2026-2027 School Year

THE WOODS, A MONTESSORI SCHOOL

PARENT HANDBOOK

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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 school is licensed by the Virginia Department of Education (formerly the Virginia Department of Social Services) (VDOE) and is required to follow certain regulations as outlined by the Prince William County Department of Health and the VDOE. THE WOODS is accredited by the American Montessori Society (AMS), and Cognia (formerly AdvancedEd). 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 comprises the Virginia Department of Education regulations, Health Department regulations, American Montessori Society and Cognia best practices, and lessons learned through practical ongoing 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. This Handbook intends to provide parents and other caregivers with 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 their rate and in accordance with their own needs, interests, and abilities. In addition, 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 at a certain age. Students move on to the next lesson or continue practicing until they have mastered the lesson. Older students inspire and motivate 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 any person authorized to act in place of parents. THE WOODS respects parents' role as their children's primary educators. Since school is a continuation of children's education at home, the faculty of THE WOODS should demonstrate respect and support for the parents in their critical and challenging task.

Parents are expected to support the school's mission and objectives and 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. Suppose 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. In that case, the school may take corrective action. Said disciplinary action may include, but is not limited to, at the discretion of the Head of School, the following:

- The parent must follow the imposition of particular rules or procedures in interacting with the school, 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.

PANDEMIC DISCLAIMER

In the event of a pandemic, The Woods reserves the right to modify any policies and procedures outlined in this handbook without prior notice. By enrolling their child at The Woods, parents/guardians acknowledge and agree to this policy.

RELEASE, WAIVER, AND INDEMNITY

A Release, Waiver, and Indemnity Agreement is found at the end of this Handbook that all parents/guardians must agree to for their child to attend The Woods in the event of a pandemic. Please inform The Woods' Administration immediately if you disagree with this release. By sending your child to school, you inherently agree to this agreement. Failure to notify The Woods' Administration does not exempt your family from this policy.

PART II: MONTESSORI PROGRAMS AT THE WOODS

TODDLER HOUSE – AGES 16 MONTHS – 3+ YEARS

The Toddler Program fully embraces the Montessori philosophy. It aims to help children grow in independence, self-discipline, social and emotional awareness, and physical body development, 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 for every child to feel safe, happy, and loved daily. Additionally, we strive to help each child develop, at their own pace, physically, socially, emotionally, and intellectually.

- Practical Life: This area focuses on the toddler's ability to care for themselves and helps them become aware of and begin to care for the environment around them. 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 Children's House classroom. Toddlers will explore the idea of quantitative description and the basis of experimentation and prediction.
- Culture and Art: Toddlers explore the different celebrations and traditions of the cultures represented in their classrooms. 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 to foster creativity available daily.

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, and 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. **Several different developmental factors define readiness 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. When it is most appropriate, security and nurturing in this stage 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. Following the teaching philosophy developed by Maria Montessori, lessons are given 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, others, and their environment. The lessons, through repetition, foster order, concentration, and 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 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, most of the sensorial materials were designed by Maria Montessori. These materials isolate the child's 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, rough, rougher, roughest. Ultimately, children build spatial relationships, recognize and create patterns, and 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 build to the full scope of reading that includes deconstructing and constructing words and reading comprehension, as well as writing with an 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. Their mathematical work often includes carrying and borrowing and 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 to appreciate our difference and recognize our oneness.

- Peace Education: Maria Montessori was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize three times. It is no wonder because peace is at the heart of her teaching philosophy as she believed man's chances for peace starts 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 and 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. For example, 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 the 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 Montessori proponents tout. During this year, 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, perhaps most importantly, during the Kindergarten year, 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 interests change drastically. Therefore, students must 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 primarily due to Montessori students transitioning to traditional environments without completing the entire Three-Year Cycle. The reality is that children who transition before Kindergarten often are academically advanced compared to their peers in

traditional settings. Still, 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 shows that children who transition before 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 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 they turn five before September 30th. Children turning five after September 30th 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 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 allows children to transition, without pressure, to an afternoon work cycle, focusing on the specific needs of children 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 the 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 children 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 systematically evaluating the program, diagnosing children's strengths and weaknesses, and identifying 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. Currently, 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 the evaluation of a teacher's performance.

PART III: ADDITIONAL PROGRAMS AT THE WOODS

SUMMER CAMP

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

All Full Day Toddler House students are automatically enrolled in our Summer Camp to maintain enrollment for the next school year. Those full day students who are not school-age-eligible in our Children's House are also automatically enrolled in our Summer Camp to maintain enrollment for the next school year. School-Age children in our Children's House who want to enroll in our summer camp must fill out a Summer Camp enrollment form the January before Summer Camp begins. **THE WOODS does not guarantee enrollment for the next school year if you do not attend Summer Camp.**

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 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. Suppose families change their enrollment plans for the upcoming school year over the summer and fail to make the first tuition payment on July 25th. In that case, THE WOODS reserves the right to dismiss the student without a 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. Children are typically grouped differently to encourage adaptability, offer both children and staff a fresh perspective, and give children the chance to form new friendships.

Summer Camp Waiver: Families who choose not to enroll in Summer Camp but wish to return for the upcoming school year must submit a Waiver Request Form. A non-refundable fee of $500 is due upon waiver acceptance.

Please note that submitting a request does not guarantee approval. Waivers are granted based on availability and are reviewed in the order received. Policies are subject to change annually. Written confirmation will be provided for all approved waivers.

MUSIC CLASS

THE WOODS provides a weekly music class to all enrolled children. Our music teacher spends approximately 30 minutes with the Children's House classes and 20 minutes with the Toddler House classes. Class times may need to be altered at any time to fit the school's needs. 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.

ELECTIVE CLASSES

THE WOODS offers several elective classes that parents may enroll their students in if they 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 September, and classes do not begin until the first week in October. In addition, vendors are available to meet with parents at our annual Back to School Night.

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

LIBRARY PRIVILEGES

THE WOODS has an extensive library. The privilege of borrowing books is reserved for the Leadership class. They participate in library once a week. Children need a book bag or backpack to carry books home. Two 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.

The parents must replace any lost or severely damaged books. 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. Ms. Maureen is our librarian. The rest of the Administration assists her. Please let one of us know if you want to check a book out.

TECHNOLOGY PRIVILEGES

THE WOODS allows the students of the Leadership Class to have access to a computer and the internet regularly. All resources are the school's property. Using the school's computers and internet access must support education and research.

Additional responsibilities for the use of school computers for the Internet are:

- Users should not reveal their personal addresses or phone number(s) and shall not disclose the personal address or phone number(s) of others without their authorization/permission.
- Users are reminded that electronic mail (e-mail) is not guaranteed to be private. Messages relating to or in support of illegal activities may be reported to the authorities.
- Students shall immediately notify the teacher if they suspect a security problem with the system and/or the Internet exists.
- Any attempt to log onto the Internet or the school's network/system as a systems administrator will result in a loss of user privileges at the school. In addition, any user identified as a security risk by the school administration due to a history of actual or suspected unauthorized access to another computer(s), network(s), or system(s) may be denied access to the school’s computers, and networks and/or systems.
- Users shall abide by generally accepted rules of network etiquette, which include but are not limited to:
    - Messages to others shall be polite and shall not be abusive.
    - Messages shall use appropriate language and not use obscenities, vulgarities, or other inappropriate language.
    - Use of the network shall not disrupt the network's service by others.

