**1401 NW 25th St. Oklahoma City, OK 73106**

**405-525-3521**

**montessori@wesleyokc.org**

## POLICIES, PROCEDURES, AND GUIDELINES

Welcome to Wesley Kids Montessori. We are thrilled to have your family partner with us in providing a nurturing environment for your child to learn and grow.

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 School.

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 discoveries for your child.

### STAFF

| **Kristine Wood-Halacka** | | **Charlotte Wood-Wilson** |
|---|---|---|
| *Director/Lead Teacher* | *Co-Teacher* | *Volunteer* |

### SCHOOL STRUCTURE

Wesley is a mixed age Montessori classroom for emerging 3-year-old to 6-year-old children. Our school day is 9:00am-2:00pm four days per week (Monday-Thursday).

A Montessori environment is a beautiful example of community. Life isn't segregated by age, and communities are not divided into peer groups. Age does not dictate social or academic developmental level. The 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 learning opportunities presented by being in a classroom with older peers, while the older students benefit from the internal

reward of being a good role model or guide. The older students can solidify their learning and test their knowledge by reaching the highest form of learning, which is teaching. The younger students 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.

Our kindergarten children are exposed to a blend of academically focused work as well as the traditional Montessori materials expected within a Montessori classroom. They have the opportunity to challenge themselves and expand their knowledge while also demonstrating leadership opportunities within the classroom. The individual child is always considered within the classroom and valued for their role and contribution.

**ARRIVAL**

All classes begin at 9:00 am. Teachers will be at the carpool drive through at 9:00-9:10 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.

During carpool you will enter the portico facing north and stop at the sidewalk gate just past the butterfly mural 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 gate, you will need to park and come to the sidewalk gate north of the butterfly for a teacher to let you in. We will make every effort to have a teacher available to let you in until 9:20. 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! If we have not received information about your child's absence from school by 9:30, we will be reaching out to ensure everything is okay. Providing consistent communication about absence allows us to plan for the day and not worry about your child or family.

**DISMISSAL**

Pick-up will be conducted the same as arrival, at the sidewalk gate north of the butterfly mural and peace pole. 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 have 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. Changes and adjustments can be made to the authorized pick-up list by telephone or in person with the Director. These changes cannot be made by text or email. 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 2pm. If a child is not picked up by 15 minutes after the end of your child's school day, late fees will be applied at $1 per minute.

**EMERGENCY PREPARDNESS**

Our staff trains and plans for potential emergencies so we are prepared to keep the children safe in the event of an emergency. In addition to CPR and first aid certification, we also have policies in place for lockdown, shelter in place, and conduct monthly storm and fire drills.

Should an evacuation from the building ever become necessary, families would be notified and we would transport the children as a team on foot across the west parking lot and across the street to the Oklahoma United Methodist Ministry Center. 1501 NW 24th Street OKC, OK 73106 (405) 530-2000. We have secondary and tertiary locations if ever an event arose where it was necessary.

**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

1) 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.

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

a) Complete and sign an application with related waivers giving permission to check references and background information

b) Provide the names and contact information of 3 personal references

c) Undergo a background check by a reputable third party, provided and paid for by the church

d) 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:

1) 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.

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

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

When an activity is held on church property:

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

2) 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:

1) 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).

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

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

1) 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.

2) 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.

**DAILY FLOW**

Morning Carpool- 9:00-9:10

Work and Lesson Time- upon arrival-11:30

Circle Time-11:30-11:45

Morning Recess- 11:45-12:15

Lunch/Clean Up- 12:15-1:00

Work and Lesson Time/Outdoor classroom- 1:00-2:00

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. As concentration and stamina grow, these times may be stretched to accommodate the learning environment.

**CHILD WELLNESS**

In order to provide the optimal learning environment for developing minds and bodies in our classroom and beyond, we ask that you work with us to ensure children are provided healthy snacks, bring their own packed lunch from home, engage in creative/active play, receive adequate rest and have 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 by phone or email if someone in your child's class has been diagnosed with a contagious illness or infestation (scabies or head lice). The contagious child will remain confidential through this correspondence.

