



Shining Stars

Montessori School

Parent Information Handbook

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Dear Parents,

We would like to welcome you to Shining Stars Montessori School. We have been in operation since 2010 and offer high quality child-care services.

Our progressive school curriculum is designed for our students with their best interest and Individuality in mind.

We believe that early childhood learning programs help in the development of children as they interact naturally with other children and are introduced to concepts using manipulative materials.

At Shining Stars Montessori, the teachers create a prepared environment with didactic materials that stimulate the child's curiosity and desire. Encouraging the child's natural joy of learning, teachers present specially designed Montessori materials to the children throughout the various programs leading to academic achievement and self-confidence.

“To assist a child we must provide him with an environment which will enable him to develop freely.” - Dr. Maria Montessori

Children learn by doing and observing in the classroom filled with beautiful didactic materials. Their interactions are guided by teachers who model kindness and respect, and who themselves are students of life. We look forward to serving you as a part of the family for many years to come.

The Staff of Shining Stars Montessori School

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Shining Stars Montessori School – Program Statement

Our Mission

Welcome to Shining Stars Montessori licensed childcare Centre. Our mission is to cultivate an environment where each and every individual child is recognized for their unique abilities and encouraged to reach their full potential.

Overall Statement

Each and every child is unique and special. They each have their own abilities and each grow and learn in different ways. Here at Shining Stars Montessori we understand and respect each and every child. They are our future and they have in them untapped potentials that need to be nurtured in order that they are successfully realized. As a Montessori based school, Shining Stars Montessori recognizes that children are self-learners and don't need educators to interrupt their learning or push them in certain directions. The Educator in our classrooms have the important role of creating an inviting, stimulating and developmentally appropriate environment, keenly observe the child at "play," and support these observations by encouraging further explorations. We truly believe this will help them flourish. Dr. Maria Montessori believed in the child-initiated, adult-supported environment. She believed that the child is naturally curious and full of wonder. Every child explores their world through their senses, through repetition of tasks and asking questions and imitating the adults around them. They will naturally learn – even if there aren't any educator-imposed expectations – in fact, they will learn more.

We are dedicated to having a quality program in place that will ensure the well-being, happiness and growth of children through collaborative efforts of both the educator and the family unit.

How Does Learning Happen? Ontario's Pedagogy for the Early Years is the foundation of our Program

Children are curious, competent, complex-thinking, and full of potential individuals. They are as unique as the families they grow up in. They contribute everyday to the world around them in wonderful ways and will continue to do so if their natural abilities and strengths are encouraged. We at Shining Stars Montessori recognize that for a child to thrive they need the full collaborative efforts of their family and educators alike in a rich environment that supports their learning.

Shining Stars Montessori will ensure the four foundations of Belonging, Well-Being, Engagement and Expression are always supported:

Foundations	Goals for Children	Expectations for Programs
Belonging	Every child has a sense of belonging when he/she is connected to others and contributes to his/her world.	Cultivate respectful relationships and connections
Well-Being	Every child is developing a sense of self	Nurture children's healthy

	and health and well-being	development and support their growing sense of self
Engagement	Every child is an active and engaged learner who explores the world with his/her senses, bodies and minds.	Provide environments and experiences to engage children in active, creative and meaningful exploration and learning.
Expression	Every child is a capable communicator who is able to express himself/herself in many ways.	Foster communication and expression in all forms.

To this end we will:

1. Promote the health, safety and well-being of young children, families and educators.

You will see:

- Safe supervision of children
- Child Protection procedures and training
- Sanitation and disinfection procedures
- Menu Planning following the Canada Food Guide
- Communicable disease prevention
- Emergency procedures
- Standard First Aid and CPR training

2. Support positive and responsive interaction between educators, children and families.

You will see:

- Educators role modeling inclusive, respectful, and collaborative interactions with children and other adults
- Training for Educators focusing on Positive Interactions
- Documentation that describe the Educators observations of the child’s interest and activities

Strategies to Support and Strengthen positive interactions

It is very important for children to be in positive, responsive relationships with the adults around them in order to flourish. Educators at Shining Stars Montessori will nurture an environment where each child will be included, will feel safe, secure and valued. This relationship of trust will give children the freedom to explore the world around them, discover new things, grow, develop and learn.

