

Hollister Montessori School



Parent Handbook 2026-2027

The hand is the instrument of the mind...

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Welcome

Welcome to Hollister Montessori School! We are pleased that you have chosen this program for your child. The purpose of this handbook is to familiarize you with the program and the policies of the school. Please take the time to read through it. This should help you to understand a little about Montessori philosophy and the workings of the school.

Mission Statement

The mission of Hollister Montessori School is to develop your child's independence, personal and academic growth, while guiding them to be Respectful, Responsible, and Resourceful individuals to create a strong foundation for a lifelong journey of learning.

Program Description

Dr. Maria Montessori established the Montessori Method early in the 20th century. Her aims were for the fullest possible development of human potential; a dynamic process in which the whole personality of the child must be actively engaged.

To educate the whole child, the child must have freedom to develop their physical, social, intellectual, and spiritual powers to the fullest. The teacher prepares and maintains the environment, guides the activity, and offers the child stimulation. It is the child who teaches themselves, motivated by their own need to work.

The Montessori approach is designed to help the child build within themselves the foundations for a lifetime. The method enables the child to like themselves; to have inner respect for themselves, as well as for others; to have control over their physical, emotional, and intellectual self; and most importantly to have an eternal love for learning.

- **The atmosphere:** A Montessori Primary School operates ideally with soft voices and at a slow-paced level. Concentrating on taking your time when working, doing your best, and finishing projects you start are the goals of the program.
- **Environment:** The environment is filled with challenging materials, which provide opportunities for growth in all areas as well as the arts, music, etc. The materials are organized into five major areas:
 - **Practical Life:** Exercises that assist the child in their development, concentrating on the care of the child's own person and care of the environment.
 - **Sensorial:** These materials help the child to develop their intellect, classify their environment, and organize their mind.
 - **Language:** To provide a solid foundation with enrichment of vocabulary, creative writing, and interpretive reading goals.
 - **Math:** These exercises enable the child to have concrete concepts before taking them to the abstract.

- **Cultural Studies:** A broad variety of experiences in history, geography, and science.

Days and Hours of Operations

The program operates 5 days a week.

Monday - Thursday	7:30 AM – 4:30 PM
Friday	7:30 AM – 12:30 PM (All Fridays are half-day)

Enrollment options are:

5 Days a week (7:30 – 12:30)	Half Day Extended AM
5 Days a week (8:15 – 12:30)	Half Day Standard
5 Days a week (7:30 – 3:15)	Full Day Extended AM
5 Days a week (8:25 – 3:15)	Full Day Standard
5 Days a week (7:30 – 4:30)	All Day Montessori Program
5 Days a week (8:15 – 4:30)	Full Day Extended PM

Children not enrolled in the all-day or extended AM programs are expected at school between 8:15 AM and 8:30 AM. **Students who arrive after 8:30 AM will be marked tardy during attendance.** (Please view our tardiness policy for more information)

The children will have the opportunity to have a snack during their morning work period. A snack will be available to the children to eat once each morning when they wish. The program will include group activities, individual opportunities for free choice of work, and outside playtime.

Sample Daily Schedule

7:30 AM - 8:15 AM	Arrival time for the extended morning program
8:15 AM - 8:30 AM	Arrival time for the school day program
8:15 AM - 11:15 AM	Morning work period and individual snack time
11:15 AM - 11:30 AM	Story and group time, wash up and prepare for lunch
11:30 AM - 12:00 PM	Lunch
12:00 PM - 12:30 PM*	Outside time
12:15 PM – 12:30 PM	Half-day children dismissal
12:45 PM	Preparation for nap time
12:45 PM - 3:15 PM	Continuation of all-day program.
3:15 PM - 3:30 PM	Class dismissal
3:30 PM - 4:15 PM**	Extended care includes outside time, snack, and free choice.
4:15 PM- 4:30 PM	Final dismissal

***All Fridays are half day with dismissal at 12:30 PM**

****For extended care: Parents can pick up any time after 3:30 PM.**

All Day Montessori

All Day Montessori offers families extended hours on school days only. Children in this program can arrive as early as 7:30 AM and stay as late as 4:30 PM. This program is available for children two and a half years old, potty trained, through 6 years of age and ready for a full school day setting. The benefit of this program is to provide an extended classroom work period and teaching time as well as flexibility for parents with obligations and activities out of their home.

