

Wesley Kids Montessori Preschool

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POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND GUIDELINES

Welcome to Wesley Kids Montessori Preschool. We are thrilled to have your family partner with us in providing a nurturing environment for your child to learn and grow. This is our first year since spring of 2020 serving the Oklahoma City community in this capacity, and we are excited to reinstitute the Montessori Preschool here at Wesley.

As you complete the enclosed enrollment packet, please take time to review the materials included. You will find information about the policies and practices that help us assure that your child and your family have a wonderful experience at Wesley Kids Montessori Preschool.

At this time our lead and assistant teachers all have American Montessori Society Certifications and also possess Master level degrees. We invite you to communicate with us often in person or over the phone. We encourage you to ask questions and share ideas. Please join us in making the coming year one of joyous discovery for your child.

Tai Allen

Director/Teacher

Vicki Dimmer

Teacher

Charlotte Wood-Wilson

Teacher

Our School Structure

Wesley is a Montessori self-contained mixed age classroom. We welcome potty trained children emerging 3-year-olds-6-year-olds into the environment. Our school is two days weekly Tuesday and Thursday from 9-2.

A Montessori environment is a beautiful example of natural community. Life isn't segregated by age; communities are not divided into peer groups, and we do not only spend time and learn with people our same age. Age does not dictate social or academic developmental level. A mixed age environment eliminates competition, as every child is at a different stage of learning, unique to their own development. It encourages peer-to-peer interactions and provides rich opportunities for building social and academic skills. Younger students benefit from the older peer while the older students benefit from the internal reward of being a good role model or guide. The older student is able to solidify their learning and test their knowledge by reaching the highest form of learning which is teaching. The younger student is able to see the repetition in works that they are not quite ready to do but are able to observe and gain familiarity. This mutually beneficial environment unfolds within the Montessori environment through the direct preparation of the teachers in understanding where each child is within their learning and meeting them there.

Arrival

All classes begin at 9:00 am. Teachers will be at the carpool drive through at 8:55-9:10 to assist your child out of the car. Cultivating independence is a primary focus of the Montessori Method and utilizing a carpool drop off is a great way to begin nurturing that independence within the child.

When completing carpool you will enter the portico facing north and stop at the green wooden enclosure forming a line of cars. We will assist the children out one at a time and walk them to the door to begin their day.

Establishing a routine and making departures brief and positive allows the child to separate and orient to their day. Our teachers will always support the children during this transition scaffolding their independence and growing their confidence with this practice. One teacher will be negotiating the car door and child while another teacher is welcoming them at the front door/inside the classroom. Please refrain from initiating conversation with teachers during this time, as the safety of your child is our primary concern.

We ask that you make every effort to see that your child arrives on time. This will assist your child in feeling more secure as they make the transition from home to school and back again.

Late Arrivals

If you arrive after staff have left the entry doors, you will need to park and come to the gate south of the green wooden enclosure for a teacher to let you in. We will make every effort to have a teacher available to let you in until 9:30. After that time, there may be no one to let you in as teachers will be in class.

Absence

Please contact us if your child is going to be absent from school or if you are going to be over 30 minutes later than your typical arrival time...we will start to worry!

Dismissal

Pick-up will be through the playground gate, at the front steps of the Montessori. As your child's independence grows, their speed at collecting their belongings and transitioning out of the school will also improve. Please be mindful of this transition and allow them to independently gather their things to depart for the day.

If you are having a friend/family member pick up your child, it is imperative that they are listed as an authorized pick-up in your child's file. Additionally, this individual must show a photo identification. **Wesley Kids Montessori Preschool will not release your child to an unauthorized individual under any circumstances.** This policy is for the safety of your child.

Late Fees

Please be prompt in picking up your children. The school day ends promptly at 2pm. If a child is not picked up by 10 minutes after the end of your child's school day, late fees will be applied at \$1 per minute.

Church Security and Safety

The safety of the children is the utmost concern to the staff and teaching team at Wesley. The hallway separating the Montessori from the remainder of the church is secured by two self-locking doors which are not accessible when closed from the church. The Montessori is secured with a fence and the exterior doors are always locked. Teachers and staff are the only people permitted to open doors within the Montessori environment. The teachers will always have their cell phones accessible should an emergency occur. Additional staff is also available at the church should an additional person be needed in an emergency.

Church Protection and Safety of Minors Policy

Wesley United Methodist Church adopts this policy for the protection of children and vulnerable adults.

