



Bellevue Montessori School

2026-2027

TODDLER PARENT HANDBOOK



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A Letter from the Director of the Toddler Program

Welcome to Bellevue Montessori School.

We are delighted that your family is joining our Toddler Community.

The first three years of life are a remarkable period of growth. During this time, children are developing independence, language, movement, and a deep understanding of the world around them. Every experience matters.

Our role is to provide a carefully prepared environment where children feel safe to explore, capable of making choices, and supported as they develop confidence, self-control, and a lifelong love of learning.

Your role is equally important.

Montessori education is most successful when families and teachers work together with mutual trust, open communication, and shared respect for each child's unique development. We value this partnership and look forward to getting to know your family throughout the coming year.

This handbook is designed to answer many of the questions families have about daily routines, school expectations, and life within our Toddler Community. We encourage you to refer to it throughout the year and to reach out whenever questions arise.

Welcome to Bellevue Montessori.

We're so glad you're here.

With Gratitude
Krithika Rangan
Director, Toddler Program

"Help me do it myself."
— Dr. Maria Montessori

Our Montessori Approach

Our toddler program is guided by Montessori principles. Children learn through movement, repetition, real-life experiences, and purposeful work.

In the toddler classroom, children are supported as they learn to:

- Develop independence and confidence
- Build concentration through meaningful activity
- Care for themselves, others, and the environment
- Practice language, movement, coordination, and social awareness

You may notice children repeating activities, moving freely, or choosing their own work. This is intentional. Through these experiences, children build focus, self-discipline, and a sense of belonging.

Our teachers carefully observe each child and guide them with respect, patience, and consistency.

Parent Partnership

A strong partnership between home and school is the foundation of a successful Montessori experience.

We support this connection through:

- Home visits for all new Toddler students
- New Student Meet & Greets before the start of school
- Transparent Classroom communication
- Parent-teacher conferences
- Parent education events, workshops, and coffee talks

Home visits and meet-and-greets are an important part of your child's transition. Meeting children in familiar and supportive settings helps us begin building trust, learn about their routines and interests, and create a sense of continuity between home and school.

Families can best support their child's experience by staying connected, asking questions, and sharing insights about their child. Your perspective helps us better support your child's growth.

Communication

Open, timely communication helps us provide the best possible experience for your child.

Our primary communication platform is Transparent Classroom. Families will receive classroom updates, school announcements, and important reminders through this platform.

Teacher availability:

- Phone: 8:00–8:30 AM on school days
- Email: After school hours

Because toddlers are still developing their understanding of separation, we do not offer in-person classroom observations in the Toddler Program. Zoom observations may be offered to help families observe without disrupting the child's rhythm.

The School Day

A consistent daily rhythm helps toddlers feel safe and confident.

A typical day includes:

- Arrival and transition
- Morning Montessori work cycle
- Outdoor play
- Lunch
- Rest or nap
- Afternoon work and dismissal

The morning work cycle is an important part of the Montessori day. During this uninterrupted time, children choose work, repeat activities, build concentration, and develop independence.

Beginning the Day

Arrival is from 8:30–9:10 AM.

Please help support a smooth beginning to the day by:

- Arriving on time
- Keeping goodbyes brief and calm
- Signing your child in through Transparent Classroom
- Sharing brief notes through Transparent Classroom when needed

A confident and predictable goodbye helps your child settle more easily into the classroom.

Children arriving after the arrival window must be walked to the designated entrance and signed in according to school procedure.

Dismissal

Half-Day dismissal: 11:45–11:55 AM

School-Day dismissal: 2:45–3:00 PM

Please arrive within your child's dismissal window and sign out through Transparent Classroom.

Children not picked up within the dismissal window will return to the classroom, and late pick-up fees may apply according to school policy.

Timely pick-up helps young children feel secure and trust the rhythm of their day.

Parking Lot Courtesy

The parking lot is part of the school environment, and children are always observing the adults around them.

Please remember to:

- Drive slowly and carefully
- Hold your child's hand when walking through the parking lot
- Avoid cell phone use during drop-off and pick-up
- Follow staff directions with courtesy
- Never leave children unattended in the car or parking lot

Grace and courtesy begin with us.

Guidance and Behavior

At Bellevue Montessori, we view discipline as a process of learning rather than punishment. Guided by Montessori principles, we believe that self-discipline develops gradually through experience, consistent boundaries, and trusting relationships.

Toddlers are still learning to understand and communicate their emotions. Behaviors such as crying, grabbing, pushing, or restlessness often reflect a developmental need rather than intentional misbehavior. Our role is to guide children with patience, empathy, and respect as they develop self-regulation and positive social skills.

Teachers support children by:

- Remaining calm and consistent
- Modeling respectful language and behavior
- Offering simple, meaningful choices
- Redirecting children when needed

- Helping children recognize and express their feelings
- Supporting children in repairing relationships and returning to the community

Our classroom is guided by three simple expectations:

- **Respect yourself.**
- **Respect others.**
- **Respect the environment.**

Children learn these expectations through observation, repetition, and the consistent example of the adults around them. When a child becomes overwhelmed, a teacher remains with them, offering reassurance and support until they are ready to rejoin the group.

When a child's behaviors begin to significantly interfere with their own learning, the learning of others, or become unpredictable or unsafe, we believe that early collaboration provides the best opportunity for success. We will partner closely with the family to better understand the child's needs, develop consistent strategies between home and school, and, when appropriate, recommend additional observations, evaluations, or outside services that may further support the child's development.