Child Care Program Description

The program will accept children who are ready for a preschool situation and who are two and a half years old and potty trained.

Medication

The school staff will administer medication. **Before medication can be administered, LIC 9221 must be on file in the school office.** Forms are available on the school website or in the office. The staff will administer inhaled medication and EpiPen and EpiPen Jr under the following conditions:

- LIC 9221 form completed and on file in the school office.
- Parents must provide the medication in the original packaging with the child's name on it.
- Written instructions from the doctor must include directions for use and symptoms/conditions requiring the medication.
- In the case of EpiPen and EpiPen Jr, if an antihistamine is part of the recommendation, the parents must provide it to the school.
- For the staff to be able to administer the EpiPen and EpiPen Jr, a parent must come and demonstrate its use.

These regulations are required by the California Department of Social Services, the licensing agency. Parents may also come to school to administer medication as needed.

Medical Emergency

In case of a medical emergency, the staff will administer first aid. If medical attention is required, the staff will call local 911 for an ambulance, which will transport the child to Hazel Hawkins Hospital. Every effort will be made to contact the parent(s) and the child's own physician.

Sign-in/Sign-out

Parents/guardians/authorized persons 18 years of age or older must sign in to admit children and must sign out upon dismissal daily. This is for your child's protection. No child may

be released to anyone other than a parent or person whose name appears on the Emergency Form, unless specific arrangements have been made with the school director.

A written note must be sent to the school director by a parent stating the name of the person to whom the child is to be released. This person should be able to identify themselves with a photo ID.

When signing a child in and out, please use your first and last name. Initials are not acceptable by the California State Department of Social Services, the licensing agency for our program.

Every student must be securely fastened into a car seat that is appropriate for their height and weight upon arriving and departing from the school in a motor vehicle.

The Montessori Approach to Discipline and Behavior

One goal of Montessori education is to support children in developing self-control and self-discipline. Discipline is essential for learning. Montessori discipline is an “inner control” which the child develops over their own behavior by working in a Montessori environment. Dr. Montessori noted that many children become happier and self-controlled after experiencing the challenging tasks that are in the classroom. All teachers’ actions will reflect respect for each child as well as an understanding of their developmental needs and characteristics. Ground rules require that a child be considerate of others and respect the material, allowing for the birth of order and freedom for all in the classroom.

Normal peer conflict is a part of children’s life experience. As children learn the give and take of social interaction and cooperation, conflict naturally occurs. Young children are learning self-control and developing a sense of personal space. Pushing and other unwanted physical acts, getting upset about not being first in line, taking an item from another child, and disagreeing or saying things such as: “I’m not going to be your friend anymore” or “You’re not coming to my birthday party”, are all examples of normal peer conflict and they do not mean that a bully/victim problem exists. While these things are a part of normal development, the staff at HMS (Hollister Montessori School) will do their best to help the children navigate through these situations while ensuring the children are learning to be kind and loving through these developmentally appropriate situations.

Bullying will not be and has never been allowed or overlooked. Bullying is a willful, conscious desire to hurt, frighten, or threaten. Bullying is usually a series of repeated, intentionally cruel incidents or threats of harm that involve the same children, in the same bully/victim roles. It involves an imbalance of power, either real or perceived. It can be physical or verbal and can include intimidation, inappropriate gestures or touching, and social exclusion. Due to the willful and conscious nature, younger children are not typically developmentally capable of carrying out bullying and are more often involved in a normal peer conflict. With all this in mind, please know that **any type of bullying will not be tolerated at HMS** and each instance of peer conflict is assessed individually. These peer conflicts are handled on a case-by-

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case basis, and all staff members have been trained to intervene by helping the children who need it, navigate through conflicts with tolerance, kindness, respect for oneself and respect for others.

Behavior and Discipline Procedure

When a staff member notices a behavior that requires intervention, HMS will take the following 5 steps to assess and properly handle each situation.