THE WOODS makes no warranty of any kind, whether express or implied, for Internet service. The school will not be responsible for any damages suffered. This includes loss of data resulting from delays, non-deliveries, misdeliveries, or service interruptions caused by its own negligence or user errors or omissions. Use of any information obtained via the Internet is at the user's risk. The school specifically denies any responsibility for the accuracy or quality of information obtained through its services.

Users are not permitted to:

- Use technology in sexting or cyberbullying: to harass, threaten, deceive, intimidate, offend, embarrass, or annoy any individual.
- Post, publish, or display defamatory, inaccurate, violent, abusive profane, or sexually-oriented material. Users must not use obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, rude, or threatening language. Users must not knowingly or recklessly post false information about persons, students, staff, or any other organization.
- Use a photograph, image, video, or likeness of any student or employee without the express permission of the individual, the individual's parent, and the Head of School.
- Create any site, post any photo, image, or video of another except with express permission of that individual, the individual's parent, and the Head of School.

- Attempt to circumvent the system security.
- Deliberately visit a site known for inappropriate material or any material that is not in support of educational objectives.
- Violate license agreements, copy disks, CD-ROMs, or other protected media.
- Use technology for any illegal activity.
- Use of the Internet for commercial gains or profits is not allowed from an educational site.
- Breach confidentiality obligations of school or school employees.
- Harm the goodwill and reputation of the school or school employees.
- Transmit any material violating any local, state, or federal law. This includes but is not limited to copyrighted material, licensed material, and threatening or obscene material.

The Woods has the right to monitor student use of school computers, computer-accessed content, and social media. Social media refers to activities that integrate technology, telecommunications, and social interaction through words, images, video, or audio tools. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- social websites,
- blogs,
- message boards,
- wikis,
- podcasts,
- image – video-sharing sites,
- live webcasting,
- real-time communities.

Because this is a constantly evolving area, this policy applies to all new social media platforms, whether or not they are specifically mentioned in this policy.

The Administration of the school will deal with violations of the above policy. Violation of this policy may result in any or all of the following:

- Loss of use of the school network, computers, and software, including Internet access.
- Disciplinary action includes, but is not limited to, dismissal and/or legal action by the school, civil authorities, or other involved parties.

The school retains the right to discipline students for their actions, regardless of when or where they occur when they negatively impact the school's image, reputation, and/or the safety and well-being of the school community. This covers inappropriate behavior in cyberspace, including but not limited to messages, chat room commentary, comments/pictures, postings on social networking sites, blogs, wikis, gaming chats, digital transmissions, and other technology-related activities.

PART IV: ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND REQUIREMENTS

SCHOOL HOURS

THE WOODS is open from 7:00 am to 6:00 pm.

Morning Montessori Program
Class hours are 8:15 am to 11:45 am for 20 months - 4-year-olds, Monday through Friday.

Children 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. Again, 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 five before September 30th 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 before September 30th.

Half-Day Students who turn five after September 30th are eligible to stay for our Montessori Emerging Leaders Class beginning the first Monday of the month of their 5th birthday. This accommodation is subject to availability based on the 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 likely not work with their regular classroom teacher.

Children 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 Butler Hall. Children are dismissed between 2:45 pm and 3:00 pm. Please be prompt in picking up your children. **Dismissal for all School Day students will take place in Butler Hall.** A $1 per minute late fee is charged for children not picked up on time.

Full Day Program
Hours are from 7:00 am until 6:00 pm. Children enrolled in this program may arrive any time after 7:00 am, but not later than 9:00 am. Children arriving after 9:00 am miss a significant portion of the instruction, and academic opportunities and prior approval from the office are required to drop off after 9:00 am. 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, except for School Age children. Please review the section on Absenteeism 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 from the start of the work period, which begins at 8:15 am. **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. Only Kindergarten students who are signed in before 8:30 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 five 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 want to get up after resting for 30 minutes may continue working quietly with classroom activities.

Montessori class hours for Full Day children are 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 various activities, including art, music, dramatic play, crafts, and self-initiated free play, indoors and outdoors. Children may also continue Montessori work or practice previous lessons at these times.

Our State and County licenses do not allow The Woods 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, and parents must pay this fee at pick up in cash.

ADMISSION

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

After the application is received, the child visits the school to determine their readiness for school and 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 an excellent opportunity for your toddler to meet their teacher "on their own turf" and helps ease separation anxiety. It is not meant to evaluate the child, the family, or the home. The home visit is also meant exclusively as a time for your child and the teacher to bond. It is not the time to ask questions about the school and our policies.

The application fee must accompany the application, or the application will not be accepted. The enrollment fee is paid at the time the child is accepted and is non-

refundable. This enrollment fee holds your child's space until the tuition contract begins, which coincides with the first tuition payment. 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 – 6 years of age. At a minimum, a child must be walking confidently and be able to communicate needs on a basic level to be placed into the Toddler House. 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 readiness for school may be placed in our Toddler House. The school administration decides to admit a child and their placement. **Children must be three years old by September 30th to be eligible for acceptance to our Children's House. NO EXCEPTIONS WILL BE MADE.**

The school will offer admissions for new students 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 you submit on your child's behalf 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.

Agreement Contract

Indicating yes on the following statements and/or questions is akin to signing and agreeing. The application will not be processed unless all statements and/or questions have been made in the affirmative.

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.

○ Yes

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 form 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 4th and 6th birthdays to reflect updated immunizations.

○ Yes

Parent Handbook Acknowledgement *

○ I have received THE WOODS' Parent Handbook (available at www.woodsmontessori.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.

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.). Additionally, 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 WOODS. Names of children will not be released without additional parental consent.

○ Yes

S.M.S. (Text) Alerts *

I understand that THE WOODS sends SMS (TEXT) Alerts out to all families who have listed a cell phone number. This message is sent via School Messenger and it is the family's 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 WOODS.

○ Yes

Email Messages *

I understand that THE WOODS 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 WOODS.

○ Yes

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. Additionally, 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 note that Virginia law does NOT require safety seats on the school bus*

○ Yes

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.

○ Yes

Pick Up Restriction

The individuals listed below are restricted from picking up my child. Please provide appropriate legal documentation, if applicable.

Custody Agreement *

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.

○ Yes

Toileting Agreement *
I give my permission to The Woods, A Montessori School and their 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.

○ Yes

Inclement Weather Policy *
I understand that at times the school must be closed due to inclement weather and other emergencies. THE WOODS 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 WOODS follows PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS for school closings, delays, and early closings due to precipitation. Please consult the Parent Handbook for further information. THE WOODS makes every attempt to make up any snow days as determined by PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS. However, the school year will not be extended in any way.

○ Yes

Audio and Video Surveillance *
I understand THE WOODS utilizes audio and/or video surveillance within the school and its grounds. I understand that my child and anyone else I bring onto the premises may be recorded. Furthermore, I consent to this surveillance. I understand that the recordings are on a private system and only the Administration of THE WOODS have access to the recordings. Any parent at any time can view the recordings under the supervision of an Administrator.

