

# Parent Handbook 2022-2023

Policies and Procedures



**Little Laurels**  
MONTESSORI PRESCHOOL





Our mission at Little Laurels Montessori Preschool is to provide a complete Montessori program which considers the emotional, intellectual, physical, and social development of the total child by addressing the uniqueness of each in a nurturing, emotionally secure and academically excellent environment.

We create a warm and enriching early childhood environment which promotes children's learning through hands-on experience, and opportunities for multi-sensory exploration and discovery.

# Welcome

Enrolling your child marks the beginning of a new relationship, one which will be full of exciting new experiences for you, for us, and for your child. You are warmly invited to take advantage of every opportunity and service our school offers. They are many and they are yours.

Effective interaction and teamwork will depend on a good understanding of our school's philosophy and basic agreements between your family and our school. If those agreements are strong and stable, almost any storm can be weathered. Such "storms" are mentioned in advance because, if we as a school and parent team are doing well at helping your child tackle areas of growth and challenge, there will inevitably be some periods of rough weather. If the agreements are weak or faulty, then the relationship between school and family can become unstable just at those times when the child most needs that relationship to be an anchor for his or her continued growth.

Thus, together, we make the following agreements:

- 1) **Philosophy:** Our school's core principles and values are covered in our Parent Handbook, which includes an Overview of Montessori. We always strive to help a child achieve greater independence, and sometimes this means learning through natural consequences. For example, if a child decides that they are not interested in cleaning up their lunch and decides to get distracted during cleanup time, then they won't be able to join the story circle until their lunch is cleaned. We utilize the Positive Discipline methods by Dr. Jane Nelsen, which we welcome you to learn more about.
- 2) **Familiarity:** In support of the above, our school agrees to make educational materials available to you, who we hope agree to familiarize yourself with when improved alignment and teamwork is needed.
- 3) **Coordination:** If a parent or teacher is aware of a situation with a student, in school or at home, that seems to be affecting their progress, either party may seek coordination toward its resolution. This would normally occur as part of routine interaction. But if a situation remains unsolved, a more formal conference may be necessary. Both parties agree to cooperate in this way within a reasonable and appropriate amount of time.
- 4) **Remedies:** If a parent feels that the results of coordination as above have been unsatisfactory or that a more serious situation needs attention, the parent may request that the matter be looked into by the Director. Expectations for remedies should be that the school and parents will act in a way consistent with the school's philosophy, principles and agreements as above.

- 5) **Good Faith:** As these agreements are an integral part of maintaining an effective partnership with your family to achieve mutual goals, both the school and parents agree that continuing weakness in these agreements or repeated failure to honor them in good faith could lead to a termination of service. Both parties agree to follow any expectations detailed in the enrollment contract, which ensures that the family and school are well matched, all in the interest of the educational success of the student.
  
- 6) **Open Communication:** The above points are overarching and encompass a variety of subjects a parent or teacher may wish to address. However, they also apply to seemingly trivial details. These can be as simple as, "We didn't have much breakfast this morning." or "Grandma is in town this week." Changes such as these make a difference in a child's life. A rough night of sleep, traveling parents, visiting friends or family, a new sibling, or the loss of a pet all make a difference in a child's day. Similarly, we agree to share changes in our school with you.

We are excited to welcome you to the school community and we look forward to working with you in helping your child's educational goals become a reality.

- The Laurel Team

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# Introduction

## Mission Statement

Our mission at Little Laurels Montessori Preschool is to provide a complete Montessori program which considers the emotional, cognitive, physical, and social development of the whole child by addressing the uniqueness of each in a nurturing, emotionally secure and academically excellent environment. We create a warm and enriching early childhood environment which promotes learning through hands-on experience, and opportunities for multi-sensory exploration and discovery.

## Philosophy & Program Goal

Our school is built on the premise that all children can learn. They all start off with great potential in life and with tremendous capacity and thirst for learning. The children at Little Laurels learn from hands-on experiences with an emphasis on the use of their senses, individualized work, and practical life skills. Our well-trained staff help them to overcome learning barriers. Our goal is to give children a rich learning environment that encourages exploration and sets the child free to observe, think, create, and draw their own conclusions.

