



Bellevue Montessori School

**ELEMENTARY**

# Parent Handbook

2025–2026



[www.bellmontessori.com](http://www.bellmontessori.com)

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## VISION AND MISSION STATEMENTS

### VISION STATEMENT

Bellevue Montessori School strives to provide a nurturing and enriching Montessori environment that educates and supports all children in reaching their full potential. We cultivate a passion for lifelong learning while fostering a school culture that values diverse and gifted learners. Rooted in our commitment to educating the whole child, we will continually develop as educators to prepare students to be explorers, innovators, and global citizens in a dynamic world.

### Mission Statement

Bellevue Montessori School cultivates independent, confident, and collaborative innovators through an authentic Montessori approach. Our professional community empowers children to think critically, act with integrity, and lead with empathy, laying a strong foundation for creative leadership and academic excellence.

### Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Statement

Bellevue Montessori School is committed to fostering a diverse, equitable, and inclusive community where every individual is honored and respected. Rooted in the Montessori philosophy, we believe that education serves as a powerful catalyst for social change, promoting equity and understanding among all people.

### Core Values

- The Montessori Method of education is scientifically based and provides key opportunities for development during a child's Sensitive Periods, Planes of Development, and the early years when the child has an Absorbent Mind as described by Dr. Maria Montessori.
- Our authentic Montessori-prepared environments are developmentally appropriate by providing hands-on learning materials, freedom of choice, a mixed-age classroom, the absence of rewards and punishments, uninterrupted work periods, and individualized instruction that supports each child's growth.
- That diversity is a strength and that every individual is welcomed, treated with respect, and supported in their own educational journey.

- The three basic guidelines for creating a safe space physically, emotionally, and intellectually at our school are to be respectful of others, the environment, and oneself.
- Following a child with learning differences might require additional expertise and implementing a specialized learning plan in addition to the Montessori curriculum.
- As young children have an Absorbent Mind, it is vital that adults in the Montessori environment model appropriate behavior and create a nurturing, peaceful, and orderly environment for the children.
- Learning happens when children work independently and exhibit concentration and repetition through hands-on activity without adult interference.
- For optimal growth, the whole child must be supported in their social, emotional, intellectual, and physical needs. Adults can assist by being present to each child and offering kindness, empathy, and opportunities for growth, which are identified explicitly through observation of each individual child.
- Through the adult's consistent guidelines, empathy, and trust, children will gain self-discipline and emotional self-awareness that will aid them in being intentional in their efforts to be positive members of the community, successful collaborator, and to gain inner peace in their lives.
- Freedom of choice establishes a foundation for lifelong learning by fostering intrinsic motivation, curiosity, and joy in learning.
- Our diverse population is celebrated and enriches our children's cultural education so that they learn to value differences and listen respectfully to a variety of ideas as a step towards supporting a more peaceful world.
- Conflict resolution starts with a child learning emotional self-control, an open mind to listen to other's experiences, and the ability to respectfully communicate one's feelings and needs. With these skills, the child will then need guidance and practice to successfully resolve differences independently.
- Education does not start and stop at the doors of our school. It takes the whole community of family and school members working together to create an ideal learning environment for children.

## Learning Environment Principles

### The Teachers:

- Support student physical, intellectual, emotional, and social growth;
- Provide a reality-based interrelated curriculum;
- Encourage left and right brain integration;
- Acknowledge sensitive periods for learning;
- Guide students to developmentally appropriate materials in all areas;
- Know that love, rather than judgment, teaches acceptance;
- Treat mistakes as learning opportunities;
- Collaboratively problem-solve and support conflict resolution strategies;
- Recognize that appreciation of all life is essential to cultivating joy;
- Teach students how to learn, research, vet, test, and apply knowledge;
- Model how to test and assess information for accuracy;
- Bring awareness to online safety, digital footprints, and digital citizenship;
- Empower students to know how to learn and vet sources to assess reliability;
- Promote ecological awareness, stewardship, and global perspective;
- Believe peace, through education, is attainable.

### The Students:

- Learn through their activity in a richly prepared environment;
- Work in mixed-age groupings;
- Enjoy the freedom of choice with responsibility;
- Use self-teaching manipulative materials;
- Develop independence, character, and personality;
- Progress at their own pace in all subject areas;
- Build a positive self-image through their successes and interactions;
- Learn logical consequences for behavior;
- Work individually and cooperatively in groups;
- Reinforce learning and gain leadership skills through opportunities to teach each other;
- Receive perceptual-motor education for neuromuscular development;
- Attain self-control, awareness, and respect towards others through grace and courtesy lessons;
- Cultivate confidence, self-esteem, public speaking, and leadership qualities.

## ACADEMIC PROGRAM

Our Montessori elementary classrooms provide prepared environments that stimulate curiosity and build an exceptional foundation and a love of learning. As students move through the Montessori continuum from year to year, our experienced Montessori-trained teachers work together, coordinating each student's needs.

Elementary Classrooms are organized by two, three-year programs. The Lower Elementary class is for students aged 6-9, or first through third grade (must turn 6 by September 1st), and the Upper Elementary class is for ages 9-12, or fourth through sixth grade. Starting with our Toddler classrooms through grade six, mixed-age classrooms offer students the opportunity to be leaders and, at other times, to observe or be guided by a teacher or peer. Small class sizes and low student-teacher ratios promote solid and enduring relationships.

Children in Lower Elementary are bursting with questions and are learning to discover answers independently that pique their interests. Upper Elementary students take ownership of their lessons and explore subjects of their own volition. Much of the elementary work is completed using hands-on Montessori materials, giving students clarity and depth in their understanding of new concepts. Students build on their knowledge in an integrated curriculum and shift to abstraction as mastery of each concept occurs.

The Montessori curriculum underscores the many ways in which our world is connected. For example, the five "Great Lessons," stories written years ago by Dr. Maria Montessori in collaboration with her son Mario Montessori, ignite the imagination and provide a foundation for future depth of understanding. The stories prompt broad questions about how the universe and life changed through time, how reading, writing, and numbers began, and how each area of knowledge is profoundly interrelated.

