



PARENT HANDBOOK

Flowery Grove Montessori School
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Flowery Grove Montessori School does not discriminate on the basis of race, colour, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or national or ethnic origin in hiring, promotion, or training of employees, nor in the admissions, rights, privileges, programs, and activities of its students.

A Note to Parents

This handbook is your centralized reference for Flowery Grove Montessori School. It outlines our Montessori programs for children and aims to align parent and educator expectations.

Information in this handbook is also for parents who are considering enrolling their child at Flowery Grove Montessori School, allowing you to make an informed choice.

We welcome any suggestions to improve or clarify the content and organization of the handbook. Please send any suggestions in writing to the school via e-mail.

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OFFICE CONTACT INFORMATION

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Flowery Grove Montessori School is accredited by
[Montessori Canada](http://montessoricanada.org)

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General Information

Flowery Grove Montessori School strives to educate the whole child; this means balancing approaches to students' needs:

Cognitively, Physically, Emotionally, and Socially

We strive to do this through authentic Montessori practice and by developing environments and relations based on the principles of being:

Peaceful, Positive, Patient

Quiet, Calm, Kind

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- Flowery Grove Montessori School operates as a school, on a school-year calendar, from September to June. Flowery Grove is closed for the traditional summer vacation period in July and August.
 - Flowery Grove Montessori School houses Flowery Grove's Montessori Toddler and Casa programs.
 - Flowery Grove's campus is required to hold a "childcare license" and is subject to the regulations contained in the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA).
 - Please note: while Flowery Grove's campus is a "Licensed Childcare Centre" it operates as a school and is not a traditional daycare.
 - Flowery Grove Montessori School charges "tuition" and other fees as a requirement of enrolment.
 - In most cases, tuition is paid in full prior to the start of each school year (exceptions and custom payment plans can be mutually agreed upon by Flowery Grove and individual families based on date of enrolment or in exceptional circumstances).
 - Families of students enrolled in Flowery Grove's Toddler and Casa programs may be eligible to claim a portion of their "tuition" payments as a "childcare expense" when submitting tax returns.

Montessori Education

Over 100 years ago, Dr. Maria Montessori recognized that childhood education was based on the way adults learn instead of how children learn, yet children have a greater capacity for learning than adults. Dr. Montessori observed patterns in childhood development and based the design of her educational principles and practices upon those patterns.

The Absorbent Mind

Children possess the ability to develop naturally (learning to walk, for example) and as influenced by the culture in which they are raised — the mother-tongue they speak, the clothes they choose, the games they play. They *absorb* what they experience.

Children learn through purposeful movement, exploration, and discovery. The crucial adult role is to foster and protect this all-important endeavor of individual development.

Planes of Development and Sensitive Periods

Children go through four distinct developmental stages. These were recognized by Dr. Montessori as occurring roughly between ages 0-6, 6-12, 12-18, and 18-24. These ages are informed approximations and are further refined in a Montessori school as each child develops at an individual pace.

During each of these planes of development, the child has **sensitive periods**. During these periods, they seek certain stimuli with great intensity. These are transitory periods in which they develop specific cognitive, physical, emotional, and social functions. They occur all over the world, in every culture, at approximately the same age, in all children. If a child's need for specific stimuli is not met during a sensitive period, the individual loses the opportunity for optimal development.

Throughout the planes of development, the best way for Montessori educators to aid the child's development is to observe these sensitive periods and create opportunities within the Montessori environment to provide the child with the appropriate stimuli.

The Montessori Environment (Classroom)

Children's building of their physical, mental, emotional, and social lives is an arduous, ceaseless, and delicate labour that nobody else can do for them.

To aid them in this work, Montessori education creates a place where planes of development and sensitive periods are observed, and wherein each child works at their own pace according to their intrinsic interests.

Like seeds that will not grow unless given water, soil, sunshine, and air, children will not flourish unless given a safe and enriching environment that meets their developmental needs. The Montessori environment allows children to build *their own, independent, unique selves*; a pumpkin seed won't grow into a sunflower no matter how much we may wish it to.

The Montessori Guide (Teacher)

The Montessori guide prepares the environment and is the link between each child and that prepared environment. The Montessori guide closely and continuously observes each child and prepares for the next developmental need.

When a Montessori class begins, all of the children require help to build relationships with one another and with the environment. They need to make a connection to the Montessori guide and know that the guide cares for them and understands them. Gradually, in response to their new environment and the adult's careful guidance, the children develop a harmonious, unique community, and the guide becomes a participant/observer in a community of children.

Throughout their time at a Montessori school, children become interested in a wide variety of curriculum areas, topics, and experiences, but they work at their own pace. The Montessori guide accommodates the children's developmental schedules while presenting to the children work in all areas and aspects of the Montessori curriculum and environment.

Montessori Learning

Although a Montessori environment may seem to be academically oriented, Montessori's real goals for children are not primarily academic. Montessori education strives to have children develop confidence in themselves, to have an independence in thought and action that permits them to make decisions on their own, and to understand that they are responsible for their own actions and for their own learning. A Montessori student will have curiosity about the world around them and a sense of their obligation to help others.

Skills that even the youngest Montessori students can begin acquiring include:

- ⊗ Keeping track of one's belongings: each child has a place to store possessions and the responsibility to do so.
- ⊗ Understanding order: each child learns to put things away in the proper place, to take turns, and to follow the intrinsic order of the materials.
- ⊗ Doing things for oneself: zipping, buttoning, and tying are skills that come out of the necessity of taking care of oneself in the classroom setting. Children develop an interest in these skills when they see older children performing them.
- ⊗ Sharing an adult: the children realize that they cannot have the undivided attention of an adult.
- ⊗ Developing self-control: the children learn to observe the limits of the environment and the community because they want to belong.

- Acquiring more language skills: children's new feelings and experiences will broaden their range of expression.

Montessori Program Cycles

Full Montessori cycles are prioritized at Flowery Grove for the benefit of individual children and the classroom communities. Children are part of a Montessori environment for a number of years, allowing guides, parents, and children to develop close relationships. Montessori children at Flowery Grove spend one-to-two years in a Montessori Toddler environment (18 months to 3-years-old), three-to-four years in a Montessori Casa dei Bambini environment (2.5-years-old to 6-years-old).

