

# **World Community Montessori**

**1329 Prosperity Drive**

**Bedford, VA 24523**



**[worldcommunityedu.org](http://worldcommunityedu.org)**

**540-297-1662**

## **Student-Parent Handbook**

**2024 – 2025**

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## MISSION STATEMENT

***WORLD COMMUNITY MONTESSORI** offers a prepared environment for learning focused on academic excellence and universal spiritual values that build character and community responsibility. It is a school-for-life that encourages deep love of learning, respect for all people, love of order, self-discipline, generosity, cooperation, and service to family and community.*

World Community Montessori is a school community that encourages all its members - students, staff, and parents - to be lifelong learners who embrace a healthy lifestyle, demonstrate compassion and empathy for others, and act with integrity and honesty. It is the goal of this community to provide the tools and resources necessary to foster creative, independent thinkers who will become proud stewards of our world.

World Community Montessori strives to be an exemplary school community with an engaging learning environment. We value a strong core curriculum focused on continual improvement, high achievement, and life-long learning for our students and staff.

### **World Community Montessori Strives to Provide a School Climate:**

- Where the efforts and achievements of all students and staff are recognized and celebrated
- That has low student/teacher ratios to enhance the learning process
- That encourages students to be healthy via physical activity and healthy lifestyle choices
- That celebrates and appreciates diversity
- That includes well-maintained physical facilities that meet the needs of our school community and reflect pride in the school
- That deeply supports teaching and learning
- That promotes fair and respectful treatment throughout the community, with full opportunity to be heard
- That enters into a partnership with parents in the education of their children

## **World Community Montessori Goals for Students:**

The curriculum varies at the different levels in our school (Primary, Elementary, Middle School, High School); the goals are consistent throughout all programs.

- To encourage self-motivation and cultivate a love of learning
- To develop a positive self-image
- To build the basic skills necessary for a lifetime of learning
- To develop and foster an abiding curiosity
- To foster compassion and empathy for others
- To cultivate a love of outdoor exploration and learning
- To learn through real life activities, hands-on materials
- To stimulate the growth of the whole child
- To develop a child's love of learning through a process which is FUN and ENJOYABLE

## **Family Commitment:**

Fundamental to the operation of this school is parent involvement. Teachers value the assistance and participation of parents in the classroom as well as outside of the classroom. Participating in Family Workdays, driving for school Field Trips, helping with School Fundraisers, and being a guest speaker in the classroom, are all ways in which parents support and enrich our school.

# PROGRAMS

## **PRIMARY (Ages ~ 2.5 - 6)**

Fully equipped Montessori classroom with certified Montessori teachers

## **LOWER ELEMENTARY (Ages ~6 – 9)**

Fully equipped Montessori classroom with certified Montessori teachers

## **UPPER ELEMENTARY (Ages ~ 9 – 12)**

Fully equipped Montessori classroom with certified Montessori teachers

## **MIDDLE SCHOOL (Ages ~ 12 – 14)**

Building on WCM's Montessori foundation at the Primary and Elementary levels, Middle School students continue their academic studies with hands-on and project-based learning experiences. In addition to core grade-level curriculum subjects, students take classes in carpentry, cooking, computer coding, community service, global languages, music, art, and creative writing.

## **HIGH SCHOOL (Ages 14-18)**

Subjects taught include English, Science, Math, History/Social Science, and Global Languages as well as a variety of Electives. Additional attention is given to refining study skills in preparation for college. High School students may be eligible for dual-enrollment college courses in junior and/or senior years.

## **SCHOOL HOURS**

- All levels - (Primary through High school) 8:30 am – 3:30 pm
- All levels - 8:30 am - 12 pm on Fridays

## **SCHOOL DAY**

World Community Montessori is open and supervised daily during school hours, excluding Holidays, Teacher Days, Parent Teacher Conference Days.

## **SCHOOL CLOSINGS & DELAYED OPENINGS:**

World Community Montessori follows Bedford County Schools for all weather-related closings. In the event of early dismissal due to severe weather or unavoidable circumstances, teachers will notify families as soon as possible.