## Classrooms

Toddler: 24 months - 3 years

Preschool: 3 - 6 years

## Hours

Monday through Friday (except holidays and closures).

7:45am - 8:20am - Before School Care

8:20am - 8:55am - Drop-Off Window (varies by classroom)

**9:00am - 3:30pm - School Day**

3:30pm - 3:45pm - Pick-Up Window (varies by classroom)

3:30pm - 4:30pm - After School Care

## Attendance

A timely arrival allows them to take part in opening activities for the day with the rest of their class without feeling rushed. *Help us to help your child have a peaceful entry into their classroom.*

**During the pandemic, we simply cannot accommodate late arrivals that are not prescheduled,** so if you miss your drop off window, plan to return home with your child. If timely arrival is a challenge, we suggest coming a few minutes early and parking in the parking lot until it is your “turn” to drive through.

## Drop-off and Pick-up

We are using a drive through drop-off system. Please check your child’s drop-off and pick-up procedures as they vary by classroom.

Children from different classrooms don’t mix on the playground or anywhere else on campus, therefore it is **absolutely** essential that each family follow the drop-off/pick-up windows scheduled for their child’s room.

- If a person from your child’s Emergency Contacts list will be picking up your child, please have them come directly to the main office with their Driver’s License. We will coordinate getting the child to the main office.
- For special drop-off and pick-up times, such as for doctor or dentist appointments please schedule with us in advance via Sandbox
- **Late Pick-up:** All children need to be picked up by 4:30 pm, which is when the school closes. Parents who are late will be charged \$5.00 for the first minute and \$1.00 per minute after 4:30 pm. If you are running late, please text your teacher directly.

## Classroom Environment

We offer a child-centered environment in a warm, loving and secure family-like atmosphere. Our classroom environment is kept quiet so as to not disturb the children at work, thus allowing them to develop resilience, persistence, and independence of thought and action.

We teach respect for self and others, and expect children to keep our shared environment clean. We ask all children to keep their cubbies tidy, to speak quietly when entering the building, to wash their hands when entering the classroom and clean up their own space before leaving the school. We ask parents to contribute to keeping these policies in place if they notice their child has forgotten.

# An Overview of Montessori

## Our Method

As a Montessori school, we use the philosophy developed by Dr. Maria Montessori to help children develop to their fullest potential. We want to educate the whole child, meaning we promote growth in all areas of a child's development: academic, social, emotional and physical. A key to the Montessori Method is the belief that every child has an inner desire to learn, and we work to cultivate that desire so that each child has a true joy in learning and develops a lifelong interest to do so.

The teacher's job begins with setting up an environment that draws the child in; they do this by ensuring the environment is beautiful, well prepared, and by having items available that fit what each child needs developmentally. The teacher transcends the traditional sense of the word by guiding each individual in their care.

The child does work in the classroom; the word "work" is used because every activity the child does has a specific purpose that facilitates growth, development and education. Even grace and courtesy, hand washing and potty training are considered age-appropriate work and are very important to each child's growth. Another reason we call it work is that it offers the child self-validation for a job well done. We strive to make the activities as close to real world experiences as possible; for example, a lesson on food will usually include preparing, cutting and eating their own snacks and natural foods as well as cleaning up.

The Montessori environment is self directed, giving children the opportunity to learn through their own experiences and at their own pace. Repetition is key to the learning process so a child is given the opportunity to do a work/activity as many times as they would like. Their strong interest shows us that a particular activity is just right for them developmentally and that they are in the process of perfecting their skills. While adults usually do something for the end product, children enjoy the actual doing and the process more than the completion. For example, a child will work very hard to polish a mirror until it shines beautifully; an adult may come along and attempt to put the mirror away, but the child may just begin the polishing process all over again! They may choose to repeat an activity over and over, not for the product, but to joyfully engage in and to master the process.

Children tend to absorb their surroundings and go through different stages of development referred to in Montessori as "sensitive periods". When a child is in a sensitive period, they are quite interested in that particular type of activity and are more able to absorb information related to that activity than at any other point in their lives. For example, when a child is in the sensitive period for order, they may love to put things in proper sequence, want their clothes exactly where they belong in each drawer, and are likely to get very upset or frustrated if something in their environment is not exactly as it should be. By allowing them to work on activities where they get to put items in order, put the environment just how it should be, keep an exact bedtime routine, etc., they will fulfill the drive to learn about order and find enjoyment.