During each of these periods, Montessori guides are better able to recognize what developmental stage a child is at because they know the children so well. Children go through periods of intense intellectual growth and interest during which they need a lot of attention and many Montessori presentations. Children go through other developmental periods when all of their attention is focused on social relations; during this stage, children may not profit from academic lessons, but may benefit greatly from learning how to get along and work with friends, peers, and adults. The multi-age, multi-year cycles in Montessori make it possible for children to take full advantage of peer learning and mentoring, and of their natural inclinations and desires to learn in a supportive environment in which they are known, respected, and safe.

The Social Environment

An authentic Montessori classroom is a very friendly place where children talk to one another freely and have the opportunity to work with others at will. Social learning is an important part of educating the whole child.

Repetition

Children tend to repetition in the formative years. Montessori presentations introduce children to Montessori materials, how to handle them, and what to do with them, but repetition on the part of the child is the key to mastery. Montessori students repeat work because the materials are designed to lead the child to deeper understanding. You can help your child by emphasizing the value of practicing and by encouraging repetition.

Patience

A different type of patience is encouraged in Montessori education. Many people think that it takes a lot of patience to deal with young children because they ask a lot of questions and need a lot of help. That kind of patience is easy to come by. The patience that is hard to develop is the kind that allows one to wait and not give help too soon. It takes patience to watch a child make mistakes and to not interfere to show them how to do it, and to let the child truly learn by providing them the time and space to figure it out for themselves. It takes patience to listen to a squabble and to not interfere, but

to let children settle it alone. This willingness to wait, although hard to develop, is very important for the growth of a child's confidence and capability.

Montessori Levels and Ages at Flowery Grove

Montessori Level	Ages	Traditional Grade Equivalent
Toddler	18 months – 3-years-old	N/A
Casa dei Bambini (Casa)	2.5 – 6-years-old	Preschool/JK/SK

Staff Qualifications

Educational staff at Flowery Grove must meet the qualification requirements set out by both CCEYA and Montessori Canada.

CCEYA requires that qualified educational staff at Montessori schools have recognized Montessori training from either the Association Montessori Internationale (AMI) or a Montessori teacher training institution accredited by the Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education (MACTE), or are members in good standing of College of Early Childhood Educators.

In order to achieve accreditation as an authentic Montessori school from the Montessori Canada, it is required that the school, "Has one teacher in each classroom who holds an age-appropriate diploma from an AMI or MACTE accredited teacher training institute or any other teacher training program that may be recognized by Montessori Canada."

Flowery Grove is a Montessori Canada accredited, authentic Montessori school and adheres to the authentic Montessori practices dictated by the AMI.

School Calendar and Closures

- ❁ Flowery Grove publishes and maintains a calendar each school year that indicates school closures for statutory holidays, winter and spring breaks, professional development/activity (PD/PA) days, parent-teacher conference days, parent education events, planned field trip days, and summer vacation. Make [the calendar in the “Parents” section at flowerygrove.org](#) your go-to source for up-to-date information and details.
- ❁ **Inclement Weather (Snow Days):** Flowery Grove utilizes the Hamilton Wentworth District School Board inclement weather process, which posts cancellation notices by approximately 6:00 a.m. If HWDSB closes, so does Flowery Grove. If there is a snow day, we will communicate that to you as early as we can in the mornings via email and the flowerygrove.org “Home” page. (For more information from HWDSB, please see “Part IV: Reference and Resources: Ref. E: HWDSB Winter Weather Bus Cancellations and School Closures”).

- **Professional Development/Activity days (PD/PA days):** Flowery Grove staff attend Montessori conferences or other training sessions and workshops, or work to upgrade Flowery Grove's Montessori environments. Please be assured that your child will greatly benefit from PD/PA activities. Flowery Grove is closed and there is no school on PD/PA days.
- **Parent-Teacher Conferences:** There are two Parent-Teacher conferences each school year, at the end of the first (fall) and third (spring) terms. There is no school during the conferences. Childcare is available for your child during your conference. Each conference is 20 minutes long.

School Hours

Flowery Grove is open from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. each day. Please see the chart below for program times.

Toddler	Casa
Arrival: 8:00-8:45	Arrival: 8:00-8:45
Work Cycle: 8:45-11:00	Work Cycle: 8:00-11:45
Recess: 11:00-12:00	Lunch: 11:45-12:30
Lunch: 12:00-12:45	Recess: 12:30-1:30
Nap: 12:45-2:45	Work Cycle: 1:30-3:00
Work Cycle: 2:45-3:30	Recess: 3:00-3:30
Dismissal: 3:30	Dismissal: 3:30-4:00
After Care: 3:30-4:30	After Care: 4:00-4:30

The Flowery Grove office is open from 8:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. each day.

Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA)

The Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014, (CCEYA) is a piece of Ontario Ministry of Education legislation that governs licensed child care centres in the province of Ontario (Ontario Regulation 137/15).

Children begin their educations at Flowery Grove as early as 18 months of age. Therefore, Flowery Grove falls under the purview of the CCEYA and holds a child care license.

The CCEYA requires that Flowery Grove develops, implements, and monitors for compliance a specific set of policies and procedures, including required inclusions in this *Parent Handbook*, in order to be granted a license to operate a child care centre. The license is renewed on an annual basis after an inspection of Flowery Grove by Ministry of Education personnel.

Flowery Grove is a compliant, licensed child care centre. Hamilton Public Health, Hamilton Medical Officer of Health, and the Hamilton Fire Department also have requirements and/or guidance relative to specific policies and procedures at Flowery Grove.

Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC)

Flowery Grove Montessori School does not participate in the CWELCC system and is not subject to terms and conditions of the CWELCC system. At the time of its implementation, guarantees could not be provided that the CWELCC system would fund the delivery of Flowery Grove's authentic Montessori education program. If at any time such guarantees can be attained, and the program permits Flowery Grove's inclusion, we will be thrilled to reduce the cost of Montessori education and to make Montessori more accessible to more families.

Tuition Costs and Base Fee Schedules:

In most cases, tuition is paid in full prior to the start of each school year. Exceptions and custom payment plans can be mutually agreed upon by Flowery Grove and individual families based on date of enrolment, in cases of new student enrolment, or in exceptional circumstances.

