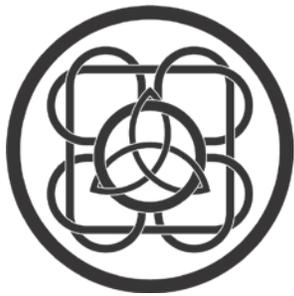


2018-2019 School Year



# The Woods

A Montessori School

THE  
WOODS, A  
MONTESSORI  
SCHOOL

## PARENT HANDBOOK

## Table of Contents

<b>PART I: INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>5</b>
ABOUT THE WOODS .....	6
OBJECTIVES.....	6
MISSION STATEMENT.....	6
PARENTAL ROLE.....	7
EQUAL OPPORTUNITY .....	7
<b>PART II: MONTESSORI PROGRAMS AT THE WOODS.....</b>	<b>8</b>
TODDLER HOUSE – AGES 16 MONTHS – 3+ YEARS.....	9
CHILDREN’S HOUSE – AGES 3-6 YEARS .....	10
MONTESSORI KINDERGARTEN (A.K.A. LEADERSHIP CLASS).....	12
MONTESSORI EMERGING LEADERS CLASS.....	13
<i>PROGRAM ASSESSMENT</i> .....	14
<b>PART III: ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS AT THE WOODS.....</b>	<b>15</b>
SUMMER CAMP .....	16
MUSIC CLASS.....	16
SPANISH CLASS .....	17
ELECTIVE CLASSES.....	17
LIBRARY PRIVILEGES.....	17
<b>PART IV: ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND REQUIREMENTS.....</b>	<b>18</b>
SCHOOL HOURS .....	19
ADMISSION.....	20
APPLICATION.....	21
REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION .....	26
TUITION AND FEES.....	28
FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.....	30
LATE PICK UP POLICY .....	31
ADMINISTRATION .....	31
SCHOOL FACULTY.....	31
CLASSROOM ASSIGNMENTS.....	32
HOUSE TRANSITIONS.....	32
OUTDOOR PLAY .....	33
NAPTIME.....	34
TOILET TRAINING REQUIREMENT – CHILDREN’S HOUSE .....	34
DIAPERING AND TOILET LEARNING – TODDLER HOUSE.....	35
DAILY REPORTS.....	36
ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE.....	36
ABSENTEEISM AND TARDINESS.....	40
CLOTHING AND UNIFORMS .....	42
<i>UNIFORMS REQUIREMENTS:</i> .....	43
<i>CLASSROOM SHOES</i> .....	44
PERSONAL BELONGINGS .....	45
TRANSPORTATION.....	45

RECORDS.....	46
CELL PHONES.....	46
<b>PART V: FOOD POLICIES.....</b>	<b>47</b>
BREAKFAST.....	48
SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM.....	48
LUNCHES FROM HOME.....	48
SNACKS.....	49
<b>PART VI: PROCEDURES FOR SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES AND OCCASIONS.....</b>	<b>50</b>
BIRTHDAYS.....	51
LIBRARY BIRTHDAY BOOK PROGRAM.....	51
HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS.....	51
<b>PART VII: INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY.....</b>	<b>53</b>
INCLEMENT WEATHER OR EMERGENCY CLOSING.....	54
<b>PART VIII: BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE.....</b>	<b>56</b>
POSTIVE DISCIPLINE.....	57
BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS AND DISMISSAL.....	57
SPECIAL NEEDS OR DEVELOPMENTAL CONCERNS.....	58
ANTI-HARASSMENT/ NON-DISCRIMINATION - STUDENTS.....	59
BULLYING.....	60
<b>PART IX: COMMUNICATION AND PROGRESS.....</b>	<b>62</b>
INFORMATION FROM HOME.....	63
INFORMATION FROM SCHOOL.....	63
TELEPHONE CALLS AND EMAILS.....	63
PARENT PARTICIPATION.....	64
PARENT-ADMINISTRATION COMMUNICATION.....	64
PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATION.....	64
EMAIL COMMUNICATION POLICY FOR PARENTS.....	65
PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES.....	66
CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS.....	67
NARRATIVES AND LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION.....	67
PARENT EVENTS.....	67
<b>PART X: HEALTH POLICIES.....</b>	<b>69</b>
FIRST AID, CPR AND ACCIDENT PROCEDURES.....	70
ALLERGIES.....	70
HEALTH AND ABSENCES.....	70
MEDICATION POLICY.....	72
SUNSCREEN & INSECT REPELLENT.....	73
<b>PART XI: CHILD SAFETY, CRISIS MANAGEMENT, AND SCHOOL SECURITY.....</b>	<b>75</b>
CHILD SAFETY.....	76
CRISIS MANAGEMENT.....	76
FIRE PREVENTION AND FALSE ALARMS.....	77
SCHOOL VISITORS.....	78
PHOTOGRAPHY OF STUDENTS.....	78

**PART XII: MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION ..... 79**  
POLICY CHANGES .....80  
RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION.....80  
SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT .....80  
INFORMATION REGARDING VIRGINIA SENATE BILL #594 .....80  
LICENSING INFORMATION FOR PARENTS ABOUT CHILD DAY CARE PROGRAMS .....80  
LEGAL.....81  
THE WOODS MONTESSORI, INC. ....82

# **PART I: INTRODUCTION**

## **ABOUT THE WOODS**

THE WOODS was founded in 2018 as a private school to provide Montessori classes for children in Prince William County. THE WOODS is the sister school of The Springs, A Montessori School located in Springfield, Virginia. THE SPRINGS is an American Montessori Society Accredited School and THE WOODS will be accredited as a satellite campus to THE SPRINGS making THE WOODS the only Montessori accredited school in Prince William County. The school is licensed by the Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) and is required to follow certain regulations as outlined by the Prince William County Department of Health and the VDSS. THE WOODS program consists of a traditional, authentic Montessori program as follows:

- Toddler House (ages 16 months – 3 years)
- Children’s House (ages 3-6 years)

This handbook sets forth THE WOODS’ policies and procedures. It is comprised of the Virginia Department of Social Services regulations, Health Department regulations, American Montessori Society and AdvancedEd best practices, and lessons learned through practical on-going operations. Parents of all enrolled children are expected to read carefully and review the policies and procedures set forth in this handbook. Adherence to this Handbook is agreed upon contractually between enrolled families and THE WOODS by the terms of each student's Enrollment Agreement. The intention of this Handbook is to provide parents and other caregivers the information necessary to ensure a positive and harmonious school experience.

## **OBJECTIVES**

THE WOODS is dedicated to the Montessori philosophy and method of teaching. The faculty strives to create an environment that allows each child to learn and develop at his or her own rate and in accordance with his or her own needs, interests, and abilities. We work with the children to help them acquire a love of learning, respect for others, and self-discipline.

A Montessori class differs from the traditional school setting in several significant ways. The education is child-guided, classes are mixed ages, and materials are designed to stimulate, challenge, and encourage curiosity, self-motivation, and self-discipline. Children learn and develop new skills as they are ready rather than when they reach a certain age. Students move onto the next lesson or continue practicing until they have mastered the lesson. Older students provide inspiration and motivation to younger students while younger children remind older children that they must lead and help care for their greater community.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

The Woods, A Montessori School, is committed to developing the whole child in accordance with their individual needs adhering to authentic Montessori practices to provide a foundation that cultivates a lifelong love of learning grounded in peace, respect, independence, and excellence intended for the continued success of our students.

### **PARENTAL ROLE**

In this handbook, the term parent refers not only to a child's natural or adopted parent, but to a student's non-parent legal guardian or to any person authorized to act in place of parents. THE WOODS respects the role of parents as the primary educators of their children. Since school is a continuation of the education children are receiving at home, the faculty of THE WOODS should demonstrate respect and support for the parents in their important and challenging task.

Parents are expected to support the school's mission and objectives as well as to support the school policies as outlined forthwith. One of the conditions for initial and continued enrollment at THE WOODS is a signed contract indicating the parents' support of the school's philosophy, policies, and regulations. If a parent repeatedly or seriously violates proper school protocol, displays inappropriate or disruptive conduct toward students, or displays disrespectful, disruptive or harassing behavior toward the faculty or administration of the school, the school may take corrective action. Said corrective action may include, but is not limited to, at the discretion of the Head of School, the following:

- Imposition of particular rules or procedures the parent must follow in interacting with the school and its students and/or faculty
- Restriction or termination of the parent's access to the school property
- Dismissal of the parent's child(ren)

The school may impose other appropriate corrective action, without prior recourse, based upon the nature of the parent's conduct and the surrounding circumstances.

### **EQUAL OPPORTUNITY**

The Woods, A Montessori School is an equal opportunity school and does not discriminate against its students or applicants on the basis of race, color, religion, age, sex, genetic information, national origin, disability, or other legally protected status.

# **PART II: MONTESSORI PROGRAMS AT THE WOODS**

## **TODDLER HOUSE – AGES 16 MONTHS – 3+ YEARS**

The Toddler Program fully embraces the Montessori philosophy and aims to help children grow in independence, self-discipline, social and emotional awareness, and physical development of the body, ultimately preparing them for a smooth transition into a classroom in our Children's House. Our Toddler classroom offers a 1:5 teacher ratio. Typically, two assistant teachers work under the direction of a Lead Teacher holding a Montessori Infant/Toddler Credential. Materials in the classroom are presented and designed to foster curiosity, exploration, self-sufficiency, and accomplishment with the flexibility and nurturing comfort of a small, attentive environment.

Our main goal for the Toddler classroom is that each and every child feels safe, happy and loved every day. Additionally, we strive to help each child develop, at his or her own pace, physically, socially, emotionally, and intellectually.

- **Practical Life:** This area focuses on the toddler's ability to care for himself as well as to help him become aware of and begin to care for the environment around him. Through repetitive and precise exercise, the toddler will learn concentration and order to gain independence. Examples include feeding oneself, dressing and undressing, toilet learning, hand washing, drinking from a cup, scooping, pouring, grace and courtesy, etc.
- **Movement:** Our Toddler classroom encourages the movement toddlers so desperately crave while helping children learn control of the body and develop spatial awareness, balance, and strength. Movement activities include yoga, dance, balance beams, climbing apparatuses and both indoor and outdoor play.
- **Language:** Exposure to the elements of language is critical for this age group. We provide activities designed to encourage expression, build vocabulary, strengthen word-mapping skills and promote linguistic understanding. Teachers encourage regular conversation in addition to reading, singing, rhyming, etc.
- **Sensorial:** Toddlers love nothing more than to explore, examine, and test. The sensorial materials encourage children to touch, watch, listen, taste, and smell, while helping them discriminate and classify, assign vocabulary, and problem solve.
- **Mathematics and Science:** Basic mathematical and scientific concepts will be introduced in preparation for entrance to the Primary classroom. Toddlers will explore the concept of quantitative description as well as the basis of experimentation and prediction.
- **Culture and Art:** Toddlers explore the different celebrations and traditions of the cultures represented in their classroom. They begin to understand and become aware of the world outside of themselves. Additionally, art and music are major components of the toddler curriculum with free expression and planned projects aimed at fostering creativity available all day, every day.

Toddlers transitioning into our Children's House, having experienced the roots of Montessori education, are excited and curious, eager to blossom into the next level of challenges. These children are evolving from side-by-side play into authentic,

interactive play. They have solid problem-solving skills and are beginning to problem solve collectively. Verbal communication and expression have become natural and comfortable for this age group. The transitioning toddlers have learned to use the toilet, care for themselves while doing so, and have mastered the necessary skills to feed and clean up after themselves. They are comfortable separating from their parents and transitioning to new activities. They understand the expectations of the classroom environment. Most of all, they are happy, confident and ripe to burst into independence and further exploration. **Readiness is defined by a number of different developmental factors in addition to the ones listed above as opposed to a specific age or milestone.**

We encourage parents to work collaboratively with us throughout their toddler's Montessori experience and to trust that your child's care and safety are our first priority. Parents will receive a daily information sheet while their child is in the Toddler classroom. We welcome feedback about your child's interests, preferences, and habits. The parent is the child's first and lasting teacher and the consistency between home and school is crucial during this developmental stage. Security and nurturing in this stage when it is most appropriate will make the leap to independence at the next stage easier for both the children and the adults. Furthermore, acceptance of the classroom goals and values and their promotion at home facilitates and even speeds a child's adjustment and success in the classroom.

### **CHILDREN'S HOUSE – AGES 3-6 YEARS**

Our Children's House (sometimes called Primary, Early Childhood or 3-6) classrooms provide authentic Montessori education in a balanced mixed age group that aims to help children gain independence, self-discipline, confidence, curiosity and problem-solving competencies. Lessons are given in accordance with the teaching philosophy developed by Maria Montessori and provide children with activities that help them grow socially, emotionally, physically and intellectually. The Children's House operates on a 1:10 teacher-student ratio.

The Primary Classroom functions on the traditional Montessori Three Year Cycle and culminates with the Kindergarten year. Students enrolled in our Primary Classrooms can expect to engage in the following Montessori lessons and activities:

- **Practical Life:** The classroom is the child's living room and the activities in the Practical Life section are designed to help students learn to care for themselves, care for others and care for their environment. The lessons, through repetition, foster order, concentration, fine and gross motor skills, and help children become contributing members of their classroom community. Many of these activities, such as polishing, dusting, pouring, scooping, washing, etc., are recognizable to the children providing them a comfortable place to begin their exploration of the classroom. Typically, the goals of the Practical Life lessons are realized quickly

thus encouraging children to attempt less familiar challenges. Practical Life remains integral through the Kindergarten year when children will accomplish sewing, embroidery, shoe tying, and other necessary life skills.

- **Sensorial:** At the heart of the Montessori classroom, the majority of the sensorial materials were designed by Maria Montessori. These materials isolate the child's individual senses to promote refined discrimination and classification. Children will smell, taste, feel, look and listen while assigning vocabulary and learning to differentiate at more acute levels. For example, smooth vs. rough will be fleshed out to order smooth, smoother, smoothest and rough, rougher, roughest. Ultimately, children build spatial relationships, recognize and create patterns, assemble and disassemble, all while indirectly building the basic skills they will need for advanced academic work in both the language and mathematical areas.
- **Language:** The average child learns 14,000 words between birth and age six. Therefore, the language section is crucial to a child's early childhood education. From the moment a child enters the Children's House classroom, they are working towards the exciting goal of independent reading. Reading is taught phonetically and includes hands on experiences that help children learn sounds, form letters, recognize sight words, learn the parts of speech, and ultimately builds to the full scope of reading that includes deconstructing and constructing words, and reading comprehension, as well as writing with illustration.
- **Mathematics:** Students in the Children's House Classroom are provided hands on mathematical experiences that provide children with a concrete experience of quantity and mathematical operations. Children work towards abstraction and upon completion of the Kindergarten year are typically able to perform operations in their heads. Often their mathematical work includes carrying and borrowing as well as more advanced concepts such as multiplication, division, and fractions. Children also practice introductory geometry and even algebra.
- **Science:** Children are curious and the backbone of curiosity is experimentation. Our Children's House students are introduced to various scientific concepts such as magnetism, buoyancy, color mixing, zoology, botany, astronomy, and chemistry. The Montessori science activities encourage prediction, evaluation, experimentation, measurement and reporting. Additionally, children learn classification and proper nomenclature. Children are always encouraged to explore and discover.
- **Geography and Culture:** Our children live in a global, connected and diverse world. For over 110 years, Montessori education has encouraged the study of and exposure to different cultural traditions, beliefs and customs. Children's House students study the world closely beginning with the globe and moving locally as they progress. Families are encouraged to share their cultural and ethnic traditions. Our students celebrate many holidays and festivals

experiencing cultural food, dances, clothing, goods, and beliefs with the aim of appreciating our difference and recognizing our oneness.

- **Peace Education:** Maria Montessori was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize three times and it is no wonder because peace is at the heart of her teaching philosophy as she believed man's chances for peace start with the children. Now more than ever, children need to learn appropriate social and emotional skills. Our Children's House classrooms always teach and promote self-control, independence, empathy, reflection, appreciation, adaptability, emotional self-awareness, and positivity. Children are encouraged to self-discipline through inner motivation as opposed to systems of rewards and punishments.
- **Creativity and Expression:** Our Children's House classrooms encourage creativity and positive self-expression at all times. Art projects as well as free, open ended, art activities such as painting, coloring, molding, etc., are always readily available in the classroom. Additionally, many traditional Montessori activities incorporate elements of art and creativity. Students are exposed to music through dance, singing and simple listening enjoyment throughout the day. Furthermore, times for movement to encourage balance, coordination and control of body are integrated throughout the day.