1. **Discussion:** A teacher will have a discussion with the child and parent to make sure they understand the expectations at school
2. **Observation:** A teacher will continue to observe the child to make sure the behavior does not happen again
3. **Parent Meeting:** If the behavior persists, a parent meeting will be scheduled to discuss the behavior and to help create an action plan to address the behavior
4. **Child Sent Home:** If the behavior continues, the child may be sent home for an undetermined amount of time. If there are no improvements, parents will be notified and advised to have their child work with a therapist or the appropriate specialist.

Unsafe Behavior

In the case of children harming themselves or others (verbally or physically), the director will be informed, and details will be recorded in the injury/incident log. **In the case of repeated behaviors like bullying, biting, or hitting, the child may be sent home.** An action plan will be worked on with the parents to address the behavior. If there is no improvement, parents will be notified and advised that their child works with a therapist or the appropriate specialist. The school reserves the right to ask a child to leave the program if it does not feel able to meet the child's needs.

Please contact Ms. Debbie immediately if you have any concerns. Parents will be notified of any major conflicts/concerns/incidents.

Admission Policies

Before admission, both parents are required to tour the school facilities, observe the class in session, and have the Montessori Method explained to them. Next, a personal interview will be set up to review all necessary paperwork. This will include a copy of the personal rights, parents' rights, emergency information, pre-admission health history, physical exam requirements, including a TB test, and admission agreement.

All these forms, except the Physician's form, are due on or before the first day of school. Parents have a maximum of 30 days after the child begins school to return the physician's form. **After that date, the child will not be allowed to participate in the school program until the physician's form has been returned to the school.** Children admitted to the program will

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have an adjustment period of **one month**. Therefore, the first month's tuition is non-refundable. We feel that it takes one month before you, your child, and the teachers can make an honest evaluation of your child's adjustment to the environment. Parents are welcome to visit the facility while their child is enrolled by contacting the Head of School to schedule the visit. We request that you be respectful of the children's routines and programmed activities while visiting.

Enrollment is open to the public without regard to race, culture, gender, religion, color, national origin, sexual orientation, or economic circumstance.

Tuition and Fees

To secure your space, a non-refundable registration fee and materials fee are required annually of all children enrolled in the program. **Tuition is based on a ten-month academic year.** Tuition is not refundable for illness, vacations, or general absences from school.

- Tuition may be paid annually, semi-annually, or monthly.
- There is a 10% discount on current tuition for siblings.
- If you choose a ten-month payment option, **Tuition will be due by the first of the month** and past due after the fifth of the month, at which time a late charge of **\$25.00** will be assessed weekly until paid in full.
- Checks that bounce are subject to a **\$35.00** late fee
- Late pick-ups are **\$25.00 for the first 5 minutes after your scheduled pick-up time and \$5.00 for every 5 minutes thereafter.** Pick-up times are 12:30 PM, 3:30 PM, and 4:30 PM. Please arrive 5-10 minutes early to avoid a late pickup fee.
- A drop-in rate of **\$25.00 per hour** for any fraction of an hour beyond your admission agreement, before 8:15 AM, after 12:30 PM, or 3:30 PM, will be charged. Drop-ins must be scheduled in advance (**a minimum of 24 hours**) to make sure that we have sufficient staff to allow for extra children.

Accident Insurance

All parents are required to participate in the school Accident Insurance Plan. This cost is included in the registration fee.

New Students

1. Registration/Material **fees and Tuition Deposit** are required for each child enrolled in the program and are **non-refundable**. Registration fees are due when registration forms are submitted. This is an annual per-student fee, which reserves the student's admission for the following school year. The registration fee covers student accident insurance, student tax, cost of consumables, and educational materials.

2. Your first month's tuition is non-refundable. We feel that it takes one month before you, your child, and the teachers can make an honest evaluation of your child's adjustment to the environment.

Returning Students

1. The annual non-refundable registration/materials fees **and tuition deposit** are required to secure your child's space.
2. The adjustment period is waived.

Phasing In Program

To ensure the smooth running of the program, new children will begin the school year **up to a week** before returning children. Carefully review the school calendar for your child's start date. The first week of school will be half days; all children are dismissed at 12:30 pm.

