster independence, self-esteem, and problem-solving skills. Our curriculum will provide opportunities for choice and decision-making within a framework that respects each child's developmental abilities.

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OUR PROMISE

At Durham Montessori School and Daycare, we promise:

- Children come first and foremost in any decisions relating to the running of the childcare center.
- To establish, maintain, and conduct the highest-quality licensed childcare center and to provide education, care, and guidance to children.
- We promise to continually strive to improve the learning and working environments for all participating children, families, and staff.
- To provide your child with activities to enhance all areas of their development so that they will have a solid educational base to start grade school with.
- To provide a clean, safe place for your child to grow emotionally, socially, physically, and cognitively.
- Never at any time take your child for granted.

APPROACHES:

- Our program encourages and builds positive and responsive relationships between staff and the children, between the children and their peers, and between parents/families and staff.
- Our program focuses on children's social, emotional, physical, creative, and cognitive development holistically by providing environments in which children learn through exploration, play, and inquiry.
- Our program incorporates the "How Does Learning Happen" pedagogy through the Montessori approach and ELECT program to provide child-initiated and adult-supported experiences and, at the same time, support each child's learning and development.
- We encourage self-reflection, discussion, ongoing collaboration, and learning among teachers and between the teachers and the children through ongoing interactions and discussions in the classroom during circle time and group activities.
- We value the strengths, contributions, and unique perspectives of our families, and we encourage them to engage, contribute, and participate in our program activities.
- Our program incorporates indoor and outdoor play, as well as active play, rest, and quiet time into the day while considering the individual needs of the children.
- We engage in ongoing communication with parents about our program and their children through face-to-face communications, newsletters, written communications, telephone conferences, and a teacher/parent electronic application.
- We involve and invite community partners like the fire department, police, etc., to our program to give workshops, presentations, and general information to the children and their families.
- We involve local community partners like Grandview, Durham Region Behaviour Management and CAS are allowing these partners to support the children, their families, and staff.
- Our program uses pedagogical documentation to study, interpret, make visible, and help inform children's learning and development. Documentation will be in the form of pictures of children outlining their learning experiences, displayed in classrooms, around the center, and/or on the communication application. Only pictures of children with parent authorization will be displayed. Learning experiences of children without their parents' authorization for pictures will also be displayed without the children's pictures.

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- Each child will have a portfolio that outlines all their learning experiences. Portfolios will be sent home when the child graduates from our program.
- We encourage our staff to engage and register for ongoing training opportunities to assist them in carrying out the program statement implementation policy and to broaden their knowledge of the “How Does Learning Happen Pedagogy”. Ongoing training opportunities and workshops offered by the Durham Region Children's Services are always communicated to staff.
- Monthly meetings are also used to discuss and train staff on how to implement the Program Statement.

Children who feel secure and appreciated in their surroundings gain confidence. It is therefore our goal to create a safe, clean, and secure environment for the children in our care. We will do our best to avoid frequent staff turnover by providing a pleasant, professional work environment. This consistency for children increases the level of security. Durham Montessori School and Daycare will continue to provide positive guidance, encouragement, appropriate and stimulating materials as well as a dynamic program to enhance children’s learning and development.

Durham Montessori School and Daycare staff develop weekly outdoor programming that enhances physical and social development. Various activities to promote gross motor skills will be integral to the planning process. Our staff will be trained to incorporate music and movement into our programs, as this helps children develop cognitively and socially. The staff will engage in ongoing professional development in areas such as pedagogical approaches, diversity, inclusion, multiculturalism, community relationship-building, health, and safety to stay up to date with current issues.

LIST OF PROHIBITED PRACTICES:

- Corporal punishment, which may include but is not limited to hitting, spanking, slapping, and punching, is prohibited. Any form of either verbal or physical punishment is prohibited.
- Physical restraint of children, including but not limited to being confined to a chair, car seat, etc., for discipline or instead of supervision unless to prevent self-harm and harm to others, and only until the risk of harm/injury is no longer imminent, is prohibited.
- Locking the exits of the center to confine a child or confine the area or room without adult supervision is prohibited. Unless such confinement occurs during an emergency.
- Children will not at any time be locked or confined in a locked room at all.
- No use of harsh, degrading measures or threats or derogatory language directed at or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, scare, or frighten the child or undermine their self-respect, dignity, or self-worth is allowed.
- Children cannot be deprived of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing, or bedding.
- Inflicting any bodily harm on children, including making children eat or drink against their will, is prohibited.

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To promote positive adult-child and child-child interactions and to promote the health, safety, nutrition, and well-being of the children, these approaches will be followed:

- Using redirection and positive reinforcement to guide a child into acceptable options when engaged in an unacceptable activity.
- Speak with the child at eye level and use a calm and positive tone of voice.
- Modeling and demonstrating appropriate ways of interacting with others.
- Offering and outlining appropriate choices.
- Giving children a chance to try again.
- Giving more emphasis to appropriate ways of interaction.
- Encourage children to show respect to each other.
- Showing genuine approval when children are engaged in positive interactions.
- Children will not be blamed, shamed, or frightened for any reason at all. Limits are clearly defined in simple language and reinforced when necessary.
- By offering and outlining appropriate choices, children are encouraged to make decisions for themselves.
- Setting limits and taking into consideration the individuality of the child.

Durham Montessori School and Daycare incorporate the Montessori Principles, the Emergent Curriculum, and the “How Does Learning Happen” program to develop programs for children which contribute to positive experiences and outcomes for children.

PROGRAM STATEMENT MONITORING:

All the strategies of the Program Statement must always be implemented by staff. To ensure that the Program Statement is being implemented by the staff, the program statement's implementation will be monitored annually by the Supervisor/designate. The Supervisor/designate will use the program statement guidelines tracking form to record if the program statement is being implemented and this will be kept on file. If, during monitoring, it is discovered that staff are not implementing the program statement, the record of contraventions of policy statement guidelines form will also be used to record the contraventions and will be kept on file.

Any staff member who contravenes the program statement will be provided with retraining on the program statement implementation policy by the Supervisor/designate, and a record of the retraining will be kept on file. If the staff in question continues to contravene the program statement, the supervisor/operator will issue a written warning to the staff. If the contravention continues after a written warning, disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment, will follow.

IMPACT OF STRATEGIES:

The impact of the strategies set out in the program statement will be reviewed by the Operator annually to assess their effects on children and families. The center will use our email to collect feedback from both the parents and staff. All suggestions will be confidential. Necessary adjustments will be made based on the feedback and by the Ministry of Legislation to accommodate the children and their families.