○ Yes

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 WOODS 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. Indicating yes on the following statements and/or questions is akin to signing and agreeing. The application will not be processed unless all statements and/or questions have been made in the affirmative. Therefore, I agree to the following:

To pick up my child immediately upon receiving notification of my child's suspected illness. If children are not picked up within an hour of notification, I understand that the school will have to report to the appropriate state authorities. *

○ Yes

To notify the school within 24 hours if my student or any immediate family member is diagnosed with a communicable disease. In the event of a death, due to a communicable disease, I will notify the school immediately. *

○ Yes

That an anonymous notification of a communicable illness reported by my family will be posted for the school community to see. *

○ Yes

To provide a doctor's note, when required, for my child to re-enter school or to keep my child home from school until he or she has been entirely symptom free for a full 24 hours, without the help of medication. *

○ Yes

Terms and Conditions of Enrollment

Indicating yes on the following statements is akin to signing and agreeing. The application will not be processed unless all statements have been made in the affirmative.

Academic tuition fees are annual, but may be paid in monthly installments from July to April. *

○ Yes

All required paperwork must be turned in before the 1st of August prior to the start of school. Your child may not attend until all paperwork is received. *

○ Yes

This contract is automatically renewable each year with re-registration of your child. *

○ Yes

Students are considered enrolled for the entire year. 30 days written notice must be given of intent to withdraw. Verbal notice is not accepted. *

○ Yes

Upon withdrawal, refunds will be issued, if applicable, on a prorated basis determined by weeks enrolled. NO REFUNDS OF DISCOUNTS ARE GIVEN FOR ABSENTEEISM. *

○ Yes

THE WOODS reserves the right to dismiss a child without notice at the sole discretion of the Head of School. *

○ Yes

Classroom assignments are made at the discretion of the School Administration. While parents may make requests at the time of the application, THE WOODS is under no obligation to honor such requests. Classroom assignments are not finalized until August (after the first tuition payment is received). *

○ Yes

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. *

○ Yes

THE WOODS reserves the right to charge a fee for any changes of contract including switching from Full Day to Half Day or vice versa. *

○ Yes

All tuition payments will be made online through a service called FACTS. *

○ Yes

FACTS requires a $40.00 registration fee each year. *

○ Yes

All tuition payments are due on the 1st 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 25th of the preceding month (e.g. July 25th for August 1st). *

○ Yes

Tuition rates may change at any time. 30 days written notice will be provided to parents. *

○ Yes

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. Toddler to Children's House) will not result in a tuition rate change until the following school year. *

○ Yes

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. *

○ Yes

A $100.00 application fee must accompany this application and is not refundable under any circumstance. *

○ Yes

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. *
Agreement required regardless of program choice

○ Yes

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. *
Agreement required regardless of program choice.

○ Yes

$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. *

○ Yes

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. *

○ Yes, I agree

Submission Agreement

By submitting this application (pressing the submit button) and digitally signing below (entering your name(s)), we as the responsible parties of the applicant, fully agree to all items listed herein and any policies set forth by The WOODS, A Montessori School including but not limited to any future policy changes made at THE WOODS' discretion.

Please note that you must have express consent to sign on behalf of another parent or guardian. THE WOODS is not held liable for failure to obtain such consent.

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 starting school. In keeping with best practices, children may 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 and all children returning for Kindergarten. It must be completed by both the parent and the child's physician and dated within one year of the first day of school. Updated health forms must be submitted each year for Kindergarten students. Additionally, any child under the age of 2 must have their Health Form updated every six months. Parents must submit proof of a medical exemption to the school if a child has not been adequately immunized. Immunization exemptions on religious grounds may also be submitted to the 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 the 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 the doctor's printouts of the health form.

All children must complete an Identification Verification. VDE requires this to aid in preventing kidnapping and 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. In addition, VDE requires two additional local contacts (non-parents) that can pick up and assume temporary care of your child in case of an illness or emergency affecting your child when the school cannot reach a parent. This information must be submitted on Transparent Classroom. All fields must be completed to be approved.

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 local contacts. Notify the school office in writing any time a child will be picked up by someone other than the parent to verify the pick-up 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. In addition, all unfamiliar individuals picking students up will be required to present identification, even if they have previously been to the school.

Children with 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 on Transparent Classroom upon request.

TUITION AND FEES

THE WOODS is an educational institution that operates solely on tuition income designed on an academic model. While we recognize that some families use THE WOODS exclusively for childcare services, please understand that we follow the aforementioned academic model with a childcare component. **Therefore, all tuition payments and deposits are made in advance and are only refundable in limited circumstances as described in the Refund Policy.**

Application Fee: A $150 application fee is due at the time of application to initiate enrollment. The application fee is non-refundable, with 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.

Enrollment Fee: A non-refundable enrollment fee is required upon notification of acceptance. The following are the non-refundable enrollment fee that are required:

- Toddler House: $500
- Children's House: $500
- Kindergarten: $3000*

  *This is a deposit which is applied to the last tuition payments of the academic year.

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

The enrollment fee is not refundable under any circumstances.

Materials and Activities Fee: A $375 materials and activities fee is applied to all student's accounts and is due October 1st. A $80 summer camp materials fee is applied to all student's accounts and is due June 1st.

Field Trip Fee: A $100 field trip fee will be applied to all students accounts who are enrolled in Kindergarten and is due October 1st. A non-refundable $50 Summer Camp field trip fee will be applied to all students accounts who will be school aged for the following school year and is due June 1st.

Tuition: **Tuition is a fee for the academic year,** which may be paid in 10 installments, July-April. Summer Camp fees are billed in May and June. Please note that annual tuition is divided into installments. These installments do not correspond to the month in which they are paid.

The first tuition payment is due July 25th, and the remaining amounts are due on the twenty-fifth of each month and are considered late after that, following the policies set forth by FACTS Tuition Management. **The first tuition payment is non-refundable, and all subsequent tuition payments are final and only refundable in limited circumstances (see Refund and Withdrawal Policy) once received by The Woods.**

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**. The remaining payments are due on May 25th and June 25th. 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 $50.00 registration fee each year, and the registration fee is the responsibility of each respective account holder. FACTS also requires a five-day hold on all tuition payments. Therefore, funds will be withdrawn from your account several days before the 1st to be received by The Woods on the 1st of the month. Any late fees or returned checks will also incur a late fee as stated in your 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 modern conveniences to keep administrative costs as low as possible. Therefore, THE WOODS only accepts cash or a FACTS payment. We cannot process credit cards except through FACTS, but please note that the use of credit cards through FACTS incurs additional fees.

Other Fees: Fees are included in the tuition for Music classes. 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 borrowed school clothing, or unreturned library books.