Families of students enrolled in Flowery Grove's Toddler and Casa programs may be eligible to claim a portion of their "tuition" payments as a "childcare expense" when submitting tax returns.

There is no refund or reduction in fees in cases of withdrawal, dismissal, absence, cancellation, or persistent absenteeism.

For the 2026.2027 school year, the Flowery Grove fee schedules are as follows:

Toddler Tuition Fee Schedule 2026-2027
New Flowery Grove Students

Payment Option 1: Payment in Full	
\$18,500	

Payment Option 2: Four Equal Payments Schedule	
Total Tuition: \$19,500	
Quarterly Payment 1: \$4,875	Quarterly Payment 3: \$4,875
Quarterly Payment 2: \$4,875	Quarterly Payment 4: \$4,875

New Student Registration Fee
One time only payment, per NEW student, <u>due upon registration</u> at Flowery Grove Montessori. \$2,000

Tuition Notes and Payment Information
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- ⦿ **PAYMENT METHODS:** All payments can be made via the TUIO payment platform.
- ⦿ **PRO-RATED TUITION:** For students starting school after September the tuition and payment amounts will be pro-rated relative to start date.
- ⦿ **PAYMENT DATES:**
 - We will work with you to devise a custom quarterly payment schedule that works for your family.
 - Please see the “Returning Students and Siblings” fee schedule for subsequent school year payment due date examples.
 - It may be to your benefit to make all payments within the same calendar year for tax purposes.
- ⦿ **SIBLING DISCOUNT:** Tuition fees are reduced by 10% for siblings of registered students. The program that is less in fees will be discounted by 10%.
- ⦿ Registration is complete only upon receipt of a completed, signed registration form, and payment of the registration fee.
- ⦿ Additional non-mandatory fees may apply for extracurricular activities such as field trip fees, etc.
- ⦿ A 1% charge per month (12% nominally per annum) is payable on late payments.
- ⦿ Please note: in general, payments are due prior to the start of the school year, with the exception of registrations immediately prior to and during the school year.
- ⦿ In certain circumstances, Flowery Grove will work with families to develop custom payment schedules. Please do not hesitate to contact us at accounts@flowerygrove.org if you would like to discuss a possible custom payment plan.
- ⦿ Enrolment at Flowery Grove Montessori is non-transferable.
- ⦿ **There is no refund or reduction in fees in cases of withdrawal, dismissal, absence, cancellation, or persistent absenteeism.**

Toddler Tuition Fee Schedule 2026-2027
Returning Students and Siblings

Payment Option 1: Payment in Full	
Due February 5, 2026: \$18,500	

Payment Option 2: Equal Payment Schedule	
Total Tuition: \$19,500	
Quarterly Payment 1: February 5, 2026: \$4,875	Quarterly Payment 3: June 1, 2026: \$4,875
Quarterly Payment 2: April 1, 2026: \$4,875	Quarterly Payment 4: Sept. 1, 2026: \$4,875

Registration Fee for New Sibling Students
One time only payment, per NEW sibling, <u>due upon registration</u> at Flowery Grove Montessori. \$2,000

Tuition Notes and Payment Information
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- ☛ **SIBLING DISCOUNT:** Tuition fees are reduced by 10% for siblings of registered students. The programme that is less in fees will be discounted by 10%.
- ☛ **PAYMENT METHODS:** All payments can be made via the TUIO payment platform.
- ☛ Tuition is paid in full prior to the start of the school year.
- ☛ Registration is complete only upon receipt of a completed, signed registration form, and payment in full, first quarterly payment, or registration fee for new Flowery Grove sibling students.
- ☛ Additional non-mandatory fees may apply for extracurricular activities such as field trip fees, etc.
- ☛ A 1% charge per month (12% nominally per annum) is payable on late payments.
- ☛ In certain circumstances, Flowery Grove will work with families to develop custom payment schedules. Please do not hesitate to contact us at accounts@flowerygrove.org if you would like to discuss a possible custom payment plan.
- ☛ Enrolment at Flowery Grove Montessori is non-transferable.
- ☛ **There is no refund or reduction in fees in cases of withdrawal, dismissal, absence, cancellation, or persistent absenteeism.**

Casa Tuition Fee Schedule 2026-2027
New Flowery Grove Students

Payment Option 1: Payment in Full	
\$17,000	

Payment Option 2: Four Equal Payments Schedule	
Total Tuition: \$18,000	
Quarterly Payment 1: \$4,500	Quarterly Payment 3: \$4,500
Quarterly Payment 2: \$4,500	Quarterly Payment 4: \$4,500

New Student Registration Fee
One time only payment, per NEW student, <u>due upon registration</u> at Flowery Grove Montessori. \$2,000

Tuition Notes and Payment Information
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- ⦿ **PAYMENT METHODS:** All payments can be made via the TUIO payment platform.
- ⦿ **PRO-RATED TUITION:** For students starting school after September the tuition and payment amounts will be pro-rated relative to start date.
- ⦿ **PAYMENT DATES:**
 - We will work with you to devise a custom quarterly payment schedule that works for your family.
 - Please see the “Returning Students and Siblings” fee schedule for subsequent school year payment due date examples.
 - It may be to your benefit to make all payments within the same calendar year for tax purposes.
- ⦿ **SIBLING DISCOUNT:** Tuition fees are reduced by 10% for siblings of registered students. The program that is less in fees will be discounted by 10%.
- ⦿ Registration is complete only upon receipt of a completed, signed registration form, and payment of the registration fee.
- ⦿ Additional non-mandatory fees may apply for extracurricular activities such as field trip fees, etc.
- ⦿ A 1% charge per month (12% nominally per annum) is payable on late payments.
- ⦿ Please note: in general, payments are due prior to the start of the school year, with the exception of registrations immediately prior to and during the school year.
- ⦿ In certain circumstances, Flowery Grove will work with families to develop custom payment schedules. Please do not hesitate to contact us at accounts@flowerygrove.org if you would like to discuss a possible custom payment plan.
- ⦿ Enrolment at Flowery Grove Montessori is non-transferable.
- ⦿ **There is no refund or reduction in fees in cases of withdrawal, dismissal, absence, cancellation, or persistent absenteeism.**