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HOURS OF OPERATION

Durham Montessori School and Daycare operate **Monday to Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.** throughout the year. The center is closed on weekends, Winter Break, March Break, Summer Break, and all Statutory/Civic Holidays:

Winter Break --- December 18, 2026 – January 3, 2027

March Break --- March 12-19, 2027

Summer Break --- July 2-9, 2027

January ---- New Year's Day

February -- Family Day

March/April ----Good Friday

May -----Victoria Day

July -----Canada Day

August -- Civic Day

September ----Labour Day

October -----Thanksgiving Day

December ---- Christmas Day and Boxing Day

*** Durham Montessori School and Daycare generally follow the Durham District School Board (DDSB) for school closure decisions due to inclement weather, unsafe road conditions, or other emergency situations. However, Durham Montessori School and Daycare reserves the right to make independent decisions regarding classroom or school closures. Daily fees for school closures remain due.**

ADMISSION POLICY:

We would like to use this opportunity to welcome and thank you for choosing Durham Montessori School and Daycare for your child. We hope that through cooperation and communication, your child's years with us will be enjoyable and fulfilling.

Before your child is admitted to Durham Montessori School and Daycare, parents/guardians will meet with the Supervisor or designee in person, via Zoom or telephone, and are required to complete a registration package that includes child emergency information, application forms, public immunization information, and consent forms. Proof of age and an immunization record is required before your child/children attend the program. The Supervisor or designate will provide a Parent Handbook if a parent requires a hard copy; however, a Parent Handbook is readily available on our website at www.dmsd.ca as a paperless option and for quick reference to our policies and can provide a tour of DMSD. This is an opportunity for you and your child (ren) to meet the staff. Please provide as much information as possible about your child to help us best provide care for them.

DAILY PROGRAM:

Durham Montessori School and Daycare offer Full-Time and Part-Time options for:

Toddler Casa Rooms: Full-Time only for children ages 12 to 18 months.

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Full-Time and Part-Time for children ages 19 months to 36 months.

Preschool Casa Room: Full-time and Part-time for children ages 3 years to 5 years and 11 months.

*Spaces are subject to availability. *

The main emphasis of our program is:

- To provide the children with a rich, interesting learning environment that they can explore with all their senses.
- To encourage the development of positive social skills.
- To encourage the children's feelings of competence by giving them opportunities to experiment, problem solve, and enhance their abilities.
- To develop the children's self-esteem by ensuring that they feel valued and cared for as individuals.
- To foster a sense of autonomy by ensuring flexibility and choice.

All our E.L.E.C.T and Focus Board weekly programs are posted weekly in each classroom. These plans offer more detail about events and activities in your child's room. Parents can use this tool to be involved by bringing in resources such as books, pictures, costumes, or music that are relevant to the programming in the room at that time. Parents are also encouraged to offer suggestions to enhance the program.

Durham Montessori School provides daily opportunities for indoor and outdoor activities.

Your child will benefit more from the program if they arrive no later than 9:00 a.m. and do not leave before 3:00 p.m.

TODDLER POLICIES:

- Parents of Casa Toddlers who require preferred meals from home can provide them until the child is ready for catered meals provided by Durham Montessori School and Daycare. Up to 4 snacks and 1 hot lunch, including milk, are provided to the children daily.
- Parents of Casa Toddlers will be receiving a daily record of their child's day via email from our electronic application. This will include any milestones achieved, activities they participated in, and a record of food eaten and diaper changes. Parents are encouraged to read the reports and respond if required.

CHILD GUIDANCE:

Our goal is to help children develop self-discipline by accepting the consequences of their actions. We define the behavior and then work with the child to adopt a more socially acceptable manner. The staff uses redirection and natural and logical consequences to guide children's behavior instead of a time-out. If a child needs to be removed from a situation, a teacher stays with them and helps them understand the consequences of their behavior. We encourage the children to express themselves and express their feelings verbally.

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STAFF:

All our teaching staff are highly qualified Montessori Teachers, Registered Early Childhood Educators, and other related professionals. A minimum number of Early Childhood Assistants are paired with Montessori Teachers and Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECEs) in a team-teaching approach. The Montessori Teacher/RECE takes the lead role in programming and child development issues. All staff have their First Aid, C.P.R., and Vulnerable Police Reference Checks. They are required to do professional development throughout the year. Professional behavior is expected by all staff. Parent-Staff communication is integral to the program. If you have any concerns or comments, please bring them to your child's classroom teacher first and then to our supervisor if needed.

CANADA-WIDE EARLY LEARNING CHILDCARE PLAN (CWELCC)

Durham Montessori School and Daycare is currently not enrolled in the Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care System (CWELCC). DMSD continues to operate as a private Montessori childcare and school program, and the fees listed in this Parent Handbook are not CWELCC-reduced fees.

BASE FEES AND NON-BASE FEES

Base Fees: Base fees include the daily childcare fees charged for each child's regular childcare program, as outlined in the Program Fees section of this handbook. Base fees also include the non-refundable registration fee of \$500 per child and the non-refundable deposit of \$500 per child required to secure enrolment before a child begins at Durham Montessori School and Daycare. The deposit will be applied only to the last month of care after one year of attendance, and only after two months' written notice of withdrawal has been provided by email. The deposit is non-refundable if parents withdraw their child before the agreed start date, change their confirmed start date, withdraw before completing the required one-year commitment, or sign a re-registration form committing to another year at DMSD and later decide not to continue. Monthly childcare fees are invoiced in advance and are due before the 1st of each month. If the 1st falls on a weekend or statutory holiday, payment must be made on the business day before. Parents are responsible for all monthly childcare fees regardless of absences, illness, vacation, statutory holidays, school closures, snow days, Winter Break, March Break, Summer Break, or other interrupted closures, unless otherwise stated in this handbook. Credits or refunds will only be provided in the event of an overpayment or where specifically required under DMSD policy.

Non-Base Fees: Non-base fees are additional charges that may apply outside of regular childcare fees. These may include, but are not limited to, late payment charges of \$5 per day, late pick-up fees of \$2 per minute after the centre's closing time, field trip or visitor/vendor fees, the required DMSD school bag fee of \$25, and costs related to items or supplies that parents are required to provide but fail to send, such as diapers, pull-ups, wipes, creams, extra clothing, water bottles, or other required personal items. Field trip and visitor/vendor fees are non-refundable if a parent chooses not to have their child participate or if the child is absent on the scheduled activity day. Late pick-up fees must be paid within 24 hours by e-transfer. All childcare payments are accepted by e-transfer, cash, or VISA, subject to a 5% service charge.