Additional Tuition Information: All children are enrolled for the entire school year and Summer Camp. NO deduction or refund is made for absenteeism regardless of reason, excused or unexcused. When a child enrolls during the school year, rates are prorated for the actual number of weeks the child was formally enrolled. **No refunds are given when a child is withdrawn except in the limited circumstances outlined in the Refund and Withdrawal Policy. The first tuition payment of the school year is required for all students, including those who withdrew after June 30th.**

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., Toddler and Children's House) are influenced mainly by the state-required student-to-teacher ratios determined by age. Therefore, your child's tuition rate is determined by their age before September 30th and not by the class level to which they are assigned, unless you choose to hold your child back or your student has not met the requirements necessary to move to the next level.

THE WOODS tuition is determined by the number of school days and accounts for planned school closures (e.g., spring break), holidays, and 25 extra days for emergency closings (no distance learning or childcare). No tuition adjustment will be made when THE WOODS must close the school for inclement weather, natural disaster, or other life-safety or emergency situations. This is necessary so that THE WOODS can honor faculty salaries and other financial obligations throughout such times. If THE WOODS is closed for an extended period, we will make every effort to provide remote distance learning for all students. All school-age children may be required to participate fully in the distance learning program to meet state requirements for schooling.

REFUND AND WITHDRAWAL POLICY

Parents may withdraw their child from the school or Summer Camp anytime during the year with 30 days' written notice. Any returned payments will be per our Refund Policy, and please note that it is possible that tuition may still be owed to THE WOODS. In the event, The Woods determines 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 in accordance with the following Refund Policy:

THE WOODS operates solely on tuition income, and tuition payments are considered final upon receipt. Therefore, THE WOODS only refunds tuition in very limited circumstances. However, if a refund is warranted, please allow 60 days from the notice of withdrawal to receive payment refunds.

Tuition will be refunded to families under the following circumstances:

- A documented, job-related relocation outside a 20-mile radius of the school
- A documented, long-term medical condition of the enrolled student or immediate family member (i.e., parent or sibling only)
- Death of a student or an immediate household family member

Should THE WOODS require a student's withdrawal from the school, a refund will be issued 30 days after the child's official withdrawal. The refund will be prorated for the weeks the child was formally enrolled.

Refunds will not be given except in the circumstances mentioned earlier. Additional non-refundable fees include but are not limited to the following:

- Application Fee
- Enrollment Fee
- Deposits
- Lunch fee
- Extra Clothing Fee
- Field Trips

Any outstanding fees, including damaged materials, unreturned library books, etc., will be deducted from any potential refunds or charged to your account if tuition is not eligible for a refund.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGAM

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 subsides on tuition alone and 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 also participates in the Virginia Department of Social Services subsidy program. 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 parent/guardian is required to sign in and out daily with the subsidy machine per the subsidy requirements including when a child is absent. Failure to do so will result in the parent/guardian being required to make up the additional tuition difference.

Please note that THE WOODS is not liable for any determination of refunds or eligibility of individual participation with any subsidy provider. THE WOODS does not guarantee a continued partnership with the military subsidy programs or with the VA Department of Social Services subsidy.

LATE PICK UP POLICY

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

Should any child be left at THE WOODS past 7:00 pm, and parents or emergency contacts cannot be reached, the Virginia Department of Education and Child Protective Services will be called, and arrangements will be made for the child to be taken into state custody.

ADMINISTRATION

THE WOODS' Administration is headed by a Head of School, an Office Manager, and a Director of Enrollment and Outreach. The current Head of School is Ashley Blunt. The Office Manager is Deidre Manu. The Director of Enrollment and Outreach is Elisa Zago. All questions and concerns regarding the school should be brought to the attention of the Administration. However, the Administration of school matters is left to the discretion of the 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 Education background check, a Virginia State Police background check, and 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. In addition, 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 community's needs.

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 must 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 develop faculty members. However, if a faculty member cannot 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, 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 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 a significant bearing on the learning experience. Therefore, we use the child visit, 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 specific 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, including twins, or other familial relations in the same class.

HOUSE TRANSITIONS

Students, who enroll at the 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, and Elementary House for rising Leadership students. This step can be exciting and intimidating for students and parents alike. Our primary goal regarding House transitions is to ensure that the child's transition is smooth when they are 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 beginning of summer camp. Generally, it is in the child's best interest to remain at their 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, several other factors are considered. Generally, a child must be of age (i.e., three years old or six years old) to transition to the next House. This does not mean that a child makes the transition the day they reach the appropriate age. Rising preschoolers must be confident and proficient in using the toilet. In addition, rising Leaders must have completed the Montessori Kindergarten (a.k.a Third Year) curriculum. 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 the 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 their current class. Additionally, the child may be invited to spend some time visiting 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 several different developmental factors rather than 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 they 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 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 within designated school hours is considered part of the academic school day and 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 the Department of Education require 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 between morning and afternoon play. Any other restrictions on playing outside (e.g., precipitation, temperature, etc.) are at the school's discretion.

If a child is present at school, the child will be expected 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, they are 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 has dressed appropriately.

When it is lightly raining, the children will still go outside so please dress your child appropriately for school.

NAPTIME

State regulations require that children under the age of five 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 a 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 House at THE WOODS are expected to be toilet trained. Toilet trained means that the child wears underwear and does not wet or soil him or herself except on rare occasions can express to an adult when they have to go to the bathroom and can handle themselves in the bathroom independently. This includes managing their clothing, operating a toilet, and cleaning their own body. Children are always supervised by a staff member in 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.

In keeping with licensing regulations and best practices for protecting themselves and your children, the staff at THE WOODS 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 try to help a child clean themselves to the fullest extent possible. If a child is unable to clean their 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 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. Therefore, always keep an extra supply of clothes in your child's cubby.

DIAPERING AND TOILET LEARNING – TODDLER HOUSE

THE Woods' Toddler Houses have the necessary equipment to care for children in diapers or pull-ups. In addition, THE WOODS will help those children in the Toddler House to change themselves, which may include, but is not limited to, cleaning or wiping their genital area, helping children on and off the toilet, and 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 cleaning and dressing themselves from an early age. However, it is expected that children will have many toileting accidents during their toilet learning experience. Always keep **multiple changes** of clothes at school for your child.

Until children are able to wear underwear successfully, children will be diapered. Parents are to supply diapers daily for their child in the size, brand, etc., appropriate for their child's needs. All diapers must be disposable unless a licensed physician's use of cloth diapers is deemed medically necessary. 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.

The school will provide unscented, hypoallergenic wipes. If a parent wishes to provide alternative wipes from home, they are free to do so.

Diaper ointment is treated like medication, and the appropriate authorization to administer it 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.

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 and sleep times. Daily reports are maintained in our child management system, Transparent Classroom. Parents may log on and view the daily information at any time. In addition, 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 this includes on the side of the building between the school and the shopping center.** 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 to the building are locked at all times. There is a security system to the left of the door. All enrolled families will be given a code to the door that will operate between 7 am and 6 pm. This code should only be given to the people who regularly pick up your children. The code will change periodically throughout the year. Parents will be notified by email and text message when the code has changed. If you do not know the door's code, a buzzer can be pressed, and a faculty member at the reception desk may let you

in. If 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 someone trying to enter the building, do not let them in, and please let one of the faculty members handle the situation. We want to maintain as safe an environment as possible.