Purpose

Our purpose for establishing this policy and accompanying procedures is to demonstrate our total and unwavering commitment to protecting the physical, emotional, and spiritual growth for any children, youth, and vulnerable adults who enter our facilities or participate in our programming.

Covenant Statement

Wesley United Methodist Church hereby pledges to conduct the ministry of Jesus Christ in ways that ensures physical safety, emotional empowerment, and spiritual growth for children (ages 0-11), youth (ages 12-18), adult workers (those who are given the responsibility of working with children and youth), and vulnerable adults (those who live with mental or developmental handicaps). We will follow reasonable safety measures when selecting and recruiting workers; we will implement prudent operational procedures in all areas of programming and care; we will train our workers on our procedures and policies; and we will clearly define procedures for reporting a suspected policy violation incident that conforms to our standards and requirements of law.

SELECTION Policies

a) All volunteer and paid staff who work with children and youth at the church must be at least 18 years old and no less than 5 years older than the oldest person they supervise or work with directly.

b) All volunteer and paid staff with responsibilities for working directly with children, youth, and/or vulnerable adults will:

- Complete and sign an application with related waivers giving permission to check references and background information
- Provide the names and contact information of 3 personal references
- Undergo a background check by a reputable third party, provided and paid for by the church
- Will submit to having a new background check performed at least once every 4 years. Certain programs, activity partners, or agreements may require more frequent renewal of background checks and/or screenings. No one who works

or volunteers officially for the church has a right to refuse a background check and still be considered qualified for the work.

SUPERVISION Guidelines

When supervising activities:

a) There must be at least two non-related, qualified persons (see above) present at all times. This may mean having

both qualified persons present in the same activity space or having one qualified person present in the space and

another elsewhere in the facility with the ability to observe or move in and out of the space easily.

b) They will have easy access to means of communication (such as a phone).

c) One-on-one interactions will be visible to all.

When an activity is held on church property:

a) Anyone has the right to visit and observe the activity at any time.

b) All classrooms, office doors, or other spaces of use will have at least one window of visibility that will not be

covered for any reason. For rooms with doors without a window of visibility, the doors will remain always open.

When the church is responsible for transporting people to or from an activity:

a) No one but qualified and approved drivers may drive the vehicle (approved drivers must be 25 years of age, hold

a proper Oklahoma Driver License, and have official approval of the church's Board of Trustees).

b) At no time will anyone be transported in vehicles owned by private individuals.

When outside groups use the church's facilities or vehicles:

a) When the church facilitates activities from other church or community organizations by allowing them to use

facility space and/or vehicles, such groups are expected to agree to and abide by this Safe Sanctuaries policy.

b) As this policy provides minimum standards, other groups or organizations may add to it so long as doing so does

not violate a principle otherwise stated.

REPORTING Procedures

Incidents that occur must be reported for the safety and security of all involved. Such incidents include:

a) Violence

b) Abuse

c) Retaliations

d) Sexual misconduct

e) Bullying

f) Persistent and sanctioned peer pressure

g) Any other rule or policy already stated in the body of this document

Those in charge of an event or activity are responsible for properly filling out an approved "Incident Report" form to be turned into the Church Administrator.

If there is an incident of violence, abuse, or neglect revealed to volunteers or leaders of the church, the following steps must be followed:

1. Insure the immediate safety of the child, youth, or vulnerable adult

2. Inform the person in charge of the event

3. Fill out an "Incident Report" form to be turned into the Church Administrator

4. In congruence with state law involving children and youth, the suspected incident must be reported to state

authorities by utilizing the Oklahoma Child Abuse Hotline at 1-800-522-3511

School Schedule and Closings

Regular payments are due monthly regardless of holidays/closings, planned or otherwise. There are no refunds for these days. There are no refunds for family vacations or other absences. Please see our school calendar for a list of our school closings for the current school year.

School Closures-If the weather conditions are not safe for traveling, or if we encounter an emergency situation, in which we have to close, we will notify parents through their preferred means of communication as soon as possible. Wesley Kids Montessori Preschool will decide school closures based on the safety of everyone involved, including staff.

Wesley has the right to terminate care with a family if the administration and staff feel like it's not a good fit or if there are safety concerns.

Celebrating Birthdays at School

Should you choose to send a special treat or snack in celebration of your child's birthday, please contact the teacher to coordinate the date. The snack will be passed during circle time on the designated day and shared together in honor of your child's birth.