PROGRAM FEES

Casa Toddler Program	
Full-Time Only (12-18 months) \$84/Day	Part-Time (19-36 months)
Full-Time (19-36 months) \$74/Day	2 days \$90/Day
	3 days \$85/Day

Casa Preschool Program	
Full-Time (3yrs-5.11 yrs.) \$72/Day	Part-Time (3yrs-5.11 yrs.)
	2 days \$90/Day
	3 days \$85/Day

***Fee schedules are posted in the building located on our Information Boards. ***

- A **NON-REFUNDABLE** registration fee of \$500/per child and a (**NON-REFUNDABLE**) deposit of \$500/per child will be paid before your child begins at Durham Montessori School and Daycare. The deposit will only be applied to the last month of care after 1 year’s attendance and 2 months’ written notice is given via email.
- The deposit is **NON-REFUNDABLE** if parents decide to withdraw their child's registration before the agreed start date.
- The deposit and first month’s childcare fees will not be refunded if a parent decides the child will not continue with the program.
- Monthly childcare tuition fees are to be paid before the 1st of every month, when the invoice is due.
- Regardless of whether a child’s last day is throughout the month, the full month’s childcare tuition fee is charged and is due in full.
- Childcare tuition fees are subject to increase before the child’s start date. Program fees increase annually.

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- Parents are responsible for all monthly childcare tuition fees, even if the child is absent for any reason. These dates include all Statutory/Civic holidays, sick days, vacation days, isolation days (if required by Public Health), Winter Break, March Break, Summer Break, snow days, or interrupted closures. Failure to pay tuition fees may result in termination of care, a spot given away, and a **NON-REFUNDABLE** deposit.
- Durham Montessori School and Daycare will follow DDSB school closures for Snow Days. These days are non-refundable and can not be used for extra days.
- Credits or refunds will be offered in the event of an overpayment. All other refund requests not included in our policy must be submitted in writing to the supervisor and are not guaranteed.
- Children in our Preschool Casa Program using Diapers or Pull-ups throughout the day, naptime, or having washroom accidents from September 1 of that school year are charged Toddler Casa Program fees from September 1 to August 31 regardless of when they become fully trained that year.
- Should Durham Montessori School and Daycare close a classroom or the entire center due to an Outbreak or any other program-interrupted closure, childcare tuition fees will not be reimbursed for days closed; however, every child's spot will be reserved upon clearance to reopen the center/classroom by the ministry.
- Should your child be sent home due to a staff assessment of possible Lice or Nits, DMSD will not reimburse the daily rate for care on those days, and the child must be Lice and nit-free for 48 hours before returning to DMSD.
- Daily childcare tuition fees will stay the same from September to August, regardless of age or movement to another classroom within the school year.
- Extended absences must be discussed with the Supervisor. Should the Supervisor not be informed, your child's spot is not guaranteed upon the child's return unless full payments to maintain the spot have been made and the deposit is non-refundable.
- Parents will be invoiced ahead of time for their monthly childcare tuition fees, which are to be paid before the 1st of every month. Payments must not be late unless authorized by the Director.
- If the 1st falls on a weekend or Statutory holiday, tuition payment must be made on the Friday before (or Thursday due to Good Friday). Example: Saturday, February 1st, payment must be made on Friday, January 31st. If payment is not made before your child returns to school, staff will not be able to accept your child into the program unless the administration provides clearance.
- A late payment charge of \$5/day will be charged from the 1st of the month until the day payment is received, including weekends, and the child is approved to come back by the Administration.

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- Payments will be accepted only via E-Transfer, cash, or VISA (subject to a 5% service charge).
- Children registered at DMSD are required to wear a school uniform and purchase a DMSD bag for their extra belongings to be left on their hook on their first day at school. Boys' school uniform includes navy blue pants/shorts, a white short- or long-sleeve golf shirt, a cardigan/vest, navy blue socks, and black shoes. The girl's school uniform includes a Tunic/Skort, white short- or long-sleeve golf shirt, a cardigan/vest, navy blue socks, and black shoes. Please visit www.uniformbasics.com for all the details.

***Tax receipts for childcare payments will be provided by the end of February every year*.**

WITHDRAWAL POLICY:

- If parents wish to withdraw their child(ren) from the program, two months' written/email notice is required during operating business hours. Deposits will only be deducted from the last month's invoice after a 1-year commitment from the start date. The child must attend during the notice period, and all outstanding balances must be paid before the child leaves.
- If parents wish to change the number of childcare days, one month's **written** notice is required and only accepted if a spot is available.
- If a child withdraws before the completion of the annual re-registration form's end date, as completed by the child's parent, the deposit will not be refunded. Should a re-registration form be incomplete, the child's spot will not be guaranteed.
- Policies at Durham Montessori School and Daycare are subject to change throughout the time a parent's child is registered with them, and families will agree to policy amendments or additions.

Non-compliance with General Policies and Payment Provisions may, at Durham Montessori School and Daycare's sole discretion, result in immediate termination of the childcare space, in addition to any other available legal remedies.

LATE PICK-UP FEES:

Parents must designate a person to pick up their child if they will be running late in picking up their child from the center before DMSD's closing time.

The staff has personal plans, and overtime costs affect our rates; therefore, a late fee of \$2 per minute will be charged after 5: 00 p.m., or the childcare center's closing time, should their hours of operation be reduced/extended. Late fees are to be paid within 24 hours of the last pick-up via E-Transfer.

If staff have not communicated with a parent/guardian within 15 minutes after the center closes, staff will begin calling emergency contacts to pick up your child. If no one can be reached to pick up the child (ren), Children's Aid will be called, and our Safe Arrival and Dismissal Policy will take effect.