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 or infestation, 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.

A child with an infestation (head lice or scabies) will be allowed back into school once they have started treatment. 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.

**MEDICATIONS**

All medications should be given outside of school time or a parent needs to come to the school to administer the medication to their child. If your child requires an emergency medication lifesaving medication that will need to be stored at school, this is something that needs to be addressed with the director to ensure the safety and support of your child and the other children. The medication will need to be in its original packaging with instructions for use and will be stored in a locked medication container out of reach from children. It will be administered by the teacher should an event or emergency occur and would otherwise remain in the locked cabinet until it is picked up by the family members on the final day of school. Should there be any need for disposing of medical waste, a sharps container or biohazard bag would be obtained or biohazard bag to optimize the safe handling of the materials and minimize the risk.

Parents are encouraged to apply sunscreen and insect repellent before arrival. Outdoor play areas include shaded spaces to minimize sun exposure

**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.

**BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT AND DISCIPLINE METHODS**

Within our Montessori classroom there are a few governing norms, respect for the child, the prepared environment, the use of modeling appropriate behavior, as well as positive reinforcement. Each child who joins the classroom is seen through a lens of respect and appreciation for the unique and individualized gifts they possess. They have autonomy within the classroom. The prepared environment is the role of the teachers and is seen as our greatest tool for behavior management. A prepared classroom allows children freedom within limits and promotes an environment where they can explore and gain autonomy while also growing and building internal validation for their work and the growing of their skills. When there is a breakdown in behavior, our first role as a teaching team is to look at the environment and work from that lens to see if we can adjust the environment to honor the needs or curiosities of the child. The utilization of modeling and positive reinforcement are also woven into the classroom setting. A language of reverence is introduced upon hiring and taught in Montessori training. Statements like, “Eyes only, or Notice” take the place of “Don’t touch that, or pay attention.” It is through these foundational Montessori principles we cultivate a classroom where children begin the foundational work of living in community and working with others.

**SUSPICIONS OF ABUSE OR NEGLECT**

All preschool staff are mandatory reporters. If abuse or neglect is suspected, it will be reported immediately to the Oklahoma Department of Human Services Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-522-3511, as required by law. All reports will be documented.

**POISON EXPOSURE**

To protect our students, all hazardous materials are stored securely outside of the classroom environment. Should an event occur, and a child is in contact with poisonous material, the parent and Poison Control would be immediately notified 1-800-222-1222. In the event the child was unconscious or not breathing, 911 would be contacted and the child would be removed from the source of exposure if it is safe to do so. Upon securing the environment and ensuring the safety of the child, licensure and DHS would be notified of the incident.

**STORAGE OF INFORMATION**

The storage of personnel and children’s personal information is important to us and maintaining privacy and confidentiality is also a priority. We keep some forms digitally and have a file in the locked front office on your child which is updated and used for conferences, progress tracking, and other general information. We keep a log of names

and numbers as well as an approved list of people a child can leave with inside the classroom for quick access as needed throughout the school week. Our compliance file is located in our parent education shelves and accessible and available at all times for your convenience.

**TUITION AND FEE PAYMENTS**

The cost for tuition is $5,985 annually or $665.00 per month. Tuition 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.

Payment can be made in full for the school year in September or in 2 halves, $2,993 in September and $2,993 in January. Should you wish to pay monthly, tuition for the first month of the program, along with a non-refundable $100.00 enrollment and $65 per semester supplies fee, is due on or before the first day of classes. Following the first month, the tuition is due on the first school day of the 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 15th or during the school year, we require a 30-day written notice and you are responsible for all tuition and fees due for that semester. 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.

**CUBBY PHOTO**

Each child has an assigned cubby to keep their personal belongings organized. This will help your child find their cubby easily and is only used for this purpose.

**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. Water and small cups are available in the classroom. 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.

Updated WB/TA 5/26 KH 6/26