Educators will:

- **Engage** with children in a way that builds on their strengths as opposed to identifying what they are doing “wrong”
- Respond positively when a child asks them something. If they don’t know something they may respond by saying: “Let’s find out together!”

- **Move away** from viewing play as just something children do and **move towards** viewing play as intentional; a way for children to **express** themselves in multiple ways
- Try to have a **shared sense of joy** that is the wonder of new learning for the Educator and the children with whom they engage.

Supporting Children to Manage their Behavior

Children benefit socially, emotionally and physically from our positive approach. Educators focus on helping the child understand their feelings and emotions and provide support to help children regulate their behavior.

You will see:

- Smaller groups that allow for more individualized adult attention
- A flexible learning environment allowing the educator to respond in the moment to a child's interest and build on it
- Educators ensuring toys, equipment, and materials are available to children at all times
- Engaging in role-playing with children to demonstrate positive social skills including problem solving when conflict arises, and understanding how their actions affect others
- Children given the freedom to make choices

The following are unacceptable behavior management strategies, are not permitted at any time under any circumstances and are considered **Prohibited Practices**:

- 1) Corporal punishment of the child;
- 2) Physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a high chair, car seat, stroller or other device for the purposes of discipline or in lieu of supervision, unless the physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing a child from hurting himself, herself or someone else, and is used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent;
- 3) Locking the exits of the child care Centre or home child care premises for the purpose of confining the child, or confining the child in an area or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is required as part of the licensee's emergency management policies and procedures;
- 4) Use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or use of derogatory language directed at or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame or frighten the child or undermine his or her self-respect, dignity or self-worth;
- 5) Depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding; or
- 6) Inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

If any of the staff members violate any of these expectations, it will lead to disciplinary actions including memo's, further training - up to and including termination.

3. Encourage and enable children to interact and communicate in a myriad of ways with each other, with educators and with their communities.

A Montessori Classroom is set up in such a way that allows children to either work individually or in a group setting, allowing each child to learn how to positively interact

with their fellow classmates as well as learn how to collaborate and solve problems. This will teach children, not only how to communicate with each other, the educators and their communities, but also how to become confident, independent individuals.

You will see:

- Educators using developmentally appropriate language throughout the day
- Activities where children can work individually or in a group
- Educators working closely with children

4. Foster exploration and inquiry that is play based. Evidence from diverse fields of study tells us that when children are playing, they are learning.

In a Montessori classroom, we understand that a child will learn through their senses, through exploration of their environment and through freedom. “Working” with the activities is no different to them than playing. This play allows them to become active participants, keen observers, collaborators and reporters. It piques their curiosity, allows them to become independent and more importantly create within them a love of learning they will take with them throughout their lives.

You will see:

- Different areas set up for children to learn and play and explore – Such as dramatic play area, language, sensorial, math, culture and practical life section. Each section is set up to pique a child’s interest so they naturally want to learn more and progress further
- Children-directed activities. Children decide when, where, how and what they wish to work with.
- Educators responding and adapting the environment based on children’s interest and curiosities. They will add new toys, material, equipment, and pose questions to support play and learning.

Supporting Healthy Development and Learning

Our environment supports healthy development and learning by allowing children the freedom to move around the classroom and “working” with the activities based on their own interests, at their own pace, without interruption or imposed expectations. Our environment is flexible and responsive to the children’s needs. It is also a warm, positive place where children feel safe – like a home away from their home, with bright colors, plants, and furnishing at their height level, so they may be independent.