An important goal in a Montessori program is the teaching of independence. The classroom is put together in a way that promotes children doing activities on their own. A lot of the earlier learning in the classroom is focused on teaching independent action, and helping the child to see repeatedly that they can do things on their own. Most of the work in a Montessori classroom is also set up in such a way as to be self-correcting,

meaning that a child will likely see on their own if a work is improperly done. Having less need for teacher correction makes this a positive experience by reinforcing the idea that they are completely capable of figuring things out.

Ideally, a child will be in a Montessori program for three years, from around ages 3-6. The reason for this is that while children get a lot out of the academic materials, they also learn just as much from having social interactions and relationships. The multi-aged classroom gives a much better overall sense of community, and more closely simulates real life. A new 3 year old will come into the program and watch how the older children talk and conduct themselves and will learn from this. The older children, having been in the classroom for a couple years, now know many of the lessons and activities, have mastered the practical life skills, and are usually very well mannered and courteous. They have also learned about community, caring for the environment and helping others, and thus are invited to help teach the younger students. They are also given the responsibility of being a leader in the classroom. This is done both by their positive role modeling and by giving younger students lessons on how to properly do some of the work. The last year, when a child is 5-6 years old, is one of the most exciting and rewarding years of the program and prepares a child to graduate directly into a 1<sup>st</sup> grade program.

If you have any questions, please communicate with your lead teacher or the preschool director. They will gladly go over any part of the Montessori Method and how they use it in their classroom!



# Admissions

## Admissions & Orientation

Little Laurels accepts applications throughout the year. Although most children enroll in September, the personalized nature of our program allows students to enroll at any time, space provided.

We will make every attempt to communicate with children and families who do not speak English. We strive to develop a respect for all life in a multi-racial, multicultural, non-sexist, cooperative and calm setting.

## Steps to Enroll

If you have not already visited the school, please contact us to find out when the next Open House is scheduled. You will be able to meet our staff and get familiar with our preschool and program.

Our school currently has a waiting list for all classrooms. You are welcome to reserve your spot on our waiting list at any time. Simply contact us to attend an Open House, fill out the waiting list application form, and pay a non-refundable Waiting List Fee.

Once an opening becomes available, we will invite you and your child in for a visit and assessment. After a successful visit, we will be able to discuss enrollment options, placement, and starting dates.

To reduce possible anxieties, we employ a transition schedule to ease the child into the classroom. We will discuss the best transition schedule for everyone once our program has been deemed a great fit.

A tuition deposit, equal to half of one month's tuition is due upon enrollment. This serves as a space reservation and commitment to enroll, and shall be credited toward the last month's tuition, less any outstanding payments or fees.

## Transition

The transition period is a 60-day period to give both the staff and family an opportunity to ensure that our learning environment provides the best fit for a particular child.

If for any reason within this time frame, either the family or staff consider that our school is not ideally suited to meet a child's needs, this period provides an acceptable and mutually understood way to make this known and discontinue enrollment. If at any time you feel you need to hold a one-on-one meeting, we welcome your communication.

## Withdrawal

A refund of the original tuition deposit, less any outstanding payments or fees is available only when parents have provided a minimum of 45 days advance notice that their child will be departing our program.

## Tuition

As a full year preschool, we provide service to your family from September to August. Tuition is based on a full year divided into 12 equal monthly payments. Thus, there is no reduction in tuition for months that have vacations and holidays (e.g. winter break).

To hold your child's spot in the school, we must have an accompanying tuition payment. If your family chooses to take time off (for example, a 1-month summer vacation), tuition will continue to be billed as usual. *Nonpayment will signal disenrollment, and the 45-day advance notice will apply.*

Monthly tuition payment is due between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> of each month. If payment is received after the 5<sup>th</sup> of the month, there is a late charge of \$25.

We are unable to give refunds or "make up time" for absences.

Tuition is set each school year and published separately, and there may be annual increases of up to 5% starting in September of each year.

Families with two or more children in the program receive a 5% discount on your first child(ren).

Tell your friends, family and neighbors about our school and earn a 10% referral discount on your next monthly tuition payment, when they enroll.