Modification Conditions/Withdrawal

We require **30 days' notice** if a parent plans to withdraw their child from school, and **tuition will be due during this time**. If a child is withdrawn from the program, **one month's notice is required** from the parent. If the school determines that it is in the best interest of the child or the school to terminate enrollment, one month's notice will be given to the parent. Examples of reasons the school may terminate enrollment are behavioral issues that have not improved after repeated attempts and parent consultations, repeated and problematic lateness, or repeated unexcused absences which negatively affect the child's ability to learn, or failure to pay tuition and fees on time.

Parent requests to change enrollment status, for example from partial day to full day, will be considered based on space availability, the make-up of the class, and the readiness of the child.

Reason for Termination

If it is ascertained that the program is not meeting the needs of the child, the child may be asked to leave the program. Non-compliance with the school handbook and policies, continuous late payment of tuition and fees, lack of support of the program by the parents/guardians, or continuous late pick-ups may all be cause for termination of enrollment.

Daily Attendance

Attendance will be taken every morning. Please notify the school office if you are planning to miss school due to personal days or vacations. If your child is sick, please notify the school as soon as possible by email or phone. If you have not notified the school of your student's absence a courtesy call will be made to ensure your child is safe and healthy. All student illnesses will be tracked to prevent any communicable diseases from spreading.

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Late Arrival / Tardiness after 8:30 AM

Any arrivals after 8:30 am are considered tardy. Excessive tardies cause students to have trouble settling in and cause a distraction to other students who have already begun their lessons. We ask that students arrive on time for drop-off every day unless otherwise noted to the office.

If you are planning to be late, call or email the office and indicate the time of your child's arrival. Once you arrive at school, please enter the office or patiently wait outside until a staff member can let you in. Office staff will plan for receiving your child at the pre-arranged late arrival time. If the office is closed, please be patient, and a member of staff will be there as soon as they are available.

For repeated tardiness, a parent conference will be scheduled with the Head of School.

Early Departure

Early departure must be scheduled in advance with the main office. Notify the school office via email or by phone to state the time of your child's departure. HMS Staff will notify the classroom community and prepare your child for early pick up. Sign your child out and your child will be brought out to you.

Dress Code

- We require children to wear **solid color polo shirts** daily. We find that the atmosphere of the classroom is enhanced if children wear clothes that reflect the fact that this is primarily their place of work, just as most adults dress appropriately for their work. Pants, shorts, skirts, jumpers, or dresses may be worn with the polo shirt. The polo shirt should be worn over the dress. Your child should come to school in comfortable clothing so that they will feel at home sitting on the floor, etc.
- We require that children come to school in **closed-toe, well-fitting athletic shoes/sneakers, which do not light up or have glitter**. Their shoes must be sturdy and suitable for climbing and running outside. Cowboy boots, Crocs, Ugg-type boots, leather and/or rain boots, jellies, high heels, and ballet flats are not appropriate shoes for school. During our rainy season, if your child comes to school with rain boots, please send another pair of shoes to wear outside on the playground.
- We also require a pair of properly fitted inside-only shoes. This pair of shoes will remain at school during the school year. Your child should be able to walk in the shoes without their feet slipping around inside the shoes. This type of shoe will help to avoid tripping or slipping in the classroom, restroom, or courtyard.
- We ask that you bring your child in clothing that allows them to dress themselves independently and assume the responsibility for self-care while using the restroom and while dressing for outdoor play. We find that bib overalls, buckle belts and snaps are

especially difficult for young children. All clothing must be clearly marked with your child's name.

- A complete set of labeled clothing should remain at school. Please send these clothes in a Ziploc bag, labeled with your child's name. The clothes will be kept in an area accessible to your child, should they need to use them. If they are used, please replace them on your child's next day at school. The school is not responsible for lost clothing or jewelry, so please dress your child accordingly.
- On Fridays, children may come in free dress. This means that the dress code rules, **except the requirements for shoes**, are relaxed and the children may choose their own clothes.