### **MONTESSORI KINDERGARTEN (a.k.a. LEADERSHIP CLASS)**

Dr. Maria Montessori based her teaching method on Three Year Cycles of education: Infant/Toddler (ages 0-3), Early Childhood (ages 3-6), Lower Elementary (ages 6-9) and Upper Elementary (ages 9-12).

THE WOODS offers an Early Childhood (a.k.a. Children's House) program that includes Kindergarten.

Montessori Kindergarten is crucial to realizing the goals and outcomes that are touted by Montessori proponents. It is during this year that students complete the most advanced work in the classroom, activities they have been building towards since entering the Children's House classroom at three. Additionally, and perhaps most importantly, it is during the Kindergarten year that students develop leadership skills, confidence and social maturity that can only come from being the eldest in a group setting.

Kindergarten is an important transitional year, as it is the final year of the First Plane of Development. As children turn six, they move into the Second Plane of Development and their desires, needs, and interest change drastically. Therefore, it is crucial that students have a solid capstone year to their First Plane of Development that satisfies their desire to lead, be challenged, and contribute to their community.

From time to time, as parents of Montessori students, you may run into skeptics who question the philosophy and students' ability to transition into traditional settings. This skepticism is largely due to Montessori students transitioning to traditional environments without completing the entire Three-Year Cycle. The reality is that children, who transition prior to Kindergarten, often are academically advanced when compared to their peers in traditional settings, but they have not gained the social maturity and problem-solving skills to handle their advancement. As a result, children who are not challenged or who finish assignments quickly are not able to refocus themselves and often resort to inappropriate behaviors thus becoming labeled as behavior problems and giving Montessori education an unfair stereotype. Additionally, research is beginning to show that children who transition prior to realizing the academic goals of the Montessori Kindergarten year are more apathetic and less confident towards future academic challenges.

On the other hand, children who complete the Kindergarten year make a much more seamless and productive transition as the goals of a traditional first grade classroom are more aligned with that of a Montessori classroom. Therefore, THE WOODS believes it is in the best of interest of our students to complete the Kindergarten year in a Montessori environment and THE WOODS does not recommend transition prior to the Kindergarten year.

In keeping with Virginia Law, a child is eligible to participate in the Kindergarten class provided he or she turns 5 prior to September 30. Children turning 5 after September 30 may join our Montessori Emerging Leaders class. No exceptions will be made.

### **MONTESSORI EMERGING LEADERS CLASS**

THE WOODS encourages the learning growth of a child. As a result, any student who turns five after the Virginia Department of Education's September 30th Kindergarten entrance date will be eligible to attend our Emerging Leaders Class. This class offers an additional afternoon work cycle and strives to help stimulate the child's intellectual curiosity while still embracing the Montessori Method. A Montessori Teaching Intern typically leads the class and the student may not be with their normal Lead Teacher or Intern during this work period.

The Emerging Leaders class provides children an opportunity to transition, without pressure, to an afternoon work cycle, focusing on the specific needs of children who are on the cusp of leadership and transitioning into more complex academic work. From time to time, the Emerging Leaders class may integrate with the Kindergarten class, but generally will work in separate areas that allow for greater access to those lessons that best meet their needs of this unique transitional period.

Students are welcome to opt out of participating in the Emerging Leaders class. Half Day children may continue to go home at 11:45 while Full Day may remain in the nap room where they will be required to rest for 30 minutes and then work quietly until others wake up.

**PROGRAM ASSESSMENT**

The school's assessment program is intended to assist faculty and administrators in a systematic evaluation of the program, to diagnose children's strengths and weaknesses and identify any potential weaknesses in the overall presentation of the curriculum. THE WOODS does so by administering the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) from Seton Testing Services. This testing experience also provides students with a Practical Life exercise in taking an exam. Kindergarten students are assessed once per year (winter). The ITBS "are nationally normed standardized tests that offer educators a diagnostic look at how their students are progressing in key academic areas." While some alterations and adjustments may be made to the curriculum in the event any gaps in the curriculum are identified in the testing process, no efforts will be made to "teach" to the test and assessment is in no way tied to evaluation of a teacher's individual performance.

# **PART III: ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS AT THE WOODS**

## **SUMMER CAMP**

Every summer, THE WOODS offers an eight-week summer camp to children who are enrolled for the upcoming school year at THE WOODS. Camp is educational and theme oriented. The Montessori philosophy remains active during camp.

Families who want to enroll in Summer Camp must fill out a Summer Camp enrollment form the January before Summer Camp is to begin.

**Eligibility:** Summer Camp is only available to THE WOODS' students. Children who have completed Kindergarten at THE WOODS are eligible for Summer Camp before moving on to First Grade. Children who are eligible to continue enrollment at THE WOODS for the upcoming school year, but who have decided not to do so may not be eligible to attend Summer Camp (e.g., children planning to attend Kindergarten at another school). Exceptions may be made for students who still have younger siblings attending THE WOODS, but only if there is space availability after all other eligible children are enrolled. If families change their enrollment plans for the upcoming school year over the summer and fail to make the first tuition payment on August 1, THE WOODS reserves the right to dismiss the student, without refund, to facilitate the transition of new students to THE WOODS.

**Summer Camp Classroom Assignments:** Children are assigned to a class at the discretion of the Administration. THE WOODS has a reduced faculty for summer and does not guarantee that students will be placed with the same teachers as during the regular school year. Typically, children are mixed up to help promote the adaptability of the children and provide the children and staff with a new and fresh perspective as well as to provide children the opportunity to establish new friendships.

## **MUSIC CLASS**

THE WOODS provides a weekly music class to all enrolled children. Our music teacher spends approximately 30 minutes with each class. Music class consists of singing songs, introducing different instruments and types of music, dramatic play, puppetry and much more.

The music curriculum culminates at the end of the school year with our Annual Spring Concert, where each class performs for the school and all of our families.

There is no additional cost for Music Class.

## **SPANISH CLASS**

THE WOODS provides daily Spanish instruction to all students in the Children's House. The Toddlers spend at least 30 minutes per week with our Spanish Teacher. Spanish Class consists of singing songs, conversational Spanish, grammar building, writing, and much more. There is no additional cost for Spanish Class.

## **ELECTIVE CLASSES**

THE WOODS offers a number of elective classes that parents may enroll their students in if they so desire. Elective classes may change from year to year. Generally, outside vendors partner with our school to provide their program on-site for your convenience. All fees and policies are determined and handled by the third-party vendor.

Enrollment for elective classes takes place during the month of September and classes do not begin until the first week in October. Vendors are available to meet with parents at our annual Back to School Night.

Children enrolled in the Half Day program are free to return to school if they wish to participate in any of the elective classes.

At this time, THE WOODS has partnered with, Jennalee Brummel (music lessons) and JumpBunch (physical fitness) for the 2018-2019 Academic Year.

## **LIBRARY PRIVILEGES**

THE WOODS has an extensive library. The privilege of borrowing books is reserved for the Leadership and Emerging Leaders classes. They participate in library once a week. Children need a book bag or backpack to carry books home. Two or three books are allowed to be checked out at a time and may be kept out for one week. A child will not be allowed to check out books unless the books borrowed the previous week have been returned.

Any lost or severely damaged books must be replaced by the parents. We recommend bringing in a similar book from your child's personal collection.

The library has a section dedicated to parents and teachers as well. Please feel free to visit our library.

# **PART IV: ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND REQUIREMENTS**

## **SCHOOL HOURS**

THE WOODS is open from 6:00 am to 6:30 pm.

### **Morning Montessori Program**

Class hours are 8:15 am to 11:45 am for 16 months - 4 year olds, Monday through Friday.

Children who are enrolled for the above hours must arrive at school between 8:15 am and 8:30 am. Please be prompt. Children are dismissed between 11:45 am and 12:00 pm. Please be prompt in picking up your children. A \$1 per minute late fee is charged for children not picked up on time.

### **School Day Program (Kindergarten age)**

Kindergarten class hours are 8:15 am to 2:45 pm, Monday through Friday. Children must be 5 prior to September 30 to be eligible to stay until 2:45 pm in the Kindergarten class. No exceptions will be made if your child's birthday is not prior to September 30.

Half Day Students who turn 5 after September 30 are eligible to stay for our Montessori Emerging Leaders Class beginning the first Monday of the month of their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday. This accommodation is subject to availability based on teacher to student ratios and is not guaranteed. (Full Day students are guaranteed space in the Emerging Leaders class). Hours are the same as the School Day (8:15 am – 2:45 pm). Tuition will be prorated to reflect the change in hours. Please note that students in the Emerging Leaders class will mostly likely not be working with their regular classroom teacher.

Children who are enrolled for the above hours must arrive at school between 8:15 am and 8:30 am. School Day students should also be dropped off in their classroom or on the playground as determined by the class schedule. School Day students may not be dropped off in Founder's Hall. Children are dismissed between 2:45 pm and 3:00 pm. Please be prompt in picking up your children. A \$1 per minute late fee is charged for children not picked up on time.

### **Full Day Program**

Hours are from 6:00 am until 6:30 pm. Children enrolled in this program may arrive any time after 6:00 am, but not later than 9:00 am. Children arriving after 9:00 am miss a significant portion of instruction and academic opportunity. Full day students must be picked up no later than 6:00 pm.

A child is considered tardy or late if they arrive after 9 am with the exception of School Age children. Please review the section on Absenteesim and Tardiness for more information. If your child is going to be late, please notify the office. We offer a 45 minute grace period to Toddler and Non-Kindergarten students. **After 9:00 am no child will be admitted to school without prior approval from the Head of School or an Assistant Head of School as such late arrivals are disruptive and hard for**

**faculty and children alike. Under no circumstances will children be admitted to school after dismissals have begun for the day, i.e. 11:45 am.** Children who are signed in prior to 9 am and leave for an appointment, may return after 12 pm with permission from the office.

Kindergartners Students are beholden to state laws regarding attendance and tardiness and must arrive no later than 8:30 am. Please review the Absenteeism and Tardiness Section for additional information

By Virginia regulation, children enrolled in the Full Day program have two outdoor playtimes and children under 5 are required to nap/rest for at least 30 minutes. Children who fall asleep are allowed to nap as long as their individual needs require. Children who would like to get up after resting for 30 minutes may continue to work quietly with classroom activities.

Montessori class hours for Full Day children are generally 8:15 am until 4:00 pm. During this time children will engage in activities in their Montessori classroom. From 7:00 am until 8:15 am and 4:00 pm until 6:00 pm children will engage in a variety of activities including: art, music, dramatic play, crafts, and self-initiated free play, indoors and outdoors. At these times, children may also continue Montessori work or practice previous lessons.

THE WOODS is not allowed by the terms of our State and County licenses to operate before or after our approved, designated hours. A violation of these hours could result in the revocation of our permit to operate; therefore, children may arrive no earlier than 7:00 am and must be picked up by 6:00 pm. A \$1 per minute fee will apply to children picked up late.

## **ADMISSION**

We require that all parents visit the school before submitting an application for their child. This enables parents to make an educated decision as to whether a Montessori environment is the right choice for their child and also provides an opportunity to have questions answered.

After the application is received, the child visits school to determine his or her readiness for school and for parents to determine if our program is right for their child. Applicants to our Children's House complete a Child Visit that is comprised of a visit, generally with the parent, to one of our classrooms. Child Visits occur in the morning and typically last about 30 minutes. For a toddler applicant, we do not require a student visit. Instead we offer a home visit from your child's teacher closer to the start of school, but it is not required. The home visit is a wonderful opportunity for your toddler to meet his or her teacher "on his own turf" and helps ease separation anxiety. It is not meant to be an evaluation of the child, the family or the home.

The application fee must accompany the application or the application will not be accepted. The tuition deposit is paid at the time the child is accepted. This deposit holds your child's space for the following school year and is applied to the last tuition payment of the child's capstone year. For more information, please see the Tuition and Fees section.

If space is available, the individualized nature of the program allows for children to be phased into the classroom at any time during the year.

THE WOODS admits children ages 16 months - 7 years of age. All children must be fully toilet-trained and demonstrate a readiness for school to be accepted into our Children's House. Children not toilet-trained and/or not showing a readiness for school may be placed in our Toddler House. The decision to admit a child and his or her placement are made by the school administration. **Children must be 3 years old by September 30<sup>th</sup> to be eligible for acceptance to our Children's House. NO EXCEPTIONS WILL BE MADE.**

Admissions for new students will be offered each February after re-registration is complete for returning students. Returning students are guaranteed a space in their current classroom until the close of re-registration (typically the last school day in January). After that time, spaces will be offered to new applicants and returning students are no longer guaranteed availability. Preference for open spaces is given to siblings of enrolled children.

### **APPLICATION**

The application that you submit on behalf of your child is also your enrollment agreement. When signing and submitting the application you agreed to the policies and procedures listed on the application and any subsequent changes to school policy or procedure that may be issued through an updated Parent Handbook or memo as disseminated by the school (i.e. email, text, bulletin board notifications).

See below for an example of the enrollment agreement portion of the application. This example may not reflect the most recent version of the agreement. Please see the office for the most up to date enrollment agreement.

**PROOF OF IDENTITY VERIFICATION**

Virginia Department of Social Services requires that schools verify the identity of all children enrolled in our program. This is to assist with the identification of missing children and to verify the age of each student. Acceptable forms of identification include your child's birth certificate, passport, certified notification of birth from a hospital, physician or midwife, or adoption/foster placement agreements. All documents presented must be ORIGINAL and will be documented and returned to you immediately. Identity Verification must be completed upon enrollment and no later than your child's first day of school. A yearly physical must be documented for elementary students. Please Initial \_\_\_\_\_

Office Use Only	
Date of Birth _____	Place of Birth _____
Document Number _____	Date of Issue _____
Verifying Individual (PRINT) _____	
Verifying Individual (Signature) _____	
Date of Verification _____	Other Info _____
Date of Notification of Local Law Enforcement (when required ID verification isn't provided): _____	
<b>Select Document Type</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Birth Certificate <input type="checkbox"/> Passport <input type="checkbox"/> Notification of Birth <input type="checkbox"/> Birth Registration Card <input type="checkbox"/> Adoption Agreement or other proof of placement	

**VIRGINIA SCHOOL ENTRANCE FORM**

All students are required to submit a Virginia School Entrance Health Form that is signed and dated by a physician. Your child's physician must certify that your child is up to date on his or her immunizations or certify that your child is medically or religiously exempt from immunization requirements. If applicable, the Virginia Form for Religious Exemption must be notarized and accompany your child's Health Form. The Health Form must be submitted prior to your child's first day of school. Additionally, an updated Health Form must be submitted between your child's 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> birthdays to reflect updated immunizations. Please Initial \_\_\_\_\_

**PARENT HANDBOOK ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

I have received THE SPRINGS' Parent Handbook (available at [www.springsmontessori.com](http://www.springsmontessori.com)). I understand and agree to abide by the policies, procedures, rules and regulations set forth in the Handbook for the academic period in which I am enrolling my child and all future academic periods to include any subsequent Parent Handbook changes. The policies set forth are to protect and ensure your child's safety. Understanding and complying with the Handbook will help to make your school experience more enjoyable and seamless. Please Initial \_\_\_\_\_

**PERMISSIONS:**

**SCHOOL DIRECTORY:** I acknowledge that my child's name, as well as my name will be listed in my child's classroom directory which is only accessible through a secure login via the school's online platform. Please Initial \_\_\_\_\_

**MEDIA RELEASE AND PHOTOGRAPHS:**

I acknowledge that my child's photograph may be taken within school events for use within the school community (e.g., bulletin boards, newsletters, private online portal, etc.). Please Initial \_\_\_\_\_

I acknowledge that my child's photograph may be taken and used in publications, videos, social media, and other mediums for public use associated with THE SPRINGS. Names of children will not be released without additional parental consent. Please Initial \_\_\_\_\_

**SMS (TEXT) ALERTS:**

I understand that THE SPRINGS sends SMS (TEXT) Alerts out to all family's who have listed a cell phone number. This message is sent via School Messenger and it is the families' obligation to opt in or out of the messaging service. I agree to abide by the terms and conditions of my cellular provider and am 100% responsible for any charges incurred by my cellular provider for receiving any SMS (TEXT) alerts sent by THE SPRINGS. Please Initial \_\_\_\_\_