# For Parents

## Communication

Our school utilizes an online parent portal called Sandbox. Teachers use it to keep you up to date on news, photos, and events. There is also a Parent version of the Sandbox app available for download on your phone.

**Non-Urgent** communication. Please use Sandbox to communicate any non-urgent information about your child, such as special arrangements for birthdays, etc. You may also use it to make any updates on your child's profile. For *vacations* please refer to our Vacation policy and post the dates in Sandbox.

Please send illness related communication via Sandbox, and expect a follow up inquiry from an administrator.

**Urgent** information should be communicated directly via the school line: (206) 522-5992. School generated urgent communications will come to you via text and email.

## Parent Involvement

A strong school community is essential to building an environment which nurtures and supports each child. As such, parent involvement is strongly encouraged.

Throughout the year, there are plenty of opportunities to help build strong ties. Activities range from parent nights and family activities to graduation ceremonies, musical performances, theater productions, and more. You may also have a special hobby, talent, or cultural holiday that you would like to share with your child's classroom or with the broader school community.

As a non-profit, we also host fundraising activities to procure playground and classroom upgrades; your participation is valuable!

## Parent Conferences

Parent conferences are offered once a year in the Fall/early winter, although they may be scheduled at any time if a parent or teacher has a concern. Parents are strongly encouraged to attend these conferences to gain a better understanding of their child's progress. Teachers will observe and record information on the child's development. We will share information with you, learn from your knowledge of your child, and plan together for more opportunities to grow. We will keep your child's information confidential and share with government regulatory agencies only when it is required.

## Clothing

Please take a few minutes to mark your child's clothing and belongings with their name. This will aid your teachers in daily operation as well as ensure your belongings get home with your child. In the preschool classrooms, we ask for 2 changes of clothing in case of accidents or illness. In the toddler classroom, we prefer 3 changes on hand. We require indoor shoes while inside. Please provide a pair of inside shoes for your child to change into and out of, which will be kept at the school. We suggest Crocs or Toms for ease of use and safety.

## Naps

We believe in the importance of rest for a child's well-being during the early developmental stages. Children are given a minimum of 30 minutes to rest and fall asleep; non-nappers take this time to lay down and may get back up to do work quietly in the classroom. We provide mats for the children to sleep on. Please provide a sheet, a small blanket and a small stuffy (if needed).

## Toilet Training

**Toddler:** Our school practices stand-up diapering, as taught by the Montessori philosophy. When we see signs of readiness to begin training, we will schedule a meeting with your family to go over the process and offer assistance if needed. You may also be ready to begin the process and can ask to meet with your teacher to discuss next steps.

**Preschool:** Our preschool program requires that children be fully potty trained. This means the child 1) is aware enough to go to the toilet unprompted, 2) wears no pull-ups at any time (including naps), and 3) is accident-free for 30 days.

Occasionally, a child will regress when starting a new program. If after two weeks, a child is having regular accidents, there is an additional monthly fee. Please refer to our Toilet Training Policy for more information and suggestions if you are still training your child. It should be noted that if a child has an accident and soils any classroom materials (rugs, furniture, and other materials of our school) that require professional cleaning, we ask for parents to cover the cost.



## Toys

Toys and special objects are welcome on Show and Tell day to support the theme of the week. Keeping toys at home helps the children focus on learning, and it reduces the risk of special toys getting lost or damaged. A small nap time stuffy, if needed, is welcome.

## Lunch & Snacks

Good nutrition is an important element in our overall program. We ask parents to provide snacks and lunch for the day. Please pack adequate amounts of protein, which plays an important role in your child's growth and stamina, and keep sugary items to a minimum. We do not allow candy, soda, or gum, and recommend that bread or crackers be made from whole grain flours.

**Our classrooms are NUT FREE.**

We schedule breakfast time (if your child is in Before School Care), lunch time, and morning and afternoon snack time. Per the Department of Children, Youth and Families, your child's meals must be labeled clearly as a snack or meal.