Calendar

The school has a ten-month academic year from mid-August through early June. Please take the time to carefully review the school calendar to correctly ascertain which days school is in session. Every Friday will be a half-day, so staff can do deep cleaning of classrooms and materials, as well as have a staff in-service meeting. **All students will be dismissed at 12:30 PM on Fridays.**

Holidays

Many cultural and traditional aspects are learned from our holidays. We reserve the option to use holidays to teach moral values and principles through plays, songs, and discussions.

We welcome any parents/family members who want to share a special holiday tradition or cultural experience with us. Please contact the Head of School to coordinate.

Birthdays

Although we recognize everyone needs to have a special day for themselves and a child's birthday is especially important. We at HMS celebrate on the last Friday of each month for all birthdays in that month. This is a time when the children learn how to give as well as receive. If you would like to bring a **healthy item** for your child to share, please make prior arrangements with your child's teacher before your child's birthday.

For outside events: Children often invite their classmates to birthday celebrations outside of school. We recommend sending out invitations via email or in the family's mailboxes at the entry of the school as an efficient way of contacting everyone.

Code of Ethics and Communications

We acknowledge that the effectiveness of HMS in fulfilling its mission is greatly determined by the behavior of the staff and parents in our school community. Our behavior serves as a model for the children. The adults' communication skills and attitudes contribute to the atmosphere of the school. These skills are also vital in parent-staff communications regarding

individual children and affect not only the social climate for the school, but the academic progress of our students as well.

By following this code, we demonstrate our commitment to a supportive and respectful community for children and adults and move HMS toward Maria Montessori's guiding vision of Montessori as "An Education for Peace".

We agree to be proactive in solving problems and finding answers. Parents and staff will communicate directly with the person or persons who can answer their questions or address their concerns. Parents' questions regarding individual children or classrooms will be directed to the lead teacher of the class. After this discussion, if the parents and/or teacher feel that the issue has not been satisfactorily addressed, we will bring it to the attention of the director. Concerns regarding educational issues of a more general nature, or the day-to-day workings of the school or policy issues, will be discussed with the Director/Head of School.

Communications will be direct, honest, and appropriate in a manner that respects the rights of all parties. We will each strive to use effective listening skills focusing on responding rather than reacting. We recognize the importance of each person being heard and acknowledged for their interests and concerns.

We agree, as a community of adults, to respect the reputations and privacy of the children, families, and staff at our school.

Health, General Illness, COVID procedures

Your child must have received all California state-required immunizations such as: polio, measles, tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis before he can be admitted to the school. Your child must also have a general physical exam before entering school.

The staff at Hollister Montessori School will administer medication to children, with authorization from a parent. **Form LIC 9221** must be on file to administer medication. Medication must be in the original packaging with the child's name on it. The parents must also submit something in writing from the physician, explaining the symptoms/conditions under which the medication must be administered. Regarding Epi-Pen and Epi-Pen Jr, one parent must train the staff in its use. The parent should also supply Benadryl for children requiring the Epi-Pen or Epi-Pen Jr.

General Illness:

To protect others, please notify the school and keep your child at home when they have symptoms of a cold, runny nose, or other illnesses. When your child has seasonal allergies, please remain at home until symptoms are minimal. They may return with a **note from their doctor** verifying their symptoms are allergy-related.

Your child's comfort and health are important to us. If the child arrives at school and the administration feels that the child is unable to properly perform their daily school duties, the Hollister Montessori School

Head of School or Administrative Assistant will call you, and you will be required to pick up your child immediately. Please have a plan in place to have your child picked up from school within 30 minutes of being contacted by staff.

In addition, please keep your child home under the following conditions:

- **Fever:** A child has a fever. The child should not return until 24 hours without a fever and **without** the use of fever-reducing medications
- **Diarrhea:** The child should have no loose stools for 24 hours prior to returning to school.
- **Vomiting:** A child should have no vomiting episodes for 24 hours prior to returning to school.
- **Lice Policy:** We have a **No Nit** policy. When an outbreak of Lice occurs at school, the staff will conduct periodic head checks. When Lice are found, you will be called to pick your child up from school. Your child may return to school after proper treatment and when they are nit-free. The staff will conduct head checks upon arrival at school, prior to the child returning to class.
- **Rash:** When a child develops a rash and has a fever or a change in behavior, the child will need to remain home until your healthcare provider has determined the rash is not infectious. The child may return to school with a note from your healthcare provider. (Per the San Benito County Health Department)

COVID-19 Operating Policy

HMS prioritizes the health and well-being of our community by following CDC recommendations for COVID-19 in Early Childhood Education (ECE) settings. To keep our community safe, we encourage individuals to stay home when feeling unwell.