5. Provide both child initiated and adult supported experiences to foster development.

You will see:

- Children being able to choose when, where, how, and which activity they would like to work with without any imposed expectations. They may work however long they want, independently or with whomever they choose to
- Educators responding to their needs and curiosities by adapting the environment to reflect their interests. For example if a child is interested in cars – they may the next day bring other types of transportation, coloring

sheets of different types transportation, real models of other forms of transportation. They may pose questions or offer their observations to foster development

6. Provide many opportunities for a range of experiences that support each child's learning and development.

You will see:

- A recognition and celebration of different Cultural Festivities, i.e Diwali, Eid, Christmas, Chinese New Years, so children become more aware of the World outside of the classroom
- Cultural Food Day
- Circle time where current events are discussed
- Cooking Days – where children learn to make muffins or pizza to take home to their parents.
- Nature walks where children are made aware of living, once living and non living things, as wells as different type of trees and leaves
- Gymnastic, Yoga/Meditation days.

7. Incorporate a range of different experience modalities including indoor and outdoor play, active play, quiet play, rest and quiet time considering the individual needs of children.

You will see:

- Scheduled indoor/outdoor, rest time
- Generous blocks of time for play and exploration
- Section for quiet time and reflection

8. Foster engagement of and ongoing communication with parents about the program and their children

You will see:

- Observation days
- Parent/teacher interviews
- Events such as mother/father day breakfast
- Displays of children's art work
- Photographs of children at play or during a trip

Parents as Partners:

At Shining Stars Montessori, we understand that parents are the most important influence in a child's life. It is so important for us to work closely with parents so that we are continually making sure that children are developing, thriving and most importantly are healthy and happy. All the above strategies will be in place to keep the parents included. Added to that the Educator will always be available to have conversations with parents in regards to any concerns or updates they may need.

Key ideas and messages we share with parents:

Here at Shining Stars Montessori, our key goal will always be to educate parents on How Learning Happens. The research and documentation in regards to that will be communicated to the parents through news articles and/or letters sent home so that they are aware of how best their child learns.

9. Actively engage with community partners and provide opportunities for the children and families to develop close connections with a range of community supports.

At Shining Stars Montessori, we work closely with the Region in order to provide extra support for children and families. We are a part of Raising the Bar so that we are a part of a continual process of improvement and a part of the Peel Inclusion Resource Services (PIRS), which provides support to children with special needs in a licensed Centre's.

You will see:

- Resource Teachers providing extra support to children who may need it.
- Early Years Specialists sitting in and observing a classroom in order to provide valuable advice on how best to improve the classroom environment or the curriculum. They will also be there to ensure Best Practices.

10. Strengthen the capacity of educators to collaborate effectively with children, families and their colleagues through the provision of ongoing opportunities for continuous professional learning.

You will see:

- Support staff in place while Educators are off for the morning or afternoon taking a Professional Learning Course
- On-site training provided through external agencies
- Articles and memos posted in the staff room for further Educator knowledge and continuous learning

Continuous Professional learning for Educators

Shining Stars Montessori is committed to the ongoing professional development of all our educators. What our educator learns benefits both the children and our program.

Shining Starts Educators will have many opportunities to attend external learning events and conferences and keep legislated training requirements like Standard First Aid & Infant and Child CPR up to date.

On a day-to-day basis the child-care Centre supervisor is responsible for the leadership, mentorship, coaching and development of educators. Based on the learning needs of the educators, the supervisor may meet with staff to suggest strategies, conduct learning huddles to focus on a particular area of Shining Stars Montessori curriculum with the entire team, conduct regular staff meetings to reflect and plan, invite speakers from external agencies to attend the Centre, or provide materials including links, articles, and various readings to supplement educator's professional learning

11. Use many languages to document and review the experiences of the children and the educator in order to:

- Provide an ongoing record of development;
- Provide tools to enable educators to reflect on the impact of their activities and strategies; and
- Provide a visual and oral record that enables parents to review and explore the developmental trajectory of their child.

You will see:

- Monthly/weekly calendar of activities
- Term record of activities child is learning, mastered and has yet to learn and how this relates to the development of the child i.e. gross/fine motor skills, language development or building a foundation of mathematical skills
- Report card given twice a year to parents

A Commitment to continuous Improvement

At Shining Stars Montessori we are committed to the development of the Educators, children and the program itself. We will continually reflect and assess the effectiveness of the learning environment in order to evaluate and improve. In order to best do this, we will engage the staff in meetings and group discussions, and parents by providing surveys and questionnaires and by constantly being vigilant of changing research in effective, successful teaching methodologies and child learning and development.