## **RELIGIOUS PRACTICES**

WCM respects all religions and religious practices. Students are free to believe and practice their own religious cultures in the classroom. Daily noon prayer is part of the school day for Muslim students. If your child has religious practices that take place during the school day, please contact the Head of School so we can make appropriate arrangements.

## APPLICATION AND ENROLLMENT

Families interested in enrolling their child, are invited to tour the school with the Head of School prior to applying. Families wishing to pursue enrollment should submit an enrollment application (along with a non-refundable \$50 fee).

A Parent and Student interview will then be scheduled for the parents and the school to become better acquainted with one another and share relevant information to ensure that WCM's philosophy and methodologies are compatible with the parents' vision for their child's education.

Upon acceptance into the program, enrollment will be finalized after the following documents have been received:

- *Birth Certificate*
- *School Entrance Health Information Form (MCH-213F Part I)*
- *Certificate of Immunization (MCH-213F Part II) OR Religious Exemption, Commonwealth of Virginia (CRE-1)*
- *Signed Handbook Agreement*
- *Signed Tuition Agreement*
- *Emergency Contact Information*
- *Signed Optional Photo/Video/Voice Release*
- *Current Progress Reports (if transferring from another school)*
- *Signed Student Records Release Form (if transferring from another school)*

## STUDENT ARRIVAL & DISMISSAL

### **Morning Drop-off: *Classes begin at 8:30. Arrival time is 8:25***

Please stay with your child until his/her classroom is open (8:25). The tone of the morning is greatly influenced by the timely arrival of students. It is important that students are on time and feel settled into the classroom at the beginning of the day.

**Afternoon Pick-Up:** Please pick up your child at closing time (3:30). If a parent will be delayed, please notify your child's teacher (text or verbal). For the child's protection, no student will be permitted to drive home with someone who is not listed on their Emergency contact form. If anyone other than the parent or Emergency contact person will be picking up the child, the student's teacher will need verbal or written (text) approval from the parent.

### **Tardiness: Please ensure Arrival & Dismissal Times are Observed:**

Late arrivals are disruptive to the classrooms. Late pick-ups can cause problems for the teacher. If repeated tardiness becomes a pattern, the school will need to meet with the family to receive assurance that students arrive and are picked up on time.

**Absences:** Please contact your child's teacher as early as possible to report an absence. ***Re-contact the child's teacher for each day missed.*** To maintain the integrity of the student's learning period, please try to schedule appointments after the end of the school day, or on days the school is closed. If the student needs to leave during school hours for an appointment, the parent should inform the teacher, preferably the day before the appointment.

**Travel Absences:** Please try to schedule personal travel during school breaks. If this is not possible, notify your child's teacher as early as possible.

**For Middle School and High School:** Students who are absent can join classes by zoom or audio conferencing. Parents/students are responsible for contacting teachers for assignments.

**Rules for Vehicles While on School Grounds:** The safety of our students is paramount. We require all parents to adhere to the following rules of the road while on campus:

- All vehicles must obey the speed limits posted on the property.
- While on school grounds, pedestrians always have the right of way.
- Vehicle ignitions must be turned off while parked on school grounds.

## **DRESS CODE AND UNIFORM POLICIES**

The World Community Montessori uniform dress code builds a sense of belonging and unity, promotes inclusivity, and places the focus on the lessons and inner qualities of the student. It is the responsibility of the parent to ensure that their child follows the dress code and uniform policy.

Students in Elementary, Middle, and High School are required to wear school uniforms. All students should wear shoes suitable for outdoor play.

If it comes to a teacher's attention that the student is not following the dress code, they will hold a personal private discussion with the student to advise them of the potential non-compliance. Students will then be required to modify their appearance. If necessary, the teacher will notify the parent to help ensure compliance.