**EMAIL MESSAGES:**

I understand that THE SPRINGS routinely sends email messages out to all families who have listed an email address. These messages are sent through a variety of platforms and it is the families' obligation to opt in or out of the messaging services. I agree to abide by the terms and conditions of my email provider and am 100% responsible for any incidents associated with receiving any email messages sent by THE SPRINGS. Please Initial \_\_\_\_\_

**FIELD TRIPS:**

I hereby give permission for my child to be transported via bus\* to and from field trips away from the school grounds, unless the school receives written notice from me to the contrary. Please Initial \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby give my permission for my child to be transported to the field trips by a licensed and insured driver. I understand that when my child is transported in the car, the driver will follow all safety precautions, including the use of seat belts. I will provide a child safety seat as required by Virginia Law. Please Initial \_\_\_\_\_

I understand that if I do not wish for my child to participate in a specific field trip, the school will make every effort to find a space in another class at the school. If no space is reasonably available, I understand that it may be necessary to keep my child home the day of the trip. Please Initial \_\_\_\_\_

\*Please note that Virginia Law does NOT require safety seats on the school bus

**AUTHORIZATIONS:**

**PICK UP AUTHORIZATION:** I understand that for any individual, other than the parents listed on application, to have approval to pick up my child from school I must complete a Pick Up Authorization Form. This form will be provided before my child's first day of school. All individuals picking up children will be required to present ID. Pick up authorizations will not be approved by telephone. Please Initial \_\_\_\_\_

**PICK UP RESTRICTION:** The individuals listed below are restricted from picking up my child. Please provided appropriate legal documentation, if applicable. \_\_\_\_\_

**CUSTODY AGREEMENTS:** If there is a custody agreement (or one is subsequently agreed to) for my child, I agree to provide a copy to the school prior to the first day of school. I also agree that if any subsequent agreement were to be made, it will be provided to the school immediately. Please Initial \_\_\_\_\_

Please list the names of those individuals having custody (If different from the two parents listed on this application):  
\_\_\_\_\_

**TOILETING AGREEMENT:** I give my permission to The Springs, A Montessori School and its teachers to help clean my child if they have any toileting accident. Children's House teachers will only intervene at the request of the child or when it is visibly apparent that the child is unable to clean him or herself completely. Please Initial \_\_\_\_\_

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### INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

I understand that at times the school must be closed due to inclement weather and other emergencies. THE SPRINGS does not possess the resources or technology to determine widespread weather conditions. Additionally, the school must ensure property conditions are safe for students and faculty and that we can be fully staffed to provide care for your children. Therefore, THE SPRINGS follows FAIRFAX COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS for school closings, delays, and early closings due to precipitation. Please consult the Parent Handbook for further information. THE SPRINGS makes every attempt to make up any snow days as determined by FAIR COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS. However, the school year will not be extended in any way.

Please Initial \_\_\_\_\_

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### COMMUNITY HEALTH AGREEMENT

I understand that my child is joining a school community that, in addition to my child, consists of other students, teachers, and family members of students and faculty. THE SPRINGS works very hard to protect the health of all members of our community and reserves the right to send ill children home at the discretion of the School Administration, each of whom has completed the Virginia Daily Health Observation Training. However, these individuals, while trained to identify potential illness, are not medical personnel and cannot diagnose illnesses. Therefore, I agree to the following: Please initial each one.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ To pick up my child immediately upon receiving notification of my child's suspected illness. If children  
(initial) are not picked up within an hour of notification, I understand that the school will have to report to the appropriate state authorities.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ To notify the school within 24 hours if my student or any immediate family member is diagnosed with  
(initial) a communicable disease. In the event of a death, due to a communicable disease, I will notify the school immediately.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ That an anonymous notification of a communicable illness reported by my family will be posted for  
(initial) the school community to see.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ To provide a doctor's note, when required, for my child to re-enter school or to keep my child home  
(initial) from school until he or she has been entirely symptom free for a full 24 hours, without the help of medication.

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### TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF ENROLLMENT

1. \_\_\_\_\_ Academic tuition fees are annual, but may be paid in monthly installments from August to May.  
(initial)
2. \_\_\_\_\_ All required paperwork must be turned in before the 1<sup>st</sup> of August prior to the start of school. Your  
(initial) child may not attend until all paperwork is received.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ This contract is automatically renewable each year with re-registration of your child.  
(initial)
4. \_\_\_\_\_ Students are considered enrolled for the entire year. 30 days written notice must be given of intent to  
(initial) withdraw. Verbal notice is not accepted.

5. \_\_\_\_\_  
(initial) Upon withdrawal, refunds will be issued, if applicable, on a prorated basis determined by weeks enrolled. **NO REFUNDS OF DISCOUNTS ARE GIVEN FOR ABSENTEEISM.**
6. \_\_\_\_\_  
(initial) THE SPRINGS reserves the right to dismiss a child without notice at the sole discretion of the Head of School.
7. \_\_\_\_\_  
(initial) Classroom assignments are made at the discretion of the School Administration. While parents may make requests at the time of the application, THE SPRINGS is under no obligation to honor such requests. Classroom assignments are not finalized until August (after the first tuition payment is received).
8. \_\_\_\_\_  
(initial) House Transitions are done at the beginning of Summer Camp or a new school year. Mid-year transitions are extremely rare and are the discretion of the Head of School, if space is available at the next House level.
9. \_\_\_\_\_  
(initial) THE SPRINGS reserves the right to charge a fee for any changes of contract including switching from Full Day to Half Day or vice versa.
10. \_\_\_\_\_  
(initial) All tuition payments will be made online through a service called FACTS.
11. \_\_\_\_\_  
(initial) FACTS requires a \$40.00 registration fee each year.
12. \_\_\_\_\_  
(initial) All tuition payments are due on the 1<sup>st</sup> of every month. They are considered late after that and if there are insufficient funds in your account FACTS will charge you a fee. Failure to make a payment will result in the immediate dismissal of your child from the school. Note: FACTS withdraws the tuition from your account on or about the 25<sup>th</sup> of the preceding month (e.g. July 25<sup>th</sup> for August 1<sup>st</sup>).
13. \_\_\_\_\_  
(initial) Tuition rates may change at any time. 30 days written notice will be provided to parents.
14. \_\_\_\_\_  
(initial) Tuition rates for your child will be determined by his or her age on the first day of school and will remain at that rate for the entire school year. Classroom placement is based on your child's age prior to September 30. A transition to another level (i.e. Infant to Toddler or Toddler to Children's House) will not result in a tuition rate change until the following school year.
15. \_\_\_\_\_  
(initial) Accounts payable are assigned to the child and the parents listed on this application; they are considered the responsible party. In the event a third party will be responsible for tuition, written notice must be given to the school office. Otherwise, refunds, credits, late fees, etc., will be charged to the individual listed as parents on this contract.
16. \_\_\_\_\_  
(initial) A \$100.00 application fee must accompany this application and is not refundable under any circumstance.
17. \_\_\_\_\_  
(initial) Upon notification of acceptance, a non-refundable tuition deposit of \$250.00 is due immediately via FACTS for the **Children's House**. Enrollment is not guaranteed until receipt of the tuition deposit. The amount of tuition deposit due is subject to change at the discretion of the school at any time. Advance notice will be given, if possible.
18. \_\_\_\_\_  
(initial) Upon notification of acceptance, a non-refundable tuition deposit of \$500.00 is due immediately via FACTS for the **Toddler House**. Enrollment is not guaranteed until receipt of the tuition deposit. The amount of tuition deposit due is subject to change at the discretion of the school at any time. Advance notice will be given, if possible.
19. \_\_\_\_\_  
(initial) Upon notification of acceptance, a non-refundable tuition deposit of \$1,950.00 is due immediately via FACTS for the **Infant House**. Enrollment is not guaranteed until receipt of the tuition deposit. The amount of tuition deposit due is subject to change at the discretion of the school at any time. Advance notice will be given, if possible.
20. \_\_\_\_\_  
(initial) \$250 of the tuition deposit may be carried over from year to year and is non-refundable if your child does not complete their kindergarten year at THE SPRINGS. All other amounts will be applied to the last tuition payment of the school year in May. If a student does not complete the school year then the complete amount of the deposit is forfeited. Upon completion of the kindergarten year at THE SPRINGS, the \$250 deposit will be refunded in its entirety if no outstanding debts are owed.

## INFANT HOUSE ADDITIONAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF ENROLLMENT

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
(initial) All nutrition for children in the Infant class will be provided by the parent. Limited snacks may be provided by the school (e.g., Cheerios, bananas, etc.) but not without parental consent.
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
(initial) THE SPRINGS will not introduce new foods to infants. All new foods should be introduced at home, over three consecutive days. Only if the infant shows no sign of allergic reaction should the food be brought to school.
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
(initial) The parents will provide labeled bottles, with premeasured nutrition, on a daily basis. Parents should provide at least one extra serving per day to account for adjustments in intake. All food shall be labeled and dated with the day it was prepared.
4. \_\_\_\_\_  
(initial) Parents will provide diapers on a daily basis. Destin and Sensitive Unscented Wipes will be available. If parents prefer a different brand/type they will be expected to provide those items as necessary. Destin requires additional authorization.
5. \_\_\_\_\_  
(initial) Parents will provide at least three additional changes of clothes. They may be left at school, but the parent is responsible for restocking extra clothes regularly as the infant grows. We suggest monthly at least.
6. \_\_\_\_\_  
(initial) All of the infant's belongings should be labeled with the child's name. We suggest adhesive labels.
7. \_\_\_\_\_  
(initial) The weaning process is an important transition for all student's in the Infant House. THE SPRINGS will work closely with parents to facilitate this process according to the prescribed method outlined by the Montessori philosophy. This includes weaning children as they show a readiness, moving from a bottle directly to a drinking cup, and encouraging self-feeding. This is done at the child's pace. However, all children must be fully weaned prior to entering the Toddler House.
8. \_\_\_\_\_  
(initial) Pacifiers are a useful, instinctual comfort to babies until 4-6 months. Beyond that they are proven to become unnecessary crutches as infants become capable of self-soothing. They also contribute to the spread of germs as infants become more mobile at this stage and can impede language development. The Montessori method works to eliminate pacifier use at this age.
9. \_\_\_\_\_  
(initial) I understand that under no circumstance will any item (other than a pacifier, if applicable) be placed in an infant's crib at any time, even by parental request.
10. \_\_\_\_\_  
(initial) I understand that all babies will be placed in their crib on their back. No exceptions will be made, even by parental request. Once an infant is capable of rolling over, he or she will be free to roll at his or her will.
11. \_\_\_\_\_  
(initial) I understand that all infants will be placed on their stomach for at least 30 minutes per day to strengthen neck and upper body strength as well as head control. This time will be broken down into age appropriate increments based on the child's individual needs.
12. \_\_\_\_\_  
(initial) I understand that infants require human contact and comfort. All employees of THE SPRINGS are thoroughly vetted with background checks and are approved to work in childcare environments. Therefore, children will be offered physical comfort on a regular basis, as needed, each day.
13. \_\_\_\_\_  
(initial) I understand that infants thrive on consistency and routine and agree to work in collaboration with the school to ensure that we, as a family, are consistent with the procedures and goals of the Infant classroom in our home.

## REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

All children must have a Commonwealth of Virginia School Entrance Health Form, an Emergency Information Card, a Pick-Up Authorization Form and ID Verification of a birth certificate on file **BEFORE** they may start school. The Health Department and Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) require that children be denied attendance if the required paperwork is not fully completed and on file in the office.

The Health Form must be completed for all new children as well as all children returning for Kindergarten students. It must be completed by both the parent and the child's physician and dated within one year of the first day of school. In the event that a child has not been adequately immunized, proof of a medical exemption must be submitted to the school. Immunization exemptions on religious grounds may also be submitted to school, but must also be verified by a doctor on the Health Form. A child who can demonstrate an established plan to bring immunizations up-to-date may be allowed conditional admittance to school. The Health Form can be downloaded from Virginia Department of Education's website, the school website, or many doctors now complete the form electronically and provide you with a copy. Be sure to complete Section 1 which must be completed by a legal guardian and is not always included with doctor's print outs of the health form.

All children must complete an Identification Verification. VDSS requires this to aide in the prevention of kidnapping as well as to verify that the child meets the age requirements of the school's license. All documentation submitted for the Identification Verification must be original. It will be recorded and immediately returned to you. Documents that can be accepted are a birth certificate, a US passport, legal adoption papers, or a certificate of live birth issued by an accredited hospital.

The Emergency Information Card must be submitted for all children, including returning students, at the start of the school year. All information must be complete. VDSS requires two additional contacts (non-parents) that can pick up and assume temporary care of your child in the event of an illness or emergency affecting your child when a parent cannot be reached. This information must be submitted on the card provided to you by the school. These cards are filed in a manner that allows them to be removed from the building during an emergency so parents can still be contacted. All fields must be completed on both sides.

The Pick-Up Authorization Form is a list of individuals authorized to pick up your child from school. It remains in the child's file and can be added to or subtracted from at any time. Please list all individuals who may pick up your child including emergency contacts. Notify the school office in writing any time a child will be picked up by someone other than the parent to verify the pickup person is listed. For your child's safety, no child will be allowed to leave with anyone not on file as authorized, in writing, by the parent. All unfamiliar individuals picking students up will be required to present identification, even if they have previously been to the school.

Children who have allergies listed on their emergency card, health form, or application must have a completed Allergy Action Plan on file. The Allergy Action Plan is available in the school office.

All children must have an email authorization sheet on file. This email indicates which email you would like to use to access Transparent Classroom as well as for general school mailings. Email is the school's primary method of communication to parents.

All children in the Children's House need to have a restroom form on file. This form authorizes teachers to help a child in the bathroom if needed and/or requested by the child.

## **TUITION AND FEES**

**ALL** tuition payments are made in advance.

Application Fee: A \$100 application fee is due at the time of application to being the formal enrollment process. The application is non-refundable, no exceptions. Upon enrollment, the application fee covers the cost of your child's accident insurance while at school. All children are automatically covered by accident insurance at the time they are enrolled.

Tuition Deposit: Upon notification of acceptance, a non-refundable tuition deposit is required. The following are the non-refundable deposits that are required:

- Toddler House: \$500
- Children's House: \$250

Enrollment is not guaranteed until receipt of the tuition deposit. The amount of tuition deposit due is subject to change at the discretion of the school at any time. Advance notice will be given, if possible.

For students enrolling in the Toddler House, \$250 of the tuition deposit may be carried over from year to year and is non-refundable if your child does not complete their kindergarten year at THE WOODS. All other amounts will be applied to the last tuition payment of the school year in May. If a student does not complete the school year then the complete amount of the deposit is forfeited. Upon completion of the kindergarten year at THE WOODS, the \$250 deposit will be refunded in its entirety if no outstanding debts are owed.

The tuition deposit may be carried over for re-registration, each January, to hold your child's place for the following school year. New children must pay the tuition deposit at the time of acceptance to guarantee enrollment.

Tuition: **Tuition is a fee for the academic year** which may be paid in 10 installments, August-May. Summer Camp fees are billed in June and July.

The first tuition payment is due August 1<sup>st</sup> and the remaining payments are due on the first of each month and are considered late after that. **The first tuition payment, once received by THE WOODS, is non-refundable, regardless of whether or not the school year has begun.**

Summer Camp Tuition: Summer Camp enrollment requires a \$500 deposit each spring to reserve a space in camp. **The Summer Camp deposit is non-refundable.** Remaining payments are due June 1 and July 1. Due to the limited timing and availability of Summer Camp, **no refunds are issued for withdrawal from Summer Camp.**

FACTS Tuition Management System: All payments and fees are handled through the tuition management system FACTS. All families must create an individual account with FACTS. FACTS requires a \$40.00 registration fee each year and the registration fee is the responsibility of each individual account holder. FACTS also requires a five day hold on all tuition payments. Therefore, funds will be withdrawn from your account several days prior to the 1st in order to be received by THE WOODS on the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month. Any late fees or returned checks will also incur a late fee as stated in your individual agreement with FACTS.

THE WOODS was founded on the principle of affordable all-day Montessori education and continues to aspire to that goal. In doing so, the school must forego some modern conveniences to keep administrative costs as low as possible. THE WOODS only accepts cash or a FACTS payment. We do not have the capability to process credit cards except through FACTS, but please note that use of credit cards through FACTS incurs additional fees.