Calendar

Academic Year

The school program is designed to combine the curriculum and play time during the months of September to June. During the school year the children will be involved in indoor activities based on a curriculum designed to incorporate Montessori learning with a modern outlook. The outdoor routines will be strictly followed due to the most needed physical activities. In case of extreme weather children will be involved in special gross motor activities indoors. A Summer program will be operative during the months of July and August during which time the children will be participating in nature and neighborhood walks, water play and field trips. The school will be open from 7:00 am to 6:00 pm Monday through Friday.

Holidays

September Labour Day
October Thanksgiving Day
December Christmas, Boxing Day
January New Year's Day
February Family Day
April Good Friday
May Victoria Day
July Canada Day
August Civic Holiday

Bringing and Picking Up Your Child

When you bring your child in the morning, please tell the teachers anything you think they should know about your child (i.e. slept poorly). This information is valuable to the staff so that they have a better understanding of your child's behavior and how to help the child to cope during the day.

Your child's safety is always the staff's first priority. For this reason we request that you complete the following tasks when bringing and picking up your child.

1. Ensure that a staff member acknowledges your child's arrival in the morning.
2. A sign – up sheet will be posted for you to initial at drop off/pick up.
3. When picking up your child, make certain that a staff member is aware that you are taking the child.
4. If someone other than yourself will be picking up your child, please notify the staff by completing and submitting the necessary form: "Alternate Pick Up/Drop Off".

Phone call authorization for release of your child will NOT be accepted.

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School Closure

In the event of a serious snow/ice storm or an unforeseen event, the school may automatically be closed. Also if the Peel Board of Education announces school closure in our area, this Centre will also be closed. It would be advisable in these circumstances to call the school before leaving your home.

School and Daycare hours

The school and daycare hours are from Monday to Friday 7am to 6:00pm for children of ages 2 months – 5 years.

To allow you a little flexibility, various programs have been offered. You can consult the Supervisor for the pick-up and drop off times of your child. The school will operate during all 12 months.

Full Day Program 7:00am to 6:00pm

Half-Day Program 8:30am to 11:30am and/or 2:00pm to 5:00pm

Any program for 5 hours or more will be considered a full day.

Center Policies

Registration & Fee Payment

A non-refundable registration fee of \$100 is required in accompaniment with the application form. A deposit equivalent to two week's fees and a VOID cheque must be submitted at the time of registration. The deposit will be used for the last week of attendance or in case there is no notice provided for termination of care by the parent.

Fees must be paid for everyday the child is enrolled including days absent and all statutory holidays. A 10% discount will be given to the second (and third ...) older sibling. There will be a charge of \$25 for each bounced cheque. A late fee of \$10 per day will be charged for overdue payments.

If fees are overdue for more than three days your child's registration will be cancelled immediately. In case of any cheques returned unpaid by the financial institution the two week's deposit will be used to pay the fees for that period.

Tax receipts will be issued to all parents during the month of February.

Late Fee

A late fee will apply when a child is not picked up on time, as this will affect the hours of scheduled supervision provided by the staff. A 15-minute delay is acceptable only for half day programs. A late/early fee of \$5 will be charged for every 30-minute over and above the designated time. After 6:00pm the late fee is \$1 per minute due to the detainment of staff beyond the regular hours.

Late Pick Up Policy

It is the responsibility of all parents/guardians to pick up their child from the Centre by 6:00PM. If for any reason/s the child cannot be picked up at the designated time we request that you call the Centre immediately.

If a child is not picked up by 6:00PM, the attending staff will contact the parents and the emergency phone numbers. If no contact is available and the parent/guardian has not informed of any delay in picking up the child then the staff will wait until 6:30PM.