Need ideas of what to bring? Here are some suggestions:

- Fresh or dried fruits (Apples, Bananas, Grapes, Kiwi, Oranges, Plums, Berries)
- Fresh vegetables (Carrots, Celery, Cucumber, Broccoli, Green Beans, Tomatoes)
- A sandwich or wrap (turkey, ham, salami, roast beef, tuna, egg salad, etc.)
- Cheese (string, cubes, slices, cottage, cream)
- Yogurt (check the sugar content as these are sneaky!)
- Pita bread with dip (sunflower seed butter, hummus, etc.)
- Soup, mac and cheese, beans with rice, or stir fry



**The Department of Children, Youth, and Families specifies the following guidelines for meals:**

Snacks must contain at least 2 out of the following:

- A dairy or dairy-alternative product (such as milk, cottage cheese, yogurt, cheese)
- A meat or meat alternative (such as meat, legumes, beans, egg)
- A grain product (such as bread, cereal, bagel, or rice cake)
- Fruit or vegetable

Lunch must contain one of each of the following:

- A dairy or dairy-alternative product (such as milk, cottage cheese, yogurt, cheese)
- Meat or meat alternative (such as beef, fish, poultry, legumes, tofu, or beans)
- A grain product (such as bread, cereal, bagel, or rice cake)
- Fruits or vegetables (two fruits or two vegetables OR one fruit and one vegetable to equal the total portion size required). When juice is served in place of a fruit or vegetable it must be one hundred percent fruit or vegetable juice (not made from juice concentrate as the sugar content is often very high and routinely has added sweeteners or preservatives).

Breakfast (if your child is in Before School Care) must contain:

- A fruit or vegetable or one hundred percent fruit or vegetable juice.
- A dairy or dairy-alternative product (such as milk, cheese, yogurt, or cottage cheese).
- A grain product (such as bread, cereal, rice cake or bagel).

Each snack or meal must include a liquid to drink. The drink could be water or one of the required components such as milk, one hundred percent fruit or vegetable juice. When sending milk to school, please ensure it is cold and an ice pack is included inside the lunch box.

As always - Water is Best!

# Other Things to Know

## Questions

If you have questions or concerns about your child in the classroom, please first talk with your child's lead teacher. If it is regarding your child's schedule, paperwork, school environment or policy, please also talk to the school administrator. If you want to talk about general parenting or child development issues, either the school administrator or your lead teacher will be happy to talk with you.

## Visits

While we maintain an open door policy, Montessori parents understand that a child's classroom is designed for the child (e.g. child-sized toilets, small tables and chairs, artwork hung at eye level, etc.). This provides a sense of belonging, independence, and ownership, and must be respected as the child's home. Just as you would never barge into your neighbor's house, Montessori parents respect the same boundary. The integrity of the classroom and learning environment is paramount; should you be interested in visiting the classroom, we appreciate your communication and coordination ahead of time.

*\*Please note: visits are suspended during the Pandemic.*

## Birthdays

The Montessori birthday circle is a special occasion that children excitedly await. We will celebrate your child's birthday unless directed otherwise. Some non-food items to be shared as "treats" may include - pencils, erasers, stickers or a favorite book to be read at school. Please confirm this with your teacher before you decide to send anything to school.

## Statement of Non-Discrimination

We recognize, value and promote diversity. It is the policy of Little Laurels Montessori that no person shall be subjected to discrimination because of race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, religion, creed, marital status, disabled or Vietnam Era Veteran status, or the presence of any physical, mental, or sensory handicap. Little Laurels Montessori acknowledges and protects the rights of children, families and staff to their own culture and to the customs, beliefs and practices that comprise that culture.

Little Laurels Montessori Preschool also complies with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.



## Religion, Holidays & Cultural Events

We do not disseminate any religious teachings. Like most secular schools, we employ philosophies from individuals across many cultures and beliefs. If the subject of religious beliefs comes up, we will always accompany statements with “some people believe [...]”. We do encourage parents and staff to share meaningful cultural events and celebrations in an age-appropriate manner. An open sharing of such customs and beliefs expands the children’s understanding of the world and encourages acceptance and appreciation for other people’s beliefs and differences. We invite you to come and share with us! You may contact your core teacher at any time to make arrangements.

Nothing that we would do at the school is meant to supersede or interfere with your own personal teachings. The foundation laid in your home is by far the strongest basis for your child’s religious growth.