Other Fees: Material fees are included in tuition as are fees for Spanish and Music Class. Lunch fees are not included in tuition. Additional fees may be charged to your FACTS account for damaged materials resulting from aggressive behavior, failure to return borrow school clothing, or unreturned library books.

Additional Tuition Information: All children are considered enrolled for the entire school year and/or Summer Camp. NO deduction or refund is made for absenteeism regardless of reason, excused or unexcused. When a child enrolls or withdraws during the school year, rates are pro-rated for the actual number of weeks the child was formally enrolled. **No refund in tuition will be made when a child is withdrawn without 30 days written notice. The first tuition payment of the school year is required for all students including those students who were withdrawn after June 30<sup>th</sup>.**

Tuition is credited to the account of the enrolled child. The individuals named on the application, typically the parents, are considered the responsible parties for the account. Any tuition payments made by third parties such as grandparents, aunts, uncles, etc., on the child's behalf are credited to the child's account. Any refunds or overpayments, including those involving a third party, are repaid to the individuals listed on the account as responsible parties. If you would like to change the responsible parties for your child's account, please notify the office.

THE WOODS is supported only by its tuition and fees so please pay promptly and be sure to review our payment and refund policies carefully. Tuition rates for each level

(i.e., ToddlerHouse and Children's House) are largely influenced by state required student to teacher ratios that are determined by age. Therefore, your child's tuition rate is determined by his or her age prior to September 30 and not by the class level to which he or she is assigned.

### **WITHDRAWAL POLICY**

THE WOODS requires 30 days written notice of intent to withdraw a child from the school during the school year. Under no circumstance will be any refunds be issued without 30 days written notification. If a parent provides 30 days written notification, tuition will be prorated based on the number of weeks the student was enrolled at THE WOODS and in the event a refund is due, it will be mailed to the address of record 60 days after receipt of the notice of withdrawal, i.e. 30 days after the student's anticipated final day of attendance. Please note: formal enrollment, not days attended is used to determine prorated fees.

In the event, THE WOODS makes the determination that it is in the best interest of a child to withdraw from the school, 30 days written notice is not required and any due refund will be issued 30 days after the child's official withdrawal.

Parents may withdraw from Summer Camp at any time, but due to the limited timing and availability of camp space, no refunds will be issued for withdrawal from summer camp. This includes the \$500.00 non-refundable camp deposit. Additionally, **Parents who choose to withdraw their children from THE WOODS after June 30th are still required to pay the first tuition payment of the school year.**

Additionally, **any non-refundable payments or non-refundable deposits once received by THE WOODS will not be refunded under any circumstances** regardless of advanced notice of intent to withdraw. This includes but is not limited to the application fee, the initial deposit to secure your child's space, summer camp deposit, as well as the first tuition payment. The first tuition payment, once received by THE WOODS, regardless of whether school is in session or not, is non-refundable. The only exception to this policy is in the case of relocations (outside of THE WOODS' service area) required by military orders. Families requesting refunds of "non-refundable" fees, must present documentation of their orders.

Lunch fees, extra clothing fees, field trip fees, etc. are non-refundable. Outstanding fees including for damaged materials, unreturned library books, etc. will be deducted from any potential refunds.

### **FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM**

THE WOODS was founded on the idea of being an affordable Montessori program in Northern Virginia. As such we strive to maintain those ideals by trying to keep tuition as

low as possible. THE WOODS subsidizes on tuition alone and as such does not have a financial assistance program.

THE WOODS participates in several military subsidy programs. All tuition is still paid in the full amount to THE WOODS. All subsidy documentation must be retrieved from the program to which you may qualify and submitted to the agency for review. Upon acceptance from the qualifying agency, a reimbursement check, as determined by the program will be sent to THE WOODS. THE WOODS, will reimburse the family in accordance with the subsidy rules and regulations. THE WOODS is not liable for any determination of refunds or eligibility of individual participation. THE WOODS does not guarantee a continued partnership with the military subsidy programs.

### **LATE PICK UP POLICY**

There will be a charge of \$1.00 per minute for children not picked up on time. Payment must be submitted no later than the following morning in order for your child to be admitted to school. Late fees must be paid in cash. All late fees are considered babysitting fees and are distributed to the faculty members who remained late with your child. Any parent who is repeatedly late will be asked to withdraw their child from school.

### **ADMINISTRATION**

THE WOODS' administration is headed by a Co-Heads of School and an Assistant Head of School. The current Co-Heads of School are Daniel and Maureen Clifford. The Assistant Head of School is Elizabeth Fee. All questions and concerns regarding the school should be brought to the attention of the administration. The administration of school matters is left to the discretion of the Head of School and the Assistant Head of School or in their absence, their appointed Designee.

### **SCHOOL FACULTY**

All faculty members are carefully chosen and references are checked carefully. All faculty members undergo a Virginia Department of Social Services background check, a Virginia State Police background check, as well as a national fingerprint investigation. All faculty members must also provide a tuberculosis screening. Faculty members follow the same health and illness policy expected of students (see Health and Absences).

Preschool classrooms at THE WOODS are assigned one (1) Montessori Lead teacher and two (2) supporting faculty members. Other supporting faculty members are designated as "floating" and assist in every classroom. THE WOODS strives to maintain consistency in the staffing of each classroom, however, it may become necessary to adjust faculty hours or assignments based on the needs of the community.

The Montessori Lead teachers all have at least a Bachelor's Degree or equivalent programmatic experience and a teaching certificate from an accredited Montessori training program. Supporting faculty members are chosen for their experience, love of children, patience, and sense of humor. All faculty members are expected to meet the highest standards of Montessori pedagogy and follow childcare best practices. Additionally, all faculty members are required to complete at least 16 hours of professional development/continuing education each school year and undergo CPR and First Aid training every other year. THE WOODS works very hard to support and development faculty members, however; in the event a faculty member is unable to meet the demands and expectations of our school community, it may become necessary to make changes in faculty staffing.

### **CLASSROOM ASSIGNMENTS**

THE WOODS assigns children to their classrooms/teachers. Classroom assignments are based on classroom and school needs in keeping with the Montessori philosophy. The goal is to balance the different age groups as well as genders. In a Children's House Montessori program, the goal is for the child to remain with the same teacher for the three-year Montessori cycle. The school administration has ultimate authority regarding classroom assignments.

We work diligently to ensure that student and parent experiences are consistent and predictable across all of our different classroom environments. Therefore, we are confident that no one class is better or superior to another. Certainly, the unique personalities of students and faculty have significant bearing on the learning experience. Therefore, we use the child visit, the information gathered on the application and other feedback from the parent to make an educated and thoughtful classroom placement.

Parents may request to be considered for a certain classroom. THE WOODS does not guarantee classroom/teacher requests. Requests must be made at the time of application or, in the case of returning children, during the re-registration period in January. THE WOODS does not recommend switching classrooms from year to year. In no instance will returning children ever be "bumped" from their assigned classroom to accommodate the classroom requests of other families or to balance out age or gender. It is not school policy to move a child to a different classroom during the school year, even by parent request except in extenuating circumstances.

Final classroom assignments are made in August after the first tuition payment has been received from all enrolled families.

THE WOODS does not place siblings, to include twins, or other familial relations in the same class.

### **HOUSE TRANSITIONS**

Students, who enroll at Toddler level or are enrolled in the Leadership class, will reach a point where it is time to transition to the next House. This means the Children's House for rising toddlers. This step can be both exciting and intimidating for both students and parents alike. Our primary goal regarding House transitions is ensure that the child's transition is smooth, when he or she is developmentally ready and that it is made for appropriate reasons. At no time will tuition costs be considered a reason to transition a child as tuition rates are determined by age, not exact house placement. Each transition is determined on an individual basis and is based on the child's needs. Transitions with some rare exceptions occur at the start of the school year or the start of summer camp. Generally, it is in the best interest of the child to remain at his or her house level for a full academic year, unless exceptional developmental progress demands a sooner transition. If a mid-year transition is warranted, it will always occur on a Monday.

While certain basic criteria may need to be met to initiate a transition, a number of other factors are considered. Generally, a child must be of age (i.e., 3 years old) to transition to the next house. This does not mean that a child makes the transition the day he or she reaches the appropriate age. Rising preschoolers must be confident and proficient using the toilet. However, each child is different. Some potty-trained three year olds need a little extra time in the smaller toddler environment to gain self-control or control of body before entering the larger environment. Similarly, some younger children show a readiness and warrant making the transition earlier to meet their needs. The child guided individuality is the heart of the Montessori philosophy.

As the time for transition approaches, parents will be invited to come in to observe the next level. The teacher from the next level up will come and observe the child in his or her current class. Additionally, the child may be invited to spend some time visiting in the next level before making the final transition. Your child's current teacher will conference with you throughout the process. Parent input is welcomed and encouraged. **Please remember that readiness is defined by a number of different developmental factors as opposed to a specific age or milestone. Ultimately, the decision to transition a student to the next level will be made by THE WOODS' Head of School in consultation with a child's current teacher and the teacher of the class he or she will be entering.**

## **OUTDOOR PLAY**

THE WOODS is committed to outdoor, physical play. Outdoor play time represents not only a crucial portion of your child's physical education, but movement and gross motor activities are a core component of the Montessori philosophy. Additionally, the benefits of physical play for your child's overall health, social development, and even academic success are well documented in educational research. Children who engage in outdoor physical play, demonstrate healthier physical development, they learn the intricacies of social relationships with peers, and show increased levels of concentration during academic work times. **THE WOODS is highly committed to providing our**

**students with ample opportunities for physical education. Therefore, outdoor play that occurs within designated school hours is considered part of the academic school day and is compulsory. Students are not required to be present for play time prior to 8:15 am and occurring after 3:00 pm.**

Additionally, outdoor play is a regulatory requirement. The Licensing Standards outlined by Department of Social Services requires that any school operating longer than 5 hours must allow children to play outside for one hour provided the air quality is safe for children and there are no severe weather advisories for our area. At THE WOODS, we divide this hour up between morning and afternoon play. Any other restrictions on playing outside (e.g., precipitation, temperature, etc.) are up to the school's discretion.

If a child is present at school, the child will be expect to participate in outdoor play. THE WOODS is unable to accommodate children remaining inside. If a child has an approved excuse to refrain from physical play, alternative activities will be brought outside. If a child is not healthy enough to go outside, he or she is not healthy enough to be at school.

**At THE WOODS, children will go outside to play every day for fresh air and exercise unless it is actively precipitating, the wind chill falls below 25 degrees F, the heat index rises above 100 degrees F, or there is a Code Red advisory for air quality. Therefore, please make sure your child is dressed appropriately.**

### **NAPTME**

State regulations require that children under the age of 5 rest or nap daily after lunch. Cots or cribs and sheets are provided. Children's House and Toddler House students are required to bring a blanket (make sure it is marked with your child's name). Blankets will be sent home weekly to be washed. Children are welcome to bring a "lovey" or "cuddle buddy" for nap. However, this item will be stored with other sleeping materials or in the child's cubby during non-sleeping times.

**Please do not send full size bed pillows or sleeping bags as we do not have room to store these items.**

### **TOILET TRAINING REQUIREMENT – CHILDREN'S HOUSE**

All children enrolled in the Children's at THE WOODS are expected to be toilet trained. Toilet trained means that the child wears underwear, does not wet or soil him or herself except on rare occasions, can express to an adult when he or she has to go to the bathroom and can handle himself or herself in the bathroom independently. This includes being able to manage his or her clothing, operate a toilet, and clean his or her own body. Children are always supervised by a staff member at the bathroom.

However, staff members do not enter the bathroom with a child and are prohibited from cleaning or “wiping” children without the direct written permission of the parents.

The staff at THE WOODS, in keeping with licensing regulations and best practices for the protection of themselves and your children, are not encouraged to clean and “wipe” children in the Children’s House without direct written permission from the parents and the child. The staff will make every effort to help a child clean him or herself to the fullest extent possible. In the event that a child is unable to clean his or her body completely and refuses help, the administration will immediately notify the parents. The parents are responsible for making arrangements to come and clean and/or pick up their child if the teachers are not given either verbal consent from the child and written permission from the parents to clean the child.

The Children’s House classrooms are not equipped with diapering supplies or disposable mechanisms. Therefore, wipes and diapers cannot be used in these rooms. Children requiring such items will be sent to the Toddler House classrooms. It is up to the discretion of the school administration to decide if a child is sufficiently toilet trained to be able to continue in the Children’s House program.

It is expected that children will have occasional accidents or find themselves in need of a change of clothes. Always keep an extra supply of clothes in your child’s cubby.

### **DIAPERING AND TOILET LEARNING – TODDLER HOUSE**

THE WOODS Toddler Houses do have the necessary equipment to care for children in diapers or pull ups. THE WOODS will help those children in the Toddler Program to change themselves, which may include, but is not limited to, cleaning or wiping their genital area, helping children on and off the toilet, securing clothing, etc.

The Montessori philosophy for the Toddler level provides for toilet learning and the basics of toilet learning will be introduced as young as nine months. The faculty is trained to teach toileting lessons and will work with your children to ensure they learn to use the toilet as they become ready. The Montessori approach to toilet learning encourages children to become involved in the process of cleaning and dressing themselves from an early age. However, it is expected that children will have many toileting accidents at times during their toilet learning experience. Always keep **multiple changes** of clothes at school for your child.

Until children are able to successfully wear underwear, children will be diapered. Parents are to provide a supply of diapers daily for their child in the size, brand, etc., that is appropriate for their child’s needs. All diapers must be disposable unless the use of cloth diapers is deemed medically necessary by a licensed physician. It is recommended that children in the Toddler House wear a pull up style diaper as they facilitate independence and child involvement in the toileting process.

Unscented, hypo-allergenic wipes will be provided by the school. If a parent wishes to provide alternative wipes from home, they are free to do so.

Diaper ointment is treated like a medication and the appropriate authorization to administer must be completed. It must be supplied in its original container, clearly labeled with the child's name. A record will be maintained of all applications and any adverse reactions, if applicable. THE WOODS maintains a supply of Destin on-site, which still requires administration authorization. Children requiring other types of diapering cream/ointment will be required to supply their own.

### **DAILY REPORTS**

Daily reports are kept for children enrolled in the Toddler House. Daily reports detail your child's meals, snacks, diaper changes and/or toilet use, as well as sleep times. Daily reports are maintained in our child management system, Transparent Classroom. Parents may log on and view the daily report at any time and an electronic copy will be sent (usually about an hour after signing out) to those families who enter an email into Transparent Classroom. Some teachers may also provide a paper copy, but are not required to do so.

### **ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE**

Enter the school driveway from River Ridge Road and please park in marked spaces. Do not park in the handicap space unless you are authorized to do so. Never park in fire lanes or other unmarked areas. Spaces located in the River Oaks Shopping Center can also be utilized for parking.

**Building Access:** All children enter and leave through the door by the school office. All doors in the building are locked at all times. There is a security system to the right of the door. All enrolled families will be given a code to the door that will operate the door between the hours of 6 am and 6:30 pm. This code should only be given to the people who will regularly be picking up your children. The code will change regularly throughout the year. Parents will be notified by an email a few days prior to the change. If you do not know the code to the door, there is a buzzer that can be pressed and a faculty member who is at the reception desk may let you in. In the event that the office is left unattended, and you do not know the code, you may have a short wait to enter the building. A WOODS' faculty member will come to let you in as soon as possible. THE WOODS asks that if you are unsure of a person trying to enter the building, do not let them in and please let one of the faculty members handle the situation. We would like to maintain as safe of an environment as possible.

**Arrival Times and Locations:** Half Day children should arrive between 8:15 am and 8:30 am and should be dropped off directly in their classrooms or on the playground

depending on their class' schedule. Half Day students may not be dropped off in Founder's Hall.

School Age Students (Kindergartners) are subject to state laws regarding attendance and tardiness and should arrive between 8:15 am and 8:30 am, but no later than 8:30 am. Please see the section on Absenteeism and Tardiness for more information.

Full Day children may arrive as early as 6:00 am, but no later than 9:00 am (except Kindergartners students who must arrive by 8:30 am) and all students must be picked up by 6:00 pm. Children arriving between 6:00 am and 7:00 am should be dropped off in Mellet Library. Children arriving after 7:00 am but before 8:15 am should be dropped off in Founder's Hall. Children arriving after 8:15 am must be dropped off in their classroom or on the playground depending on their class' schedule.