Beyond academics, the Montessori pedagogy emphasizes ecological awareness and lifelong skills in Grace and Courtesy, Practical Life, conflict resolution, and Peace Education. Grace and Courtesy lessons provide children with age-appropriate vocabulary, actions, and steps required to strengthen empathy and awareness of others. Common lessons in this area include the development of social-emotional skills, digital citizenship, and mindfulness. Practical Life lessons and exercises include care of self, from food preparation to handwashing to sewing, and care of the environment, from sweeping to tending to classroom plants and pets to environmental stewardship.

### **School History**

Bellevue Montessori School opened in 1966 as the first Montessori school on Seattle's Eastside. The school was founded by Margo Rossano in a small two-room house in downtown Bellevue. As more parents learned about this fantastic method of education, the need for a larger school became apparent.

In 1975, a Montessori elementary education program was started and now serves children from first through sixth grade. The elementary building is between Bellevue Montessori's Main Campus and the Park Campus (housing the Toddler Program). To honor Mrs. Rossano's legacy, the newly renovated elementary and primary campus building was named the Rossano Campus.

## **DIVERSITY / NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT**

Bellevue Montessori School welcomes all children. We do not discriminate with respect to race, creed, color, national origin, sex, age, or physical ability.

Bellevue Montessori School celebrates the diversity of the children and families in our community, including those from all ethnic and religious backgrounds. We do not prescribe to any specific religious organizations or practices. However, we do invite all families to share their ethnic, cultural, or religious observances and unique cultural perspectives with us.

## **AMS ACCREDITED SCHOOL**

Bellevue Montessori School is proud to be accredited by the American Montessori Society, a distinction shared by only 11 other schools in the State of Washington.

AMS has verified that our school meets rigorous institutional and instructional standards and has achieved AMS accreditation, the gold standard of Montessori education. Accreditation is a voluntary process and the pinnacle of the 10-step Pathway of Continuous School Improvement, a school-quality initiative available to member schools. As part of accreditation, Bellevue Montessori School is required to submit annual reports updating AMS on improvements to our program.

More information is available at <http://www.amshq.org/>.

## SCHOOL OPERATIONS

### **Address**

Bellevue Montessori School - Rossano Campus  
11033 NE 24th Ave  
Bellevue, Washington 98004

### **Telephone**

425-502-8052

*To avoid disrupting student work time or instruction, non-urgent calls or messages during Montessori work time will be left with the office. Leave a message with a return number, and the School Director, Elementary Program Director, or your child's Montessori teacher will return your call as soon as possible.*

### **Front Desk Administrator Email**

[info.rc@bellmontessori.com](mailto:info.rc@bellmontessori.com)

### **Elementary Program Director Email**

[elementary@bellmontessori.com](mailto:elementary@bellmontessori.com)

### **Communication Platform**

The BMS parent communication platform is called Transparent Classroom. It is secure, password-protected, and exclusive to school parents. Transparent Classroom is also a community forum comprising current classroom news, photos, and upcoming event information. You can also find documents such as the Academic Calendar and other School policies on this site. Please make sure your profile is updated with parent email addresses. Please let us know if you have any difficulty joining or accessing Transparent Classroom (TC)!

URL: <https://transparentclassroom.com/>

Good communication between you and our staff is essential as we partner in educating your child. You are always welcome at our school. We encourage you to visit to observe your child or to participate in volunteer class activities. These activities are coordinated with your child's teachers. Please plan your formal observation of the classroom after September, when the class is settled. More information about Observations can be found in the Parent Information section of the Parent Handbook.

## ADMISSION OF STUDENTS

### Enrollment Procedure

Bellevue Montessori School welcomes all children. We do not discriminate with respect to race, religion, color, ancestry, national origin, gender, or physical ability.

Children must demonstrate a willingness and ability to cooperate with the staff and other children and meet classroom expectations.

Our school's enrollment process is as follows:

1. **Schedule and attend a tour** of the Elementary Program at the Rossano building.
2. **Complete an application form** and submit with a non-refundable **\$175 application fee**.
3. **Submit the Records Request and Teacher Evaluation Form** so that your child's academic records from their current or previous school can be shared with Bellevue Montessori School.
4. After BMS receives both the Evaluation Form and Academic Records, you will be contacted to schedule a **half-day classroom visit for your child**.
5. If your child is accepted for admission, BMS will email you an **Enrollment Offer**.
6. To accept the offer, **your child's registration packet must be completed** and parents must pay **non-refundable first deposit payment within 14 days of receiving the enrollment offer** on the Finals site. The non-refundable deposit payment is your tuition payment for June 2026. This deposit is not transferable.
7. At this time, additional enrollment forms and tuition will be required.
8. Financial Assistance is available for families that qualify through a third party called SSS (School and Student Services). See below for more information.

### Disenrollment

Bellevue Montessori School reserves the right, in its sole and absolute discretion, to revoke enrollment at any time (before or after the beginning of classes) when it deems it necessary.

If admission is revoked by Bellevue Montessori School any portion of the tuition paid for the current month is non-refundable. The tuition deposit is non-refundable and non-transferrable per the parent contract. Specific reasons for disenrollment include but are not limited to the following:

- Nonpayment of tuition. Payments not received within 30 days of their due date are cause for disenrollment.
- Students' needs are more significant than the school can support, such as a child who needs constant one-on-one support.
- Behavior that puts the safety of the student or others in the community in danger.

## **Tuition and Fees**

Tuition is divided into 10 monthly payments. After the June tuition deposit has been paid, the remaining nine payments are due on the first of each month from September through May. Tuition payments are due on the first of each month from September 2025 through May 2026. Payments can be made by credit card, ACH, or by check. Credit card payments will require a merchant fee currently at 3.05%. ACH payments have a fixed transaction fee currently at \$2.50. You will be notified if these rates change, as the fees are subject to change.