- If experiencing symptoms such as colds, fever, or diarrhea. Individuals must remain symptom-free for 24 hours and without the use of fever-reducing medications before returning to school.
- Masking is recommended during periods of high respiratory illness prevalence.
- Students and staff members are advised to seek testing for COVID-19 and other contagious illnesses, and it is required that you promptly inform the school of any illness.
- Good hand hygiene practices are strongly encouraged at HMS, and we have implemented enhanced measures for sanitizing and disinfecting classroom materials.

All members of our school community are urged to refer to the CDC website for additional guidance on masking protocols. By collectively upholding these guidelines, we can create a safe and healthy environment for everyone at HMS.

As required by the California Department of Social Services, Hollister Montessori School follows the strictest health and safety guidelines provided by the San Benito County Health Department, CDC, and California Department of Social Services.

- State/County Specific information about COVID levels:
<https://www.cdc.gov/respiratory-viruses/index.html>
- Protecting Against COVID-19 in ECE Programs:
<https://www.cdc.gov/early-care/prevention/protecting-against-covid-19-and-other-infections-in-early-care-and-education-programs.html>
- COVID-19 Symptoms:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/symptoms-testing/symptoms.html>

Distance Learning:

We will have a one-week preparation period if we need to move to distance learning.

Parent Nights

Parent nights are scheduled throughout the school year. Some nights are educational and informative; others are for your family's enjoyment. **We expect that at least one parent will attend 50% of the meetings throughout the year.** If both parents attend an in-person meeting or a Zoom meeting, it counts as 1 hour towards your parent participation, whether both parents attend or not.

Parent Volunteer Program

The successful operation of Hollister Montessori School relies on the efforts of parents. We have established a Parent Volunteer Program. **The program requires that each family volunteer for 10 hours per academic year.** We will provide you with regular opportunities to participate. *Parent volunteering is always appreciated!*

Annual Events that count towards Parent Volunteer hours:

- Beginning of the year work week and attending the Parent Orientation
- Welcoming new families during Meet and Greet
- Monthly parent night meetings, providing a snack to share during the meetings
- 30-minute classroom observations
- Leading/helping organize HMS parent/ family social events and fundraisers
- Attending and supervising the pumpkin patch outing
- Boiling eggs for egg hunt
- Helping with special projects (sewing/painting/repairs/etc.)

- Sharing your skills/talents
- Taking the lead on Teacher Appreciation Week
- Signing up and participating in our end-of-year Family Picnic Day

Event not eligible for Parent Volunteer Hours:

- Parent-teacher conferences
- Holiday events – Attending Halloween parade, holiday performance(s), the egg hunt, etc.
- Watch Me Work Nights

There will be a \$30.00 charge for each hour not met by May 10, 2027. Volunteer forms are available on the school website or in the office. **Keeping track of Parent Volunteer hours is the parent's responsibility.** HMS will review all parent volunteer hours to confirm they match our records.

Water bottles

Each child needs to bring a child-size reusable water bottle (**12 to 16 oz**) from home with his/her name on it for drinking water. The school provides filtered water for drinking, and we will refill water bottles throughout the day.

Lunch

All children are required to bring lunch from home. Children will not be allowed to share food, and any uneaten food will be sent home to allow you to be aware of your child's eating habits.

- Many foods contain additives, preservatives, and sugars of varying kinds. These adversely affect some children. We ask that parents pay close attention to the food in their children's lunches.
- An ideal lunch would contain a healthy, balanced mix of the different food groups. We discourage fast food. Be wary of packaged foods and drinks that may be attractive but have little nutritional value. In addition, heavily packaged foods create a large amount of plastic waste that must be recycled.
- Filtered water will be available during inside and outside activities. Water bottles will be taken home daily.
 - Sodas & Juice Boxes will not be allowed; HMS will provide filtered water the children can use to refill their reusable water bottles.
 - Desserts will be eaten last—after everything else has been finished.
 - If something needs to be kept cold, please include an ice pack in the lunch box and/or if items need to be warm, we recommend using a thermos.