ARRIVALS AND DEPARTURES:

- Where a child does not arrive in care at the confirmed drop-off time or is not picked up as expected, staff must follow the Safe Arrival and Dismissal Policy and Procedures.
- Parents/guardians or persons over 18 years of age are required to accompany their child/children to the center and to make sure that the staff member on duty is aware of their child's presence.
- Parents dropping off their child/children are required to ensure their child is signed in on the attendance sheet/device before they leave. Similarly, when picking up your child, make sure the staff member on duty knows you are leaving and that your child's teacher has signed the child out on the attendance sheet/device.
- Ensure that the child's belongings are in the proper designated place before you leave.
- Your child may only be picked up by authorized persons listed on the registration forms. Permission from a parent or guardian, via email to info@dmsd.ca or through the parent communication app, must be provided every time someone else is picking up the child. All persons, other than parents/guardians who are picking up children, are required to show identification before the child can be released upon pickup after parents' permission.
- Emailed permission from a parent or guardian to info@dmsd.ca and/or the parent communication app must be provided if anyone else is picking up the child. If an unauthorized person arrives to pick up a child in our care, access will be denied. Your child will remain under the supervision of Durham Montessori School and Daycare until an authorized person arrives to pick up your child.

• An unauthorized person is anyone who is not listed on the child's registration form, has not been authorized by the parent/guardian in writing by email at info@dmsd.ca and/or through the parent communication app, or appears intoxicated, impaired, medicated, or otherwise incapable of safely caring for the child.

SAFE ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Purpose

Durham Montessori School and Daycare is committed to supporting the safe arrival and dismissal of all children in our care. This policy provides clear direction to staff, students, volunteers, parents, and guardians on the steps to follow when a child arrives at the center, does not arrive as expected, is picked up from the center, or is not picked up as expected.

This policy is intended to support compliance with Ontario Regulation 137/15 under the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014, regarding safe arrival and dismissal procedures for children attending licensed childcare programs.

General Policy

Durham Montessori School and Daycare will ensure that every child is signed in upon arrival and signed out upon dismissal each day.

Children will only be released to a parent/guardian or to an individual who has been authorized in writing/email to info@dmsd.ca by the parent/guardian and is listed on the child's registration or emergency contact information.

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All individuals picking up a child, other than the child's parent/guardian, must be at least 18 years of age and may be required to provide valid photo identification before the child is released.

Durham Montessori School and Daycare will not release a child to any person who is not authorized in writing by the parent/guardian. Verbal authorization alone will not be accepted unless confirmed in writing by email from the parent/guardian.

Durham Montessori School and Daycare does not release children from the program without adult supervision. All children must be dismissed directly to a parent/guardian or authorized pick-up person.

Where a child does not arrive in care as expected or is not picked up, staff must follow the procedures outlined below.

Parent/Guardian Responsibilities

Parents/guardians are required to:

1. Inform Durham Montessori School and Daycare by email at info@dmsd.ca/ parent communication app if their child will be absent, late, picked up early, or picked up by someone other than the usual authorized person.
2. Provide the child's full name, classroom, reason for absence or change, and expected arrival or pick-up time, where applicable.
3. Ensure all emergency contact and authorized pick-up information is accurate and up to date.
4. Sign their child in upon arrival and sign their child out upon dismissal using the centre's attendance sheet/device.
5. Notify the centre as soon as possible if they will be late for pick-up.
6. Ensure that any person picking up their child is listed as an authorized pick-up person and is prepared to show valid photo identification.

Staff Responsibilities at Arrival

Upon arrival, staff will:

1. Greet the child and parent/guardian or authorized drop-off person.
2. Confirm that the child has been signed in on the attendance sheet/device.
3. Complete a visual health check of the child upon arrival.
4. Ensure the child is received safely into the classroom or designated program area.
5. Monitor attendance records to confirm which children are present and expected in care.

Procedure: When a Child Does Not Arrive as Expected

If a child does not arrive at Durham Montessori School and Daycare as expected, and the parent/guardian has not notified DMSD of the child's absence or late arrival, staff will follow these steps:

1. The classroom staff will notify the Supervisor/designate that the child has not arrived as expected.

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2. The Supervisor/designate or assigned staff member will review attendance records, emails, voicemail messages, and any communication from the parent/guardian to determine whether the absence or late arrival was reported.
3. If no communication has been received, the Supervisor/designate or assigned staff member will contact the parent/guardian by phone and/or email to confirm the child's absence or expected arrival time.
4. If the parent/guardian cannot be reached, staff will contact the emergency contacts listed on the child's file.
5. Staff will continue attempts to contact the parent/guardian or emergency contacts until the child's whereabouts have been confirmed.
6. All communication attempts and outcomes will be documented, including the date, time, person contacted, method of contact, and information received.
7. Once the child's absence or whereabouts have been confirmed, staff will update the attendance record accordingly.

Staff Responsibilities at Dismissal

At pick-up time, staff will:

1. Release the child only to a parent/guardian or authorized pick-up person listed on the child's file with permission from the parent via email/parent communication app.
2. Request valid photo identification from any pick-up person who is unfamiliar to staff.
3. Confirm that the child has been signed out on the attendance sheet/device.
4. Ensure the child leaves the classroom or program area safely with the authorized adult.
5. Document any changes to regular pick-up arrangements.

Procedure: When an Unauthorized Person Arrives to Pick Up a Child

If a person who is not listed as an authorized pick-up person arrives to pick up a child:

1. Staff will not release the child.
2. Staff will contact the parent/guardian to request written authorization by email.
3. The child will remain under the supervision of Durham Montessori School and Daycare staff until written authorization is received and the person's identity is verified.
4. If written authorization is not received, the child will not be released to that individual.
5. If the situation becomes concerning, unsafe, or disruptive, the Supervisor/designate may contact the appropriate authorities.

Procedure: When a Person Appears Unable to Safely Care for a Child

Durham Montessori School and Daycare will not release a child to any person who appears unable to safely care for the child, including but not limited to a person who appears intoxicated, impaired, medically unwell, aggressive, or otherwise incapable of providing safe supervision.

In this situation:

1. Staff will keep the child safely supervised at the centre.

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2. Staff will contact the other parent/guardian or another authorized emergency contact to pick up the child.
3. If necessary, staff may contact police, the Children's Aid Society, or another appropriate authority to support the child's safety.
4. The incident will be documented.

Procedure: When a Child Is Not Picked Up as Expected

If a child has not been picked up by their expected pick-up time or by the centre's closing time, staff will follow these steps:

1. Staff will attempt to contact the parent/guardian by phone.
2. If the parent/guardian cannot be reached, staff will contact the emergency contacts listed on the child's file.
3. Staff will continue to supervise the child safely until an authorized person arrives.
4. Late pick-up fees will apply according to Durham Montessori School and Daycare's Late Pick-Up Fees policy.
5. If staff cannot reach a parent/guardian or authorized emergency contact within 15 minutes after the centre closes, staff will continue calling the emergency contacts listed on file.
6. If no authorized person can be reached to pick up the child within a reasonable period of time, Durham Montessori School and Daycare may contact Children's Aid Society and/or the appropriate authorities for further direction.
7. All attempts to contact the parent/guardian and emergency contacts will be documented, including the date, time, person contacted, method of contact, and outcome.

