

Wesley Kids Montessori Preschool
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wesleyokc.org/montessori



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.

Currently 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 older students benefit from the internal reward of being a good role model or guide. The older student can solidify their learning and test their knowledge by reaching the highest form of learning which is teaching. The younger student can 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 the 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 conversations 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 the 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 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 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 2 pm. If a child is not picked up 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 of 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.

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 on 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 is not a good fit or if there are safety concerns.

Child Wellness

In order to provide the optimal learning environment for developing minds and bodies, children are provided healthy meals, 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 or 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 the 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 so advised by 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 the 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 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 in 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 lunchtime experience and having the opportunity to bring a 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 setup. Allow your child to practice opening and closing their containers to ensure their independence prior to sending them to school. Healthy, and 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 consequences 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. 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, and 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, 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 the 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 on 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.