The staff will then call the Centre Director at 6:30PM, and the Children's Aid Society (CAS) by 7:00 PM, to report of the child not been picked up by the parent/guardian. The staff/director will then follow the instructions given by the CAS worker for further action. The attending staff will prepare a written report of the incidence.

Illness Policy

It is in the best interest of your child and the other children at the Centre for your child to stay at home when he/she is ill.

- After a fever your child's temperature should be normal at 37 Celsius for 48 hours before returning to the Centre.
- If your child has a loose bowel movement, he/she should not return to the Centre until he /she has had a normal stool or no stool for 48 hours.
- Any child with discharging eyes may not return to the school until his/her eyes are free of discharge for 48 hours.
- If your child has vomited he/she may not come to the school until he/she has not vomited for 48 hours and is resumed to a regular diet.

If your child becomes ill at school and you are called, kindly pick up your child promptly. Shining Stars Montessori will not contact you unless your child needs to be at home.

Student Teachers/Volunteer

Shining Stars Montessori School welcomes the support of placement students and volunteers to enhance the safety and well-being of the children. They will be welcome under the following conditions:

- The needs of the children are priority.
- Placement students and volunteers will not be admitted in numbers that hinder the essential work of the school.
- Placement students and volunteers will be required to read, understand and comply with all policies and procedures.

Although the assistance provided by Placement students and volunteers is valuable, certain restrictions apply.

- No child is to be supervised by a person under 18 years of age alone.
- Placement students and volunteers do not count towards staffing ratios.
- Placement students and volunteers are not permitted to be alone with the child.

Absentees

If your child will be absent, we ask that you notify the center early in the morning so that the staff is aware. If your child is absent due to a communicable disease, a doctor's note stating that your child has recovered completely will be required when returning to school. If your child shows signs of illness i.e. fever, diarrhea, vomiting etc. she/he must remain at home. If a child becomes ill at school the parents will be contacted and the child must be picked up as soon as possible.

Withdrawal

We request that a written notice be given two weeks in advance if the intention is to withdraw the child from the school. Fees for two weeks will be charged in the absence of a notice for withdrawal. The center reserves the right to request withdrawal of a child from the program if the Educator feels that the Program does not meet the needs of the child. Furthermore, if the parent/guardian acts in a disrespectful manner and behavior, the supervisor/operator reserve the right to terminate care of your child effective immediately.

Meals

Each day there will be one full meal at noon, consisting of meat/protein alternative, fruits, vegetables, salad, dessert, milk, and bread. Morning and afternoon snacks will also be provided at the center.

A weekly menu will be posted on the bulletin board at the beginning of every week. Please take the time to view the menu and notify the staff if you have any concerns regarding the food items.

In order to reduce the exposure to Anaphylactic causative agents (severe allergies) there will be no food allowed from outside at any time. Anaphylaxis is a life threatening allergy. If a

child has any other food allergy i.e. dairy, gluten etc., parents must bring the substitute foods for their child in original containers labeled with their child's name and fill out a Special Dietary form. Parents must inform the Supervisor of any changes.

Health

To ensure the safety of all children at the center, we ask that parents provide us with their child's immunization record prior to admittance. The child's immunization record is an essential requirement by the Peel Health Department. If your child has not been inoculated for measles, please consult your doctor about the importance of being protected.

Young children are very susceptible to infections, and we ask for your co-operation in keeping your child at home if he/she is ill. If your child does not feel well during the day, the staff will contact a parent or the person that has been delegated for this responsibility, and ask that arrangements are made to take your child home. When a child is even mildly ill, the stimulating atmosphere of a large group of children and an active program makes it more tiring for the child. For this reason, children are better at home where they can rest more easily with fewer distractions.

There are "No Smoking" signs posted at all entrances and exits. To all parents, staff, volunteers, and visitors smoking is prohibited on the premises and in the playground.