Documentation

Durham Montessori School and Daycare will document any safe arrival or dismissal concern, including:

- child's name;
- date and time;
- staff involved;
- parent/guardian or emergency contacts contacted;
- method of contact;
- outcome of the communication;
- time the child's whereabouts were confirmed;
- time the child was picked up, where applicable;
- any follow-up required.

Review and Compliance

All staff, students, and volunteers will be made aware of this policy before they begin working or interacting with children, and whenever it is updated.

The Supervisor/designate will monitor compliance with this policy on an ongoing basis. Any concerns or contraventions will be addressed through review, retraining, documentation, and further action where required.

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT:

Parent communication with the child's teacher or supervisor/designate is highly encouraged. Parents are encouraged to take a few minutes at the beginning or end of the day to let staff know about any special or unusual events that may affect their child and how the child will approach the program. Invariably, the staff is required to inform parents of any highlights or upsets that occurred during the day, either verbally or via an incident report.

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS AND INVITATIONS

Teachers celebrate each child's birthday in the classroom by participating in a special Montessori ceremony known as "The Earth Goes Around the Sun."

Prior to the child's birthday, parents are kindly asked to send in one 5x7 hard-copy photo of their child from each year of life, beginning with an infant photo, followed by age one, age two, age three, and so on.

Parents are kindly asked not to request that the school print photos or provide explanations on their behalf. All photos must be provided as hard copies by the family.

To protect family privacy and allow staff to remain focused on the children, Durham Montessori School and Daycare does not share parent contact information with other parents, classroom lists, or distribute birthday invitations on behalf of families.

Birthday celebrations may take place at school only. Parents may send a commercially prepared treat that is nut-free, egg-free, and shellfish-free, approved in advance by the administration, and brought in unopened with clear labeling.

Private party invitations and contact arrangements must be handled by families outside of school.

PARENT ISSUES AND CONCERNS POLICY:

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide a transparent process for parents/guardians, Durham Montessori School and Daycare, and staff to use when parents/guardians bring forward issues/concerns.

Definitions

Operator: The individual or agency licensed by the Ministry of Education responsible for the operation and management of each childcare center it operates.

Staff: Individual employed by the Operator (e.g., program room staff).

Supervisor: Ministry-approved individual, the staff member responsible for the supervision of staff and the day-to-day running of the childcare center.

General

Parents/guardians are encouraged to take an active role in our childcare center and to regularly discuss what their child(ren) are experiencing in our program. As stated in our program statement, we support positive and responsive interactions among children, parents/guardians, childcare providers, and staff, and foster ongoing communication with parents/guardians about the program and their children. Our staff are available to engage parents/guardians in conversations and support a positive experience during every interaction.

All issues and concerns raised by parents/guardians are taken seriously by Durham Montessori School and Daycare and will be addressed. Every effort will be made to address and resolve issues and concerns to the satisfaction of all parties as quickly as possible.

Issues/concerns may be brought forward verbally or in writing. Responses and outcomes will be provided verbally or in writing. The level of detail provided to the parent/guardian will respect and maintain the confidentiality of all parties involved.

An initial response to an issue or concern will be provided to parents/guardians within two business days. The person who raised the issue/concern will be kept informed throughout the resolution process.

Investigations of issues and concerns will be fair, impartial, and respectful to the parties involved.

Confidentiality

Every issue and concern will be treated confidentially, and every effort will be made to protect the privacy of parents/guardians, children, staff, students, and volunteers, except when information must be disclosed for legal reasons (e.g., to the Ministry of Education, College of Early Childhood Educators, law enforcement authorities or a Children's Aid Society).

Conduct

Our center maintains high standards for positive interaction, communication, and role modeling for children. Harassment and discrimination will therefore not be tolerated by any party.

If at any point a parent/guardian, provider, or staff member feels uncomfortable, threatened, abused, or belittled, they may immediately end the conversation and report the situation to the supervisor and/or the operator. If a staff member is treated disrespectfully by a parent/guardian, a letter from Durham Montessori School and Daycare will be given to them, and childcare will be halted effective immediately.

Concerns about the Suspected Abuse or Neglect of a Child

Everyone, including members of the public and professionals who work closely with children, is required by law to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect.

Duty to Report

Every person in Ontario, including a person who performs professional or official duties concerning children, is required under the Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017, to report her/his suspicion that a child may have been abused or is at risk for abuse (i.e., in need of protection). The suspicion and the information, upon which that suspicion is based, must be reported to the Children's Aid Society

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immediately. The individual who suspects that a child may have been abused or is at risk for abuse must report directly to the Children’s Aid Society and cannot rely on anyone else to report on his/her behalf.

Persons who become aware of such concerns are also responsible for reporting this information to CAS in accordance with the “Duty to Report” requirement under the Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017.

Escalation of Issues or Concerns

Where parents/guardians are not satisfied with the response or outcome of an issue or concern, they may escalate the issue or concern verbally or in writing to the Childcare Operator at info@dmsd.ca

PROCEDURES:

Nature of Issue or Concern	Steps for Parent and/or Guardian to Report Issue/Concern:	Steps for Staff and/or Operator in responding to issue/concern:
<p>Program Room Related</p> <p>E.g.: Schedule, Sleep Arrangements, Toilet Training, Indoor/Outdoor Program Activities, Feeding Arrangements, etc.</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to - the classroom staff directly first. If the concern is not resolved within 24 hours, resort to notifying the Supervisor first, followed by the Director/Operator should the issue not be solved by the supervisor.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Address the issue/concern at the time it is raised or - arrange for a meeting with the parent/guardian within two business days. <p>Document the issues/concerns in detail. Documentation should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the date and time the issue/concern was received. - the name of the person who received the issue/concern. - the name of the person reporting the issue/concern.
<p>General, Centre- or Operations-Related</p> <p>E.g.: Child Care Fees, Hours of Operation, Staffing, Waiting Lists, Menus, etc.</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to - the Supervisor first, followed by the Director/Operator should the issue not be solved by the supervisor.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the details of the issue/concern; and - any steps taken to resolve the issue/concern and/or information given to the parent/guardian regarding the next steps or referral. <p>Provide contact information for the appropriate person if the person being notified is unable to address the matter.</p>
<p>Parent, Staff, Supervisor-, and/or Operator-Related</p>	<p>Raise the issue or concern to - the individual directly or - the Supervisor/ Director/Operator.</p> <p>All issues or concerns about the conduct of staff, parents, etc. that put a child’s health, safety, and well-being at risk should be reported to the supervisor as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.</p>	<p>Ensure the investigation of the issue/concern is initiated by the appropriate party within 2 business days or as soon as reasonably possible thereafter. Document reasons for delays in writing.</p> <p>Provide a resolution or outcome to the parent(s)/guardian(s) who raised the issue/concern.</p>