### **Primary School Dress Code:**

- Comfortable clothing, easy for child to manage independently
- Indoor shoes/slippers (close-toed) required
- Complete change of clothes including underwear

### **Elementary/Middle/High School Uniform Dress Code Includes the Following:**

1. White or Forest Green (Evergreen) polo shirt with collar, or Oxford collared shirt; long sleeve or short sleeve.
2. Navy pants, skirt, jumper, or uniform shorts (skirts and shorts should be knee-length.)
3. Socks or tights must be worn.
4. Solid navy fleece, sweater or vest with or without school logo.
5. Close-toed shoes. Flip-flops and high heels are not permitted.
6. All levels require indoor shoes/slippers (close-toed). Primary and Elementary students wear indoor shoes/slippers in the classroom.
7. Hats or head coverings must be removed before entering the classroom unless worn for religious reasons.
8. Outerwear (including sweatshirts, hoodies, jackets/coats, gloves, etc.) are not to be worn in the classroom.
9. Accessories, make-up and body-art should be minimal and non-distracting.

### **Friday is an Optional Non-Uniform Day:**

- Clothing should be free from any intentional rips or tears.
- Imagery on shirts should be respectful.
- Skirts and shorts should be knee-length.
- Sleeveless shirts, such as tank tops should not be worn.
- #7-9 from above apply

Uniforms with (and without) school logo may be purchased through <http://www.landsend.com>. The WORLD COMMUNITY MONTESSORI preferred school number is 900160003. Uniforms may also be purchased through other vendors of your choice, such as: Old Navy, Target or Wal-Mart.

If purchased from an alternate vendor, we encourage parents to first check the WORLD COMMUNITY MONTESSORI Lands End approved uniform page, for correct colors and styles.



## **SCHOOL POLICIES**

### **SUPPLIES**

Students at every level must have a backpack. Supplies lists will be provided before the beginning of school. ***Students in Middle School and High School will need to provide their own laptop computer or Ipad.***

### **FOOD AT SCHOOL**

As advocates of children's health and well-being, we ask that while at school, children eat the healthiest foods possible to keep the body and mind functioning at its best. There is a scheduled time in the morning for a small snack. Lunch is around noon. Please pack lunchboxes with a variety of healthy options including fresh fruit and vegetables. ***Please do not send sugary desserts, sodas, or chocolate.*** **Pack it out.** Students will be asked to "pack home" all food waste and food wrappers each day. Due to peanut and nut allergies, WCM is a peanut-free school.

### **FIELD TRIPS**

Class field trips are planned and integrated into the class curriculum and are an important part of the student's school experience. Parents will be notified in advance of field trips and what students will need to bring. A permission slip signed by the parent is required for every child participating in a field trip.

### **BIRTHDAYS**

On a child's birthday, parents are welcome to bring a special snack for the class. Please notify the teacher of your plans at least one day before the child's birthday.

### **PERSONAL BELONGINGS**

The school provides abundant materials for use in school. We ask that toys, games, trading cards, sports equipment and other personal belongings not directly related to school use be left at home. Pocket knives and toy guns (water, nerf, etc.) are not allowed on school premises at any time.

### **MOBILE PHONES AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

Students with mobile phones must have their devices turned off or muted and stored in a designated container in the classroom during school hours. Ipods, Ipads and other personal electronic devices or toys are not permitted at the Primary and Elementary levels, unless required by a teacher for educational purposes.

### **PARENT-CHILD COMMUNICATION DURING THE SCHOOL DAY**

If an emergency arises during the school day, the school will contact the parent immediately. If a student feels that they need to contact their parents during school hours, they can request permission from their teacher to use a school phone to make the call to their parents. If a parent needs to communicate with their child during school hours, please call (or text) the child's teacher directly. (For Middle School and High School parents, please call or text the Head of School 540-875-8908.)

### **EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS**

An emergency preparedness plan will be updated annually and discussed with parents at the beginning of the school year. Students will have regular emergency event drills.

## ILLNESS

For the 2024-2025 school year, please refer to the COVID-19 illness policy addendum, for additional details and protocols.

World Community Montessori must protect all children, parents, and staff from communicable diseases. Our illness policy is in place to prevent the spread of illness to others, reduce the possibility of the recuperating child returning to school before the child is fully recovered from the illness, which, in turn, could develop into a more serious illness, and to prevent the spread of colds, flu, and diarrhea common to children in school settings.