Arrival Times and Locations: Half-Day children should arrive between 8:15 am and 8:30 am and 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 Butler 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 7:00 am, but no later than 9:00 am (except Kindergartner students who must arrive by 8:30 am), and all students must be picked up by 6:00 pm. Children arriving before 8:15 am should be dropped off in Butler 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-Kindergarteners), we 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. 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 signed 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 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 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 age and academic level.

- **Children are not allowed to be in the hallway, bathroom, or classroom without an adult.** Therefore, when picking up or dropping off your child, please always keep them by your side.

- **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 the 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 significant transition for children, and children require the full attention of the adults caring for them. Therefore, we respectfully ask that you do not use cell phones during this critical time in your child's day.

- **Children may not play outside the fenced playground in the parking lot or other outdoor areas.**

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 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."** Instead, tell your child that you're leaving the classroom. Make sure you are consistent and give one quick goodbye 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 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 Butler Hall. School Day children must be picked up from Butler Hall between 2:45 pm and 3:00 pm. Full-Day children must be picked up by 6:00 pm. 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. Parents must pay late fees 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 7:00 pm, and parents or emergency contacts cannot be reached, the Virginia Department of Education 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 THAN THOSE LISTED ON THE 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. Suppose someone unfamiliar to the faculty picks up your child. In that case, 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 school attendance is strongly encouraged to set the groundwork for a successful school experience. However, 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 compulsatory 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 head of School or their Designee.

The Head of School or their 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 their Designee.

This definition holds for all-day and period absences.

After the fifth unexcused absence, the school will contact the parent to notify them of the absences and the consequences of continued absences. After the tenth (10th) absence of any description, the Administration will follow the following protocol:

- Written notification of a tenth absence will be made to the parent/guardian
- The school will request a conference 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 (15th) 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 ensure 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 per the Code of Virginia equal one absence. School-age children (Kindergarteners students) are considered tardy after 8:30 am. The sign-in function in Transparent Classroom determines arrival time.

The school day includes outdoor or indoor playtime. Any playtime during the prescribed school day hours (8:15 am-3:00 pm), even if it occurs before the start of the Montessori work cycle, is considered compulsory. It represents a component of your child's physical education and reflects 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 recently potty-trained children should have several clothing changes at school. Please note that children work with water, food, and various art materials. In addition, 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, mittens, and a warm coat. During the summer, children must wear socks and closed-toed shoes. It is essential for children who nap to wear socks to protect their feet 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, 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. If the school does not have clothes available, you may be required to bring a change of clothes in for your child or come pick them up. School clothing must be washed and returned to the school office within five (5) school days. Borrowed clothes must be returned to the front office to verify their return. 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 the 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)

Please keep your child's cubby fully stocked with extra clothes to avoid unnecessary charges.

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 School Box Uniforms (school code: **QS5EQXN**) or Lands' End School (school code: **900188632**).

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.
  - The approved pants and shorts colors are navy blue and gray.
  - Leggings are not to be worn as pants, except for in the case of inadequate sizing from our uniform suppliers. Approval from the Administration is required under these circumstances.

  - Classroom shoes (see policy below)
  - Toddler students may opt to wear the PE uniform*. However, the PE uniform and standard uniform may not be combined.
  - Outdoor shoes should be shoes that children can play in, i.e., no high heels, sandals, or boots should be worn.
- 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.
  - The approved pants and shorts colors are navy blue and gray.
  - Leggings are not to be worn as pants, except for in the case of inadequate sizing from our uniform suppliers. Approval from the Administration is required under these circumstances.
  - Children's House students may opt to wear the PE uniform*. However, the PE uniform and standard uniform may not be combined.
  - Classroom shoes (see policy below)
  - Outdoor shoes should be shoes that children can play in, i.e., no high heels, sandals, or boots should be worn.

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. In addition, a note will be sent home via Transparent Classroom 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 now available from both Land's End and French Toast. The PE uniform is unisex, although they may 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 and Children's House are required to wear classroom shoes in the classroom. Classroom shoes are sturdy, slipper-like shoes common to Montessori environments. Children in a Montessori classroom spend a lot of time on the floor, and using 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 LL Bean and the "Kids Suede Moc Slippers" from Lands' End for Children's House students. We also recommend Toms or 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 okay)

Shoes that do not meet the criteria will be sent home to replace. Please note that these shoes will remain at school and 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 also expected to check their child's shoes routinely.

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:

- Foamtreads
- Toms
- Soft Star (Ramblers 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 versions do not meet classroom shoe guidelines. Additionally, 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 their 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 are welcome. Also welcome are additions to the science and nature shelf or items related 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 they come 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 to store a change of clothing and other personal items brought to school. In addition, 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, Williams Bus Service or other reputable bus services will be contracted when THE WOODS takes field trips. All automotive and traffic laws will be strictly enforced. This includes requiring all passengers to wear a seat belt at all times, if available.

Additionally, all faculty members are highly discouraged from transporting students not of blood relation. Parents who choose to have faculty members transport their children to and from school do so at their own risk. Furthermore, a liability waiver must be signed by both the Faculty member and the Parent/Guardian, acknowledging the removal of liability for the school.

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 documents. The school shall maintain student records for at least seven years but no more than ten years.

CELL PHONES

The Woods is a cell phone-free zone as our focus is always on the children.

Faculty members are not allowed to use personal cell phones while responsible for children. Faculty cell phones must be stored, 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 in the school building. Drop off and pick up are significant transitional times for children, and we ask that parental attention be focused on your child until you leave the school building.

Students are not permitted to bring cell phones on any field trip. Parents should call the office if they need to contact their child, and the office will contact the teacher in charge. Parents will be contacted by the teacher or the office if there is a need for parent communication, including arrival times, illnesses or injuries, unexpected changes in field trip plans, behavioral issues, etc.

MAKE UP

Students are not allowed to wear makeup to school. Makeup can distract children, and we want them to focus on their work. Therefore, any student who comes to school with make up on will immediately be asked to wash their face. If they are unable to wash their face, then a teacher will help them.

PART V: FOOD POLICIES

BREAKFAST

THE WOODS does not serve a formal, full-scale breakfast. Children are expected to finish breakfast before coming to school. However, we understand that mornings are hectic and hurried with children. Therefore, a breakfast snack of dry cereal is 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.

If food or containers are left behind, please understand that the School will discard them. THE WOODS cannot save uneaten food.

SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM

Lunches are obtained from Fairfax Food Services for all children in the Children's House, and Toddler House 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 daily. Therefore, you will still be charged for lunch on days your child is absent (excused and unexcused). In addition, 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 limit 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 stop 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 and the date that lunch was brought. Lunch

bags must be equipped with a dry erase tag so that if you forget to label the date, the teachers can easily add the date. **DO NOT** send breakable thermoses or glass containers.

We do not have facilities for refrigerating food from home, and the Department of Health strictly prohibit**s heating foods brought from home. Therefore, lunches from home must contain an ice pack, especially when fruit, vegetables, or dairy products are sent. Similarly, parents should pack hot food in an appropriate warming thermos. Lunches sent from home must be labeled with the student's name, and the date lunch 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). The teachers will serve the child water if the parent does not bring a substitution. 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. The school provides this snack which usually consists of dry cereal and milk.