Snacks

The school will provide a morning snack. Please see the monthly snack calendar posted on the Parent bulletin board.

Children staying for the “after-school” care program will need to provide their own snacks. This should come in their lunch boxes in a specially marked snack container. Please do not send snack supplies to be kept in the kitchen for your child.

Nap Time

Children requiring a nap need to bring a crib sheet and a small blanket in a reusable bag for storage. Please leave all security blankets and toys safely at home. Please put your child’s name on each item. These items will go home weekly (or more frequently, if necessary) for laundering.

Telephone Calls

In case of emergency or change in pick-up time, please call the school. If no one answers, leave a message on the answering machine, and your call will be returned as soon as possible. The school number is: 831-630-3038.

Toys

Please do not allow your child to bring any toys to school for use during the day. The Montessori environment completely provides for your child’s needs at school. We also discourage items such as jewelry, security items such as blankets, cuddly animals, etc.

Sharing

Please speak with the teacher if your child wishes to bring sharing. Although every precaution will be taken against loss or damage, the school cannot be responsible for the item. Suggested sharing items: items from nature, pictures, and books.

Dogs and Pets at School

Please do not bring your dogs or pets onto our school campus. This includes during drop-off and pick-up times. **Please leave your pets at home or in your vehicle if the weather permits.** This is for the safety of the children, the staff, and your furry friend. We are required to report all dog bites to Animal Control and to the Authorities to prevent any further injuries from occurring.

Conferences

We feel that close cooperation with parents is necessary so that we can work together for the utmost benefit of the child. The successful development of the child is the business of both the school and the parents, and honest communication about how this can best be brought

about is essential. If you would like to have a parent conference at any time, please make an appointment at your convenience. We will schedule a mandatory conference once or twice during the school year. Please direct all questions regarding your child to the lead teacher.

Observation

Scheduling a classroom observation is highly recommended. This is an opportunity to see your child in their classroom environment prior to the annual parent/teacher conference. Please call the school office to schedule your observation.

School Supplies

Hollister Montessori School supplies all the materials that your child needs at school. You do not need to send any supplies with your child. Please do not send your child to school with a backpack/school bag. We have very limited storage space at school. The only exception will be a child who has an after-school commitment requiring a change of clothes or special materials.

Promotional Materials

Parents authorize Hollister Montessori School to take and utilize photographs and/or video and audio of the parents and children enrolled in the school, without any compensation to the parents and/or children. The parents understand and agree that these photographs and tapes may be used in preparing promotional material for the school in any medium. The parent waives their right, and the child's right, of publicity in connection with said materials. **Parents have the right to opt out of this policy. Please notify the office with a written and signed note if you wish to opt out of this policy.**

Rights of Licensing Agency

The Department or licensing agency shall have the authority to interview children or staff, and inspect and audit child or facility records without prior consent. The Department or licensing agency shall have the authority to observe the physical condition of the child(ren), including conditions which could indicate abuse, neglect, or inappropriate placement, and to have a licensed medical professional physically examine the child(ren).

Visiting Policy

Parents may visit during regular hours of operation. Please speak with the Head of School to schedule a visit.

Laundry

To conserve paper products, we use cloth towels exclusively. Laundry service is completed on site, and we only use dye/perfume free products.

Cleaning and Disinfecting General Practices

Hollister Montessori follows the cleaning and disinfecting guidelines mandated by the California Department of Social Services (CDSS).

Staff will routinely clean and disinfect high-touch materials and areas such as tables and chairs, light switches, door handles, countertops, and commonly used educational materials, as detailed in the cleaning binder. All bathrooms will be cleaned and disinfected regularly throughout the day.

Materials will be cleaned and sanitized regularly. Materials that children have placed in their mouths or that are otherwise contaminated will be set aside until they are cleaned by a staff member. These materials will be sanitized prior to use by the next person.