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Student- / Volunteer-Related	<p>Raise the issue or concern to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- the staff responsible for supervising the volunteer or student. <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Supervisor first, followed by the Director/Operator should the issue not be solved by the supervisor. <p>All issues or concerns about the conduct of students and/or volunteers that puts a child's health, safety, and well-being at risk should be reported to the supervisor as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.</p>
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WHAT PARENTS NEED TO PROVIDE:

Clothing etc.:

*Please ensure that your child has at least 2 complete changes of clothing, which include 2 white tops, 2 blue bottoms, 2 pairs of underwear, and 2 pairs of socks, in case of an accidental spill or leak, and that a DMSD bag is always used for clean storage on their hook.

*Parents must provide indoor/outdoor shoes for sanitary purposes. We recommend black Velcro-running shoes for indoor and outdoor wear. No soft-sole shoes, Crocs, slippers or rainboots are permitted.

*Please label all clothing, shoes, and personal items coming into the center. Full school uniform is required at DMSD daily, regardless of the child's age in the program.

*A minimum of 2 plastic bags to send home soiled clothing is required to be replenished in their green school bag.

*As children will be attending outdoor activities, weather permitting, appropriate outdoor clothing to suit the season should be kept at the center, such as hats, mittens, snow pants, etc.

*Soiled or wet clothing must be taken home by the parent/guardian each day, and a clean replacement is needed to replenish your child's bag at school the following day.

*Durham Montessori School and Daycare is not responsible for providing extra clothing or diapers/Pull-ups, creams, or wipes. Should your child not have the required items, parents will be notified to bring them in within 1 hour of being notified or picked up for that day.

*Parents are required to bring a labeled, clean, spill-proof, and freshly filled water bottle daily.

Diapers/Pull-Ups:

Parents/guardians should provide a labeled bag or sleeve of diapers and/or Velcro pull-ups for their child. For sanitary purposes, only disposable diapers and/or Velcro sides pull-ups are to be used at DMSD. An adequate supply is to be kept in the child's change basket, along with any required wipes and/or diaper cream. Parents are responsible for checking in with their child's teacher every month to ensure that a sufficient number of supplies are available for their child.

Sunscreen:

Parents are responsible for providing and applying sunscreen for their children's use before their children come to the center every morning. Please remember to label the bottle with your child's name. Staff will reapply sunscreen for afternoon outdoor time and will notify you when your child's sunscreen is running out. Parents are required to check sunscreen, ensuring its due date is not until the following summer.

TOY POLICY:

Parents/guardians are asked not to bring toys from home to DMSD unless staff members ask for them for special occasions or show-and-tell. Toys brought in for show-and-tell should not be violent in nature. The center will not be held responsible for any lost, stolen, or broken articles brought from home.

HOOK AND BASKET:

Each child has a labeled hook/basket. This is where they keep their DMSD bag of personal belongings. Please check regularly for the child's finished work and notes to parents. DMSD is not held responsible for broken or lost personal items.

TRIPS/VISITORS:

When monthly field trips or visitors are planned, a notice and permission form will be sent home in advance, providing information about the visitor, destination, cost, date, and departure and arrival times. Trips and visitors are a part of the program. If parents do not wish their child to participate, they are required to keep their child home until we return to normal programming for the day, no earlier than 12:00 p.m. and no later than when we return from a field trip. DMSD does not reimburse childcare fees for attendance lost on those days if parents do not want their child to participate. If a parent pays for a field trip/visitor but their child does not attend due to absence, a refund or use toward another trip/visitor cannot be applied.

REST PERIODS:

The children at the center are required to rest for a maximum of two hours daily. This helps to keep the children rejuvenated and enhances active participation in the program. If, after one hour, a child is not sleeping, they will be offered a quiet activity. There is a designated nap/rest time each day. All toddler and preschool Casa children will have a two-hour rest period after lunch. Sleeping blankets will be provided by the childcare center. Sleeping cots, cot sheets, and sleeping blankets shall be provided by the childcare center. The cot sheets and blankets will be washed once a week. The sleeping cots will also be cleaned and sanitized every Friday, and a record of the cleaning will be kept at the center.

NUTRITION:

At Durham Montessori School and Daycare, we believe that nutrition plays a vital role in a child's ability to learn, grow, and develop. Our menus are planned in accordance with Canada's Food Guide and designed to support children's nutritional and cultural needs. All children receive a hot, nutritious lunch, up to 2 morning snacks, and up to 2 afternoon snacks daily. Seasonal menus are posted in advance. Durham Montessori School and Daycare is a nut-safe centre. To reduce the risk of accidental exposure to allergens, food and drinks from home are not permitted unless approved in writing by the Supervisor/designate for medical, dietary, severe allergy, or approved toddler transition needs. Any approved food from home must be clearly labeled with the child's name, date, ingredients, and allergen information. Parents must not send food containing nuts, peanuts, shellfish, or any allergen restricted by the centre. Please discuss any dietary restrictions with the Supervisor/designate and complete all required forms so that appropriate meal arrangements can be made. DMSD reserves the right to refuse any food

item that may pose a safety risk. Children are never forced to eat; they are encouraged to try different foods, and privileges are never withdrawn for not eating.

PHOTOGRAPHS AND SOCIAL MEDIA:

On occasion, staff members photograph the children while they are in the program. The center will post some photographs for educational purposes in the center. These photographs are used only within the center. Children's names are not used when photographs are displayed. Photographs used for the center's social media are also taken of your child; however, photographs taken inside or outside of DMSD are only with parental consent obtained at the time of registration.

IMMUNIZATION POLICY:

Each child must be immunized in accordance with the Child Care and Early Years Act and as recommended by the Local Medical Officer of Health before they start the program. Parents/guardians who do not immunize their children for medical or religious reasons must provide a letter from the appropriate ministry granting exemption before a child or children can be admitted to the center.