Casa Tuition Fee Schedule 2026-2027
Returning Students and Siblings

Payment Option 1: Payment in Full	
Due February 5, 2026: \$17,000	

Payment Option 2: Equal Payment Schedule	
Total Tuition: \$18,000	
Quarterly Payment 1: February 5, 2026: \$4,500	Quarterly Payment 3: June 1, 2026: \$4,500
Quarterly Payment 2: April 1, 2026: \$4,500	Quarterly Payment 4: Sept. 1, 2026: \$4,500

Registration Fee for New Sibling Students
One time only payment, per NEW sibling, <u>due upon registration</u> at Flowery Grove Montessori. \$2,000

Tuition Notes and Payment Information
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- ☛ **SIBLING DISCOUNT:** Tuition fees are reduced by 10% for siblings of registered students. The program that is less in fees will be discounted by 10%.
- ☛ **PAYMENT METHODS:** All payments can be made via the TUIO payment platform.
- ☛ Tuition is paid in full prior to the start of the school year.
- ☛ Registration is complete only upon receipt of a completed, signed registration form, and payment in full, first quarterly payment, or registration fee for new Flowery Grove sibling students.
- ☛ Additional non-mandatory fees may apply for extracurricular activities such as field trip fees, etc.
- ☛ A 1% charge per month (12% nominally per annum) is payable on late payments.
- ☛ In certain circumstances, Flowery Grove will work with families to develop custom payment schedules. Please do not hesitate to contact us at accounts@flowerygrove.org if you would like to discuss a possible custom payment plan.
- ☛ Enrolment at Flowery Grove Montessori is non-transferable.
- ☛ **There is no refund or reduction in fees in cases of withdrawal, dismissal, absence, cancellation, or persistent absenteeism.**

Non-Base Fees

Non-Base Fees (Fees that families are responsible for over and above the base/tuition fee at Flowery Grove Montessori.)
After school Program
A monthly fee of \$100 applies to children enrolled in the after-school program. <i>(Fee is subject to change based on the duration and schedule of the after-school program.)</i>
Field Trip Fees
A nominal fee may be charged to cover the costs associated with field trips. Parents will be notified in advance of any applicable fees, and participation in field trips is optional.
Late Pickup Fees
The school understands that occasional delays may occur due to unforeseen circumstances, such as traffic or emergencies. In the event of repeated or extended late pick-ups, a fee may be applied at the discretion of the director and management.

Emergency Closures and Refund/Credits Policy

In the event of an emergency or unforeseen circumstance beyond the control of the school (such as a pandemic, natural disaster, government-mandated closure, or other force majeure event), any decisions regarding refunds, credits, or fee adjustments will be reviewed and determined by the directors and management. Each situation will be assessed based on the specific circumstances and any applicable government directives.

Part I: Flowery Grove Montessori School Policies

Daily School Procedures

Safe Arrival and Dismissal Policy and Procedure:

Flowery Grove is required to follow a “Safe Arrival and Dismissal” policy and procedure as part of CCEYA regulations.

What it means for you:

- ⦿ If your child has not arrived to school by 9:30 a.m. and we have not received communication from you regarding the absence, we will call you to confirm their absence and the reason for it.
- ⦿ If your child has not been picked up by 15 minutes after the end of the published dismissal period, we will call you to ascertain when the child will be picked up.
- ⦿ If your child has not been picked up by the time the school closes, we will attempt call you again; if we cannot reach a parent/guardian at this time, we will begin contacting the “Authorized Pick-up/Emergency Contact” persons listed for the child in order to request that they pick up the child.
- ⦿ If we have not been able to contact a parent/guardian or “Authorized Pickup/Emergency Contact” by 30 minutes after the school closes (ie. 5:00 p.m.) we will contact the Hamilton Child and Family Supports service (HCFS) [formerly the Children’s Aid Society of Hamilton (CAS)] and follow their directions.

Arrival:

Upon arrival at Flowery Grove Montessori School, a Flowery Grove staff member will greet your child with a handshake and a verbal greeting.

At this time, the staff member greeting the child will receive any information relevant for that day from the child’s parent/guardian or other person dropping the child off; such information may include an alternative pick up person, pick up time, or other information that may affect the child’s day such as remaining illness symptoms (that do not exclude the child from attendance), activities or events at home, or other relevant information.

Young children depend on regular routine for their comfort, confidence, and security. The school depends on regular routine for optimum classroom success. It is therefore essential that your child arrives to school on time.

Once your child has been greeted, we ask that you leave promptly to allow for a swift transition to school and to facilitate the development of their independence.

Please note that parents are not allowed into the child's classroom, even on the first day of school, as it can make separation harder. It is one of the more difficult aspects of the Montessori philosophy for parents to get used to, however, it makes it that much more special when you come into the classroom for parent education evenings or for your child to show you their work.

Montessori philosophy encourages independence and students are encouraged in the cloakroom area, as much as possible, to remove their own outerwear, hang things up, get shoes on, etc. This can take time and patience so it is best to arrive on time and to let children practice these skills at home.

Drop-off for Toddler and Casa students begins at 8:00 a.m.

Parents of Toddler and Casa children accompany students to the main school gate where children say goodbye to caregivers and are greeted by a Flowery Grove staff member. Toddler students proceed to the playground. Casa students are supervised to their classroom by a Flowery Grove staff member.

Late Arrivals:

Late arrivals are disruptive to Montessori environments and to children's routines. A student who is late will miss important elements of the morning Montessori work cycle. Students greet each other as they remove outerwear and make the transition from home to school; this transition is easier when they can prepare themselves with peers.

Uninterrupted focus and concentration are essential elements of the Montessori education you and other parents have chosen for your children at Flowery Grove; late arrivals distract and disturb the focus and concentration of other students.

We are all late on occasion, but please do your best to be on time each day.

Absences:

Students will get sick or need to be absent from school on occasion. In cases of absence, please follow these procedures:

- Call or email the school as soon as possible to inform the school of the child's absence:
 - Email: office@flowerygrove.org
 - Telephone number: 905-525-4283 (please leave a message if necessary)
- In your call or email, please provide a specific, detailed reason for the child's absence. Flowery Grove is required to track certain illnesses and to report possible outbreaks to Hamilton Public Health. Other afflictions may necessitate the school notifying families in the child's class, or school-wide, that they should be aware and on the lookout for certain symptoms. Your child will not be identified in cases of such notification. Also, where the absence is not illness-related (family trips or visitors, funerals, etc.), it is beneficial for your child's Montessori guide to know what is happening in your child's life.