**Please do not send your child to school with a fever, sore throat, cough, cold, flu symptoms, or any contagious illness. If your child has any of these illnesses, they must remain home until they are symptom-free for 24 hours.**

Children should remain home if the following occur:

- Child develops or is sent home from school with a fever of 100 degrees or more
- Vomiting or diarrhea or rash within the previous 24-hour period
- Heavy colored nasal discharge
- Persistent cough or sore throat
- Cold or Flu Symptoms (persistent cough, sore throat, sneezing)
- Child not “well enough to go outside”

Parents will be called to pick up their child if symptoms of illness develop during the school day. The student will be removed from the group to a designated quiet area until the arrival of the parents. Upon notification, parents are required to pick up their child from the school within **one** hour. In case of illness or serious injury, if the parent cannot be reached, the person designated on the child’s Emergency Contact Form will be contacted.

Parents may not bring their child to school if he/she has been exposed to a communicable disease, develops symptoms of a contagious disease, or is diagnosed by a physician as having a contagious disease. Parents are required to report any contagious illness or symptoms in their household to WCM within 24 hours. Notice can then be given to the families of other students who may have been exposed.

**In the case of serious illness or injury** the child will be stabilized by a CPR/First Aid certified staff member and emergency authorities will be notified by 911. Parents will be notified immediately. The child will be transported to the nearest hospital.

## **MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION POLICY**

With the exception of diaper creams, sunscreen, insect repellent, and emergency life-saving medication such as epipens and inhalers, WORLD COMMUNITY MONTESSORI does not administer or store any medications.

If a student needs any of the above, parents are required to fill out a **Parent Consent Form** and deliver the above items to their child's teacher for proper storage.

## **ACCIDENTS / EMERGENCIES**

In case of minor accidents, staff will administer routine first-aid procedures. In the event of a serious injury, the student's family will be notified immediately. If parents cannot be reached, emergency procedures provided by parents and kept on file will be followed.

## **CODE OF CONDUCT**

**For your Child's success at School, Parents are Encouraged to:**

- Have your child at school on time.
- Encourage your child's daily attendance at school.
- Keep informed of school policies.
- Be sure your child is appropriately dressed at school and school-related activities.
- Discuss school assignments, progress reports, and grades with your child.
- Bring attention to your child's teacher any learning problems or conditions that may relate to your child's education.
- Maintain up-to-date home, work, and emergency telephone numbers and other pertinent information at the school.
- Support academics at home by assisting your child with management of schoolwork.
- Participate in school activities.
- Assist your child in understanding their responsibilities as outlined in this handbook.

### **STUDENT CONDUCT**

Students are expected to be respectful of teachers, peers and themselves. Disruptive behavior, verbal harassment or physical harm to oneself or others is not acceptable and will be dealt with on an individual basis. Teachers will approach student misconduct with the following methods:

1. Engaging the child in curricula and discussions, which lead to awareness of one's own strengths and challenges
2. Providing tools for dealing with challenges
3. Setting clearly-defined limits of behavior with consequences for going over limits, such as removal of privileges or limitation of participation. In extreme cases, the child may be asked to remain at home until they are able to conduct themselves appropriately.

The goal is internalization of the highest human values so that the student behaves from his or her own initiative without excessive external reminders of appropriate and respectful behavior.

### **HONOR SYSTEM**

Honor is one of a person's greatest attributes and most cherished traits. Without honor, students cannot achieve their maximum potential. Honor, character, and integrity are related to our school's key characteristics. Our honor system is based on the premise that a person should hold these qualities up to the highest standards in all that he or she does. Under the Honor Code at WCM, it is expected that all students will demonstrate

honesty and integrity in their conduct and study. Transgressions will be handled on an individual basis.

## **HOMEWORK**

### **Purpose:**

Homework and after school assignments start in Middle School. This contributes toward building responsibility, self-discipline, and lifelong learning habits. Homework should provide students with the opportunity to apply information they have learned, complete unfinished class assignments, and develop independence.

### **Benefits of Homework can include:**

1. Extend or make more meaningful concepts introduced at school.
2. Engage students in purposeful practice relevant to their learning.
3. Develop effective student habits.
4. Develop independent learning skills.