MEDICATION POLICY:

The staff at Durham Montessori School and Daycare can administer prescription and other medications if a Medication Form is completed and signed by the child's parent. Before any medication can be administered, all the following conditions must be met:

- All medication must come in its original container, with the prescription label on it, stating the child's name, dosage, date of purchase, name of the drug, doctor's name/phone number, and instructions for storage and administering.
- If it is non-prescription medication, it must be accompanied by a Non-Medication Form and the parents' signature, with instructions on how to give the medication, for how long, and storage instructions.
- The parent must complete and sign all forms authorizing the staff at Durham Montessori School and Daycare to administer the medication.
- The parent/guardian must give and train all medication to the Supervisor or designate the child's teacher if the Supervisor is not available.
- It is the parent's responsibility to take the medication home daily if needed.
- If a child uses an EpiPen, 2 EpiPens are required to be kept at the center. Parents must make note of EpiPens expiration dates and provide updated medication before expiration. DMSD can not accept a child into the center without 2 valid EpiPens.

***If the above administering requirements are not adhered to, our staff can not administer the medication. ***

SANITARY/HEALTH POLICY:

The Durham Montessori School and Daycare health policy contains guidelines that ensure the health and well-being of children and staff. It always follows the current requirements and guidelines set out by the

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Ministry of Public Health. The main objective of the policy is to minimize the spread of illness. Illnesses such as high fever (over 37.8°C), runny nose, cough, cold, flu, COVID-19, strep throat, pink eye, chickenpox, diarrhea, head lice, etc., are considered contagious and should be treated by a doctor. Sick children are not allowed to attend childcare. It is not the center's responsibility to care for sick children. If your child becomes sick while at the center, the parent or emergency contact will be notified, and the center will request that your child be picked up within 1 hour of notification. If your child develops a contagious or communicable illness, parents will be asked to remove the child from the center 24 hours after the last symptom or 48 hours for nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea. The child is required to return to the center with the attending physician's written consent to return and be symptom-free.

If your child has been infected or exposed to head lice, please notify the center immediately. Head lice can be controlled in a group setting if everyone works together. The center operates a "Nit-Free Policy" under which each child will be inspected upon arrival at the center following the initial report of head lice. If any nits are suspected or found by staff, the child will be sent home. This policy applies even if a child has been treated. DMSD is not responsible for reimbursing childcare fees should staff suspect lice or nits in any child sent home or in children who have lice or nits.

Durham Montessori School and Daycare will not be held responsible for any child who has contracted any illnesses, Lice, Nits, etc., while attending our program.

DAILY HEALTH CHECK:

According to the requirements of the Child Care and Early Years Act, a daily health check is conducted for each child upon arrival at a childcare center. As a result, Durham Montessori School and Daycare will conduct daily health checks for each child upon arrival at the childcare center to ensure the health and well-being of children and staff to the best of their ability.

CUSTODY POLICY:

- Durham Montessori School and Daycare require a copy of any custody agreement or court order dealing with custody to be properly informed and to enforce any custody terms by parents/guardians.
- The signed consent of all parties must be given to the Supervisor or designate before any visit by the non-custodial parent is made. The visit should always be arranged through the Supervisor.
- A non-custodial parent will not be allowed to pick up a child without the written consent of the custodial parent or as outlined in the court documents.
- Should the non-custodial parent show up at the center unexpectedly, staff will not allow the child to be sent home with that parent, and the police will be called.
- The custodial parent will be called to remove the child/children from the center, as staff members are put in a vulnerable position.
- As this may be disturbing to the child/children, the most important role of the Supervisor and staff members is the protection of the child/children.

INCLUSION POLICY:

Durham Montessori School and Daycare strive to foster and provide a learning and working environment, with a climate of mutual respect and understanding. We will not tolerate discrimination or bias in any form. All children and families, staff members, students, and volunteers are accepted regardless of their differences and similarities. We promote the development of unbiased attitudes and beliefs.

Adults are expected to model appropriate behavior refraining from swearing, name-calling, etc. Any individual engaging in this type of behavior will be asked to leave the premises. Failure to comply may result in police intervention.

CONFIDENTIALITY:

We must maintain and respect the privacy of our families, staff, volunteers, and students. Therefore, gossip within the center and/or electronic information sharing like using social media among staff, students, and volunteers or between parents, staff, students, and volunteers in issues between Durham Montessori School and Daycare and our families, staff, volunteers, and students will not be tolerated at any time and may result in the dismissal of the staff member or child of a parent involved.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT POLICY:

Durham Montessori School and Daycare have a comprehensive Emergency Management Policy which provides a clear direction for staff and management to follow and deal with emergencies. This policy is to support all individuals to manage responses and responsibilities during an emergency, resulting in the safest outcomes possible. All emergencies and the directions to follow during emergencies will be communicated to parents/guardians by either phone, email, or by posting notifications at the center. If emergencies that require evacuation occur at the center, parents/guardians will be contacted by phone to come to pick up their children within the hour.

ALLERGIES:

Please notify the center if your child has any allergies. All applicable paperwork must be filled out and kept on file. All allergies will be posted in each room and throughout DMSD.

ANAPHYLACTIC POLICY:

Durham Montessori School and Daycare have a comprehensive anaphylaxis policy. All anaphylactic allergies will be posted in all rooms. Upon registration, parents will be required to complete an Anaphylactic Individual Plan for their child(ren), if applicable.

TERMINATION POLICY:

The center may decide to terminate a child's childcare space immediately. The following behavior may result in this decision:

- Verbal, written, and/or physical abuse of staff and/or children by parents.

Procedures used in determining when to terminate a childcare space.

- An initial meeting will be scheduled with the child's parents(s) to clearly outline the issue at hand.
- The issue will be recorded and articulated to parent(s) by staff members for a period of two weeks to one month.
- Recommended practices will be outlined to the parent(s) by staff.
- If the parent(s) can follow through on recommended practices, the staff will assist them in contacting the appropriate agencies.
- If recommended practices are not followed and if it is determined necessary, the Supervisor of the center (along with the staff) will meet again with the parent(s) to discuss the issue.
- If the issue at hand continues, the Supervisor will consult with the childcare operator, and two weeks' notice of termination will be given in writing by Durham Montessori School and Daycare.