Dismissal:

Students are dismissed from school and may be picked up as follows: Toddler: 3:30 | Casa: 3:30-4:00

DO NOT leave Flowery Grove with your child before your child says goodbye to the staff member responsible for dismissal each day.

- ☛ Toddler students are picked up at the school gate at 3:30 p.m., or are registered for After School Care (additional fee) and are picked up inside the school no later than 4:30 p.m.
- ☛ Casa students are picked up from the outdoor playground between 3:30-4:00 p.m., or are registered for After School Care (additional fee) and are picked up from the outdoor playground no later than 4:30 p.m.

In cases of inclement weather:

- ☛ Toddler and Casa students will be dismissed to the gymnasium for pick up.

Authorized Pick-up and Dismissal:

If you are not picking up your child, children will only be released to authorized persons as indicated on your child's Flowery Grove registration form (we recommend you ask them to bring identification with them in case Flowery Grove dismissal staff do not recognize them). If you know in advance that your child will be dismissed to a person not indicated as an authorized alternative pickup, you must:

- ☛ Let us know in person at drop-off in the morning, or
- ☛ Send an email of authorization indicating the full name of the person picking up; including relation to the child is also helpful — grandmother, family friend, etc.
- ☛ Parents may also authorize a person to pick up their child from Flowery Grove Montessori School by way of the “Change of Information” form on the “Parent Form Portal” page of the school website (this method will add that person as a permanent, additional “Emergency Contact/Authorized Pick Up” for your child).
- ☛ If we do not receive in-person notification, an email, or a “Change of Information,” we will not release your child to any person not listed as an “Emergency Contact/Authorized Pick Up” who claims to have come on your behalf to pick up your child, even though we might recognize that person or know that person to be your relative or friend. In such cases, we will attempt to contact you or the persons listed as your “Emergency Contact/Authorized Pick Up” contacts.

We take these precautions to ensure the safety of your child.

Early Pick-Up:

Please notify the school at the beginning of the day about any plans to pick your child up from school early. When an early pick-up is necessitated by circumstances that arise over the course of the school day, please let us know via telephone as soon as possible; an email will also suffice, but we may not see it on short notice. We will arrange for your child to be ready to meet you at the stated pick-up time.

Like late arrivals, early dismissals can also be disruptive to your child's work, the work of the class, and, if often and consistent, detrimental to optimal progression through the child's Montessori program. Please do your best to minimize early pick-ups.

Late Pick-Up:

If you will be late to pick up your child, please do your best to contact the school with an estimated time of arrival.

After School Care Program:

- ⊗ Flowery Grove offers After School Care programs for students at all levels. Toddler & Casa student after school care is available until 4:30 p.m.
- ⊗ Students must be registered in the relevant After School Care program.
- ⊗ When picking up your child from After School Care please ensure that your child says a proper goodbye to the Flowery Grove After School Care staff member tracking departures each day.
- ⊗ **Cost for the After School Care program is \$100/month.**

Parking:

- ⊗ All Flowery Grove families can use the parking lot accessible off Cottage Ave. and Mountain Ave.
- ⊗ The parking lot has a one-way entrance, off Cottage Ave. Please exit the parking lot via one of the laneways leading to Mountain Ave. or Orchard Hill.
- ⊗ **Please do not leave your engine running.** Exhaust fumes are damaging, both to the children and to the environment.

Communication and Parental Involvement

Parental involvement is essential for every child's success. Maria Montessori believed that the best way for a child to succeed is to have the parents and the Montessori guide working together for the

optimal development of the child. Parents are required to keep open lines of communication with their children's guides at all times.

Parents are asked to communicate with their child's Montessori guide about daily concerns and events, or significant changes at home, as necessary. For example, a note to say the child had a bad night's sleep and may be cranky, a message for the guide to call at the earliest convenience, a new interest the child has developed, the birth of a sibling, a death in the family, divorce or separation, the absence of a parent, your child's inability to sleep for several consecutive nights, the death of a pet, new medication or change in medication dosage, or any other matters that might affect your child's sense of well-being and that can help us continue to know and serve your child better.

We ask that such communication take place away from children so that **no one has discussions about the child's development or issues in front of them** as it might embarrass the child and does not allow proper time for thoughts and conversation. Please contact your child's guide via email; you may also call or email Flowery Grove administration if a matter requires prompt attention (Montessori guides in the classroom will not check email during the morning or afternoon work cycles, or when supervising outdoor activities).

Parents are also encouraged to take advantage of the opportunities Flowery Grove provides to be a part of your child's education. You will attend Parent-Teacher conferences, Parent Education events where you can learn more about Montessori theory and practice, school community events, and may have the opportunity to volunteer on field trips and other outings.

Flowery Grove will keep you informed in a timely manner about activities and school plans. To this end, communication with Flowery Grove families includes the following (please also see the "Flowery Grove Program Statement," specifically the goal "Flowery Grove fosters the engagement of, and ongoing communication with, parents about the program and their children in a number of ways"):

- ⊗ Provide an up to date, legislatively compliant Parent Handbook that serves as an introduction to the school and its operations and as a reference source for answers to questions parents may have.
- ⊗ Phone conferences to new parents after their child's first day and first complete month of school.
- ⊗ Verbal communication at pick-up, or through phone and email communication as necessary.
- ⊗ Parent-teacher conferences twice during each school year: at the end of term 1 and term 3.
- ⊗ Face-to-face meetings as required due to circumstance.
- ⊗ Ability for parents to observe in the Casa classrooms.
- ⊗ Hosted "Show and Share" events for parents to enter the classrooms to observe and interact with their children as they show and demonstrate their work.
- ⊗ Weekly update posted to school website and distributed by email containing school information, important dates, and photos.
- ⊗ Hosted Parent Education events each school year to explain in more detail specific aspects of the Montessori method.
- ⊗ Field trips to encourage engagement between families in the context of, and in conjunction with, the school.