Daily Flow

Morning Carpool- 8:55-9:10

Work and Lesson Time- upon arrival-10:50

Circle Time- 10:50-11:10

Morning Recess- 11:10-11:40

Lunch/Clean Up- 11:40-12:15

Reading/Music Circle- 12:15-12:35

Work and Lesson Time/Outdoor classroom- 12:35-2:00

Afternoon Carpool-2:00-2:10

****Our uninterrupted work periods are an important part of Montessori education. Sometimes the weather may shift our schedule, or dictate we move our outdoor time up or back. This is a general guideline of a typical day.**

Child Wellness

In order to provide the optimal learning environment for developing minds and bodies, children are provided healthy snacks, bring their own packed lunch from home, creative/active play, adequate rest and positive, nurturing relationships. When children are

ill or have experienced a life stressor, we request your child be at home where they are most at home and are able to receive the quiet, loving attention they need in a less stimulating environment.

A sick child, parent, or staff member should not enter the building; but should stay home and rest while determining what illness or type of infection they have. A sick person is defined as one with a fever of 100.4 or above and/or experiencing diarrhea, vomiting, rash, and/or discharge from the eyes. Please report any contagious illness, including Covid-19, to the Preschool Director, and/or teachers as soon as possible for the protection of all children and staff. You will be notified if someone in your child's class has been diagnosed with a contagious illness.

If a child becomes ill at school, is injured, the parents or legal guardian will be contacted so that the child can be picked up as soon as possible. First aid will be administered as needed by the attending teachers and/or director as soon as possible. In case of illness, the child will be separated from classmates, as space and staff allow, until parents arrive. If parents cannot be reached, we will call the emergency name you gave on your medical release form and ask that the child be transported home. In the event of serious injury or illness, when you cannot be reached, your doctor will be contacted, and the teacher or Director will transport the child to the doctor or nearest emergency room. If required, an ambulance will be called.

If your child has been ill with a fever of 100.4 or above, has diarrhea, or has been vomiting, they may not return to school for at least 24 hours following such an incident. You may be relatively certain that the incident was caused by food, allergy, or other non-contagious incident; but again, we need to be especially sure that it does not continue over the next 24 hours. We need to safeguard the other children in the class, as well as the teachers. Your help in limiting the spread of germs by keeping your child home is greatly appreciated. Please review the separate handout on when to keep your child home.

ALLERGIES

For any children with food allergies, please let us know so we can keep watch at snack and lunch. If your child needs an Epi pen for serious allergy at school, please provide all necessary medication and equipment with written details for their use.

Immunizations

All children must be up-to-date on their immunizations to attend WKMP. If you have a medical exception, a personal exemption or a religious exemption as permitted by Oklahoma law and DHS guidelines, you must submit an immunization exemption certificate

from the State of Oklahoma. If an outbreak of an illness occurs in the community, children whose immunizations are not up-to-date will not be allowed to attend WKMP until advised from the local Department of Health.

Guidance Policy

The safety and well-being of all our children is a priority. If a child exhibits unacceptable or aggressive behavior towards others on a continuous basis, parents will be contacted for a conference with the teacher. If aggressive or inappropriate behavior continues toward children or staff, parents will be contacted for a second conference. At that time, we reserve the right to ask any parent to remove their child from our school for the safety of themselves or others.

Tuition and Fee Payments

The cost for tuition is \$300.00 per month and is subject to change annually based upon the addition of available days for the program and addition of assistant teachers with the growth of the program. If additional days are added, priority for space will be given to children already enrolled.

Tuition for the first month of the program, along with a non-refundable \$75.00 enrollment and supplies fee, is due on or before the first day of classes on Tuesday, September 5th. Following the first month of the program, tuition will be due on or before the first Tuesday of each month.

Families may pay online at wesleyokc.org/montessori, by check, or by texting "GIVETOWESLEY Montessori" to 73256 from your mobile device.

If monthly tuition and other fees are not received by the 15th, a late charge of \$35.00 will be applied. Repeated failure to make timely payments could result in your child's suspension from the program.

If your family is facing a financial hardship, a meeting with the Montessori Director and the Senior Minister may be requested and will remain anonymous.

Withdrawing A Child

If you find it necessary to withdraw your child after July 5th or during the school year, we require a 30-day written notice and you are responsible for all tuition and fees due for those 30 days plus half of the next month, including any supply fees. This means you are

responsible for paying 6 weeks or 1 and $\frac{1}{2}$ months' worth of tuition and fees. You must give the Director written notice of your intent to withdraw your child/children; verbal notification by phone, in person, or text is not sufficient.