Sleep Policy

Shining Stars Montessori strictly follows the Sleep Supervision Policy for direct visual checks. Parents will be consulted regarding a child's sleeping arrangements at the time the child is enrolled or transitioning to another room. Every child under 12 months will be placed for sleep in a manner consistent with the "Joint Statement on Safe Sleep," unless the child's physician recommends otherwise in writing. Children will be supervised continually during the nap time and in addition educators will perform direct visual checks at intervals of 15 minutes for Infants and Toddlers and 30 minutes for Pre-school age children to ensure there are no indicators of distress.

Medication

It is the parents' responsibility to instruct the staff regarding administration of medication. Should there be a need to dispense medication at the Centre, the staff will ask the parent to fill out the medication form with all the details and the medicine must be provided in its original bottle. Please do not place any medication or food in the child's bag.

Interviews and Observations

Observations will take place during the Winter Term and each parent will have the opportunity to observe their child for a day and discuss their observations with a staff member. A parent can also request an appointment for an interview at this time.

Field Trips

Trips will be made to special places of interest, throughout the year. Information regarding

destination date and time along with permission slips to sign and return will be sent prior to going on any field trip. Parents are always welcome to accompany us.

Clothing and Shoes

All clothing should be clearly labeled with the child's name on the inside with a permanent marker. Sometimes there may be five pairs of clothing or shoes in the same size and color. Your child's teacher will instruct you in case any additional clothing item is required. Please provide a set of extra clothing for a child to change in case of an accident. A blanket for naptime will also be required.

Parties

The school will have a party for the last day of the school year, as well as Valentines Day, Halloween, etc. We believe that the school should be a fun experience, and your support during these days is much appreciated.

The Centre will celebrate birthdays of each child with the parents consent. A special snack will be included for the children for everyone to be able to participate. Parents are asked to not bring any food items for any events.

Ideas/Comments

If you have a particular idea for a craft or a field trip, please do not hesitate to share your ideas with a staff member. If you would enjoy helping with a special craft or activity, or if you have any comments, we would like to hear from you!

Behavior Management Policy and Discipline

According to the Day Nurseries Act, all staff members are required to strictly follow The Behavior Management Policy. These behaviors will not be tolerated

- 1) Corporal punishment of the child.
- 2) Deliberate harsh or degrading measures to be used on a child that would humiliate a child or undermine a child's self respect.
- 3) Deprivation of basic needs such as food, shelter, clothing or bedding
- 4) Locking or permitting to lock, for the purpose of confining a child, the exits of a school, or physical restraint of a child.
- 5) Child abuse of any kind will not be tolerated. Abuse includes:
 - a) To suffer physical harm
 - b) To be sexually molested or sexually exploited
 - c) To be denied of medical treatment even though it is needed
 - d) To be emotionally abused
- 6) The staff has to only follow the policies of the permitted behavior management disciplinary practices that have been agreed upon the commencement of employment.
- 7) Any violation of number 1-5 of the behavior management policy will result in immediate termination

- 8) The behavior management policy will be reviewed every six months, signed and dated
- 9) A record will be kept each time the policies and procedures are reviewed and the record will be signed and dated by the employee and supervisor
- 10) Each entry will be kept for at least two years

The supervisor of the centre will monitor staff supervision of children and behavior management. He/She will record, review and discuss with the staff should there be any concerns. An action and follow up will be required for improvement of staff behavior.

Discipline

The center has very clear policies regarding discipline, which is listed below. Please feel free to question the staff and/or the supervisor should you require any additional information. We list below for your reference, very explicit policies of the center:

- Class teachers will explain to the child what type of behavior is expected of him/her in any given situation.
- A child that has difficulty in following normal behavior patterns will be reminded and aided in order to understand the expectation in a constructive and positive manner.
- If a child continues to disrupt the classroom, he/she will be taken to another area within the classroom and given a book or a toy.
- At each stage of this process, the child will be given the choice of remaining and behaving or being moved from the disruptive situation.

It is important that the staff adopt a consistent approach to discipline. This will help to provide children with a framework of behaviors, which are acceptable and also help the children to feel secure within the school environment.

All staff members will be required to use a soft but firm tone when communicating with the children. It is advised that their hand instead of their arm be held when re-directing. Punishment and rewarding with food is not permitted at any time.