**Late Arrival:** All students are expected to arrive on time for school as this is best for their transition to the classroom and their ability to experience the morning work cycle. On time arrival also sets up healthy habits for life. For Toddlers and Preschoolers (non-Kindergartners) we do offer a 45 minute grace period for arrival up until 9:00 am. For Kindergartener students the grace period for late arrival is 8:15-8:30 am. Arriving during the grace period for any age group should be the exception and repeated late arrivals will result in a conference with your child's teacher where the school and the family will develop a plan to support on time arrival

Children arriving after the grace period, (after 8:30 for Kindergartners, 9:00 am for all other students) must have approval from the office to join their class. Students arriving after the allotted grace period will be escorted to class by the office staff to minimize distraction and interruption in the classroom. Please see the section on Absenteeism and Tardiness for more information.

**Please call the school office by 9:00 am if your child will be absent or late to school.**

- **Safety and Supervision during Arrival and Departure:** The safety of your children is our first priority and we ask that you help us maintain consistency by upholding and reminding your child of the school rules while they are in your care on school property, especially during arrival and departure. These rules are applied to all children at the school, regardless of age.
- **All children must be sign in and out by an adult, 18 years or older.**

**Children may not operate the sign in/sign out system and are not allowed to touch the iPads.** Only adults may complete the sign in/ sign out process.

- **Children are prohibited from entering or leaving the school building without being accompanied by an adult.** Please do not send children into or out of the building alone for any reason, regardless of their age.

- **Only adults may open the door of the school's main entrance.** Please do not allow your child to touch or stand in front of the door even if you are right there with them. Please do not allow your child to run and bang into the door as other children are often on the other side of the door. Additionally, the parking lot is right there and we would like to ensure the safety of all children.
- **Only adults may use the security system next to the door.** Please do not allow your children to type in or touch the box regardless of their age and academic level.
- **Children are not allowed to be in the hallway, bathroom, or classroom without an adult.** When picking up or dropping off your child, please keep him or her by your side at all times.
- **Children are not allowed to touch the fire alarm or fire extinguisher.** Because the fire alarm must be handicap accessible it is also child-accessible and can be attractive to children. The children are taught that they may not touch this. Parents must be vigilant when signing their child in and out as well. If a child pulls the fire alarm, the school will evacuate according to procedure. The fire alarm is linked to the Fire Department who must come to deactivate the alarm. In the case of false alarms, the Fire Department charges an inconvenience fee. This fee is passed on to the family of the child who pulled the alarm.
- **Children may not run or shout in the building.** Please remind your child to walk and use inside voices.
- **Avoid carrying your child into school.** Walking into school prepares the child for a school atmosphere of independence and eases the separation from the parent.
- **Cell phones should not be used during pick up and drop off.** Parents are expected to supervise their children carefully during pick up and drop off. This is a time of major transition for children and children require the full attention of the adults caring for them. We respectfully ask that you do not use cell phones during this important time in your child's day.
- **Children may not play in the parking lot or other outdoor areas outside the fenced playground.**

**Tips for a Smooth Drop Off:** Drop off can be a stressful time for children and parents. The following are some tips for helping keep drop off time stress free and are particularly helpful in the early weeks of school:

- **Talk about school.** Explain to your child what to expect: how long you'll stay, who will be in the classroom, the teachers' names, etc.
- **Be positive.** Your child can sense your own separation anxieties; if you're enthusiastic, they will be too.
- **Read books about school when you're home.**
- **When/if your child cries, remain calm.** Try not to say, "Don't be afraid," or "There's nothing to be afraid of," or "There's no reason to cry." It's best to address your child in a positive way. "It's okay to be afraid. Your teachers will take care of you."
- **Never sneak out, slink out, or "slip away."** Tell your child that you're leaving the classroom. Make sure you are consistent and give one quick good-bye, each time you leave.
- **When you leave, tell your child where you're going, when you'll be coming back, and what you'll be doing.** Please follow the teacher's instructions on when to come back, when to leave, etc.
- **Don't ask your child for permission to leave the classroom.** For example, "Is it okay if I go now?" This can be confusing to your child. Be matter of fact instead.
- **Focus on your child during drop off and pick up.** Store cell phones and hold off on other adult conversations until after you have separated from your child. Please trust that we will comfort your child when you leave and that your child is safe

**Departure or Pick-Up:** All children must be picked up at the designated time for the program in which they are enrolled. Half Day children may be picked up between 11:45 pm and 12:00 pm. Parents are welcome to wait in the reception area and students will be dismissed directly to you from Founder's Hall. School Day children must be picked up between 2:45 pm and 3:00 pm. Full Day children must be picked up by 6:00 pm. School Day and Full Day children may be picked up directly from their classroom or the playground.

**Late Pick Up:** Parents arriving late to pick up their child(ren) will be charged \$1.00 per minute per child. Payment must be submitted no later than the following morning in order for your child to be admitted to school. Late fees must be paid in cash. All late fees are considered babysitting fees, recorded in your child's file, and distributed to the faculty members who remained late with your child. Any parent who is repeatedly late will be asked to withdraw their child from school.

Should any child be left at THE WOODS past 7:30 pm, and parents or emergency contacts cannot be reached, Virginia Department of Social Services and Child

Protective Services will be called and arrangements will be made for the child to be taken into state custody.

**NO CHILD WILL BE RELEASED TO ANYONE OTHER THEN THOSE LISTED ON THE YELLOW PICK-UP AUTHORIZATION FORM IN YOUR CHILD’S FILE. A written note should be sent if a child is to go home with someone other than their parents.** If someone unfamiliar to the faculty picks up your child, the person picking up will be required to present identification to determine that the person picking up is on the parents’ list of individuals authorized to pick up your child. Individuals cannot be added to the pick-up list without written consent (i.e., over the phone).

### **ABSENTEEISM AND TARDINESS**

Regular attendance to school is strongly encouraged for setting the groundwork for a successful school experience. Neither the school, nor any of its employees are responsible for ensuring actual attendance as this is the responsibility of the child’s parent(s).

Kindergarten students (school age children) are compulsory in the Commonwealth of Virginia. THE WOODS is required by law to record and report any child and/or parent who is not in compliance with the law. As such, the following policy will be enacted in accordance with the law:

Every student must attend school during prescribed hours. The following chart lists THE WOODS requirements for arrivals and tardiness for School Age Children versus Non-School Age Children.

	School Age Children	Non-School Age Children
School Day Starts and Montessori Work Cycle Begins (to include group times and outdoor/indoor playtimes)	8:15 am	8:15 am (Full Day children may arrive earlier)
Arrival Grace Period	8:15 am – 8:30 am	8:15 am – 9:00 am
Students are Marked Absent / Tardy	After 8:30 am	After 9:00 am
Allowable Absences per Virginia Law	15 days (3 tardies = 1 absence)	N/A

Students who fail to follow the attendance policy are subject to the penalties set forth by the Commonwealth of Virginia’s Laws on compulsory education.

There are two types of absences, excused and unexcused. An excused absence is one for which parents or guardians have prior knowledge, consent, and/or legitimate reason. Legitimate reasons may include:

- Illness of the student,
- Death in the family,

- Doctor or dental appointment,
- Observance of a religious holiday,
- Suspension,
- Or another reason acceptable to the principal or his or her designee.

The Head of School or his/her designee determines whether or not absences will be excused and may require a physician's note in cases of chronic or long-term illness. Parents or guardians and students are encouraged to prearrange excused absences when possible.

An unexcused absence is one for which the parent or guardian does not have prior knowledge, consent, and/or legitimate reason. Examples of reasons that are not justified and will result in an unexcused absence include:

- Family and/or student vacations,
- Child care situations,
- Non-school-related activities,
- Or other reasons unacceptable to the Head of School or his / her designee.

This definition holds for all day and period absences.

After the fifth unexcused absence, the school will contact the parent to notify him or her of the absences and the consequences of continued absences. After the tenth (10<sup>th</sup>) absence of any description, the Administration will follow the following protocol:

- Written notification of tenth absence will be made to parent/guardian
- Conference will be requested by the school to resolve chronic absenteeism issues (within five (5) school days).
- A plan for attendance improvement will be developed at this conference.
- Attendance policy (attendance mandatory-all day, every day) outlined.

After the fifteenth (15<sup>th</sup>) absence of any description the administration will follow the following protocol:

- Send a letter sent to parent(s)/guardian(s) containing the following information:
  - Absences have been determined to be an issue of chronic absenteeism for one (1) or both of the following reasons:
    - Failure of parent(s)/guardian(s) to cooperate with an attendance improvement plan;
    - Parents inability to control/supervise the child with regard to school attendance; or
  - Absences have been determined not to be an issue of chronic absenteeism for one (1) or both of the following reasons:
    - Cooperation of parent(s)/guardian(s) and/or;
    - Extenuating circumstances have made the student's absences reasonable and not considered at this time to be an issue of failure to comply with the compulsory education law.

- Continued cooperation between parent(s)/guardian(s) and school will be necessary to insure a minimum impact of the student absences.

In the event absences are considered to be a failure to comply with the compulsory education law, the Head of School will inform the parent(s)/guardian(s) of the following action:

- A referral for failure to comply with the compulsory education law has been filed with Student Services. This referral will result in one (1) or more of the following:
  - Referral to Child Specific Team (CST) or other appropriate intervention;
  - Initiation of court proceedings against child (CHINSup); and/or
  - Initiation of court proceedings against the parent(s)/guardian(s) (Code of Virginia, section 18.2-371).

Please note that three (3) tardies equal one absence per the Code of Virginia. School age children (Kindergarten students) are considered tardy after 8:30 am. Arrival time is determined by the sign-in function in Transparent Classroom.

The school day includes outdoor or indoor playtime. Any play time that occurs during the prescribed school day hours (8:15 am-3:00pm), even if it occurs, prior to the start of the Montessori work cycle is considered compulsory. It represents a component of your child's physical education and is reflect of authentic Montessori education which includes opportunities for movement and gross motor activities.

### **CLOTHING AND UNIFORMS**

Clothing should be neat and comfortable, appropriate for the weather, and easy for the child to manage for him or herself in the bathroom. Clothing should be washable. **ALL REMOVABLE CLOTHING MUST BE MARKED WITH YOUR CHILD'S NAME.**

A change of clothing must be left at school for all children. Toddlers and children who are recently potty trained should have several changes of clothing at school. Please note that children work with water, food, and various art materials. Often children who are fully toilet trained may require a change of clothes for other reasons. Therefore, every student must have a change of clothes kept at school. Clothing **MUST** be marked with your child's name.

During seasons of variable weather conditions (e.g., spring and fall), children should have a change of clothing at school to accommodate temperature changes. During the winter, children should have a hat and mittens as well as a warm coat. During the summer, children must wear socks and closed-toed shoes. It is particularly important for children who nap to wear socks so that their feet have protection if we are required to evacuate the children during nap time.

For the safety of all children, necklaces, bracelets, rings, watches, etc. will not be allowed to be worn at school. If a child comes to school with such items on, they will be

removed and stored in the office until the end of the day. Similarly, only studded earrings are allowed. Any dangling or hooped earrings will be removed and stored promptly.

Extra Clothing Policy: If a child does not have a change of clothes at school, THE WOODS will provide (if available) appropriate clothing from our supply of extra gym uniforms for the child to wear. School clothing must be washed and returned to school within five (5) school days. Borrowed clothes must be returned to the front office so their return can be verified. Failure to return school clothing within five (5) school days will result in a charge to your FACTS account. Underwear may not be returned and use of school underwear results in an automatic charge. Charges are as follows and are subject to change without notice, based on Lands' End pricing:

- Tee shirt: \$10.00
- Sweatshirt: \$20.00
- Sweatpants: \$20.00
- Shorts: \$15.00
- Pair of Socks: \$2.00 (automatic, non-returnable)
- Underwear: \$2.00 (automatic, non-returnable)

To avoid unnecessary charges, please keep your child's cubby fully stocked with extra clothes.

### **UNIFORMS REQUIREMENTS:**

Uniforms help to support independence and self-care, which are hallmarks of the Montessori philosophy. As a result, all children enrolled are required to wear the approved uniforms. Uniforms are available only through either French Toast Uniforms (school code: XXXXXXXX) or Lands' End School (school code: XXXXXXXXXX).

The following are the uniform requirements for all House Levels. Generally, the uniform is not gender or age specific (although items are grouped by gender and/or age on the French Toast and Lands' End websites).

- Toddler House:
  - Approved uniform from FrenchToast.com or Lands' End School as listed on their respective websites.
  - All shirts, dresses, sweaters, and jackets must have THE WOODS crest.
  - Navy blue, black, white, or gray leggings, shorts, undershirts, etc. must be worn underneath uniform dresses.
  - Classroom shoes (see policy below)
  - Toddler students may opt to wear the PE uniform\*. The PE uniform and standard uniform may not be combined
- Children's House
  - Approved uniform from FrenchToast.com or Lands' End School as listed on their respective websites.

- All shirts, dresses, sweaters, and jackets must have THE WOODS crest.
- Navy blue, black, white, or gray leggings, shorts, undershirts, etc. may be worn underneath the approved uniform.
- Children's House students may opt to wear the PE uniform\*. The PE uniform and standard uniform may not be combined
- Classroom shoes (see policy below)

Children who wear the uniform are required to do in keeping with the guidelines set forth above. Violations of the uniform policy will be documented. A note will be sent home notifying parents of failure to adhere to uniform regulations. After the third notice, any subsequent uniform violations will result in the child being sent home to change. Students may return to school as soon as the uniform is in compliance.

\*The PE uniform is only available from Land's End School. The PE uniform is unisex although Land's End designates items as "girls" and "boys" on their website. Because availability varies from time to time based on their inventory, you may not see all pieces of the gym uniform listed by gender which may require you to shop under the opposite gender.

### **CLASSROOM SHOES**

All children enrolled in the Toddler House and Children's House\* are required to wear classroom shoes in the classroom. Classroom shoes are a sturdy, slipper like shoe common to Montessori environments. Children in a Montessori classroom spend a lot of time on the floor and the use of classroom shoes helps keep the classroom clean and eliminates a great deal of noise from foot traffic. Classroom shoes need to provide the structure and support of a shoe, but the comfort and softness of a slipper. We recommend the "Wicked Good Moc" from L.L. Bean and the "Kids Suede Moc Slippers" from Lands' End for Children's House Students. We recommend Montessori Movers for Toddler House students.

Parents are welcome to provide classroom shoes of their choosing. However, they must meet the following criteria:

- The slipper must have a solid, rubber sole. (Please do not send shoes with suede or soft leather bottoms)
- The slipper must have a closed toe and closed heel
- The slipper must be solid in color and free of all logos, characters, and decorations such as jewels, feathers, etc. (Initials or Names of Students are OK)

Shoes that do not meet the criteria will be sent home to replace. Please note that these shoes will remain at school and will be used exclusively indoors. Children will change in and out of classroom shoes as they enter and exit the classroom. Teachers do their best to check sizing regularly and to let you know when your child outgrows their classroom shoes, but parents are expected to check their child's shoes routinely as well.

Lastly, please order shoes early. Children who do not have classroom shoes will still be required to remove outdoor shoes and work in their socks. However, this is not optimal for your child's safety or foot development, so we will only allow this for a maximum of 10 school days, provided appropriate classroom shoes are on order.

Additional Options for Classroom Shoes:

- Montessori Movers
- Foamtreads
- Toms
- Soft Star (Rambler style only)\*\*
- Crocs\*\* (Santa Cruz Loafer; CitiLane Slip On, solid colors; and Busy Day MaryJane, solid colors are the only Croc styles that meet the guidelines at this time)

\*\*Please note most versions of Crocs and Soft Stars do not meet the guidelines for classroom shoes. Styles change so please be very careful in your selection if you choose Crocs or Soft Stars.

## **PERSONAL BELONGINGS**

All personal belongings must be marked with your child's name and stored in his or her cubby or other area designated for particular personal belongings. Please check with your child's teacher about proper storage when leaving a personal belonging at school

Books and recordings are welcome. Also welcome are additions to the science and nature shelf or items which relate to school activities. Please check with your child's teacher before leaving any items at school for "show and tell" a.k.a. "sharing." These items should be in accordance with your child's teacher's policy regarding "sharing." Please do not allow your children to bring money to school. Please do not allow your children to bring toys to school. Please do not allow your child to wear jewelry (except studded earrings) to school as such items present a choking hazard and are easily misplaced. Please check your child's pockets before he or she comes to school and upon arriving home. Montessori materials are very expensive. Please return any items found belonging to the school.