Snack is also served throughout the morning work period and after nap time. The school generally provides these snacks. You may occasionally be asked to contribute to a special snack.

Children are expected to eat school snacks. However, students may not bring snacks from home unless a child has a specific allergy or dietary restriction that the school cannot accommodate. 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 the Virginia Department of Education.

PART VI: PROCEDURES FOR SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES AND OCCASIONS

BIRTHDAYS

You are welcome to send a special treat on your child's birthday (or the day you choose to celebrate it if their birthday does not fall on a school day). 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 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.**

Suppose you want to send invitations to a private party. In that case, 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 allowed 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 and provide books and resources for our library.

HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS

THE WOODS is a non-sectarian school. Keeping with the Montessori philosophy, we discuss and celebrate holidays from many cultures. If your family celebrates a holiday that THE WOODS has not observed in the past and that you would like 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. Parents will occasionally be asked to contribute to a class event or celebration. Common celebrations at THE WOODS include, but are not limited to:

- Fall
- Thanksgiving*
- St. Nicholas Day (Germany, Holland – December 6)
- Christmas
- Hanukkah
- Lunar New Year (China)
- Valentine's day ** (Italy – February 14)
- St. Patrick's Day (Ireland – March 17)
- Military Appreciation Month (May)
- Cinco de Mayo (Mexico - May 5)
- Juneteenth (June 19)

***Thanksgiving Feast:** This celebration is one of our most prominent school-wide events. The focus is on coming together and having all community members contribute to the event. Families are asked to bring food items for the children to complete cooking projects as planned by the teacher. Children love being able to contribute to the feast. The school provides all paper products, utensils, etc. The feast is held the Friday 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 Valentines. Please do not send candy.

PART VII: INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY

INCLEMENT WEATHER OR EMERGENCY CLOSING

THE WOODS follows Prince William County Public Schools (PWCS) for school closings and delays due to emergencies or inclement weather. Our families and staff travel from all over the county, neighboring counties, and sometimes even neighboring states to be at THE WOODS. Unfortunately, we do not have the technology or resources to determine widespread weather conditions and rely on county resources. We believe children should be in school consistently and understand that school closings and delays can be inconvenient. Still, please know that we must also protect the safety of our students and staff. Additionally, we also must verify the conditions of our school facility. 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 PWCS's decision and deviates from their decision. Generally, a deviation only occurs in weather-related closings that do not involve precipitation and do not have much bearing on our community. For example, in cases where PWCS has closed due to extremely 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 remember that the Administration makes this decision with minimal 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 PWCS's 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, email, text message, etc.) when there is inclement weather to verify THE WOODS' operating status.

In emergencies, the decision to bring a child to school is at the parents' discretion. If you feel the conditions are unsafe to bring your child(ren) to school, you are not obligated to do so.

School closings and delays are always announced on the school website, the school and social media accounts. Additionally, we utilize Constant Contact and Simple Texting 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 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 pick-up time for all children is 4:00 pm.

Preschools are not required to make up emergency closing days. Our full-day Kindergarten exceeds the number of instructional hours necessary for school-age children by the Virginia Department of Education. As such, THE WOODS calendar allows for 27 emergency closing days. If we have more than 15 emergency 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 School will not extend the end of the school year. If there are more than 15 days of school closings, the Kindergarten Students may extend the school year to meet the required number of instructional hours if all missed time cannot be made up by extending the school day.**

Tuition will not be discounted or refunded for emergency closings. Please refer to our tuition policy for more information.

PART VIII: BEHAVIOR AND DISCILPINE

POSTIVE DISCIPLINE

The policy at THE WOODS is to help children acquire self-discipline by keeping them constructively occupied by engaging in challenging activities and teaching behavioral skills. The 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 fair 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 they are being separated and focuses on what they need to do to rejoin the class.

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

Faculty members agree on acceptable and unacceptable behavior standards 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 faculty member shall not punish a child for a toileting accident
- A faculty member shall not use verbal abuse of a child or the child's family
- 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 classroom's peace, harmony, and operation. Children are not allowed to hit faculty members or other children. Persistent disruptive or aggressive behavior will be considered cause for dismissal.

THE WOODS considers biting and hitting a serious behavioral problem. Biting and/or

hitting often result from frustration, inadequate communication, and/or lack of impulse control—three developmental tasks 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. Children employ their bodies in the absence of words; 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 and the parent of the child who was bitten will be notified. A child who continues to bite, hit, or show other signs of aggressive behavior will be dismissed if the school deems this necessary.

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

Suppose a child's behavior is creating an ongoing problem in the school. In that case, 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 children. If inappropriate behavior continues, the child may be dismissed. Parent cooperation is essential in successfully navigating and overcoming ongoing behavioral issues.

We desire that your child's school experience be positive and that parents feel comfortable with the philosophy and policies of the school. If THE WOODS determines 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 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 child. However, teachers may sometimes identify issues concerning a child's development that require additional services or resources. These concerns may range from behavioral problems to academic challenges to physical limitations. As part of Montessori certification, our teachers receive general instruction on identifying such issues and methodologies for observing and communicating concerns. Given their training and professional experience, teachers are qualified to recognize when they may need additional resources to serve a child's needs best. However, they are not qualified to diagnose children in any way.

If a child's teacher is concerned about their development, the teacher will contact the parent for an initial discussion of the situation. This may occur in person or over the phone. Next, 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 see what alterations or accommodations the teacher can make in the environment to help the child and 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 the 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 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 parents should share with pediatricians and other specialists that you may decide to consult. Sometimes, we may require a doctor or other professional to 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, suppose such professionals wish to work with your child one-on-one away from our faculty. In that case, they must submit proof of appropriate background checks and screenings per VDOE regulations.

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 more significant issues. At the same time, for many special needs, early intervention is crucial and can significantly impact later development. Therefore, we do not treat such concerns lightly and aim to proceed thoughtfully and with as much support as possible. We also strive to understand parents' delicacy and emotional impact when such circumstances arise. We know 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 challenging process. Nevertheless, we will support families in any way we can. When parents, teachers, and specialists 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

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 they are 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) submitting to or rejecting of such conduct as 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 email)

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

BULLYING

Bullying is any aggressive and unwanted behavior intended to harm, intimidate, or humiliate the victim; involves a real or perceived power imbalance between aggressor(s) or victim; is repeated over time or causes severe consequences and emotional trauma. Bullying includes cyberbullying 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, our policy is to avoid using the label "bully" or "bullying" when discussing young children. Instead, we focus our approach on teaching positive conflict resolution skills and supporting social-emotional learning.

If the school does determine behavior to meet this definition of bullying, appropriate action will be taken. The school will not tolerate 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 bullying incidents 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 can receive information. Generally, to conserve resources, the Administration communicates most information electronically. The Administration sends out a weekly briefing with general school-wide information. We also utilize Simple Texting (or a similar service) to send out texts with quick, general reminders and to communicate emergency closings. Also, notices are posted on the main screen above the sign-out area. Please check the screen daily.