Parents are encouraged to express questions, comments, and concerns as they arise (see “Parent Issues and Concerns” policy).

If your child relates to you an incident that was unobserved by a member of our staff, please report it to us in the same manner. Also, any unusual event or change in behaviour at school will be reported to you.

Health and Safety Policies

Health and safety policies at Flowery Grove may fall under the requirements and/or guidance of a number of different authorities. The Ontario Ministry of Education through the Child Care and Early Years Act, Hamilton Public Health, the Hamilton Medical Officer of Health, and the Hamilton Fire Department all have requirements and/or guidance relative to health and safety policies.

Accident and Incident Reporting:

In the case of a serious accident or medical emergency, the parent or person responsible for the child will be notified. The physician listed on your child’s “Flowery Grove Registration Form” may be contacted to ask for their recommendation. For serious injuries, we will call 911. A staff member may attend the hospital the child is transported to and take the child’s student file with them (including Health Card number). If, on any particular day, you know that you can be reached at a different number than the one listed in your child’s file, please let the school office know. It is imperative that you keep all contact information up to date.

Flowery Grove uses both “Accident Reports” and “Incident Reports” to communicate and track various occurrences that children may be subject to during their time at school. Both reports are to be completed at the discretion of staff members.

- ⊗ An **Incident Report** is to be completed in cases where a child has engaged in harmful or disrespectful behaviour towards another student or staff member, or has otherwise acted in a manner that the staff member feels should be communicated to the child’s Montessori guides and parents (examples include willfully damaging school property or climbing over fences).
- ⊗ An **Accident Report** is to be completed in cases where a child has been involved in an accident resulting in injury. In general, if first aid or supervision of the child is required as a result of the accident, an Accident Report should be filled out. (Minor scrapes that require a soap and water wash and a band-aid do not require that an Accident Report be filled out).

(A general guideline for both Accident and Incident Reports is: if you think to yourself, “Should I fill out a report for this?” the answer is “Yes.”)

Privacy

When filling out Incident and Accident Reports, staff must respect the privacy of each child and the child’s family. If more than one child is involved in an incident or accident, a separate report must be filled out for each child and other children’s names must not be included in the reports.

Procedure

Accident and Incident Reports are to be signed by the involved staff member and at least one of the child's parents or caregivers. A copy of the report will be given to the parents and a hard copy will be placed in the child's student records file.

Immunizations:

By law, children must have some vaccines before going to daycare or school in Canada. Children must be immunized for the following diseases:

Diphtheria	Mumps	Rubella
Measles	Pertussis	Tetanus
Meningococcal	Polio	Varicella

In accordance with Section 72 of Ontario Reg. 137/15 (CCEYA), immunization records and/or records of parental objection must be kept as part of children's files.

Parents are required to notify Hamilton Public Health each time their child receives a vaccine. If Hamilton Public Health does not have up to date immunization records they will issue a notice suspending the child from attending school until immunizations are up to date, or until a valid exemption is submitted.

Please visit Hamilton Public Health's "Vaccines and Immunizations" web pages for more information: <https://www.hamilton.ca/people-programs/public-health/vaccinesimmunizations/vaccines-children>

Objections to immunizations/vaccinations:

From CCEYA:

Immunizations are not required, “*where a parent of the child objects to the immunization on the ground that the immunization conflicts with the sincerely held convictions of the parent's religion or conscience or a legally qualified medical practitioner gives medical reasons to the licensee as to why the child should not be immunized.*”

In such cases, “*Objections and medical reasons ...shall be submitted in a form approved by the Minister.*” Those forms can be found at the following links:

- Medical exemption: <https://forms.mgcs.gov.on.ca/en/dataset/010-3041-4895-64> [must be completed by a doctor or nurse practitioner]
- Religious or conscientious objection: <https://forms.mgcs.gov.on.ca/en/dataset/010-3042-4897-64>

[must be completed by a commissioner for taking affidavits (for example, a notary public)]

As of September 1st, 2017, **non-medical vaccine exemptions for school age children (under the Immunization of School Pupils Act) will require the completion of an in-person immunization education session.** The education sessions are based upon standardized content from the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-term Care.

NOTE: Due to the COVID19 pandemic the completion of an in-person Immunization Education Session has been temporarily removed until further notice.

Disease and Illness:

When your child attends school, they will get sick and you will be required to pick your child up from school as soon as possible and/or to keep your child home from school for specific periods of time.

If your child is absent from school due to disease or illness, please let us know what is afflicting your child when you notify us of the absence (ie. we require more than “sick” or “not well” or “not themselves,” for example). We are required report certain illnesses or outbreaks to Hamilton Public Health, and/or we may need to notify families in your child’s class, or school wide, of symptoms to look out for, so it is important that we keep track of diseases and illnesses.

Thank you for your cooperation. We know that having to take days off and missing work, or having to leave work to pick up a sick child, can be frustrating and difficult. Please be considerate of the other families and children at Flowery Grove and help us to prevent the spread of disease and illness.

CCEYA requires that children are observed at the beginning of each day "*in order to detect symptoms of ill health as they enter the child care centre and before the children interact with other children.*" At Flowery Grove, this occurs when your child is greeted by a Flowery Grove staff member each day.

If a child falls ill during the school day, CCEYA requires the following:

- *The child is separated from other children and the symptoms of the illness noted in the child’s records.*
- *Where a child is separated from other children because of a suspected illness, the licensee shall ensure that:*
 - *a parent of the child takes the child home; or*
 - *where it is not possible for a parent of the child to take the child home or where it appears that the child requires immediate medical attention, the child is examined by a legally qualified medical practitioner or a nurse registered with the College of Nurses of Ontario.*

- *A summary of any incident affecting the health, safety or well-being of children and staff (e.g., accident reports, ill children, etc.), is recorded in the relevant Flowery Grove Daily Written Record.*

Flowery Grove Illness Exclusion Policies:

In addition to the information below, Flowery Grove requires that children are picked up from school and remain absent until free of symptoms for 24 hours of:

- scarlet fever
- elevated temperatures (fevers)
- vomiting
- rashes with no known cause or diagnosis

We require that in cases of hand, foot, and mouth disease children do not return to school until all rash blisters are dry and scabbed over.