A cubby is provided for all children enrolled at THE WOODS for storage of a change of clothing and other personal items brought to school. All children have a folder in which their school work is kept. The folder should be taken home on Friday, emptied and returned to school on Monday.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

THE WOODS does not provide transportation between home and school or vice versa. We encourage parents to form carpools. However, when THE WOODS takes field trips,

Williams Bus Service or other reputable bus services will be contracted. All automotive and traffic laws will be strictly enforced. This includes requiring all passengers to wear a seat belt at all times, if available.

## **RECORDS**

Parents have a right (unless prohibited by the courts in a custody agreement) to the timely inspection of the educational records of their child during school hours. The school shall respond to reasonable requests for explanations and interpretations of the records. The school shall maintain student records for at least seven years, but no more than 10 years.

## **CELL PHONES**

THE WOODS is a cell phone free zone as our focus is on the children at all times.

Faculty members are not allowed to use personal cell phones while responsible for children. Faculty cell phones must be stored and out of sight and reach of children at all times.

All students are prohibited from carrying a cellphone into school during school hours. Any student caught with a cellphone on their person, or in their belongs, is subject to the cell phone immediately being confiscated by the teacher and brought to the office. The cell phone will then be turned over to the parent at the end of the day. Violation of this policy in excess of three times will result in discipline from the school at the discretion of the Head of School.

We kindly ask parents to support our cell phone policies by refraining from cell phone use while in the school building. Drop off and pick up are very important transitional times for children and we ask that parental attention be focused on your child until you leave the school building.

# **PART V: FOOD POLICIES**

## **BREAKFAST**

THE WOODS does offer breakfast from 6:00 am to 7:00 am through Fairfax Food Service. A breakfast snack of dry cereal is also served between 7:00 am and 8:15 am for children who may still be hungry. Additionally, children arriving before 8:15 am may bring a breakfast snack to supplement the meal they eat before coming to school. A “breakfast snack” includes any item that can be eaten immediately, does not require utensils or tableware and all remnants, including packaging, can be thrown away. Appropriate breakfast snacks include fruits, muffins, cereal bars, etc. All breakfast activities cease at 8:15 am when children go to their Montessori classrooms. Children arriving after 8:15 am are expected to have eaten breakfast.

In the event that food or containers are left behind; please understand that they will be discarded. THE WOODS cannot save uneaten food.

## **SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM**

Lunches are obtained from Fairfax Food Services for all children who stay at school through lunch. THE WOODS bills the cost of lunches to the parent at the end of each month. Children are expected to eat the lunch provided by Fairfax Food Services unless the child has allergies or special dietary needs. Fairfax Food Services does not change lunch counts on a daily basis. Therefore, you will still be charged for lunch on days your child is absent (excused and unexcused). Parents must provide lunch if the child has special needs (i.e., dietary or religious restrictions).

## **LUNCHES FROM HOME**

THE WOODS strongly encourages families whose children eat lunch at school to participate in the school lunch as the Department of Health requires the school to closely monitor lunches brought from home for children in our care. However, children with special dietary needs due to illness or allergies may need to bring lunch from home. We recommend that families use the school lunch calendar as a guide when preparing lunches and recommend limiting lunch items to fruits, vegetables, cheeses, lean meats and healthy grains. Lunches from home must be nutritionally balanced.

**Families wishing to discontinue school lunch and bring lunch from home must have approval from the Head of School and complete the necessary paperwork to discontinue school lunch. This includes a release and review of the Lunch from Home Guidelines.**

If your child brings lunch from home, please send your child's lunch in a plastic lunch box or a paper bag labeled with the child's name. **DO NOT** send breakable thermoses or glass containers.

We do not have facilities for refrigerating food from home and heating foods brought from home is strictly prohibited by the Department of Health. **Lunches sent from home must contain an ice pack especially when fruit, vegetables or dairy products are sent. Similarly, hot food should be packed in an appropriate warming thermos. Lunches set from home must be clearly labeled with the student's name as well as the date it was brought in.**

THE WOODS provides milk and water for all children at lunchtime. The Health Department also requires that any leftover food be discarded. Therefore, it is THE WOODS policy to discard all uneaten food. If a child has a milk allergy, the parent is responsible for providing an alternative beverage (e.g., soy milk, 100% fruit juice). If the parent does not bring a substitution, the child will be served water. Lunch boxes are placed on classroom shelves in the hall.

Candy, gum, sugary desserts, and junk food are prohibited. All juices and fruit snacks must contain 100% fruit juice. Flavored milk is prohibited. Vitamins are also not allowed.

### **SNACKS**

A breakfast snack is served between 7:00 am to 8:15 am. This snack is provided by the school and usually consists of dry cereal and milk.

Snack is also served throughout the morning work period and after nap. These snacks are generally provided by the school. You may occasionally be asked to contribute for a special snack.

Children are expected to eat school snack. Snacks may not be brought from home unless a child has a specific allergy or dietary restriction that cannot be accommodated by the school. Parents are responsible for providing snacks if their child has food allergies or dietary restrictions.

Meals and snacks meet the nutritional needs of children as established by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Prince William County Department of Health and Virginia Department of Social Services.

# **PART VI: PROCEDURES FOR SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES AND OCCASIONS**

## **BIRTHDAYS**

On your child's birthday (or the day you choose to celebrate your child's birthday if his or her birthday does not fall on a school day), you are welcome to send a special treat. We recommend small cookies, cupcakes with minimal icing, muffins, fruit, etc. Please do not send cupcakes with sticky or dyed frosting. We prefer un-iced cupcakes. Please do not send cupcakes with plastic decorations on the top. Please provide napkins with any food. Goody bags are not allowed at THE WOODS. Please do not send candy. **All food items must be nut free.** Always check with your child's teacher before bringing in any treats or planning a birthday celebration. We keep a list of local bakeries specializing in allergy friendly treats in the office. Birthday treats that do not meet our criteria will not be served.

If you want to send invitations to a personal party, THE WOODS recommends keeping your profile on Transparent Classroom up-to-date and available to other parents as invitations should be sent out through email or the postal service. THE WOODS will not be responsible for distributing birthday invitations.

## **LIBRARY BIRTHDAY BOOK PROGRAM**

We invite our families to participate in **THE WOODS Birthday Book Program**. The birthday child is given an opportunity to select a book and present it to the school; the book is placed in the library with a nameplate in the child's name. This is a fun way to honor children as well as provide books and resources for our library.

## **HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS**

THE WOODS is a non-sectarian school. In keeping with the Montessori philosophy, we discuss and celebrate holidays from many cultures. If your family celebrates a holiday that THE WOODS has not celebrated in the past and that you would like for the children to learn about, please let the school office know when the holiday falls and we will make every effort to expose the children to such holidays. Occasionally, parents will be asked to contribute for a class event or celebration. Common celebrations at THE WOODS include, but are not limited to:

- Fall
- Thanksgiving\*
- St. Nicholas Day (Germany, Holland – Dec. 6)
- Santa Lucia Day (Sweden - Dec. 13)
- Christmas
- Hanukkah
- Chinese New Year (China)
- Valentine's Day \*\* (Italy – Feb 14)
- St. Patrick's Day (Ireland – March 17)
- Military Appreciation Month (May)
- Cinco de Mayo (Mexico - May 5)

**\*Thanksgiving Feast:** This celebration is one of our biggest school wide events. The focus is coming together as a community and having all members of the community contribute to the event. Families are asked to bring in food items for the children to complete cooking projects as planned by the teacher. Children love being able to contribute to feast. The school provides all paper products, utensils, etc. The feast is held the Wednesday before Thanksgiving and we encourage parents to attend.

**\*\* Valentine's Day:** All classes have a Valentine's Day party. Please send in signed cards for all the children in the class. Please coordinate with the child's teacher to determine how many children are in the class. Please do not address the envelopes. This allows younger children who may not be reading yet to hand out their own Valentines. Please do not send candy.

# **PART VII: INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY**

## **INCLEMENT WEATHER OR EMERGENCY CLOSING**

THE WOODS follows Prince William County Public Schools (PWPS) for school closings and delays due to emergencies or inclement weather. Our families and staff travel from all over the county, neighboring counties, and in some instances, even neighboring states, to be at THE WOODS. We do not have the technology or resources to determine widespread weather conditions and therefore rely on county resources. We believe it is best for children to be in school consistently and understand that school closings and delays can be an inconvenience, but please understand that we must also protect the safety of our students and staff. Additionally, we also must verify the conditions of our school facility and allow sufficient time for snow to be removed from our property. Most importantly, we must ensure that we have enough faculty available to maintain state regulated ratios and age groupings to ensure the safe supervision of all children

In limited circumstances, THE WOODS does review PWPS decision and deviates from their decision. Generally, a deviation only occurs in weather related closings that do not involved precipitation and do not have much bearing on our community. For example, in cases where PWPS has closed due to extreme low temperatures, THE WOODS has decided to open as our property was safe and our students are brought to school at their parent's discretion. Please keep in mind that the Administration makes this decision with very limited resources and can only do so to the best of their ability with the information available. They base their decision on several factors that include but are not limited to PWPS' decision, the National Weather Service, Capital Weather Gang, the conditions of the property, decisions of neighboring school districts, and the faculty's ability to get to school. Therefore, it is always best to check school resources (website, voicemail, etc.) when there is inclement weather to verify THE WOODS' operating status.

In all weather conditions, the decision to bring a child to school is at the discretion of the parents. At any time, if you feel that the conditions are unsafe to bring your child(ren) to school, you are under no obligation to do so.

School closings and delays are always announced on the school website, the school voicemail, and school social media accounts. Additionally, we utilize School Messenger to send out email and text message blasts. Every family is automatically enrolled in this program. You may choose to opt out of either program. Please note that standard text messaging rates apply from your carrier and THE WOODS is not responsible for any additional fees that you may incur.

If school opens late or closes early, the start time will be determined from our 7:00 am opening and 6:00 pm closing times. For example, if THE WOODS has a two-hour delay, we will open at 9:00 am for all students. If THE WOODS has a two-hour early closing, the pickup time for all children program is 4:00 pm.

Preschools are not required to make up snow days and our full day Kindergarten exceeds the number of instructional hours required for school age children by the Virginia Department of Education. As such, THE WOODS calendar allows for 15 snow days. This is two more than Prince William County Public Schools because we do not hold every teacher work day that PWPS does. In the event we have more than 15 snow days, every effort will be made to make up the days as ***a courtesy to our families***. Typically, other holidays are converted to regular school days or the length of Kindergarten time are extended daily to make up instructional hours, if necessary. **However, due to Summer Camp, the end of the school year will not be extended.**

# **PART VIII: BEHAVIOR AND DISCIPLINE**

## **POSTIVE DISCIPLINE**

The policy at THE WOODS is to help children acquire self-discipline by keeping them constructively occupied by doing interesting, challenging activities and by teaching behavioral skills. Expected behavior is on the child's level and limits or rules are appropriate and understandable to the children. Rules and expectations for behavior are fairly and consistently applied. Our faculty focuses on positive discipline.

Positive Discipline includes but is not limited to redirection, modeling appropriate behavior, as well as natural and relatable consequences. Our approach does not focus on external rewards or punishments such as stickers or time out chairs. Occasionally, a child may need to regroup and be separated for a brief time. The teacher will do so with compassion and in a manner that helps the child understand why he or she is being separated and with a focus on what he or she needs to do to rejoin the class.

The Montessori philosophy places a large emphasis on Peace Education. As such, THE WOODS incorporates these concepts into our discipline policy as well encouraging children to be peaceful and reflective. Often our classrooms have a Peace Table with soothing items such a Peace Rose or a book of peaceful scenes. This is an area where children may go to relax, regroup, or to work out conflicts between one another. Our goal is for children to acquire productive social emotional skills and to do so in a respectful and kind manner.

Faculty members agree on the standards of acceptable and unacceptable behavior to prevent children from being confused. The methods of discipline most often used include teaching appropriate behavior, distraction, brief verbal command, and redirection.

### **The following types of discipline are prohibited:**

- A faculty member shall neither force nor withhold food from a child
- A faculty member shall neither force a child to nap nor withhold naps from a child
- A child shall not be punished for a toileting accident
- Verbal abuse of a child or the child's family shall not be used
- Physical punishment of any type is prohibited

Violation of any of the above results in immediate job termination for the faculty member involved.

## **BEHAVIORAL EXPECTATIONS AND DISMISSAL**

Children enrolled are expected to behave in a manner that does not cause continuing or ongoing disruption of the peace, harmony, and operation of the classroom. Children are not allowed to hit faculty members or other children. Ongoing disruptive or aggressive behavior will be considered cause for dismissal.

THE WOODS considers biting and hitting serious behavioral problems. Biting and/or hitting often result from frustrated, inadequate communication and/or lack of impulse control—two developmental tasks that children are intensely engaged in. Younger children are in the process of mastering language and often lack the words to fully express their needs, feelings, and thoughts. In the absence of words, children employ their bodies; they push, grab, scratch, and sometimes bite. A bite or a hit by an older child is more unusual, but usually still stems from the inability of a child to be successful when using words to resolve a conflict. When a child bites or hits, the parent of the child who did the biting as well as the parent of the child who was bitten will be notified. A child, who continues to bite, hit or shows other signs of aggressive behavior will be dismissed from the school.

Destruction of materials or environment is also considered a serious behavior problem. When a child breaks materials through purposeful misuse, the parents of the child will be notified. Parents of children who break or destroy school items are asked to replace the damaged items. Children should be involved in the process of replacing the item so they can learn and understand the consequences of their actions.

If a child's behavior is creating an ongoing problem in the school, the teacher will call the parent to discuss the behavior and develop a plan with the parent to correct the behavior. If the behavior continues to be a problem, the parents will be asked to come to the school for a conference with the teacher and Head of School to determine a course of action to change the behavior. A child's ongoing aggressive or disruptive behavior affects the well-being of all of the children. If inappropriate behavior continues, the child may be dismissed. Parent cooperation is essential in successfully navigating and overcoming on-going behavioral issues.

It is our desire that your child's school experience be a positive one and that parents feel comfortable with the philosophy and policies of the school. If THE WOODS determines that this is not the case, THE WOODS reserves the right to require a child to withdraw from the school. In most cases, parents will be given two weeks notice when required to withdraw their child from the school. However, **THE WOODS reserves the right to dismiss a child, without notice, at our discretion.**

### **SPECIAL NEEDS OR DEVELOPMENTAL CONCERNS**

The Montessori philosophy is conducive to teaching children with all different learning abilities. Our teachers work very hard to meet the needs of each individual child. However, at times, teachers may identify issues concerning a child's development that may require additional services or resources. These types of concerns may range from behavioral issues to academic challenges to physical limitations. Our teachers, as part of Montessori certification, receive general instruction on how to identify such issues and methodologies for observing and communicating concerns. Given their training and professional experience, the teachers are well qualified to recognize when they may

need additional resources to best serve a child's needs. However, they are not qualified to diagnose children in anyway.

In the event a child's teacher is concerned about his or her development, the teacher will contact the parent for an initial discussion of the situation. This may occur in person or over the phone. The teacher will begin conducting formal observations of the child in the classroom. She may ask classroom assistants to conduct observations as well. Formal observations mean that the teacher sets aside specific time to observe the child and completes documentation of her observations. Generally, there will be at least three observations. The purpose of the observations is to attempt to identify any patterns and to see what alterations or accommodations the teacher can make in the environment to help the child as well as to document the outcome of such changes.

After the initial observations of the teacher, if she still feels the situation warrants more attention, the teacher will request additional observations from other members of the teaching staff and the administration. Upon completion of formal observations, the child's parents will be invited to school for a formal conference. The parents may be required to observe the child in class as well. We will discuss our observations and determine a plan forward to support the child. While it is our goal to work with all children, to do so may require additional resources. These observations provide a record that should be shared with pediatricians and other specialists that you may decide to consult. In some cases, we may require that a doctor or other professional review your child's observations or observe your child at school. Speech therapists, behavioral therapists, psychologists, etc. are welcome to come to school to observe and work with the children. This is a common practice. However, if such professionals wish to work with your child one-on-one away from our faculty, they will be required to submit proof of appropriate background checks and screenings in accordance with VDSS regulations.