## Behavior Policy

**Goals:** We will work in partnership with parents to develop independently thinking children who:

- respect themselves and others
- feel a sense of belonging
- contribute to their community
- accept and include diverse people
- solve problems peacefully

**Philosophy:** We strive to provide a safe and secure environment for the entire school community. We promote the child’s rights to develop as an individual through making mistakes and learning from them. Our discipline policies are not designed to punish the child, but rather to help the child grow into a respectful and responsible individual who is capable of making good decisions.

**Methods:** We will prepare a calm and interesting environment with child-centered activities. We will always respect the child. We will model and actively teach social skills: how to share, take turns, ask for things, communicate, etc. Children will learn to solve problems through respectful discussion and negotiation. We will never inflict pain, humiliate, frighten or shame any child.

We will work with inappropriate behavior through respectful reminders, choices, distractions, ignoring when appropriate, cool offs, and solution-oriented logical consequences. When an inappropriate behavior takes place, we will show the child why their action was not appropriate and give them an opportunity to express themselves. We will then ask how they could fix any upsets and give them the option to take responsibility for their actions.

The following are a list of unacceptable behaviors at Little Laurels:

- Physically hurting, injuring of another student or teacher
- Invalidation of any kind (invalidation: lessening, squashing, make less of)
- Damaging school property or the belongings of others

**Intervention:** Whenever a child continues to hurt others, destroy property or disrupt opportunities to learn and play, we will call a conference with the parents to cooperatively work out suitable behavior goals for the child and techniques to help him or her improve. We will also implement a timetable to evaluate progress. Parents will plan to take a child home in case of repeated hurting of other children or staff. If a child has damaged school property, we ask that the family cover the cost of repair or replacement.

**Disenrollment:** Disenrollment is rare, used principally when a behavioral plan has proven unsuccessful.

## Illness

Children who are not physically well won't fare well in a learning environment. They may also be contagious and pass their illness on to other children and teachers. Because of this, we are unable to accept children into our care if they are experiencing:

- Congested or runny nose
- Persistent sneezing or coughing
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea; 3 or more watery stools in 24 hours
- Mucus draining from the eye(s)
- Swollen glands
- Unusually tired, pale, lack of appetite, confused or cranky
- Communicable diseases (meaning contagious illnesses). Some examples of common communicable diseases include pink eye, the flu, whooping cough, strep throat, hand, foot and mouth disease, lice or nits, body rash, etc.
- A fever of 99° F
- Please send illness related communication via Sandbox, and expect a follow up inquiry from an administrator.

If your child becomes ill while at school, we will contact you and require that you pick up your child. Parents are expected to arrive for their child within 1 hour of being contacted. *This is not optional as the health and well-being of every child is paramount.* If we cannot reach you within 30 minutes, we will begin calling your emergency contacts for pick up.

**Under non-pandemic conditions,** a child sent home for the above reasons must be kept home for 24 hours after symptoms subside, and no fever without the use of fever-reducing medications.

**Please refer to our COVID-19 Supplemental Packet until the pandemic restrictions are lifted.**



## Medications

**Medication Policy:** We understand that children will occasionally need to take medicine at school. Please fill out a Medication Authorization Form. No medication will be administered by the staff of Little Laurels Montessori Preschool without a prescription or a note from the doctor.

**Allergies:** Please inform us if your child has any allergies requiring medication such as an EpiPen. If “Yes”, please fill out the Individual Care Plan Form and the Medication Authorization Form and return them prior to your child’s first day of school.

## Ouch Report Policy

If a child becomes injured or hurts another child (even if minor) while at school, we write a quick report summarizing what occurred. This will be sent home with you at the end of the day. In the event of a serious incident, you will be notified immediately.

## Medical Emergencies

Our procedure for life-threatening emergencies is as follows:

- Call 911 immediately
- Administer first aid and/or CPR as appropriate
- Notify parents or guardians
- Transport child to the hospital as appropriate (or designated hospital)
- Document emergency and file in child’s file.

In case of illness or accident it is necessary for us to know where you may be reached at all times. Please keep a current list of emergency contact information on record with us at all times.



## Child Abuse/Neglect

We are obligated by law to report any suspicion of child abuse or neglect to Child Protective Services.