### **2025-2026:**

#### **September 5, 2025-June 1, 2026**

##### School Day 8:30-3:15

Lower Elementary Grades 1-3: \$24,000

Upper Elementary Grades 4-6: \$24,600

##### Before and After Care

AM & PM After School care: (7:30-8:30, 3:15-5:45) \$6,200

\*AM/PM Activity Club Included

Financial Aid is available through School and Student Services (SSS) for elementary parents. SSS requires a comprehensive application (Parents' Financial Statement, or PFS) that includes information from your most recent tax return. Inquire with the Program Director or Enrollment Specialist at [enroll@bellmontessori.com](mailto:enroll@bellmontessori.com) for more details.

### **\*AM/PM Before and After Care**

AC provides before- and after-school care for students. The program includes snacks (in the afternoon), indoor and outdoor playtime, and activity time. Parents must sign their children out of After Care each day.

The full benefits of After Care are available to students who contract for it for the entire school year. Childcare is provided every school day from 7:30 to 8:15 a.m. and 3:00 to 5:45 p.m. In addition, childcare is provided from 7:30 a.m. until the school's regular closing time on teacher in-service days, conference days, and mid-winter break (not including Presidents' Day). Spring break is included for full-year AC contracted students who have paid for the Full-Day schedule.

### **AC Vouchers**

Any Bellevue Montessori student may participate in Activity Club on an occasional basis, with 24-hour advanced reservation, space permitting, before or after school, *as long as we have the space for the required student-to-teacher ratio*. Morning or afternoon vouchers may be purchased in groups of five to a book paid by check. AC

vouchers are valid for each student's entire tenure at BMS. An AM Voucher covers care from 7:30 a.m. to 8:20 a.m. per day. A PM Voucher covers care between 3:00 p.m. and 5:45 p.m. daily per day.

Voucher prices for 25-26 (Indicated on voucher which time frame)

- Five AM Activity Club vouchers are \$80.00
- Five reduced PM Activity Club vouchers are \$105.00
- Five PM Activity Club vouchers are \$180.00
- \$105/day for school-day students attending AC-only days
- \$35 late tuition payment

When school is not in session, there may be a few openings for children who do not have a School Year After Care contract. Reservations for these sessions must be made at least ten days in advance, are space-dependent, and require an additional payment of \$105 per day. If a room is available, a sign-up will be sent out to non-AC contracted families, and slots will be filled on a first-come, first-served basis. Please call the Rossano Campus administrative office at 425-502-8052 for reservations.

**Late Pickups**

Starting at 3:20 for School-Day students, there will be a late pick-up fee of \$10 and an additional \$1 per minute until 3:30 p.m. Those Children who are not picked will be signed into Activity Club at 3:30 p.m. with an additional charge for an AC voucher. Please call the front desk before pick-up time begins (no later than 2:45 p.m.) if you would like your child to join Activity Club. Space is limited; contact us for availability. Vouchers are available at the front desk.

## ARRIVAL / DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

Please adhere to scheduled pick-up times to avoid congestion. Form one line of vehicles and drive forward as far as you can. Please do not stop in front of the door, and leave space in front of your car. Please sign your child in and out using Transparent Classroom. During Pick-up, teachers will accompany students to their cars. If you must leave your vehicle for any reason, please park in one of the designated spaces. Please remember that the car line is not the place for conversations with teachers. They will happily schedule time to meet with you via email if needed.

### **Parking**

Park in a non-staff parking space at the Rossano Campus. All spaces not marked by the Staff Parking sign may be used anytime during the school day. Spaces are limited. During all-school events (or smaller-scale all-elementary events), spaces are available at the church across the street and at the Boys and Girls Club near Hidden Valley Park.

### **Arrival Procedures**

When entering the driveway, form one line and pull forward completely before dropping off students at the walkway. Students may then walk into the front of the building, go up the stairway, and proceed to their classrooms to put away their coats and lunch boxes. Exit straight ahead (toward Hidden Valley Park) or east toward 112th Ave NE. If you must leave your car, please park in one of the designated spaces. Elementary students must arrive on time so that they can begin their work, and so we do not obstruct the road.

### **Departure Procedures**

#### **Dismissal Schedule:**

Primary	2:40 pm to 3:10 pm
Lower Elementary	3:10 pm to 3:20 pm
Upper Elementary	3:10 pm to 3:20 pm

For safety, please enter the driveway, form one line, and pull forward completely. Pick-up begins at 3:10 for Elementary. Please do not arrive earlier and begin to create the pick-up line as the Early Childhood Program dismisses before the Elementary Program. We have limited parking, but if you have arrived early, unexpectedly, or are waiting on a sibling, kindly find a parking place, as it may disrupt the traffic flow for Primary students. All children must be walked to their car by a teacher. Exit straight ahead (toward Hidden Valley Park) or east toward 112th Ave NE. If an approved adult walks up to the building for pick-up, please be sure they check in with the child's teacher before leaving with your child. We will ask for I.D. as we get to know each child's approved adults for pick-up. At the start of the year, a sheet of paper on your dash with your child's name and classroom makes this process much smoother.

Children not picked up by 3:30 will be signed in to Extended Care, and you will be charged the Extended Care late drop-in fee outlined above.

### **Safety Rules in Parking Area**

- Enter the pick-up/drop-off line from NE 24th Street
- If you must leave your car for any reason, please park in one of the designated spaces past the front entrance
- Please be patient with our staff and students as they are properly dismissed
- Be on the lookout for any children walking to their car in the parking lot and drive cautiously
- Please do not back into the pick-up/drop-off line or "cut" the line to arrive sooner; a staff member may help you move forward in the line

### **Security**

Front entry doors are locked at all times of the day except during arrivals. A staff member is always at the front desk to monitor people entering and exiting the school. Please ring the intercom bell to the right of the front door to inform the front desk if you are dropping off or picking up your child outside the regular car line times. If you pick your child up during class time, please call the Front Desk Administrator so the classroom staff can help your child transition and prepare for departure when you arrive.

### **Absences**

If a child is absent from school due to illness, parents are asked to email their child's teacher, Program Director, and building front desk manager to let us know. Parents are asked to notify the school in advance if the absence is due to travel or doctor appointments. Please remember the Montessori work period (8:30-11:50) when scheduling appointments. If parents will be out of town, for your child's welfare, please notify the school and provide appropriate emergency contact numbers.