Hamilton Public Health Requirements:

Hamilton Public Health provides guidelines on when children must remain absent from school, and for how long, depending on their illness. The information below can also be found under “Parents” on the [“Sick Child? Here’s What to Do”](http://flowerygrove.org) page at flowerygrove.org.

Symptoms and illnesses that exclude children from child care centres

Information from Hamilton Public Health:

Do not allow a child with any of the following symptoms to stay at the child care centre:

- *Fever and other symptoms such as nausea or vomiting*
- *Fever and a body rash*
- *Diarrhea – two or more liquid bowel movements (poop) or a change from the child’s normal bowel movement (e.g., runny, watery or bloody poop) with no other explanation such as laxative use.*
- *Vomiting two or more times in the last 24 hours with no other explanation such as medication*
- *Yellow or white eye discharge that is not treated*
- *Severe cough*
- *Yellowish skin or eyes or jaundice*
- *Irritability, continuous crying more than usual*

The table below outlines diseases or illnesses and how long the disease requires a child to stay away from a child care centre.

Disease	How long children should stay away from the child care centre
Chickenpox	Until the fever goes away and spots have crusted over with scabs
Diarrhea with no known cause	24 hours after the last diarrhea
Diarrhea caused by E. coli or Shigella	Until two consecutive negative stool specimens, or poop samples, are taken, 24 hours apart
Diarrhea from Giardia	Until diarrhea stops
Diarrhea from Norovirus	Until 48 hours after the last diarrhea
Diarrhea from Salmonella or Campylobacter	Until 24 hours after the last diarrhea
Flu	Until fever goes away and the child is feeling better
Head lice	Until 24 hours after the first treatment was applied
Hepatitis A	Until one week after the start of jaundice
Impetigo	Until 24 hours after starting antibiotics
Measles	Until four days after the rash started
Meningitis – bacterial or viral	Until the child is better; decision to be made by a doctor
Mumps	Until nine days after swelling started
Pertussis, also known as whooping cough	Until five days after starting antibiotics or until three weeks if not treated with antibiotics
Pinkeye with yellow or white discharge	Until one full day of antibiotic treatment
Pinworms	Until 24 hours after starting treatment
Pneumonia	Until feeling better and no fever and if treated, 48 hours after antibiotic therapy has started
Ringworm	Until treatment starts; keep child from swimming or wading pools and water play until treatment is complete
Scabies	24 hours after starting treatment
Scarlet fever	24 hours after starting treatment

Strep throat	Until 24 hours after antibiotics are started
Tuberculosis	Call Public Health Services at 905- 546-2063
Vomiting	Until the vomiting stops or it is determined that the vomiting is caused by a non-infectious condition

For children well enough to be at the child care centre

If a child has an illness but is well enough to be in child care and does not have symptoms or a disease that require exclusion ensure that:

- *The child washes their hands more frequently*
- *Staff wash hands more frequently*
- *The child does not participate in water play*
- *Staff clean and disinfect play areas and toys more often*

Symptoms or illnesses that do not exclude children from child care centres

[NOTE: in some cases, these provisions are overridden by Flowery Grove Montessori policy]

The following symptoms or illnesses do not require that a child be excluded from child care centres:

- *Cold sores, unless they are severe*
- *Cytomegalovirus infections or CMV*
- *Ear infections also known as otitis media, unless they are severe*
- *Fever only unless a baby six months or less has it*
- *Fifth disease, also called Parvovirus B19, Erythema Infectiosum and slapped face syndrome*
- *Hand, foot and mouth disease*
- *Asymptomatic giardia*
- *Hepatitis B*
- *HIV*
- *Irritated eye without discharge*
- *Roseola*
- *Thrush and Candida diaper rash*
- *Shingles*

Administration of Drugs and Medication:

The administration of medication to children at Flowery Grove is regulated by CCEYA. The “Flowery Grove Medication Administration Policy and Procedure” is as follows:

Recommendation

Whenever possible, parents are encouraged to administer medication to their children at home, if this can be done without affecting the treatment schedule.

Drugs and Medications Covered by this Policy and Procedure

The requirements for the administration of drugs and medication apply to more than prescription medications. All products containing Drug Identification Numbers require a schedule of administration and applicable record keeping. The requirements apply to a wide variety of items, including vitamins, medicated ointments, prescription medication, and over-the-counter medication.

A Drug Identification Number (DIN) is an eight-digit number assigned by Health Canada to a drug product prior to being marketed in Canada. It uniquely identifies all drug products sold in a dosage form in Canada and is located on the label of prescription and over-the-counter drug products that have been evaluated and authorized for sale in Canada.

Medication Administration at Flowery Grove

Parents

1. Parents must provide written authorization in order for medication to be administered to a child at Flowery Grove.
 - a. Parents must complete and sign a “Flowery Grove Medication Administration Form” to indicate their authorization for medication to be administered to their child while the child is in attendance at Flowery Grove. The form is available on the [“Parent Forms”](#) page under “Parents” at flowerygrove.org.
 - b. The information on the “Flowery Grove Medication Administration Form” must include a schedule that sets out when the drug or medication is to be given, which includes either specific times of the day or specific symptoms that must be observed, as well as the dosage to be given.
 2. Drugs or medications for administration to children in attendance at Flowery Grove must be provided to Flowery Grove in their original containers, or as supplied by a pharmacist.
- And,
3. The container or package containing the drugs or medications must be clearly labelled with the child's name, the name of the drug or medication, the dosage of the drug or medication, the date of purchase and expiration, if applicable, and instructions for storage and administration.

Flowery Grove Staff

1. **Responsible Staff Member:** The storage and administration of drugs and medication is supervised by one staff member to reduce the potential for errors. The Flowery Grove staff member holding or serving in the position of Office Administrator shall be the responsible Flowery Grove staff member. If the Office Administrator is absent or unavailable at the time of medication administration, the child's Montessori Guide will administer the medication and complete all required documentation. If neither the Office Administrator or Montessori Guide are available, the licensed child care Supervisor/Vice-Principal shall perform the medication administration and documentation duties.