## Substance Policy

Little Laurels considers a child's safety of utmost importance. Children will not be released to a parent or any other person who is under the influence of drugs or alcohol. If a parent or other appointed adult who picks up a child appears to have been drinking or using drugs, we will:

1. Confront the adult.
2. Call another person on the authorized pickup list.
3. If we are unable to reach another authorized adult, Little Laurels will contact law enforcement and Child Protective Services to notify them of potential danger and keep custody of the child until an alternate arrangement for pickup has been made.

## Vacations & Closures

Our school year calendar approximates the Seattle School District's calendar, and is available on our website, in your parent packet, and at the sign in area.

To hold your child's seat in school, we must have an accompanying tuition payment. If your family chooses to take time off (for example, a 1-month summer vacation), tuition will continue to be billed as usual.

*Nonpayment will signal disenrollment, and the 45-day advance notice will apply.*

## Snow Policy

We will make every attempt to stay open and serve you. In the event of a closure due to snow, we will notify you via a text message and a posting to Sandbox.

- If a snowstorm hits mid-day, and Little Laurels is *able to maintain regular hours*, we still recommend that parents pick up their child early.
- If a storm hits mid-day, and Little Laurels *must call an early release*, please arrive promptly for pick up.

Snow days are not made up at a later date. Refunds are not available for snow days.

## Disaster Drill Procedures and Preparedness

We practice monthly fire drills, quarterly disaster drills (including earthquake and lockdown procedures). Staff are trained on an ongoing basis. A full disaster plan is available in your child's classroom and we encourage you to read it. Evacuation plans are posted in each classroom.

**Preparedness:** We require all parents to bring a small supply of items for your child (such as non-perishable snacks, a small flashlight and a bottle of water) which we store on-site. A full list of required supplies can be found as part of your enrollment paperwork.

Our building is regularly examined for safety in a possible earthquake, and any areas found wanting are addressed.

## Pet Policy

Some of our classrooms have a class pet to build a bond with the natural world, and practice responsibility for and care of others.

Any animals at or visiting our center are carefully chosen in regards to care, temperament, health risks, and appropriateness for young children. We do not have reptiles, chickens, ducks, or amphibians as they typically carry salmonella, a bacterium that can cause serious diarrhea disease in humans, with more severe illness and complications in children.

Parents are notified in writing when animals will be on the premises. Children with an allergic response to animals will be accommodated.

Animals, their cages, and any other animal equipment are never allowed in the kitchen. Children and adults must wash hands after feeding or handling animals or animal equipment.

## Field Trips

Upon admission, parents sign a waiver for walking field trips within the neighborhood. For any other field trips (such as visiting the pumpkin patch) we will have an additional waiver signed. We utilize a school van for transportation and plenty of parent volunteers! Those children who do not have signed permission will stay on school property.

## Pesticide Policy

Little Laurels will try to use safe, organic, earth friendly products for its weed and pest control needs. If Little Laurels must use a pesticide (this includes weed killers), we will notify parents, guardians and workers forty-eight hours in advance via a sign posted on the main door (except in cases of emergency, such as stinging insects). We will also post a sign for at least forty-eight hours afterwards notifying parents, guardians and workers that a pesticide has been applied.

Both the notification and the posting will include: a) the product name of the pesticide to be applied, b) the date and time of application, c) the location to which the pesticide is to be applied, d) the pest to be controlled, and e) the name and phone number of a contact person at the school.

In addition, the posting shall be placed at the front gate, and shall include the words: "THIS LANDSCAPE HAS BEEN RECENTLY SPRAYED OR TREATED WITH PESTICIDES BY YOUR SCHOOL" as the headline and "FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CALL" (all capital letters) as the footer.

## Cleaning and Disinfecting

Little Laurels uses a three step method (soap and water, water, sanitizer) to clean and sanitize the classroom materials and surfaces. Cleaning products are stored in a locked closet or cabinet.

Hand washing is mandatory when entering the classroom in the morning, coming in from outside, before meals, and after restroom trips.

## Insurance

Little Laurels Montessori Preschool carries full insurance coverage including liability and accident policies.

## Babysitting

Little Laurels does not endorse any staff person for private in-home childcare arrangements and is not liable. If you enter into an arrangement with our staff it may not interfere with their employment at our organization, and you and the staff member will be asked to sign a waiver.





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