Elementary Director, Elizabeth Vanderpool - [elementary@bellmontessori.com](mailto:elementary@bellmontessori.com)  
RC Front Desk Administrator - [info.rc@bellmontessori.com](mailto:info.rc@bellmontessori.com)

Lower Elementary Lead Teacher emails:

Magnolia Classroom Rm 1 - [magnolia.le1@bellmontessori.com](mailto:magnolia.le1@bellmontessori.com)  
Sequoia Classroom Rm 2 - [sequoia.le2@bellmontessori.com](mailto:sequoia.le2@bellmontessori.com)

Upper Elementary Lead Teacher email:

Cascara Classroom Rm 3 - [cascara.uel@bellmontessori.com](mailto:cascara.uel@bellmontessori.com)

Consistency and routine are essential to each child's development. We depend on your family's full support to keep absences to a minimum. Although our program is individualized, it will always depend on consistency and progress. When a child misses school (especially for more extended periods), there is an adjustment period before they can successfully return to the routine of their school work. More absences in a child's academic year will be detrimental to their success in both their educational and

social development. Bellevue Montessori cannot guarantee expected outcomes for students who miss an excess of 14 days or consistently miss school due to tardiness.

### **Tardy Policy**

Students who are tardy or absent excessively from the program will also fall behind in academics and social-emotional development. A student who is tardy to class not only places their learning in jeopardy but also interrupts the learning of other students. A child will be marked tardy after 8:35 am.

## **SCHEDULES**

### **Lower Elementary Schedule**

7:30 - 8:20 Activity Club  
8:20 - 8:30 Arrival Time  
8:30 - 12:00 Morning academic work period  
12:00-1:00 Lunch & Recess  
1:00 - 3:00 Academic Time & Specialists  
3:10 - 3:20 Lower Elementary pick-up  
3:00 - 5:45 Activity Club

### **Upper Elementary Schedule**

7:30 - 8:20 Activity Club  
8:20 - 8:30 Arrival Time  
8:30 - 12:00 Morning academic work period  
12:00 -1:00 Lunch & Recess  
1:00 - 3:10 Academic Time & Specialists  
3:10 - 3:20 Upper Elementary pick-up  
3:00 - 5:45 Activity Club

### **Early Arrival & Activity Club**

Full-day students contracted for Activity Club may arrive for school as early as 7:30 a.m. to participate in the Activity Club until the regular school hours begin at 8:20 a.m. At 8:20 a.m., children may enter their respective classrooms.

### **Academic Time**

During work time in the Montessori classroom, teachers connect students to developmentally appropriate work via individual and group lessons. These lessons typically occur throughout the morning and afternoon work time periods. During work time, children who are not in lessons are free to select activities from the Montessori Prepared Environment, which offers materials in a variety of areas that include practical life, art, peace, math, geometry, reading, writing, and cultural areas such as geography, history, botany, and zoology. Hands-on Montessori materials, which

promote movement and independent discovery, give our students opportunities for personal mastery of foundational skills.

Through teacher observation, review of the child's individualized work record, and activities mastered, the teacher will develop a plan with the child for each week's work selection. Once children have finished their work, they may either check it using an answer key or turn it in to a teacher. Once corrections are completed, the child learns to both take ownership over their learning by marking off work on an individual work record and to partner with their teacher as they initial complete work beside the child's marks as well.

Assessments are done for each child in the area of reading and math each year. Our Learning Support is available to support those children who need additional explicit instruction and practice. Support may be done one-on-one or in small group lessons so that children reinforce the skills developmentally appropriate at their grade level. If a child needs additional support, parents may be notified that after-school tutoring is needed. Our Learning Support may be available for outside tutoring, depending on availability. Parents would be responsible for the fees associated with all tutoring outside of school hours.

Children may also observe another child's lesson or work, or work cooperatively with another classmate. Compassion and respect are created through interactions in the mixed-age community. Students also have the opportunity to grow curious as they observe the activities chosen by their peers. These observations help clarify current concepts being learned and create motivation for trying new works. In the afternoon, children may practice new lessons, complete work begun during the morning, or attend classes taught by one of our specialists.

Teachers will hand out a general classroom schedule during the fall parent information meeting.

### **Changes in Schedule**

Other changes within the typical schedule may occur due to traditional events or field trips. Your child's teacher will communicate these changes to you.

### **Emergency Drills & Preparedness**

#### **Our Commitment to Safety**

Bellevue Montessori School prioritizes the well-being of every child. In the event of an emergency, such as a natural disaster or other critical incident, our first steps are to assess the situation, secure everyone, and provide necessary aid.

- Evacuation Plans: Each classroom has a clear evacuation map posted by the exit door, and one is also displayed on the office bulletin board.
- Building Security: In emergencies, all buildings will be locked until staff can account for and safely care for all students and personnel.
- Parent Notifications: We'll notify families via email or text through Transparent Classroom. Please avoid calling the school during emergencies, as our phone lines are reserved for coordination with emergency responders.

You're welcome to review all details in our full Emergency Response Plan, available on our website.

## Emergency Drills Schedule

Drill Type	Frequency
Fire & Earthquake	Once a month (and part of the curriculum)
Lockdown	Once a quarter

### Why Drills Matter

- They reinforce muscle memory, helping students and staff react quickly and calmly when it counts.
- Drills test plans in real time, revealing any potential gaps or areas for improvement.
- Regular practice reduces anxiety and enhances confidence in emergency response.

## Emergency Response Plan

A copy of the Emergency Response Plan is available on the website.

## Homework Policy

Lower Elementary students do not have typical "homework" assignments. Work that may be assigned to your child includes practical life activities, or activities that allow your child to become more independent and self-sufficient.

Upper Elementary students have weekly homework assigned to them in addition to their regular academic time in the classroom as an extension of their practical life lessons. These homework assignments are designed to review foundational skills or lessons already taught in the classroom. The work should take up to thirty minutes per evening to complete and students are allowed to schedule their time afterschool during their week as they choose to complete their homework, so long as they turn in their weekly work on time, if spread out appropriately.