Each teacher will send home information as she chooses at the classroom level. The teachers often post signup sheets through SignUp Genius (or other online websites) for various occasions throughout the year. These signups will come to you via email. 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 bring them home and return them empty on Monday. Remember that most Montessori work is manipulative and hands-on; so much work can be completed without a paper trail. Therefore, do not be concerned if your child's folder does not seem that full or is mostly art projects. It is not until closer to Kindergarten that more work includes paperwork.

TELEPHONE CALLS and EMAILS

Please feel free to call the school at any time between 7:00 am, and 6:00 pm to leave messages concerning your child, request a call from your child's teacher, or for information concerning billing, etc. THE WOODS telephone number is 703-634-2537.

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. Please see our Email Communication policy below for more information.

PARENT PARTICIPATION

Parents are welcome at school at any time. Parent participation is an essential 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 ask that parents refrain from volunteering during the first six weeks of school as this is critical in establishing classroom routines and helping children overcome separation anxiety. Please understand that state regulations do not allow volunteer work with children without school staff. Additionally, **all volunteers must undergo a background check and pass the a child abuse and neglect course.**

Parents may also get in touch with the office to discuss other volunteer opportunities.

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 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. Pick-up is not an appropriate time to discuss concerns with the Administration, as they are busy ensuring that all staff and students are safe. We ask that you make an appointment so we can give you our undivided attention to your concern.

PARENT-TEACHER COMMUNICATION

A strong line of communication between parents and teachers is crucial to a child's academic success. Teachers will provide weekly updates 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.

Daily reports can also be viewed through Transparent Classroom for students in the Toddler House. Keep in mind that daily reports do not include academic information. Academic information is updated weekly. Please remember that while the teacher will review your child’s information weekly, children practicing many different lessons may not

see weekly changes made to their record as their progress is ongoing. Furthermore, the teachers will do their best to update weekly photos of your child at all House levels.

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

The Lead Teachers all have a school email address. In addition, 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 the 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, your child's Lead Teacher or the Administration will relay information about your child. However, please understand that while Assistant Teachers may be able to provide you with 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 crucial, 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 our faculty is responsible for supervising and teaching the children at school during school hours. 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 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 children in front of children, including your own. We will do our best to help resolve any issues with kindness, discreetly, and professionally. We require our faculty to treat every individual, child, or adult respectfully. We ask that you provide our faculty with 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 email by 8:00 am the day of the absence to ensure the email is received.)

Parents should not send an 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 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 weekends or 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. However, 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 and an excellent 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.

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

CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS

Please let us know if you wish to observe your child's class. 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. Nevertheless, 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 establish classroom routines and appeasement of separation anxiety.

Parents are welcome in the school anytime, but please sign in as a visitor in the office.

NARRATIVES AND LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

THE WOODS provides a narrative of a child's progress after the Kindergarten. The narrative will be 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 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 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 to first grade as requested by the elementary school. Please allow two weeks (14 days) to complete recommendation requests. Recommendations are sent directly to the requesting school. The receiving school handles requests for a parent copy of any recommendations.

The Montessori Method expects a child to fully complete the Kindergarten year to realize the goals and outcomes common to Montessori education fully. Therefore, THE WOODS does not recommend transition before the completion of Kindergarten. **Therefore, THE WOODS does not complete recommendation forms or write narratives for children transitioning out of the program before 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 and 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 an excellent way to understand your child's school experience better. 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. Please let the office know 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 can 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 trained in First Aid and CPR are always 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 via an Incident/Accident Report on Transparent Classroom. 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.** Parents will be notified in case of a serious injury, and an ambulance will be contacted.

ALLERGIES

We understand that children often have allergies that influence their diet and/or well-being. Please list all allergies in your child's paperwork and notify the Head of School and 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 know such restrictions. Please notify the school office if you wish to keep your child's allergy confidential.

Please understand that the school will try 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 avoid making general restrictions for specific foods (e.g., strawberries, gluten, dairy, etc.). However, the school does evaluate the level of limitation to particular allergens on a case-by-case basis. For example, if a child in the class 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, the school administration will notify you in writing. **For the 2025-2026 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 sick home. Those unwell children must be kept at home for the health of all the children. 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 illnesses 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 backup 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. 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 for 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. For example, in the case of a fever, a child must be fever-free for 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing medication, to return to school. In certain instances, 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 group than the general population. Therefore, 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 to protect the school community adequately. According to Department of Health guidelines, children must be excluded from school for certain childhood illnesses such as chicken pox.

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 send your child home, even if documentation is on file if any uncertainty arises due to worsening symptoms or additional symptoms.

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 diagnoses 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 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 immediate household member develops any communicable disease, except for life-threatening diseases, which must be reported immediately. In addition, the school must post an anonymous notice to alert the community of any infectious 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. Without a physician's authorization, we cannot accept a parent authorization that varies from the pharmacy label. In addition, parents must provide an accurate measuring device (e.g., oral syringe, medicine cup, or medicine spoon) marked with their child's name. Utensils will not be accepted, and medication will not be given without the appropriate measuring device.

VDOE regulations state that children may only receive medication for a maximum of 10 days with written parent authorization. However, medication can be administered for periods exceeding ten 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 developed and authorized by VDOE. All medication authorizations must have the front page filled out by the appropriate authorizing party (i.e., parent or physician) and 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. A licensed medical doctor (M.D.) or pediatric nurse practitioner (PNP)** must complete any physician

authorizations. 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 medicine.

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

Medications are stored in a locked cabinet or the refrigerator in containers reserved for medication storage. Faculty must have completed the state-mandated Medication Administration Training (MAT) 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. Medicines 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. Parents may review the medication log upon request.

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

Children with diabetes have additional forms that must be filled out before the child's first day of school at THE WOODS. In addition, any faculty member treating a child with diabetes must complete Diabetes Training by a licensed medical professional. THE SPRI WOODS NGS currently has one faculty member with this training.

Parents should understand that while THE WOODS uses every care in dispensing medication, medication is administered 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 Education classifies sunscreen and insect repellent as medications and must be authorized, as detailed in the previous section. VDOE does make one exception regarding these items and allows them to be authorized for longer than ten days without a physician's authorization. However, 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. Therefore, 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. Insect repellent must be provided by the family. 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. Therefore, all doors in the building are locked. In addition, a security system is located next to the door near the school office. **Children are not allowed to open doors to and from the school building or 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. If 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 safety rules: 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 never to open the door to a stranger. Always accompany your child into a public restroom. Children should be taught their full names, address, and phone number as soon as they can 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. In addition, 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, emergencies unimaginable to us that have no outlined plan may occur in today's world. 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 lockdown 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 notify parents by phone of the situation and announce on the school website and social media accounts. A message will also be sent via Simple Texting.

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 hallways. 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 lockdown. Lockdowns 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 lockdown. You will be notified of a lockdown, but please do not attempt to come to the school during a lockdown. 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 includes name 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. Ashley (ashley@novamontessori.com) or Ms. Deidre (deidre@woodsmontessori.com) , and someone will try to respond as quickly as possible.

Lastly, please be assured that in 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 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 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 closely supervising your child when near 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. The fire department reserves the right to charge a fine for false alarms. Please understand the school cannot support the payment of such penalties, 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.