In some situations, we may recommend a **temporary adjustment to a child's school schedule**, including a reduced school day. This is not considered a disciplinary action, but rather a supportive measure designed to help the child regain regulation, experience success in the classroom, and gradually build the emotional and physical stamina needed to participate fully in the school day. As the child demonstrates readiness, we will work collaboratively with the family to return to their regular schedule.

Our goal is always to preserve each child's dignity while helping them develop the confidence, self-regulation, empathy, and social skills needed to become a respectful and caring member of our Montessori community.

Mealtimes

Mealtimes are an important part of the Montessori day, offering children opportunities to practice independence, grace and courtesy, and community.

Families may choose to:

- Send lunch from home
- Participate in the optional catered lunch program through Rainbow Fresh

If sending lunch from home, please provide:

- A labeled lunchbox
- Child-friendly containers

- Necessary utensils
- Small, manageable portions
- Nutritious foods your child is familiar with

Please do not send candy, soda, or sugary drinks. Water is always available.

Children are encouraged to participate in the mealtime routine with increasing independence.

Snack

Bellevue Montessori provides snacks for children during the school day.

Snacks are planned to be nutritious and inclusive. Families will be informed of snack menus and any relevant food-related information.

If your child has allergies or dietary restrictions, written documentation must be provided.

Rest Time

After lunch, children have time to rest.

Some children sleep, while others rest quietly. Each child's individual needs are respected, and staff maintain a calm and safe rest environment.

Toilet Learning

Toilet learning is a natural developmental process.

We support toilet independence when a child shows readiness and work closely with families to maintain consistency between home and school.

This process is approached with patience, respect, and calm support. Accidents are expected and treated as a normal part of learning.

Clothing and Belongings

Please dress your child in clothing that supports movement and independence.

Helpful clothing includes:

- Comfortable, simple clothing
- Easy-to-manage pants and shoes
- Weather-appropriate layers

- Closed-toe shoes suitable for outdoor play

Please keep labeled extra clothing at school, including shirts, pants, socks, underwear or training pants, and weather-appropriate items.

All belongings should be clearly labeled.

Outdoor Play

Children go outside most days.

Please send weather-appropriate clothing so your child can comfortably participate in outdoor play. During colder or rainy months, waterproof jackets, layers, and outdoor shoes are helpful.

A child well enough to attend school is generally expected to participate in outdoor play.

Birthdays and Celebrations

Birthdays may be acknowledged in a simple and developmentally appropriate way.

At the toddler level, celebrations are kept calm and inclusive. If families would like to provide a birthday treat, fruit is preferred so that all children may participate safely.

Cakes, cupcakes, and candy are not served.

Holiday celebrations focus on culture, community, and inclusion.

Toys, Gifts, and Personal Items

Please do not send toys or personal items from home unless requested by the teacher.

At this age, sharing personal items can be difficult and may create unnecessary conflict. Comfort items needed for rest may be brought when appropriate.

Gifts should not be distributed at school.

Health and Wellness

Keeping our school community healthy is a shared responsibility.

Please keep your child home if they are unwell or showing signs of contagious illness.

In general, children should remain home if they have:

- Fever
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Symptoms of contagious illness
- Unexplained rash
- Persistent cough or difficulty participating comfortably in the school day

Children must be well enough to participate in the full school day, including outdoor play.

Because health guidance and illness policies may change, Bellevue Montessori maintains a comprehensive Health and Illness Policy on our website. Families are encouraged to review the full policy for detailed return-to-school guidelines.

If your child becomes ill during the day, we will contact you for prompt pick-up.

Medical Information and Medication

Families are responsible for keeping all medical and emergency information current.

Required health forms and immunization records must be submitted according to state licensing requirements.

Medication may only be administered with the required written authorization and must be provided in its original labeled container.

If your child has allergies, asthma, or another medical condition requiring emergency medication, the appropriate care plan must be completed and signed by your child's healthcare provider.

Safety and Security

Your child's safety is our highest priority.

To support a secure environment:

- Children must be signed in and out daily
- Only authorized adults may pick up a child
- Emergency contact information must remain current
- Visitors must follow school sign-in procedures
- Emergency drills are practiced regularly

In an emergency, Bellevue Montessori staff will follow school safety procedures and communicate with families as soon as it is safe to do so.

School Closures

In the event of inclement weather, power outage, facility issue, or emergency closure, families will be notified through school communication channels.

Please make sure your contact information remains up to date.

Before and After School Care

Before- and after-school care is available for enrolled students according to program options and availability.

This time includes a calm extension of the school day, with opportunities for work, outdoor play, snack, stories, and rest as appropriate.

Late pick-up fees may apply after scheduled dismissal times.

Confidentiality and Photography

Bellevue Montessori respects the privacy of all children, families, and staff.

Families are asked not to share photos or personal information about other children without permission.

Photo release permissions are collected as part of enrollment and must be kept current.

Non-Discrimination Statement

Bellevue Montessori School welcomes all children and families.

We do not discriminate based on race, color, religion, creed, national origin, ancestry, sex, gender, age, disability, physical ability, family structure, or any other protected status.

We are committed to fostering a respectful, inclusive community where every child and family is valued, supported, and welcomed.

In Closing

Thank you for entrusting Bellevue Montessori School with your child's early years.

We are honored to partner with your family as your child develops independence, confidence, curiosity, kindness, and a lifelong love of learning.

We look forward to a wonderful year together.

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