## The Montessori Tiered System of Support (Behavior and Learning Policy)

At Bellevue Montessori School, we recognize that each child enters our community with a unique background, personality, emotional development, and communication style. As Montessori educators, we are committed to fostering an inclusive environment where children feel respected, valued, and supported.

The processes of social-emotional development and learning are deeply interconnected and unfold over time. Perfect behavior or having every child learn at the same pace is neither expected nor the goal. Instead, we view behavior and learning as a continuous process

requiring individualized guidance and instruction with ample opportunities for practice and progress.

When challenges arise, we see them as opportunities to build essential life skills and deepen the trust between children and adults.

Our commitment to inclusion is supported by a tiered approach that allows us to meet each child where they are. This framework provides layered levels of support, from universal strategies used with all students to more individualized guidance when needed, all within the Montessori context of respect and collaboration.

Partnering with families is crucial when additional support is necessary. Our approach is proactive, consistent, and rooted in empathy to provide your child with the best possible support. While we strive to meet the needs of all learners, there may be situations where a child requires a level of support beyond what we are able to provide within our program.

### **Montessori Behavior Expectations for Children**

1. Treat oneself and others with respect.
2. Care for classroom materials and the school environment.
3. Demonstrate actions that help maintain safety and well-being for oneself and others.

### **Overview of Inclusive Education and the Montessori Tiered System of Support**

At Bellevue Montessori School, inclusion is a foundational commitment and everyday practice that honors and respects our community's rich diversity.

The thoughtfully prepared physical, social-emotional, and instructional environment of our Montessori classrooms supports children by helping them thrive and reach their fullest potential.

When practiced with fidelity, Montessori education provides an exceptional framework for inclusive learning. Through careful observation, our educators develop a deep understanding of each child. This insight shapes personalized instruction and guidance that fosters successful learning, positive behavior, self-regulation, decision-making, and growth in social-emotional skills, which supports meaningful and fulfilling relationships within the community.

## **Tier 1: Powerful Practices (Universal and Ongoing)**

This first level of support serves as the foundation. The support is universal and provided to all students in the Primary classrooms. During this stage, students receive individualized and small group lessons, guidance, and classroom observations as part of the standard Montessori approach.

We also prioritize the explicit teaching of social-emotional skills, such as self-awareness, self-regulation, social awareness, and relationship building, which are consistent with Montessori philosophy. These Grace and Courtesy lessons help students practice skills to collaborate, form friendships, and contribute positively to the classroom community.

If a student appears to need additional support, teachers begin by closely observing the child within the classroom environment to identify potential barriers to learning and/or social-emotional development. These observations and input from parents guide future planning to meet the child's needs thoughtfully and proactively. The school may also request a family meeting to collaborate on strategies that can be reinforced both at school and at home.

All Tier One decisions are driven by observation and feedback from teachers and parents to support student growth, behavior, and well-being.

### **Criteria for Additional Support**

- Lagging academic/cognitive progress in one or more curricular areas
- Lagging social-emotional skill development
- Lagging progress in physical development
- Emerging patterns of unsafe, harmful, or disruptive behaviors

## **Tier 2: Progress Monitoring and Targeted Instruction - (Weeks 2–6)**

If a child continues to require additional support, an Action Support Plan or Behavior Support Plan is created. The parents and the Lead Teacher will meet to review the plan before implementation. Communication includes:

### **Learning Supports**

- Teachers provide intentional, interactive small-group instruction targeting skills to meet student needs.
- Teachers provide multiple opportunities to practice targeted skills.
- Instruction is differentiated based on learning styles and developmental readiness.

- Montessori materials are used intentionally to reinforce key academic concepts.
  - Progress is monitored through classroom observation.
  - Teachers may consult with the Education Coach to refine instructional approaches.
- 

## **Behavior Supports**

- Staff implement classroom-based supports such as reflective guidance, visual cues, peer modeling, and adjusted expectations.
- Instruction is differentiated based on learning styles and developmental readiness.
- Montessori Grace and Courtesy lessons are used intentionally to reinforce communication, self-awareness, self-regulation, and community awareness.
- Progress is monitored through classroom observation.
- Regular, ongoing consultation and coaching are provided for classroom teachers.
- Communication with families remains consistent to ensure shared understanding and support.

If patterns of behavior continue or intensify, an Outcome Meeting with parents is required. Supports may include daily behavior plans, sensory accommodations, or consultation with our Behavior Specialist or Leadership Team.

The School may remove a child from the program if it is in the best interest of community safety, regardless of tier status.

## **Tier 3: Outside Specialist Observations, Assessments, and Interventions (Weeks 3-9):**

- If concerns remain, parent communication will outline the next steps. These will include one or more of the following:
  - Intensive support from the school's Behavioral or Reading Specialist
  - Request an assessment or services from an outside specialist or therapist
  - Adjusted schedule or removal from the Activity Club and/or school day

- A transition plan to a more supportive learning environment
- In some cases, of repeated physical aggression (e.g., hitting, kicking, biting) or behavior that poses a serious risk to others or significantly disrupts the learning environment, the school reserves the right to take immediate action, including temporary removal from the classroom or immediate expulsion, if deemed necessary for the safety and well-being of the child and the community.

### **Criteria for Determination Recommendation**

- Consistent lack of progress or proficiency in foundational targeted skills
- Consistent lack of progress or proficiency in increased social-emotional skills & effective behavior
- Persistent difficulty engaging in classroom routines or expectations despite layered supports
- Demonstrated need for support beyond the scope of what the current school program can provide

**Behavioral Escalation and Support Process** When a child demonstrates behavior that disrupts the learning environment or poses a safety concern, we follow a structured process of observation, documentation, and a framework of a multi-tiered system of support (MTSS) in response to learner needs. While the tiered process typically unfolds over a number of weeks, timelines may be shortened based on the severity of the behavior.