### **Responsibilities of Students:**

- Write down assignments or ask Teacher to write them down for you.
- Be sure all assignments are clear; don't be afraid to ask questions if necessary.
- Set aside a regular time for studying in a quiet, well-lit study area.
- Work on homework independently so that it demonstrates your best efforts.
- Ask for appropriate homework help when necessary.
- Produce quality work.
- Make sure assignments are done according to the given instructions, and completed and handed in on time.
- Extensions may be given by advance arrangement with the Teacher.
- Be sure to get work missed due to illness or absence in a timely manner.

### **Responsibilities of Parents:**

- Set a regular, uninterrupted study time each day in a quiet, well-lit study area.
- Monitor student's daily list of assignments and organization of tasks
- Help students to focus on the learning, not to just get the work done
- Be supportive when your child gets frustrated or has difficulty with assignments

### **Homework Time:**

Actual time required to complete homework and assignments will vary with each student's study habits, academic skills, and grade level. If your child is spending an inordinate amount of time doing homework, or if your child is becoming anxious about his/her homework, you should contact your child's teacher or Head of School.

## **Homework Guidelines for Parents:**

It is not unusual for a student to need help with homework from time to time. The following will assist you in helping your child in the most efficient way:

1. Make sure the student understands the assignment or the question.
2. Find out what the student does understand and at what point he/she has become confused.
3. Ask questions to help the student work through the problem.
4. Let the student come up with the ideas. Even if an answer is completely obvious to you, don't say it! If you are supplying the content, you are the only one learning.
5. The pencil is always in the student's hand.
6. If there is something you and your child do not understand about the assignment or the content, please contact the teacher for clarification before 8:30 pm. Leave a message if you cannot speak directly with the teacher.
7. Finish the session with a recap of what was learned (supplied by the student, of course!) and make sure the student knows what the next step is in his or her work.

## PROGRESS REPORTS AND GRADES:

Report cards/Progress Reports are issued twice during the academic year.

**Progress Reports** are given at all levels and serve as a vital communication tool between teachers and families. By keeping parents informed about their child's academic and developmental progress, Progress Reports foster greater family engagement and involvement.

### Primary Student Evaluations:

Because Montessori believes in individually paced academic progress, our school does not assign letter grades or rank students within each class according to their achievement at the Primary Level. Assessments of children's progress are done **by observation of the work and abilities of the children**. The teacher provides a detailed narrative progress report giving a description of the child's work and choices of work. The narrative progress report also allows the teacher to address character development. Progress Reports share the child's development of independence, initiative, responsibility, confidence, social awareness, cooperation, concentration, helpfulness, and commitment to work.

### Elementary Student Evaluations:

At the Elementary Level, teachers continue to provide detailed progress reports for each student.

In addition, the following evaluation markers are given:

- Proficient - competent, skilled
- Progressing - makes good effort
- Developing - needs support

### Middle School and High School Grading System:

Beginning with Middle School, in addition to Progress Reports, grades are given to provide feedback to students on their overall performance. Grades also provide valuable information to all those who support the students—teachers, parents, administrators, special educators and others. Student grades are based on their daily work, assignments, examinations, participation, and developmental behavior in the classroom. Value is placed on individual achievements and students are graded in a holistic way where their mistakes and efforts are used to measure their progress. Accompanying Progress Reports, the following evaluation markers are given:

4	A
3.75	A-
3.5	B+
3	B
2.75	B-
2.5	C+
2	C

1.75	C-
1	D
0	F

### **School Records:**

Transcripts, reports and report cards are kept on file. These are confidential and only students, parents or guardians may obtain copies. Teachers may review records upon request to the Head of School.

### **Promotion Policy:**

Students move on to new levels based on criteria evaluated by teachers and subsequent recommendations.

### **Awards/Incentives/Contests/Global Activities:**

Certificates and awards will be presented throughout the year at the discretion of the teacher. Teachers may choose to include participation in local, state, or national contests or activities as part of curriculum enrichment.

### **Guidance:**

Guidance is provided for SAT and/or ACT preparation and application as well as college and career counseling. College Entrance and Financial Aid Applications are the responsibility of the family. If needed, recommendations for special testing or tutoring may be made to the families by the teachers and/or Head of School.