PHOTO AND VIDEO DOCUMENTATION

From time to time, the faculty at THE WOODS may take photographs or record video of students for educational and documentation purposes. These recordings may be used to document student work, record special activities, support curriculum planning, and share students' achievements with families.

All photos and videos are captured using school-issued devices only, such as school cameras, iPads, or school-issued mobile devices. Faculty and staff are strictly prohibited from photographing or recording students using personal devices.

Parental consent for photo and video documentation is provided through a release completed at the time of enrollment. Documented images and videos may be used for internal purposes, displayed within the school, included in student records, or shared with families. With appropriate consent, images may also be posted on the school website or school-maintained social media platforms.

Occasionally, student photographs or videos may be required for faculty coursework, professional development, or teacher training programs. In such cases, materials may be submitted to a third party, typically an educational institution, for grading or review. Parents or guardians will be notified in advance of these instances and will be given the opportunity to opt out for their child. At no time will a student's name or identifying information accompany any photo or video that is shared publicly.

BEHAVIORAL DOCUMENTATION

In certain situations, video or audio recordings may be used to document student behavior for internal review, safety, or support purposes. Behavioral documentation is used solely to better understand and support a child's development and is not used for public display or marketing.

Behavior-related recordings are not uploaded to online parent portals, including Transparent Classroom or any other system the school may choose to use. These recordings are maintained locally on the school-issued device or stored securely on the school's private, cloud-based server with restricted access.

Behavioral documentation may be shared directly with a child's parents or guardians by school administration when appropriate. Access to such recordings is limited to authorized personnel, and all reasonable steps are taken to protect student privacy and confidentiality.

All recorded materials are stored securely and accessed only by authorized school personnel. THE WOODS is committed to using documentation in a respectful, developmentally appropriate manner.

THE WOODS reserves the right to modify or discontinue photo and video documentation practices at any time at the discretion of the Executive Director.

AUDIO AND VIDEO SURVEILLANCE

THE WOODS uses audio and video surveillance systems within the school building and on school grounds to support the safety and security of the school community. Consent for the use of this system is provided by parents or guardians through the enrollment contract.

Surveillance recordings are maintained for a period of up to thirty (30) days. Recordings are not continuous and are captured in one- to two-minute segments. All recordings are stored on a secure, private system.

Access to surveillance recordings is restricted to the Executive Director of THE WOODS. Parents or guardians may request to view recordings under the supervision of a school administrator. The decision to grant access to or release any recording is at the sole discretion of the Executive Director.

THE WOODS reserves the right to modify or discontinue the surveillance system at any time at the discretion of the Executive Director.

PART XII: MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

POLICY CHANGES

THE WOODS reserves the right to make any changes or updates to its policies. All enrolled families additionally agree to any changes made to school policy for continued enrollment of their family. New school policy will be issued, 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 notice 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 the Code of Virginia requires any person providing full or part-time child care for pay regularly to report suspected child abuse or neglect. Therefore, if any faculty person at THE WOODS suspects abuse or neglect, the Virginia Department of Education 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 survey results 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 Education 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 day care centers address certain health precautions, adequate play space, children ratios 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. In addition, standards require the facility to meet 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 Education. 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. First, conditional licenses may be given 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 meets the licensure criteria. Finally, 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 Education closest to you.

The Northern Licensing Office (703-934-1505), located at 10 Rosedale Court, Suite 270, Warrenton, Virginia 20186, licenses THE WOODS. 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. The maximum enrollment for the preschool program is two hundred (200) students. The school facility is in compliance with the applicable laws and regulations regarding food service, health, sanitation, water supply, building codes, the Statewide Fire Prevention Code, or the Uniform Statewide Building Code. Compliance documentation can be found on the bulletin board in the main hallway and 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.

RELEASE, WAIVER, AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT

Due to the _____ pandemic, all families are required to agree to the following agreement. Changes may not be made to this agreement without express consent from the Head of School.

This RELEASE, WAIVER, AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT ("Agreement") is made as of the date below between The Woods Montessori, Inc. d/b/a The Woods, A Montessori School, a Virginia corporation ("School"), _____ and _____ (collectively, "Customers" and "you" and "your").

RECITALS

WHEREAS, there exists a global pandemic that has come to be known as the _____ pandemic;

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth of Virginia and the federal government have provided orders and guidance regarding social distancing and measures to curb the spread of the _____ pandemic;

WHEREAS, a serious need exists for child care providers to reopen in order for parents to attend work during the _____ pandemic health and economic crisis that is currently ongoing, which the government has acknowledged;

WHEREAS, Customers are aware of the dangers of the _____ pandemic, but desire their children/child's attendance at the School;

NOW THEREFORE, in consideration of the promises and mutual covenants set forth herein, and for other good and valuable consideration, the receipt and sufficiency of which are mutually acknowledged, School and the Customers hereby agree as follows:

1. IT HEREBY ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE _____ PANDEMIC IS EASILY TRANSMITTED AND IS A CONTAGIOUS, DANGEROUS DISEASE. Customers therefore release, waive, discharge and covenant not to sue School, its members, managers, officers, directors, employees, representatives or agents, along with any of its parents, subsidiaries, or other affiliates, along with their its members, managers, officers, directors, employees, representatives or agents of each of them, all for the purposes herein referred to as the "Releasees," from any and all liability, demands, costs or expenses, including without limitation, attorneys fees actually incurred, and arising in connection with Customers' children/child's attendance at the School during the duration of the _____ pandemic.

2. Customers hereby agree to indemnify and save and hold harmless the Releasees and each of them from any loss, liability, damage, or cost, including reasonable attorneys' fees, arising from any allegation, claim, demand, debt, obligation, liability, cost, or expense the School or the Releasees may incur arising from the Customers' children/child's attendance at the School during the _____ pandemic, including any allegation that the _____ pandemic was transmitted to any person as a result of Customers' children/child's attendance at the School during the _____ pandemic.

3. Releasees shall be third party beneficiaries of this Agreement.

4. Governing Law/Forum Selection. This Agreement shall be construed by the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia, without reference to its conflict of laws rules. The parties to this Agreement hereby expressly consent to be subject to the jurisdiction of the Commonwealth of Virginia to determine any disputes regarding this Agreement and further agree that the sole venue for any such dispute shall be the Circuit Court of Virginia for the County of Fairfax.

5. Incorporation of Recitals. The above-listed Recitals are hereby incorporated into this Agreement as if fully set forth herein.

6. THE UNDERSIGNED further expressly agrees that the foregoing release, waiver, and indemnity Agreement is intended to be as broad and inclusive as is permitted by the law of the Commonwealth of Virginia, including indemnification against one's own negligence, and that if any portion thereof is held invalid, it is agreed that the balance shall, notwithstanding, continue in full legal force and effect.

7. THE UNDERSIGNED HAS READ AND VOLUNTARILY SIGNS THE RELEASE AND WAIVER OF LIABILITY AND INDEMNITY AGREEMENT, and further agrees that no representations, statements or inducements apart from the foregoing written Agreement have been made.

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.

A corporate Board of Directors governs The Woods Montessori, Inc. 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. Therefore, the Board does not accept parent inquiries (questions, comments, concerns, etc.), and any such inquiries should be directed to the Head of School and their 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 a 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.