## **GENERAL POLICIES**

### **Visitor Sign-In/Sign-Out**

All adults entering the school building or school grounds must sign in at the front desk and receive an identification badge while on school grounds. Visitors must also return the identification badge and initial the sign-out sheet when leaving. No unauthorized adults are allowed on campus, and observation of any stranger is immediately reported to the office. Only parents/guardians, adults approved by a child's parents/guardians, or adults doing business with Bellevue Montessori School are allowed in the building.

### **Volunteers**

Parent volunteers are welcome in our school. You will hear about volunteer opportunities at the September parent meeting. All volunteers must sign in/out at the front desk and wear an identification necklace while on campus. Please come without babies or small children so that you can give your full attention to the children. All Parent Volunteers are required to have a Portable Background Check and proof of MMR.

## **Eating and Nutrition**

We encourage students to eat nutritious lunches and require them to eat nutritious parts of their lunch before dessert. Nutritious foods better prepare students for focusing on the work of learning. If you include dessert, consider providing fruit and omit any sugary items. Candy, gum, and other such items are prohibited at school. Water is the ideal beverage for lunch and is always available at school. Do not include sodas or other sugary drinks (including flavored kinds of milk and sports drinks). Please help us teach your child good eating habits by reinforcing these guidelines.

### **Snack**

Children may eat a healthy snack (e.g., fruit, vegetables, cheese, crackers, yogurt, etc.) from their lunch box during the morning work time. Parents are responsible for providing a snack during class time. Students in AC receive an additional healthy snack provided by the school. The school has a touchless filtered water bottle filler as part of our water fountain system.

### **Lunch**

Bellevue Montessori School does not provide lunch for students. This year, we have contracted the Rainbow Fresh company to bring catered meals for lunch at our school. This service is optional and requires additional payment to Rainbow Fresh. Rainbow Fresh handles all invoices and payments. Further information can be found at <https://www.rainbowfreshfood.com/>. To sign up, go to: [how to create an account](#).

If you choose not to participate in the Rainbow Fresh program, please send your child's lunch in a sturdy lunch box clearly labeled with the student's name. Always include two napkins and required reusable utensils in the lunch box. No cooking facilities, including microwave ovens, are available to heat student lunches. Since no refrigeration is available for student lunches, please include a cold/ice pack to keep food cold or use a thermos to keep food warm.

### **Nut Policy**

So that the staff will have an adequate opportunity to take safety precautions, it is imperative that we receive written notification from your child's pediatrician of any food allergies or dietary restrictions. You will be asked to complete a form outlining this information for your child.

We ask that you assist us in providing our students with a safe school environment. To avoid a life-threatening allergic reaction, it is important that there is strict avoidance of all nuts and nut-containing products (peanuts, walnuts, pecans, almonds, peanut butter, almond butter, Nutella, etc.). We do not allow nuts or products containing nuts at our school. To reduce the chance of this occurring, please be mindful of the following:

1. If your child has eaten peanuts/nuts before coming to school, please be sure your child's hands and face have been thoroughly washed before

- entering the school.
2. Please do not allow your child to bring any food items containing nuts or nut products into the school or walk around carrying any product that contains nuts on school grounds.
  3. When planning your child's lunch, we ask that no foods containing nuts or nut products be brought into the school under any circumstances.

Your understanding and support in helping us to provide a "NUT FREE ZONE" within the Bellevue Montessori School campuses are greatly appreciated. While we do our best to support community member adherence to our Nut Free Zone policy for the safety of those with severe allergies, we cannot guarantee 100% adherence as unintentional mistakes from well-meaning community members can occur, so always educate students about allergen safety and make sure tables are cleaned between meals.

## **Elementary Dress Code**

At Bellevue Montessori, we aim to create a learning environment that supports focus, movement, and respect for self, others, and the community. Our dress code reflects these values and is designed to ensure that students can comfortably and safely engage in all aspects of the Montessori day, from outdoor exploration to classroom work.

### **General Guidelines**

- Clothing should be comfortable, clean, and appropriate for active movement throughout the day.
- Outdoor shoes must be closed-toe and secure for safety during recess and outdoor activities.

### **Specific Guidelines**

- Shirts must cover the midriff, even when arms are raised or when sitting. Crop tops, halters, and spaghetti straps are not appropriate for the school setting.
- Shorts, skirts, and dresses should allow for freedom of movement and preserve modesty during outdoor play and work on the floor. If wearing a short skirt or dress, shorts or leggings should be worn underneath.
- Hats and hoods should be removed indoors unless used for religious or cultural purposes.

### **Special Considerations**

- Layers are encouraged! Our days often include time indoors and out, and students should be prepared for changes in temperature.
- Field trips require a school vest or other specific clothing; families will be notified in advance.
- If a student arrives in clothing that does not meet these guidelines, we will work

with them respectfully to find a comfortable solution (e.g., offering a spare shirt or pair of shorts from the office).

## **Outdoor Activities**

Outdoor activities are a significant aspect of our Montessori program. We plan for outside play each day, and the length of time we remain outside is weather permitting. Nature walks around Hidden Valley Park are standard practices for our students.

When children are playing outdoors on the playground, they are actively supervised. Teachers either walk the playground or stand at one of the designated teacher stations. Students are also supervised during transition times.

## **Rainy Season**

On most days, children go outside for recess. We encourage students to wear layered clothing, including waterproof jackets, hoods, and appropriate footwear when the weather is cool or rainy. Layered clothing is generally advisable from late October to April. Rainy-season clothing (waterproof jackets and rain boots) may be left in the classrooms. Please put your child's name on all clothing. Living in the Pacific Northwest means that your child will be going outside on days when it rains. If severe weather makes outdoor recess not an option, we will offer indoor recess activities in each classroom.

School policy maintains that a child well enough to go to school is well enough to go outside for recess. If outdoor play is not advisable, please send a written notice from your physician explaining the situation.

## **Elementary Guidelines: Technology Brought From Home**

*(Phones, Apple Watches/Smartwatches, iPads/tablets, handheld games, and similar devices)*

### **Purpose**

Bellevue Montessori School is committed to protecting the Elementary child's uninterrupted work cycle, concentration, and social development. Personal technology—especially smartwatches—can easily interrupt learning through notifications, messaging, games, photos, and "quick checks." These guidelines are designed to support focus while recognizing that some families choose to send devices for after-school logistics.