We believe that the adult can increase the development in a child with respect to high self-esteem and competent behavior through positive guidance and by setting an appropriate model for the child to emulate.

Prohibited Practices:

- 1) Corporal punishment of a child,
- 2) Physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a high chair, car seat, stroller or other device for the purposes of discipline or in lieu of supervision, unless the physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing a child from hurting himself, herself or someone else, and is used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent;
- 3) Locking the exits of the child care Centre or home child care premises for the purpose of confining the child, or confining the child in an area or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is required as part of the licensee's emergency management policies and procedures;
- 4) Use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or use of derogatory language directed at or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame or frighten the child or undermine his or her self-respect, dignity or self-worth;
- 5) Depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding; or

- 6) Inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.

Child Abuse Policy and Duty to Report

It is the legal responsibility of every person who performs professional or official duties with respect to a child, to report abuse or any suspicions of child abuse encountered in the course of one's work, to Children's Aid Society. This responsibility is extended to include any volunteers, students or support staff that has contact with the children.

Child Abuse of any kind will not be tolerated at any time.

Abuse Includes:

- a) Physical harm
- b) Emotional harm
- c) Sexual harm
- d) Neglect

Any person who suspects that a child is being abused has a legal duty to report the suspected abuse directly to the Children's Aid Society (CAS).

It is the responsibility of parents, an employee, volunteers, supply and support staff that are in contact with the children to report abuse or any suspicions of child abuse to the CAS immediately, at the phone number (905) 363-6131.

Parent Issues and Concerns Policy and Procedures

Objective:

To outline the policy and procedures for addressing educational concerns brought to staff and supervisor by parents. Appropriate flexibility will be exercised in implementing these procedures to suit individual circumstances.

Procedures:

Classroom concerns brought to the supervisor/owner: **(An initial response to any issues or concerns will be provided within 1-2 business days at max.)**

Steps and Guidelines for Parents and/or Guardians to follow:

1. Inform the teacher/supervisor of your concerns and if you are not satisfied with the response,
2. Set up a meeting to discuss your concerns. If there is still no resolution,
3. Inform the licensee of your concerns. And finally,
4. Inform the school in writing of the issue and your concerns.

If a parent brings a concern to the supervisor/owner about a classroom or teacher-related matter, the supervisor/owner will undertake one or more of the following actions depending on the nature of the concern and its circumstances:

1. Advise the parent to first discuss the concern directly with the teacher and resolve it at that level;

2. Gather any relevant information to determine the facts and circumstances;
3. Discuss the concern with the teacher and offer advice to the teacher where advice is required to resolve the concern, and inform the parent of the outcome;
4. Meet jointly with the teacher and the parent to discuss the concern where the supervisor/owner determines that such a meeting will resolve the concern;

School Concerns Brought to the supervisor/owner:

If a parent brings a concern about a school policy, procedure, activity, event, or situation to the supervisor/owner, they will undertake one or more of the following actions depending on the nature of the concern and its circumstances:

1. Contact the parent within 1-2 business days to discuss and resolve the concerns.
2. Gather any relevant information to determine the facts and circumstances;
3. Assist the parent in resolving their concern and if it is not possible, explain the policy, procedures and activities and why they were put in place.
4. Make a final decision and communicate that decision to the parent verbally as well as in a letter.
5. Keep a record of decision, including outcomes on file.

Guidelines for Staff:

In addressing parents' concerns staff will strive to:

1. Foster a climate of respect and trust which focuses on working towards mutually acceptable solutions;
2. Ensure that every parent with a concern has an adequate opportunity to express the concern fully;
3. Encourage the parent to address the concern at the level at which the concern is related, except where circumstances warrant otherwise;
4. Conduct a process for addressing a concern that is seen to be fair by the parent and by all other parties directly involved in addressing the concern;
5. Maintain a written record of the concern(s) where necessary;
6. Provide the parent with timely updates, as needed, about the progress made in resolving the concern;

At all times we ensure that confidentiality will be maintained concerning personal or private matters addressed by all parties.