### **Graduation Requirements:**

Each year, students at the High School level take English, History/Social Science, Science, Math, a Global Language, Health/Physical Education and at least one Elective (Art, Music, Crafts, Environmental Studies, Computer Programming, Journalism, Community Service, Current Events, a second Global Language).



## **FAMILY PARTICIPATION**

### **Parent Participation:**

Parents are a vital element in the education of the children at World Community Montessori . With a variety of professions, skills, and expertise, WCM parents can teach workshops, offer a class activity, assist in fundraisers, assist with class Field Trips, and participate in Family Work Days. Parent engagement enriches the student's education and inspires the children.

### **Parent Classroom Observation:**

We have an open-door observation policy. We welcome classroom observation. Please speak with your child's teacher in advance to schedule your visit.

### **Parent-Teacher Communication:**

Parents are encouraged to share important information with their child's teacher, particularly any changes at home or in the child's life that may have an effect on their school experience. Please contact your child's teacher for a time to discuss important information. For Primary parents, contact Erica. For Elementary parents, contact Meagan. Middle School parents should contact the Middle School Program Coordinator (Jehan).

Parent-teacher conferences will be held twice yearly and additionally as needed. During the conference, the classroom teacher(s) will discuss the progress of the student, answer any questions, and address any concerns you may have. Teachers and parents work together to arrange a time for the conference.

### **Parent Feedback Policy:**

A parent who has a grievance involving a teacher, staff member or member of the administration should contact the Head of School. Parents should follow the same procedure if they have a question or suggestion regarding policy or the curriculum at World Community Montessori.

### **Fundraisers and Volunteering:**

Parents, with the administration, teachers, and students, help to organize two or more fundraising activities a year. The funds raised at these events help pay for field trips, textbooks, supplies, academic enrichment activities, teacher salaries, and construction or maintenance projects for the school. Parents are asked to help organize school potlucks, Fall and Spring Fundraisers, and Family Work

Days. World Community Montessori is able to offer more affordable tuition rates due to active family participation.

## **DISCLAIMERS**

### **Licensing and Accreditation:**

World Community Montessori is a project of the World Community, a registered non-profit 501(c)3 religious organization in the state of Virginia. Code of Virginia 22.1-289.031 exempts education programs conducted under the auspices of a religious institution from licensure, if the institution annually files certain documentation with the Virginia Department of Education.

### **Liability Waiver:**

As a condition of your child's attendance at World Community Montessori, you agree to release and hold World Community and World Community Montessori harmless for any injury, loss, delay, damage, costs or expense that students may incur or sustain while at school or on school-sponsored field trips, by reason or in consequences of: (i) any incident beyond World Community Montessori's or World Community's reasonable control, including, but not limited to, acts of God, crimes of violence, acts of war, or government actions and restrictions; (ii) any event directly or indirectly caused by intentional or negligent acts or omissions by any third party.

### **Reporting of Suspected Child Abuse/Neglect:**

Private schools in Virginia are mandated by law to report any suspicion of child abuse or neglect to the Department of Social Services. All World Community Montessori staff take an annual training, provided by the Virginia Department of Social Services, in recognizing the signs of abuse and neglect and the responsibilities of being a mandated reporter.

### **Withdrawal:**

Parents wishing to withdraw their child from WCM, must give a written thirty day notice prior to leaving. Failure to provide adequate notice will result in liability for all fees, tuition, or other that were billed at the time notice is given.

### **Non-Discrimination Policy:**

World Community Montessori is an equal opportunity employer and is continually seeking to diversify its staff and student body. WCM is dedicated to providing an anti-bias environment for children and adults. WCM does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, or national ethnic origin in the

administration of its educational policies, hiring policies, admissions policies, financial aid and other school-administered programs.

## **STUDENT-PARENT HANDBOOK SIGNATURE PAGE**

Parents/Guardians, please take time to review and discuss the information in the World Community Montessori Handbook with your Elementary and Middle/High School children.

Included in the handbook is important information regarding school policies and procedures. Once you have read the handbook, please sign and return this form to the School Office.

I acknowledge that I have read and understand the policies and procedures outlined in the World Community Montessori Handbook.

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Student's Signature

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Parent/Guardian Signature

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Date