Locker Photo

Each child has an assigned locker to keep their personal belongings organized. We ask each child to bring a recent photo for their locker on the day of classroom visitation. This will help your child find their locker easily.

Snacks & Lunches

Food exploration, grace and courtesy, and mealtime socialization are wonderful opportunities for children to gain critical social skills and independence. There will be many opportunities throughout the day for children to prepare and interact with food items as well as share a snack with a classmate. These snacks are not meant to replace a meal. They are simply opportunities to practice trying new foods, and grace and courtesy.

Sharing a lunch time experience and having the opportunity to bring lunch to school comes with a great sense of independence and pride. Napkins and table linens will be supplied by the school. Please provide utensils should your child need them for their meal. Tables will be set with pitchers of water and small cups will be provided. Children's lunches should be easily accessible for them as well as manageable in terms of opening containers and preparing their set up. Allow your child to practice opening and closing their containers to ensure their independence prior to sending them to school. Healthy, while nutritious foods work best. Please keep your child's lunch simple. Usually 3-4 items work well.

Toileting

Our school expects that all children be toilet trained before beginning school. The sensitive period for toilet awareness is around 15 months of age. Training includes independently wiping themselves after a bowel movement. Of course, we understand young children will have accidents occasionally. We do request however, that parents send their children to school wearing cloth underwear. Please do not send your child in diapers or "pull ups." We have extra clothing for changing. Please wash and return borrowed clothing to school. Toileting accidents and struggles are treated as logical consequence and are used to teach, not punish. If your child experiences an accident at school, they will be expected to undress themselves, clean up the "puddle" and dress again with minimal physical support, but strong emotional understanding and encouragement.

Daily Clothing

We encourage children to dress and shoe themselves at school. It is important that your child is dressed with play in mind, and that they are able to pull their clothes on and off easily. Pants should have an elastic waistband if your child has not mastered button snaps yet. Shoes should have Velcro snaps or be pull-on style. Closed toe shoes are the safest as the children will have a lot of opportunity for movement and activity during their day. If shoes are laces, please ensure your child is practicing tying themselves to promote independence and reduce classroom frustration.

Children will have a variety of interactions during the day, opportunities to work with water, dirt, paint, and other materials. Ensuring they are in clothing that is comfortable and easily managed is an important part of their day. They will wear smocks while performing tasks but please send them in clothing that can be easily washed.

Also, please label any clothing that a child could remove or misplace during the school day so it may be returned to the child.

Academic Areas within a Montessori Environment

Practical Life

The goals of the Practical Life materials include the development of order, coordination, concentration, independence, and in many instances, cooperation. The exercises encourage care of self, care of the environment, food preparation, art activities, and practice with social relations.

Sensorial

The very young child must be helped in acquiring the ability to separate and classify forms, colors, textures, and scents. The development of the child's senses takes place before that of his intellectual abilities. Refinement of the senses and development of skills in thinking, judging, concentrating, comparing, sequencing, and so forth is preparation for learning in math, reading, and writing.

Language

Language development is aided by activities and materials which encourage speaking, listening, conversing, symbolizing, and ultimately, reading, writing, and language analysis. It is a sequentially based phonics approach. The materials are primarily metal insets, the sandpaper letters, and the movable alphabet.

Mathematics

Young children need numerous experiences with manipulatives in order to understand mathematical concepts and develop a logical, life-long approach to problem solving.

Emphasis is on logical thinking, developing the concepts of quantity, number recognition and sequencing, matching numbers to quantities, addition and subtraction and using numbers to represent the world.

Teacher/Director Observation and Evaluation-Conferences

A primary part of the Montessori Method is observation of the child. The teachers are trained to critically assess and observe the children as they work throughout their day. We will monitor and chart growth through benchmarks within Montessori and child development. Often due to the nature of the work the children choose, it is hard to gain an understanding of the work the child did during the day. Should a family be interested, opportunities for observation of their child during the day will be available in the spring semester during the morning work block. We will also formally hold a conference in the spring to celebrate the growth and accomplishments of your child from the year if you choose. We will send home classroom updates, reflections of what the children are learning, and information about the classroom community monthly.

Missing Objects from the Classroom

Occasionally, a child will remove a small object from the classroom. This occurs for a variety of reasons: the object is beautiful and appealing, the child inadvertently places an object in his/her pocket, the child simply is not focusing on returning the object to its place, or the child enjoys playing with the item. Whatever the reason, simply return the object to school in a small envelope or baggie saying, "This object belongs at your school." Please do not overcorrect, as it is unwarranted for the age and moral development of the young child.