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.

If a parent/guardian expresses concerns that a child is being abused or neglected, the parent will be advised to contact the local Children's Aid Society (CAS) directly.

Persons who become aware of such concerns are also responsible for reporting this information to CAS as per the "Duty to Report" requirement under the *Child and Family Services Act*.

For more information, visit

<http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/childrensaidthereportingabuse/index.aspx>

Emergency Management Policies and Procedures

Shining Stars Montessori School does have an Emergency Management Policy in place in case an emergency arises where a potential threat or natural disaster has been identified and evacuation or other actions may be required. It provides procedures where sheltering is required in the case of tornadoes, hurricanes, earthquakes, disgruntled parents or unauthorized visitors and lockdown situations. In case an emergency occurs parents will be notified by phone or by email.

Educational Philosophy

The need for optimum intellectual and social skills to cope in our rapidly changing world has never been greater. The early education and training of our children is essential for developing those skills as individuals and for the stability and development of society in general. The philosophy of education represents the choices, values, knowledge and beliefs of teachers, as well as their aspirations, intentions and aims. It serves to guide and inspire and contributes to determining the detail of the everyday life in the classroom.

The Montessori Curriculum

Dr. Maria Montessori (1870-1953), the founder of the Montessori Philosophy of education strongly believed in the importance of both hereditary and environmental influences on the development of the child. It was from her observations of child development that soon became internationally recognized as the Montessori Method of Education. She was of the view that “A child’s potential for development in a society is greatly influenced by his/her environment.”

Based upon her many years of research and observation she determined that:

- The first two years of life, the absorbent mind, simply passively absorbed necessary information from the environment. In this period the child possesses the unconscious absorbent mind.
- After two years, when the child is older and mobile, he/she can go to those elements in the environment that fascinates him/her. The absorbent mind then becomes a conscious instrument.

Montessori included four major developmental skills in the educational learning process for preschoolers, which are: Sensorial (development of the five senses), Practical Life Experiences (development of self-help skills), Language Arts (to help children read and spell short words), and Mathematics (introduce quantity and symbols of math, sequencing, awareness of shape and sorting). Other categories have now been added i.e. Botany, Computers, Geography, French, Art and Music.

The Montessori materials are carefully designed to enhance the learning process and the development of the senses at every stage.

Program and Curricular Objectives

To provide a structural environment in which Montessori and Progressive philosophies of education are carefully integrated. To give each child ample opportunities to experience success, which is important in the growing and adjusting experience.

To help children develop a sense of self-esteem, trust and belonging, by exhibiting a positive attitude towards life.

To encourage active learning by providing experiences through manipulating objects, sensorial, exploration, and simply by playing.

To provide a balanced curriculum that supports and stimulates children to develop to their maximum potential by growth and development in all areas i.e. socio-emotional, intellectual, and physical. To organize activities and plan possibilities that will elicit and support their interest, and that will extend and move them into richer learning and experiencing.

To provide unstructured and open-ended materials such as clay, paint, water, blocks, wood, crayons and paper – and activities such as cooking, planning trips, crafting.

To respect the mental, physical, spiritual, and ethical values of each child individually. To help each child start the education process in a positive, supportive, healthy and safe environment.

Fee Schedule:

Program	Duration	Infants Per Month	Infants Bi-weekly	Toddlers Per Month	Toddlers Bi-weekly	Casa Per Month	Casa Bi-weekly
Full Day	7.00am – 6.00pm	\$1440	\$720	\$1260	\$630	\$1190	\$600
Half Day (5 Days) AM/PM	7:30am – 11:30am 2 pm - 6pm	N/A	N/A	\$630	\$315	\$595	\$300
Part-time 4 Full Days 3 Full Days 2 Full Days	7am – 6pm	N/A	N/A	\$960 \$775 \$450	\$480 \$387.50 \$225	\$905 \$725 \$420	\$455 \$362.50 \$210

Shining Stars Montessori School Fee Schedule