Clean and Disinfect Bedding - Each child's bedding is kept separately in their own labeled bags. Cots and mats are labeled for each child. Bedding will be sent home to be laundered at the end of each week.

Cleaning and Disinfecting Procedures - If an infected person (staff or child) has been in a school building, staff will clean and disinfect all areas used by the ill person, focusing especially on frequently touched surfaces. Staff must follow CDC's guidelines for cleaning and disinfecting.

Emergency Response Plan

The emergency response plan provides guidance to staff and parents so that we can provide safe care for our children should an emergency or disaster occur while the children are at school. All staff review the Emergency response plan and keep a copy in each classroom. Each classroom has an available list of students and their emergency contact information as part of a Grab and Go pack including a basic first aid kit. All staff take CPR/First Aid training every two years.

Fire, earthquake and/or lockdown drills occur once a month.

- **Fire:** In the event of a fire, children and staff will evacuate the building calmly using predetermined evacuation paths (please refer to evacuation posters located in the classrooms). Head teachers will bring the sign in/out sheet to check attendance as well as emergency numbers and a first aid kit in the grab & go bag. When the "all clear" is given teachers will lead children back to the classrooms or release them to parents.
- **Earthquake:** In the event of an earthquake, teachers will direct the children and staff to drop to the floor, cover heads and necks with their arms, take cover under furniture, and hold on to the leg of a table. When safe to do so, teachers will evacuate the children to the

designated evacuation area. If class is on the playground, the teachers will direct children to the evacuation area or safest location in the parking lot.

- **Lockdown:** If a lockdown should become necessary under the guidance of police and/or other regulatory forces, the following procedures will be implemented immediately, if safe for staff to do so:
 - All exterior doors and gates will be locked if accessible.
 - All blinds and/or curtains will be closed.
 - If necessary, teachers will block the doors.
 - Children will immediately be moved to their designated lockdown area, away from all windows and/or doors where possible. Roll will be taken by the head teacher.
 - No one shall be permitted to leave or enter the building under any circumstances.
 - If possible, an emergency email or text will be sent to parents explaining circumstances.
 - The lockdown will be effective until emergency personnel issue an “all clear”.
- **Suspicious Persons**
 - In the event of suspicious persons around the property, details will be reported to Debbie Parga and recorded by the staff in our communications journal. Either 311 will be called to report the incident or 911 if the situation is deemed threatening.
 - Incidents will be reported to parents if authorities are contacted.
- **Communicable disease**
 - Control of Communicable disease among children is a prime concern. Families are asked to notify the school as soon as you are aware that your child has contracted a communicable disease. If the health department requires, a notice will be posted on the notice board. A list of communicable diseases is available in the office.
- **Evacuation procedures**
 - In the event of evacuation, Debbie Parga and the HMS staff will direct procedures, contact emergency personnel, and ensure proper child pickup. When possible, we will evacuate to our parking lot. If needed, we have additional “off-site” evacuation locations
 - **“Off-site” evacuation location #1: Ladd Lane School 161 Ladd Lane Hollister CA 95023. Ladd Lane Phone: (831) 636-4490**
 - **“Off-site” evacuation location #2: The Farm Bertuccio's Market 2410 Airline Hwy, Hollister, CA 95023**
- **Student release procedures**
 - Students will be released to parents or other emergency contact when the “all clear” is given.
 - Teachers will remain on campus until all children have been released to a parent or caregiver.
- **Communication during a disaster**

- The school will make all attempts possible to notify parents via phone, email, website, and the school's answering machine as to the situation.
- Debbie Parga will contact parents by phone as soon as possible.
- **Overnight Procedures**
 - In the event of an overnight emergency, mats will be provided for each child.
- **Disaster supplies**
 - Supplies of non-perishable snacks and water for 72 hours are in the kitchen.
 - First aid kits are in each classroom.

QUESTIONS

If you have any questions, please reach out to the Head of School, Debbie Parga, by phone: (831) 630-3038 or Email: dparga@hollistermontessori.com

“The greatest gifts we can give our children are the roots of responsibility and the wings of independence.”

Dr. Maria Montessori