### **School-Provided Technology**

The School provides student access to school-approved devices (e.g., laptops) for specific learning purposes such as keyboarding, research for reports, and presentations under staff supervision. Personal devices are not needed for the school day.

## **Expectation During the School Day: "Off and Away"**

Students may bring personal technology to school, but it must remain:

- **Off or in School Mode** (no notifications, messaging, games, internet browsing, photos, or calls), and
- **Out of sight** (stored in the child's backpack).

**Personal devices may not be accessed during the school day**, including during the work cycle, lunch, recess, and transitions, unless a staff member has explicitly directed otherwise for a specific reason.

## **Communication During the Day**

If a parent/guardian needs to reach a student during the school day, please contact the **Rossano Campus front desk**. Students may access their device **after dismissal**.

## **If a Device Becomes a Distraction**

If a student uses a device during the school day or it interrupts learning (e.g., checking notifications, messaging, games, photographing, calling, or repeated handling), the following steps will occur:

1. **First occurrence:** The Lead Teacher (or supervising staff member) will remind the student of the policy and direct the student to place the device in their backpack.
2. **If the distraction continues or repeats the same day:** The device will be **collected by the Lead Teacher** and kept in a secure location until **pick-up**, at which time it will be **returned directly to the parent/guardian**.
3. **If the device must be collected more than once:** The School will notify the parent/guardian that the student **may no longer bring the device to school**.

## **Additional Notes**

- The School is not responsible for loss, theft, or damage of personal devices brought to campus.
- Devices may not be used to photograph/record others at school.
- These guidelines apply to all personal technology (smartwatches included).

**Thank you for partnering with us to maintain a learning environment that honors**

**focus, respect, and independence.**

## HEALTH POLICIES

### Health Procedures

In case of an emergency, school personnel will call 911 and follow the recommendations of the responding emergency medical personnel.

State law requires us to maintain immunization records for each student. Parents must submit an adequate, updated Immunization Form annually. A new Consent for Emergency Treatment and Health Information & Policy form must also be signed and on file in our office each year. These forms will be assigned through the [Finalsite platform](#). Any child without immunization records on file can only attend school once our records are complete.

We adhere to these policies because we are a school facility and care for the well-being of children. Respiratory infections and communicable diseases are readily transmitted in groups of children. Parents of children with any form of contagious disease must inform the school as soon as they know the diagnosis.

If sending your child home due to illness is necessary, we will attempt to contact the parents first. If a parent cannot be reached, we will contact the emergency contact person. Although we do not have a sick room, every effort will be made to keep your child comfortable while we contact you. It is essential that you or your emergency contact person is able to pick up your child during school hours, within one hour of our call when necessary. It is vital that we are able to contact either a parent or emergency contact person at any time! Adding school contact numbers to your phone is a great way to catch such calls.

If your child is ill, please keep him/her at home. Please report severe or communicable diseases to us, as we are required to report these occurrences to the Health Department.

According to state licensing requirements, a child should not attend school when any of the following are true:

- **Fever**—If your child has a fever of 100.4 or higher, they must remain home for at least 24 hours until they are fever-free without fever-reducing medication. If a child is sent home for a fever after 10 am they may not attend school the following day.
- **Vomiting** - a child will be sent home after vomiting at school from an illness and must remain at home for a minimum of 24 hours after vomiting two or more times in the previous 24-hour period. If a child is sent home for vomiting after 10 am they may not attend school the following day.

- **Diarrhea** - a child will be sent home after an episode of diarrhea while at school. Any time a child has diarrhea where stool frequency exceeds two stools above normal per 24 hours for that child or whose stool contains more than a drop of blood or mucus, must isolate themselves from other children at home for at least 24 hours after the last episode. If a child is sent home for diarrhea after 10 am they may not attend school the following day.
- **Nasal Drainage/Cough** - a runny nose alone is not necessarily a cause for keeping your child home. Consider the color of the drainage. Clear drainage is usually associated with allergies or the start of a viral infection. Yellow or green drainage may be a bacterial infection. If the runny nose is associated with a sore throat, nausea, or unusual fatigue, keep your child home and contact your healthcare provider if the symptoms do not improve within 24-48 hours. A healthcare provider should evaluate severe coughs to rule out Pertussis or “whooping cough.”
- **Rash** - any rash of unknown cause should be considered contagious. Please have your child examined by a healthcare provider to determine the cause and communicability of the rash before sending them to school. Your child may only return to school if there is a letter from a medical provider stating that the rash is not communicable or if the rash is no longer present.
- **Colds:** Children should stay home for three to four days after symptoms appear, especially if they feel poorly, have a persistent cough, their nose is very full, or their secretions are yellow or green.
- **Influenza:** Children should stay home for three to four days after symptoms appear, especially if your child feels poorly, has a persistent cough, his/her nose is very full, or secretions are yellow or green. Additionally, if your child has a fever of 100.4°F or higher, they must remain home until they have been fever-free without fever-reducing medication for at least 24 hours.
- **Strep Throat:** Students must remain home from the day they are diagnosed with strep for a minimum of 24 hours following the administration of the first dose of antibiotics.
- **Croup** - a person with croup is usually contagious for about three days after symptoms start or until their fever disappears. If your child has croup, please keep them home from school for at least three days. Your child may only return to school if there is a letter from a medical provider.
- **Chickenpox (Varicella)** - Children must remain at home until all lesions are crusted over, which usually takes seven to ten days. Children are most contagious the day before a rash occurs. Children may still get Chickenpox even though they have been immunized.
- **Stomach Flu (Norovirus)**- is the virus that causes the “stomach flu”. It is the most common cause of viral gastroenteritis in adults. You're contagious when you begin to feel ill. Symptoms usually appear within one to two days of exposure. Although you typically feel better after a day or two, you're contagious for a few days after you recover. The virus

can remain in your stool for up to two weeks or more after recovery. Children must remain at home as long as they actively have diarrhea or a fever of 100.4° F or more, and for at least 48 hours after the last episode of vomiting or diarrhea.