WAITLIST POLICY:

The Child Care and Early Years Act prohibits licensed childcare centers from charging waitlist fees. As a result, Durham Montessori School and Daycare does not charge or collect any fee or deposit for placement on the waitlist. Children are placed on the waitlist based on the date the inquiry or waitlist request is received, the child's age group, program availability, requested start date, and available classroom space. Durham Montessori School and Daycare maintain a first-come, first-served approach to enrolment, subject to availability and program needs. Families may request information about their child's general position on the waitlist, and this information will be shared in a manner that protects the privacy and confidentiality of other children and families. Parents will be notified by phone or email once a suitable space becomes available. A child is considered enrolled at Durham Montessori School and Daycare only once a completed registration package, immunization record, deposit fee, and registration fee have been received and accepted by the centre.

STUDENTS AND VOLUNTEERS:

Students and volunteers will not be left alone with the children at any time. Students and volunteers will be monitored by staff when implementing child guidance techniques. All students and volunteers must provide a Vulnerable Police Record Check before interacting with children.

SERIOUS OCCURRENCE POLICY:

The safety and well-being of all children, staff, students, and volunteers is our highest priority. An occurrence is any unusual, unsuspected, potential, or unexpected event that is not consistent with routine safety in service delivery while in attendance at childcare. Despite all the precautions, a serious occurrence can happen from time to time. Licensed childcare centers are required to post information regarding a serious occurrence that has taken place at the Centre. Durham Montessori School and Daycare will report and post any serious occurrence that took place at the center. This policy supports the government's efforts to increase parents' access to information about licensed childcare programs.

CHILD ABUSE POLICY:

Durham Montessori School and Daycare staff, students, and volunteers are made aware and will adhere to the legal obligations to report cases of child abuse under the Child and Family Services Act. Durham Montessori School and Daycare staff, students, and volunteers will report any suspected child abuse, which includes neglect and risk of harm, physical, emotional, and sexual abuse, to the appropriate authorities.

AVAILABLE SPACING IN THE NEXT AGE GROUPING:

Continued care in Durham Montessori School and Daycare will depend on the availability of care in the next age grouping to which your child/children would normally progress at our childcare center. Priority will always be given to children already enrolled at the center. If your child reaches 6 years of age, a withdrawal notice will be given, as Durham Montessori School and Daycare only cares for children up to 5.11 years of age. Children will be moved to the next age grouping/classroom in September, following the month they reach a particular age.

CRIMINAL REFERENCE CHECK POLICY:

All staff, including students, volunteers, and supply staff at Durham Montessori School and Daycare, are required to obtain a clear original police criminal reference check, including vulnerable sector screening, before they start employment at the center. If the criminal check result certifies that the potential candidate has no criminal record on file and would not pose a danger to the children in childcare, an offer of employment/volunteer position will be made.

SCHOOL DROP OFF AND PICK UP:

All Kindergarten-aged children enrolled at the center will be dropped off and picked up at the local school if they attend. However, the center's staff members are unable to pick up children from school if they are involved in extracurricular activities at school that fall outside the regular drop-off and pick-up times.

SMOKE-FREE POLICY:

The Smoke-Free Ontario Act prohibits smoking in enclosed workplaces and enclosed public places in Ontario. To protect children, workers, and the public from the hazards of second-hand smoke, Durham Montessori School and Daycare is committed to providing a smoke-free environment for all families, children, staff members, and volunteers. The childcare operator, supervisor, and staff members will ensure that smoking is prohibited in classrooms, playgrounds, washrooms, and all areas of the center and property. Anybody who does not comply with the smoke-free policy will be removed from the premises immediately, and the Childcare Operator or Supervisor will inform Children Services. A written warning will be issued to the person who contravenes the policy. In the event that a person continues to fail to abide by the Smoke-Free Policy, the Childcare Operator or Supervisor will inform the Public Health Representative.

ABSENCE:

Parents are required to contact the Durham Montessori School and Daycare via email at info@dmsd.ca or through the parent communication app if their child will be absent and to provide a reason for the absence to be recorded in the attendance records.

FIRE DRILLS:

Durham Montessori School and Daycare conduct monthly fire drills to familiarize children and staff with its importance and practice responding quickly. Fire procedures are posted in each room and on the center's information board.

FIRE SAFETY POLICY:

Respond as quickly as possible, get the children in front of each room door, and direct them out through the designated exit to the emergency shelter. Attendance records will be taken, a head count will be conducted, and the results will be given to the Supervisor or designee for verification. The Supervisor will notify staff members when it is safe to re-enter the building after receiving direction from the fire department.

GATES AND DOORS:

For the safety of the children, the playground gates and all doors at the center must be kept closed to prevent a child from going through them. The exterior front and back emergency doors are kept locked and will unlock during an emergency or evacuation.

SUMMARY OF NEW HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES:

Effective Date: July 1, 2026 and January 1, 2027

Durham Montessori School and Daycare is committed to maintaining a safe, respectful, and well-supervised environment for all children. In accordance with updates to the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 and O. Reg. 137/15, Durham Montessori School and Daycare has updated its health and safety policies regarding prohibited practices, emergency medication, hazard mitigation, supervision, missing child procedures, unauthorized access, staff training, and emergency acting supervisor responsibilities.

Durham Montessori School and Daycare strictly prohibits all prohibited practices, including corporal punishment, harsh or degrading treatment, deprivation of basic needs, inappropriate restraint, sexual abuse, sexual misconduct, and prescribed sexual acts. Any concern involving the safety or protection of a child will be addressed immediately and reported to the appropriate authorities where required.

Durham Montessori School and Daycare has procedures in place to ensure active supervision of children, prevent unauthorized access, respond to emergencies, and address hazards that may create a risk of imminent harm. Parents/guardians will be notified of any high-risk hazard affecting child safety and the actions being taken to reduce or eliminate the risk.

Children who require emergency medication for allergies, asthma, epilepsy, diabetes, or another medical condition may be permitted to carry or have immediate access to medication where required by a prescribing medical professional and approved through Durham Montessori School and Daycare's medication procedures.

Durham Montessori School and Daycare will conduct missing child drills once every three months and will ensure staff are trained on all applicable policies and procedures.

PARENT HANDBOOK REVIEW AND UPDATES

The Parent Handbook is reviewed annually and may be updated by September 1 of each year, or as required throughout the school year to reflect changes in legislation, licensing requirements, Ministry direction, Public Health guidance, school operations, fees, or DMSD policies. For convenience, the most current version of the Parent Handbook will be available at all times, free of charge, on the DMSD website at www.dmsd.ca under the Enrollment tab and/or provided upon request. Parents/guardians are responsible for reviewing the most current version of the Parent Handbook, and DMSD will make the updated handbook available whenever changes are made.

Parent Handbook Updated July 2026