Please understand that identifying special needs or developmental issues is difficult in young children. Many behaviors that are often classified as age appropriate in young children can also be an indicator of larger issue. At the same time, for many special needs, early intervention is crucial and can have a significant impact for later development. Therefore, we do not treat such concerns lightly and aim to proceed thoughtfully and with as much support as possible. Additionally, we also strive to understand the delicacy and emotional impact for parents when such concerns arise. We understand that for many parents, this may be the first time there is an indication of a special need or developmental issue and that this can be a very difficult process. We will support families in any way we can. When parents, teachers, and specialist work together, openly and honestly, we have a very high success rate of working with children with special needs and/or helping children over developmental hurdles.

### **ANTI-HARASSMENT/ NON-DISCRIMINATION - STUDENTS**

THE WOODS is committed to maintaining a school environment in which all individuals

are free from harassment or discrimination based on race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, age, sex, citizenship status, genetic information, disabilities and other characteristics protected by federal or applicable state law.

Harassment is defined as verbal or physical conduct that denigrates or shows hostility toward another student because he or she is a member of a protected group and that interferes with a student's work or creates a hostile, intimidating, or offensive environment.

Sexual harassment, in particular, may consist of (a) making unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct or comments of a sexual nature; (b) making submission to or rejection of such conduct the basis of decisions; or (c) creating an intimidating, offensive, or hostile environment by such conduct. Examples of sexual harassment can include, but are not limited to:

- Verbal: Sexual innuendo, suggestive comments, insults, threats, jokes about gender-specific traits or sexual propositions
- Non-verbal: Making suggestive or insulting noises, leering, whistling or obscene gestures
- Physical: Touching, pinching, brushing the body, coercing sexual intercourse or assault
- Graphic: Displaying or circulating in the school written or graphic material that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual or group (including through e-mail)

Any student who engages in sexual harassment shall be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion.

## **BULLYING**

Bullying is defined as any aggressive and unwanted behavior that is intended to harm, intimidate, or humiliate the victim; involves a real or perceived power imbalance between aggressor or aggressors and victim; and is repeated over time or causes severe emotional trauma. Bullying includes cyber bullying but does not include ordinary teasing, horseplay, arguments, or peer conflict.

However, the school recognizes that many of the children in our care are too young to be developmentally capable of bullying as defined here, but that some habits, if not identified and dealt with in early years, can lead to bullying. Therefore, it is our policy to avoid using the label of "bully" or "bullying" when discussing young children. Instead, we focus our approach on teaching positive conflict resolution skills and supporting social emotional learning.

In the event, the school does determine behavior to meet this definition of bullying appropriate action will be taken. The school will not tolerate any bullying on school grounds or at any school sponsored activity (on or off school grounds).

Consequences for students who bully others shall depend on the results of an investigation from the Administration, and may include:

- Counseling
- Parent Conference
- Community Service
- Suspension and/or Expulsion

Depending on the severity of the incident(s), the Head of School may also report incidents of bullying to law enforcement if appropriate.

# **PART IX: COMMUNICATION AND PROGRESS**

**INFORMATION FROM HOME**

Please inform your child's teacher and the office anytime a significant change (i.e., a parent away from home, death in the family, death of a pet, illness in the family, new family member, etc.) occurs at home.

We will inform you of any changes in the school environment that may affect your child.

**INFORMATION FROM SCHOOL**

We make every effort to communicate school wide information to parents effectively, quickly and diversely. We understand that each person is unique in how they like to and are able to receive information. Generally, to conserve resources, the administration communicates most information electronically. The administration sends out weekly briefing with general school wide information. We also utilize School Messenger to send out texts with quick, general reminders, and to communicate emergency closings. Additionally, notices are also posted on the main bulletin board above the sign out shelf. Please check the bulletin board daily.

At the classroom level, each teacher will send home information as she chooses. The teachers often post signup sheets on the main bulletin board for classroom events. Again, please check the main bulletin board daily. Additionally, each teacher creates a work folder for each student in the class. Children store their work in these folders throughout the week. On Fridays, the teachers will make the folders available to take home. Please take them home and return them empty on Monday. Keep in mind that most Montessori work is manipulative and hands-on. A great deal of work can be completed without a paper trail. Therefore, do not be concerned if you child's folder does not seem that full or is mostly art projects. It is not until closer to Kindergarten that more work includes paper work.

Each classroom also has a class page on our website. Monthly class newsletters are posted here as well as other classroom information.

**TELEPHONE CALLS and EMAILS**

Please feel free to call the school at any time between the hours of 7:00 am and 6:00 pm to leave messages concerning your child, to request a call from your child's teacher, or for information concerning billing, etc. THE WOODS telephone number is XXX-XXX-XXXX.

Emails are welcome, but may not receive an immediate response. We do our best to respond to all emails within 24 hours during the school week. THE WOODS general email address is [info@woodsmontessori.com](mailto:info@woodsmontessori.com). Please see our Email Communication policy below for more information.

## **PARENT PARTICIPATION**

Parents are welcome at school at any time. Parent participation is an extremely important part of the child's school experience. Parent help is a welcome resource for the school. In the past parents have made tables, made copies, taken photographs, developed computer programs, repaired equipment, and painted shelving. If you have a cultural experience or musical instrument you can share, these are also enjoyed by the children. We always welcome fresh flowers, blank scrap paper, books, and baby food jars.

If you have time to volunteer, please contact your child's teacher and/or the school office. Parents typically volunteer in the classroom in the morning for 30-60 minutes. Parent volunteers must sign in at the school office. We do ask that parents refrain from volunteering during the first six weeks of school as this is an important time in establishing classroom routines and helping children overcome separation anxiety. Please understand that state regulations do not allow volunteers to work with children without school staff present.

If you can donate a service to the school, please contact the office.

## **PARENT-ADMINISTRATION COMMUNICATION**

Any official communication from the Head of School or the Administration will be in the form of writing or a telephone call. If parents wish to speak with the Head of School or another member of the Administration, please call the school office during regular school hours and an appointment will be made.

## **PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATION**

A strong line of communication between parents and teachers is crucial to a child's academic success. Teachers will provide monthly newsletters to parents to provide general information about the class. Additionally, each teacher will maintain individual records for each child through our child management system, Transparent Classroom. Parents may log in to Transparent Classroom to view their child's progress, send messages to the teachers, view pictures, read descriptions of Montessori lessons, and receive announcements about upcoming events.

For students in the Toddler House, daily reports can also be viewed through Transparent Classroom. Keep in mind that daily reports do not include academic information. Academic information is updated weekly. Please keep in mind that while the teacher will review your child's information weekly, children who are practicing many different lessons may not see weekly changes made to their record as their progress is on-going.

Parents are always welcome to request a telephone call from their child's teacher. The teacher will make every effort to call you the same day, if the request is made during school hours. We ask that parents please respect our teacher's privacy, personal lives and personal obligations. Teachers' private phone numbers and emails will not be distributed and we ask that even in the event you access this information that you do not use it without the teacher's direct consent.

The Lead Teachers all have a school email address. Parents may email them directly at their school address. Please allow at least 24 hours for an email response during the school week. Generally, live conversations are most productive for discussing issues of concern.

Teachers will discuss the best way to communicate with them at Back-to-School Night. Please understand that we allow our teachers the freedom to communicate in the way they feel most comfortable.

Generally, information about your child will be relayed by your child's Lead Teacher or the Administration. Please understand that while Assistant Teachers may be able to provide you basic information about eating, sleeping, toileting, etc., they are not able to comment on a child's academic or behavioral progress.

Please understand that parent-teacher communication is very important and our faculty is happy to provide you with many avenues for communication: phone calls, emails, conferences, etc. **However, we ask that parents keep in mind that during school hours our faculty is responsible for supervising and teaching the children present at school. Therefore, please refrain from conferencing with faculty during visits, observations, drop off and/or pick up. If you have an immediate concern while at school, please let an Administrator in the office know.**

If at any time you have a problem or concern about a faculty member or another student, we ask that you bring it to the attention of the Administration professionally, respectfully and privately. Please be sure to avoid discussing other adults or other children in front of any children, including your own. We will do our best to help resolve any issues with kindness in a discreet and professional manner. We require our faculty to treat every individual, child or adult, with respect. We ask that you provide our faculty the same consideration. Any parent who is threatening or aggressive towards members of our faculty (including administrators), other parents or any children may be prohibited from school grounds. If such problems persist, you may be required to withdraw your child from our program.

### **EMAIL COMMUNICATION POLICY FOR PARENTS**

Below are the guidelines and expectations to follow when using electronic communication.

Parents may send an email to THE WOODS faculty under these conditions:

- In reply to a faculty or administration email
- Asking a question that does not need an immediate response
- Setting up an appointment for the future, either in person or via phone
- Advance notice of a student's absence. (Please make sure to email by 8:00 am the day of the absence to ensure the email is received.)

Parents should not email to THE WOODS FACULTY under these circumstances:

- In response to a disciplinary measure
- To ask a question that needs an immediate answer
- To express disagreement with a classroom policy, procedure, activity, etc.

In these instances, the appropriate course of action is to contact the school administration. A meeting with all involved parties will be scheduled.

Additional Notes:

- Expect a minimum of 24-hour response time to an email during the school week. Understand that we do not require teachers to check or respond to emails on the weekend or over holidays.
- Email is not the forum to hold lengthy discussions requiring explanations.
- Teachers reserve the right to respond to an email with either an email or a phone call, as they see appropriate.
- If you, as a parent, prefer an email response, please say so. If email is not the proper method of communication on the subject, an email reply requesting a phone call or a face-to-face meeting may be sent by the teacher.
- Include a phone number, as well as a good time to reach you, should the subject matter be deemed inappropriate for email.
- Abuse of this email policy can result in your email address being blocked by the school administration.
- Parents may not use email for solicitation purposes.

### **PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Parents of new children will be contacted, by phone, within the first two weeks of school to welcome you to the school and reflect upon your child's initial transition to school. Parents may be contacted again after a few weeks to discuss the child's adjustment as necessary.

During November, a formal parent conference with you and your child's teacher will be scheduled. A second scheduled conference is held in the late spring. Additional conferences may be requested at other times throughout the school year by either the parents or the teacher. In the event you would like to request a conference, please allow us 72 hours to make arrangements for the conference.

## **CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS**

If you wish to observe your child's class, please let us know. It is helpful to the teacher to know ahead of time to ensure other parents are not already scheduled to visit the classroom. Please do not bring other children with you when you observe as this is very distracting to the children in the class. We encourage your interest and hope you will observe often. For students in the Toddler and Children's Houses, we ask that you wait to observe until after the first six (6) weeks of school to allow for the establishment of classroom routines and appeasement of separation anxiety.

Parents are welcome in the school at any time, but please be sure to sign in as a visitor in the office.

## **NARRATIVES AND LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION**

THE WOODS provides a narrative of a child's progress at the completion of the Kindergarten year. The narrative is completed in May. A copy is placed in the child's file and another is provided to the parent. You may want to ensure that your child's first or seventh grade teacher(s) receives a copy. A copy will be sent to your child's forwarding school if the school requests records from us. However, not all schools request records and in some cases the records are not forwarded on to the teacher when received by the school, so it is always good to double check.

THE WOODS will complete recommendation forms for children moving on to first grade as requested by the elementary school. Please allow 2 weeks (14 days) for recommendation requests to be completed. Recommendations are sent directly to the requesting school. Requests for a parent copy of any recommendations are handled by the receiving school.

The Montessori Method expects a child to complete the Kindergarten year to realize fully the goals and outcomes that are common to Montessori education. THE WOODS does not recommend transition prior to the completion of Kindergarten. Therefore, THE WOODS does not complete recommendation forms or write narratives for children transitioning out of the program prior to first grade except in the case of relocation, transfer to another Montessori school, or for students requiring additional services to meet special needs such as, but not limited to, speech therapy, behavior management, etc. THE WOODS Head of School has ultimate discretion over the decision to complete recommendation forms and/or write narratives as well as final review of recommendations and narratives.

## **PARENT EVENTS**

Parent events will be held during the year. Your participation is encouraged. Time and dates will be announced. Parent events may include opportunities for student showcases, parent education, or community socials.

Parent events are a wonderful way to gain a better understanding of your child's school experience. We strive to offer many events and vary the timing of events to accommodate the varying schedules of our families, particularly during Summer Camp when there are more opportunities for parent events. While participation is highly encouraged, we also understand that it is unrealistic for parents to attend all events. Therefore, we try to structure parent events that include children in a way that does not upset those children whose parents are unable to make the event. Depending on the type of event, this may involve allowing parents and children to participate together and then repeating the event with just the children or children without parents may be assigned to faculty members and enjoy the event with their favorite teachers. Additionally, we welcome grandparents, aunts, uncles or other family members or friends to come as well. Please let the office know ahead of time if we should expect an individual other than the parent. In either case, every child will participate in any special event regardless of whether or not a parent is able to attend.

# **PART X: HEALTH POLICIES**

## **FIRST AID, CPR and ACCIDENT PROCEDURES**

The staff at THE WOODS undergoes First Aid and CPR training every two (2) years. Multiple staff members who are trained in First Aid and CPR are always present at school.

In the case of a minor accident, such as a skinned knee, parents will be informed of the accident, the circumstances involved, and the treatment at the time of pickup. In the case of an injury that needs immediate, but non-emergency medical treatment, parents will be called immediately to pick up their child. If the parents cannot be reached, the emergency contact person listed on the emergency card will be called. **Please keep emergency numbers up to date.** In the case of a serious injury, parents will be notified and an ambulance will be called.

## **ALLERGIES**

We understand that children often have allergies that influence their diet and/or well-being. Please be sure to list all allergies in your child's paperwork and notify the Head of School as well as your child's teacher of any food or drug allergies. Parents must complete an Allergy Action Plan for any allergies disclosed to the school. Allergies requiring medication must have the appropriate Medication Authorization completed. Please note that your child's allergy will be posted in the classroom so all faculty members are aware of such restrictions. If you wish to keep your child's allergy confidential, please notify the school office.

Please understand that the school will make every effort to accommodate your child's allergy. However, you will be required to provide substitutions if the school's lunch and/or snack program does not meet your child's needs.

In fairness to all the children at the school, we try to avoid making general restrictions for specific foods (e.g., strawberries, gluten, dairy, etc.). However, the school does evaluate the level of restriction for certain allergens on a case by case basis. If there is a child in the class that has a life-threatening allergy, restrictions may be placed on that particular allergen class-wide. If a specific food is restricted class-wide or school-wide, you will be notified in writing by the school administration. **For the 2018-2019 school year, THE WOODS will continue to be entirely nut-free.**

## **HEALTH AND ABSENCES**

When children enroll at THE WOODS they join a school community that in addition to your child, consists of other students, teachers, and family members of teachers and students. THE WOODS works hard to protect the health of all members of our community and reserves the right to send ill children or those who may be ill home. For the health of all the children, those children who are sick must be kept at home. Any child arriving at school sick will not be allowed to remain. Any child who becomes sick

at school will be safely isolated and carefully monitored, and parents will be required to pick up the child. The decision to exclude or send a sick child home from school is left to the sole discretion of the school administration. All school administrators have completed the Virginia Daily Health Observation Training that provides education in identifying potential contagious illness, but in no way allows for diagnosis.

Children will be excluded from school when any of the following signs of illness are present:

- Fever of 100 degrees or more
- Diarrhea
- Rash (until diagnosed and determined to be non-contagious)
- Vomiting
- Eye inflammation (until diagnosed and determined to be non-contagious)
- Sore throat
- Unable to participate in school activities

Sick children must be picked up within 30 minutes. We suggest all families have a back-up plan to contact someone who can reach the school within that time frame. Be sure they are listed on your authorized pick-up list. **However, please understand that if a sick child is not picked up after one (1) hour from the time the parent is notified, we must notify Child Protective Services and the regular late pick up fees will take effect (i.e., one dollar per minute for every minute late), even if we know you are on your way.** Late fees collected on behalf of sick children will be donated to the School Library.

Children will not be allowed to return to school until the symptoms have disappeared for a full 24 hours or until the child has been on the appropriate, corrective medication for 24 hours, or whichever is longer. In the case of a fever, **a child must be fever free for 24 hours, without the use of fever reducing medication, in order to return to school.** In certain cases, a doctor's note/diagnosis may be required to return to school (e.g., skin rashes). Please understand that the children in the age range served by THE WOODS are considered a more susceptible and sensitive group than the general population. The requirements for returning to school may be more stringent than for older, school-age children and is up to the discretion of the school administration. **It is possible that a doctor's note may not be sufficient enough for returning to school.** Additional treatment and or exclusion may be required in order to protect the school community adequately. For certain childhood illnesses such as chicken pox, children must be excluded from school according to Department of Health guidelines.