- **Rotavirus** - is the leading cause of viral gastroenteritis in infants and young children and usually appears one to three days after exposure. But you're contagious even before you develop symptoms, and up to two weeks after you've recovered. Children must remain at home as long as they actively have diarrhea or a fever of 100.4° F or more, and for at least 48 hours after the last episode of vomiting or diarrhea.
- **Hepatitis, Meningitis, Mumps, Rubella, and Tuberculosis** - these are very serious diseases and we need to be notified immediately when a diagnosis is made. Your child needs to be kept home and cannot return until we have written notice from your child's doctor.
- **Conjunctivitis ("Pink Eye")**—If the infection is bacterial, keep the child home from the time the child's eyes are red and oozy until 24 hours after s/he starts antibiotics. Viral conjunctivitis is contagious for five to seven days. Children diagnosed with viral conjunctivitis may return once the infection is gone or we receive written notification from their doctor.
- **Lice**—Once treated, the child may return to school after appropriate treatment has begun. Nits may persist after treatment, but successful treatment should kill crawling lice and check the child daily until the child is nit-free.
- **Impetigo and Scabies**: Students can return to school the following day after overnight treatment with a prescribed topical anti-scabicide cream and a note from their doctor.
- **Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease** - if your child is diagnosed with HFMD, please keep them home until they are fever-free without the use of fever-reducing medications and all sores have healed. This is typically 7-10 days.
- **Coxsackievirus A16** - is spread by fecal-oral route. About 90% of infections don't cause symptoms or present with a fever only. Infants and young kids are particularly susceptible to symptomatic coxsackie. Your child should stay home from school until they have no fever for 24 hours and the mouth sores and open blisters have healed.
- **Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV)** - is a common respiratory virus that usually causes mild, cold-like symptoms. Most people recover in a week or two, but RSV can be serious, especially for infants and older adults. People infected with RSV usually show symptoms within 4 to 6 days after getting infected. Symptoms of RSV infection usually include a runny nose, decreased appetite, coughing, sneezing, fever, and wheezing. People infected with RSV are usually contagious for 3 to 8 days. However, some infants, and people with weakened immune systems, can continue to spread the virus even after they stop showing symptoms for as long as four weeks. Children are often exposed to and infected with RSV

outside the home, such as in school or child-care centers. They can then transmit the virus to other members of the family. Children may return to school after eight days have passed since the infection began or we receive written notification from your doctor.

- **Bronchiolitis** - is a viral infection that affects tubes in the lungs called the bronchioles. When infected, they get swollen and full of mucus. That makes it hard to breathe. Bronchiolitis is the leading cause of hospitalization in infants and young children. RSV is the most common cause, but bronchiolitis also is caused by many other respiratory viruses including influenza and parainfluenza, rhinovirus (a.k.a. the common cold), and COVID-19 infections. Children are typically contagious for 3 to 8 days. Children can return to school after at least 3 days have passed AND they have been fever-free for 24 hours without medication and are no longer wheezing.
- **Pertussis (Whooping Cough)** - is a very contagious respiratory illness. Whooping cough may begin like a common cold, but unlike a cold, the coughing can last for weeks or months. Symptoms of whooping cough can vary for people based on their age and if they've been vaccinated or not. Pertussis is most severe for infants and the elderly, though not everyone affected by the bacteria shows symptoms. It severely impedes breathing—the “whoop” is a struggle to intake oxygen. About one-third of babies are hospitalized when they have an infection. A PCR nasal swab is needed to provide an accurate diagnosis. Children who test positive for pertussis must have taken 5 days of antibiotics before returning to school. They will be unable to return to school for four weeks if they refuse antibiotics.
- **COVID-19** - People infected with COVID-19 are typically contagious for 5-10 days. If a child tests positive for COVID-19, they must remain at home for at least the first 3 days. Children may return to school after at least 3 days have passed AND they have been fever-free for 24 hours without the use of fever-reducing medications, and all symptoms have significantly improved. If a child still has a persistent cough, they should remain home until day 6, or they will be asked to wear a well-fitting mask while indoors at school.

These are very serious diseases, and we need to be notified immediately when the diagnosis is made. **Your child needs to be kept home, as noted.** *Our full Illness Policy is available on Transparent Classroom.*

### **Pet Policy**

If there is a fish, reptile, or other pet in the classroom, parents will be notified and asked to complete our pet policy form. Children may not bring their pets to school.

### **Medication**

Medications will only be given to children under the following conditions:

- Prescriptions require a written request for permission to dispense medication to a student signed by a parent or physician.
- The parent must supply all medications (including over-the-counter drugs) and must be in their original, labeled container with the child's name printed on it.

- All medications must be accompanied by a school Medication Form, including sunscreen if it is to be applied at school.
- All medications, including inhalers and Epi-Pens, will be kept in the medicine box in the child's classroom, and a duplicate rescue medication will be kept in each classroom's Emergency Backpack.
- Children are not allowed to self-administer medications at school.

### **Allergy Medication**

If your child requires an Epi-Pen or other allergy medication to be kept at school, you need to fill out the Emergency Plan for Allergic Reactions, which needs to be signed by your child's medical provider. You must supply the school with two Epi-Pens to keep in the child's classroom and a Grab-and-Go bag.

For Asthma, please include any information from the child's physician. Parents will also need to complete the Emergency Plan for Allergic Reactions.

We encourage a meeting between the parent and classroom staff if there is a life-threatening allergy or asthma to ensure staff are fully aware of symptoms and steps to take in an emergency.

It is the parent's responsibility to check on the expiration dates of any medication brought to school throughout the year.

### **Medical Release**

When filling out the child's application, each parent (s) signed a medical release (Consent for Emergency Treatment). This release gives us the authority to have the child treated in an extreme emergency. We will only use the medical release to obtain treatment for the child if contact with parents, guardians, or other numbers listed on the application form cannot be reached.