If your child has an ongoing, reoccurring medical issue that is not contagious such as eczema or seasonal allergies, please have your child's doctor provide documentation, including a description of typical symptoms. Having such documentation may prevent us from having to send your child home. However, THE WOODS reserves the right to still send your child home, even if documentation is on file, if any uncertainty due to worsening symptoms or additional symptoms arises.

Please understand that THE WOODS does not employ medical personnel and, therefore, cannot diagnose a child. When a diagnosis is required for a child to remain at or return to school, it must come from a licensed doctor or nurse practitioner. This individual cannot be a family member. THE WOODS cannot accept diagnosis made by non-medical individuals, including parents.

Whether or not a child is fit to attend school is up to the discretion of the school administration that has undergone Daily Health Observation Training as required by the Commonwealth of Virginia. Any child who is unable to participate in regular school activities will be sent home.

The Commonwealth of Virginia also requires enrolled families to notify the school within 24 hours when any member of the immediate household develops any communicable disease, except for life threatening diseases which must be reported immediately. The school is required to post an anonymous notice to alert the school community of any communicable diseases occurring among the school's population.

**Please call the school office by 9:00 am if your child will be absent or late to school.**

### **MEDICATION POLICY**

**THE WOODS only administers emergency (i.e., epi-pen, inhalers, etc.) and prescription medication.**

The school must have a completed Medication Authorization Form on file for each medication your child is to receive. Forms are available in the school office. All medication must come in the original package with the original pharmacy label and any additional instructional inserts. We cannot accept a parent authorization that varies from the pharmacy label without a physician's authorization. Parents must provide an accurate measuring device (e.g., oral syringe, medicine cup or medicine spoon) clearly marked with your child's name. Utensils will not be accepted and medication will not be given without the appropriate measuring device.

VDSS regulations state that children may only receive medication for a maximum of 10 days with written parent authorization. Medication can be administered for periods exceeding 10 days with a written authorization completed by the child's physician that must be updated every six months.

The Medication Authorization Form is a common form that has been developed and authorized by VDSS. All medication authorizations must have the front page filled out by the appropriate authorizing party (i.e., parent or physician) and must include a specific medication name, dosage, route and time for administration. Only one medication per form can be authorized. Additionally, only one medication and form may be used per child. **The Medication Authorization Form must be completed in English. Any**

**physician authorizations must be completed by a licensed medical doctor (M.D.) or pediatric nurse practitioner (PNP).** Physician authorizations cannot be completed by a parent even if that parent is a licensed medical doctor or nurse practitioner.

Medication will only be given on an “as needed” basis with written authorization from the child’s physician outlining the specific symptoms that warrant administration of the medication.

**Medication will not be administered if the authorization form is not filled out correctly and sufficiently.**

Medications are stored in a locked cabinet or in the refrigerator in containers reserved for medication storage. Faculty must have completed the state mandated Medication Administration Training (MAT) in order to administer medication. This training certifies child care professionals to administer medication through the following routes: oral, inhaled, topical, medicated patches, eye, ear and Epinephrine via auto injector device. Medications that require injections or vaginal or rectal application can be administered with further training from the parent and/or child’s physician. Faculty members who dispense medication are required to record the name of the child, the date, the time, the medication, the dosage, the route, and any adverse reactions or administration errors. The faculty member administering the medication will sign off on this information. The medication log may be reviewed by parents upon request.

Chapstick and other lip balms and ointments are considered medications according to the VDSS regulations. THE WOODS will only administer these items if they are medicated and prescribed by a doctor.

Children who have diabetes have additional forms that are required to be filled out prior to the child’s first day of school at THE WOODS. Any faculty member who is treating a child with diabetes must complete Diabetes Training given by a licensed medical professional. THE WOODS currently has two faculty members with this training.

Parents should understand that while THE WOODS uses every care in dispensing medication, medication is dispensed by non-medical personnel.

If your child has a communicable illness, please contact the school so other parents can be notified.

### **SUNSCREEN & INSECT REPELLENT**

Virginia Department of Social Services classifies both sunscreen and insect repellent as medications and must be authorized as detailed in the previous section. VDSS does make one exception regarding these items and allows them to be authorized for longer than 10 days without a physician’s authorization, but we still must have a completed authorization filled out by the parent.

THE WOODS will administer sunscreen and insect repellent from April 1 until October 31. However, the school will only administer sunscreen and insect repellent **before going outside in the afternoon** as it must be applied 30 minutes before outdoor activity. If you would like your child to have sunscreen or insect repellent for outdoor play in the morning, these items must be applied at home before coming to school.

**Unless medically necessary, enrolled children use our school provided sunscreen. We use Rocky Mountain SPF 50 Broad Spectrum Sunscreen (RMS). RMS meets all 2012 FDA mandates for sunscreen. It is water resistant, hypo allergenic, fragrance free, gluten free, nut-oil free, and formulated for sensitive skin. Proper authorizations are still required.**

Authorization Forms for sunscreen and insect repellent are available in the office. THE WOODS provides sunscreen. Sunscreen and insect repellent cannot be authorized on the same form. A separate authorization must be filled out for each item.

# **PART XI: CHILD SAFETY, CRISIS MANAGEMENT, AND SCHOOL SECURITY**

## **CHILD SAFETY**

Your child's safety is of the utmost importance at THE WOODS. All doors in the building are locked. There is a security system located next to the door near the school office. **Children are not allowed to open doors leading to and from the school building or to touch the security system.**

Parents are reminded that Virginia law states that when a child is a passenger in a car, child restraint devices are required for children who are under eight (8) unless parents obtain a signed doctor's note indicating that the child is physically mature enough to no longer require a booster seat. In the event that a car or truck does not have a back seat, the passenger's side airbag should be deactivated and the child restraint device should be placed in the front seat. This law applies to all children enrolled at THE WOODS. THE WOODS will advise parents failing to observe this law.

Please teach your children the basic rules of safety: Never talk to or accompany a stranger. Never approach the car of a stranger when called from the sidewalk. Never accept gifts or treats from a stranger. Instruct them to never open the door to a stranger. Always accompany your child into a public restroom. Children should be taught their full name, address, and phone number as soon as they are able to learn these. Teach them how to use a landline telephone and a cell phone. Show them how to dial "0" and "911" to ask for help. Teach them what to do should they become lost in a mall, store, amusement park, etc. Emphasize caution, not fear.

## **CRISIS MANAGEMENT**

THE WOODS has a Crisis Management Plan on file in the office. Should an emergency arise, the plan states the procedures to be followed in the event of a disaster. The Crisis Management Plan focuses primarily on the responsibilities of the faculty. Parents may review a copy of the Crisis Management Plan at any time.

In the case of any emergency, please know that your child's safety is the primary concern of all faculty members. Unfortunately, in today's world, emergencies unimaginable to us that have no outlined plan may occur. Be assured we will make every effort to protect all children in all situations. At THE WOODS, emergencies are classified into three general categories: evacuation emergencies, shelter-in-place emergencies and lock down emergencies.

In the case of emergencies that require evacuation (e.g., fire, flood, etc.), children will evacuate the building and proceed to the playground area or if necessary to the grass area of the adjacent building. The administrative staff will begin notifying parents by phone of the situation and will make an announcement on the school website and social media accounts. A message will also be sent via School Messenger.

In the case of emergencies that prevent us from evacuating the building (e.g., hurricane, tornado, biological warfare, etc.), the faculty and children will shelter-in-place in the interior hallways of the building. Everyone will remain until the threat has passed. If an emergency requires shelter-in-place, please do not try to come to the school. Remain where you are until the threat has passed. If phone service is available, THE WOODS will make every effort to contact and update parents.

In the case of emergencies or threats in the surrounding community, the school will go into lock down. Lock downs are issued by local law enforcement agencies and can vary in the level of intensity depending on the duration and severity of the threat. Please understand that no one may enter or leave the building during a lock down. You will be notified of a lock down, but please do not attempt to come to the school during a lock down. You will not be admitted to the building and may interfere with the efforts of emergency personnel.

Each classroom contains an emergency GO BAG. The Faculty is trained to take the bag with them in the event of any emergency. The bag contains names tags, contact information for each child's parents, a flashlight, duct tape, a copy of the Crisis Management Plan, extra snack food, and a first aid kit.

THE WOODS also has one cell phone which will be used in the case of any emergency to contact parents. If you are trying to reach the school and the main line is not functioning, you can try the cell phone. The number for the cell phone is 703-744-0482. However, this phone is only on during an emergency and is not used during the regular school day. If the phone systems are down or circuits are busy, it may be possible to contact the school through email. Please email Ms. Maureen and Mr. Daniel (HeadofSchool@woodsmontessori.com) or Ms. Liz ([AssistantHoS@woodsmontessori.com](mailto:AssistantHoS@woodsmontessori.com)), someone will try to respond as quickly as possible.

Lastly, please be assured that in the event of an emergency a faculty member will remain with your child(ren) until every child has been picked up.

### **FIRE PREVENTION AND FALSE ALARMS**

THE WOODS is issued a Fire Permit from Prince William County every year and undergoes an inspection from the Fire Marshall to ensure that all alarms and emergency lighting are functioning, emergency exits are cleared, and that the building is generally prepared to limit the spread of a fire. This permit is on display in the hallway.

All fire alarms must be handicap accessible and as such are within the reach of a child. Our fire alarm is located in the main hallway. The children are taught at school that they may not touch the fire alarm. Please help us reinforce this by supervising your child very closely when in proximity to the alarm. The Prince William County Fire Department takes false alarms very seriously, viewing them as a nuisance to the community and a waste of resources. As such, the fire department reserves the right

to charge a fine for false alarms. Please understand the school cannot support the payment of such fines and the family of any child who pulls the fire alarm will be responsible for any fines imposed by the county, alarm system company, or the fire department.

### **SCHOOL VISITORS**

All visitors to the school must check in at the school office. This includes parents, other family members, prospective parents, volunteers and any individual conducting business with the school.

### **PHOTOGRAPHY OF STUDENTS**

From time to time, the faculty at THE WOODS takes pictures of students to document work, record special activities, and show parents their child's achievement. At the time of enrollment, parents will be given a release giving THE WOODS permission to photograph their child.

Children who are photographed are only photographed or recorded with school cameras. Faculty is strictly prohibited from photographing children with personal devices. Pictures may be posted to the school website, school maintained social media, placed on display in the school or used for student records. Occasionally, student photographs are required for coursework for teacher training and education. In such an instance, the coursework will be submitted to a third party, typically an educational institution, for grading. Parents will be specifically notified of such instances and will have the opportunity to opt out for their child. At no time, will a student's identity accompany any photo or video that is made public.

# **PART XII: MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION**

## **POLICY CHANGES**

THE WOODS reserves the right to make changes or updates to its policies at any point. All enrolled families additionally agree to any changes made to school policy for continued enrollment of their family. New school policy will be issued through including, but not limited to an updated Parent Handbook or memo as disseminated by the school (i.e. email, text, bulletin board notifications, etc.). THE WOODS is not required to provide prior notification of a policy change.

## **RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION**

THE WOODS has no religious affiliation and provide a non-sectarian program.

## **SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT**

63.1-248.3 of Code of Virginia requires any person providing full or part-time child care for pay, on a regularly planned basis, to report suspected child abuse or neglect. If any faculty person at THE WOODS suspects abuse or neglect, Virginia Department of Social Services and Child Protective Services will be notified.

Faculty members are regularly trained to identify child abuse and/or neglect.

## **INFORMATION REGARDING VIRGINIA SENATE BILL #594**

In accordance with Virginia Senate Bill #594, inspectors completed an asbestos inspection at THE WOODS by an inspector licensed in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Our facility was determined to be free of asbestos.

Copies of the Asbestos Survey Report detailing the results of the asbestos survey can be found in the office.

## **LICENSING INFORMATION FOR PARENTS ABOUT CHILD DAY CARE PROGRAMS**

THE WOODS is a school serving children under the age of 5 and as such is classified as a Child Day Center (CDC) by the Commonwealth of Virginia. The Commonwealth of Virginia helps assure parents that child daycare programs that assume responsibility for the supervision, protection, and well-being of a child for any part of a 24-hour day are safe. Title 63.1, Chapter 10 of the Code of Virginia gives the Department of Social Services authority to license these programs. While there are some legislative exceptions to licensure, licensed programs include child daycare centers, family day

homes, child day center systems, and family day systems. The Commonwealth of Virginia may also voluntarily register family day homes not required to be licensed.

Standards for licensed child daycare centers address certain health precautions, adequate play space, ratios of children per faculty member, equipment, program, and record keeping. Criminal records checks and specific qualifications for faculty and most volunteers working directly with children are also required. Standards require the facility to meet applicable fire, health, and building codes.

Compliance with standards is determined by announced and unannounced visits to the program by licensing staff from the Department of Social Services. In addition, parents or other individuals may register a complaint about a program. Registered complaints will be investigated if it violates a standard.

Three types of licenses may be issued to programs. Conditional licenses may be issued to a new program to allow up to six months for the program to demonstrate compliance with the standards. A regular license is issued when the program substantially meets the standards for licensure. A provisional license, which cannot exceed six months, is issued when the program is temporarily unable to comply with the standards. Operation without a license when required constitutes a misdemeanor, which upon conviction can be punishable by a fine of up to \$100.00 or imprisonment of up to 12 months or both for each day's violation.

If you would like additional information about the licensing of child daycare programs or would like to register a complaint, please contact the Regional Office of Social Services closest to you.

THE WOODS is licensed by the Fairfax Licensing Office at 12011 Government Center Parkway, Suite 232, Fairfax, Virginia 22035. 703-324-7500. THE WOODS holds a regular license. THE WOODS preschool program is exempt from licensure under subsection B of section 63.2-1717 of the Code of Virginia. Maximum enrollment for the preschool program is two hundred (150) students. The school facility is in compliance with the applicable laws and regulations regarding food service, health and sanitation, water supply, building codes, the Statewide Fire Prevention Code or the Uniform Statewide Building Code. Documentation of compliance can be found on the bulletin board in the main hallway and can be provided upon request to the front office.

## **LEGAL**

A breach of the Enrollment Contract or Parent Handbook ("Agreement") by the responsible parties (child's parents) entitles THE WOODS to pursue any remedy available to it whether at law or in equity, including an action for damages or specific performance of the terms of this Agreement, and as the breaching party, you shall pay the costs incurred by THE WOODS for enforcing this Agreement or of collection of late payments, including the payment of reasonable attorneys' fees, legal expenses, and court costs. No term, provision, or breach of this Agreement shall be deemed waived by

THE WOODS unless such waiver is in writing and signed by THE WOODS. Any waiver, whether express or implied, shall not constitute a waiver of any different or subsequent term, condition, or breach. Further, you agree to indemnify, defend and hold THE WOODS, its owners, officers, and directors harmless from any and all liabilities, claims or demands (including the costs, expenses, and attorneys' fees on account thereof) arising out of any defamatory statements by the responsible parties.

### **THE WOODS MONTESSORI, INC.**

THE WOODS was incorporated in 2018 and remains a Corporation in Good Standing in the State of Virginia as registered with the State Corporation Commission. The Woods Monessori, Inc does business as The Woods, A Montessori School.

The Woods Montessori, Inc. is governed by a corporate Board of Directors. The Board of Directors functions to plan strategically for the corporation and is a silent partner in the operations of the school. The Board entrusts all responsibilities and decision-making powers to the Head of School. The Board does not accept parent inquiries (questions, comments, concerns, etc.) and any such inquiries should be directed to the Head of School and his or her designees.

THE WOODS is a tenant of MNM, LLC located at 7719-D Fullerton Road, Springfield, Virginia 22153.

The Woods Montessori, Inc. is covered by commercial general liability insurance which provides coverage in the event of suit for personal or bodily harm suffered during normal hours of operation of THE WOODS as a result of negligence.

Parents are welcome at any time to visit their child at THE WOODS.

**THE WOODS faculty welcomes you and your family to our school. We look forward to working with you to help your child develop to his or her fullest potential. If at any time you have any questions do not hesitate to call.**