2. **Drug and Medication Storage:** The responsible Flowery Grove staff member shall ensure that:

- a. All drugs or medications are stored according to the storage instructions on the label to maintain their effectiveness.
- b. All drugs or medications are inaccessible to children at all times (with the exception of asthma, diabetes, epilepsy, or emergency allergy medication that a child may self-administer).
- c. Drugs and medications requiring refrigeration are kept in a locked container in the refrigerator.
- d. The container or package containing the drugs or medications is clearly labelled with the child's name, the name of the drug or medication, the dosage of the drug or medication, the date of purchase and expiration, if applicable, and instructions for storage and administration.
- e. The responsible Flowery Grove staff member must check that the parent's written instructions match any instructions printed on the original container and that the medication is not expired.

3. **Medication Administration:** The responsible Flowery Grove staff member is responsible for all drug and medication administration and must follow the procedure set out below:

- a. All drugs or medications are administered according to the instructions on the label and the written parental authorization on the child's "Flowery Grove Medication Administration Form."
- b. The responsible Flowery Grove staff member confirms and describes how drugs or medications were administered to the child, and this aligns with the label instructions and written parental authorization, by completing the pertaining section of the "Flowery Grove Medication Administration Form."
- c. The responsible Flowery Grove staff member must also ensure a record of the details of the medication administration is entered on the relevant Daily Written Record; the record must include each dose administered and the time. If a dose is omitted or late, reasons must be listed.
- d. Medication should be dispensed in a well-lit area and, where possible, it is preferable to remove the child from any activity area to administer medication in a quiet environment with the least possible interruption.

- e. Leftover medication or surplus of medication will be returned, in the original container, to a parent of the child or safely discarded with parental permission.
- f. Any accidental administration of medication (e.g., medication administered to the wrong child or error in dosage given) must be recorded and reported to the Flowery Grove principal, who will then notify a parent of the child. If adverse symptoms are evident upon accidental administration of medication, staff should call local Emergency Medical Services (911).

Self-Administration of Medication

1. Certain medications, like puffers and epinephrine, must be administered quickly in an emergency to be fully effective. Allowing children to carry their own emergency allergy and asthma medications allows that these medications can be administered quickly when needed.
2. Flowery Grove permits, with written authorization from the child's parents, children to carry their own asthma medication (puffers) or emergency allergy medication (Epi-Pens) and to self administer those medications according to the parents' written instructions. No other medication may be carried by a child.
3. If a child self-administers a medication (e.g., puffers or epinephrine), the responsible Flowery Grove staff member is required to keep a record of the self-administration, and the time, on a medication form, and it must be noted in the Daily Written Record.

[Note: due to the young age Flowery Grove's students, students do not carry of self-administer medication]

"As-Needed" Medications and Frequent Daily Usage Items

1. If medication is to be administered on an "as needed" basis, the written instructions must clearly indicate the situations under which the medication should be given. This could include the physical symptoms that must be present, the behaviour the child must be exhibiting, or the child's temperature. Simply indicating "as needed" or "as required" is not sufficient.
2. Due to the frequency and their longer term daily usage, sunscreen, diaper creams, lip balms, moisturizers, insect repellent, and hand sanitizers can have a blanket authorization from a parent as long as they are non-prescription and/or they are not for acute (symptomatic) treatment, whether they have a drug administration number (DIN) or not. Written authorization must be provided by the child's parent(s) using the "Non-Medication Administration Form" available on the "[Parent Forms](#)" page under "Parents" at flowerygrove.org.

Anaphylactic Policy:

The “Flowery Grove Anaphylactic Policy” is in accordance with the requirements set out in CCEYA and is as follows:

Strategy to Reduce the Risk of Exposure to Anaphylactic Causative Agents

1. **Flowery Grove Montessori School strives to be a nut-free facility.**
 - a. All types of nuts are prohibited from Flowery Grove, including in children’s lunches and snacks, staff lunches and snacks, classroom cooking projects, arts and crafts areas and projects, sensory programming areas, and in any and all other food items brought into and/or prepared on Flowery Grove property.
 - b. All types of nuts found on Flowery Grove property (in children’s bagged lunches or any other food items on Flowery Grove property) will be disposed of immediately in a safe and secure manner (outside compost bins or flushed, as appropriate).
2. Other items may be added to (or removed from) the list of prohibited anaphylactic causative agents as necessary.

Communication Plan

1. Anaphylaxis is a severe systemic allergic reaction that can be fatal, resulting in circulatory collapse or shock. The allergy may be related to food, insect stings, medicine, latex, exercises, or other causes.
2. Parents of children attending Flowery Grove will inform Flowery Grove of their child(ren)’s anaphylactic condition when completing their child(ren)’s annual registration form. If an anaphylactic condition is present, more detailed information will be gathered from the child(ren)’s parents, and potentially the child(ren)’s physician or other relevant medical professionals, and will be included in a required “Individualized Anaphylactic Plan” to be completed by the child’s parents.
3. Parents of all children who attend Flowery Grove, and Flowery Grove staff, placement students, and volunteers, are informed that there are children attending the school who are at risk for potentially life-threatening allergies, and the foods and causative agents to be avoided, as follows:
 - a. Parents of all children who attend Flowery Grove are informed annually, at the beginning of each new school year, of the causative agents that may cause an anaphylactic reaction amongst the current cohort of enrolled students. In addition, periodic reminders and/or updates will be communicated directly to parents of all children who attend Flowery Grove throughout each school year.
 - b. Flowery Grove staff, placement students, and volunteers are informed at the annual staff review of Flowery Grove’s policies, procedures, and individualized

plans that takes place during late-August/early-September each school year, or at such time as employment or placement at Flowery Grove commences, or at such time as revisions or updates to, or new, individualized anaphylactic plans are made.

- i. At the time of the annual review, Flowery Grove staff will also review the strategies intended to reduce the risk of exposure to life threatening allergies.

4. Parents of all children who attend Flowery Grove and Flowery Grove staff, placement students, and volunteers also have access to information about children with anaphylactic allergy conditions via posted individualized anaphylactic plans for each affected child. At Flowery Grove, each individualized anaphylactic plan is posted as follows:

- a. In all food service prep areas.
- b. In each classroom where relevant children are placed.

5. The Flowery Grove staff member responsible for administration and coordination of the catered “Hot Lunch” program is responsible for ensuring that the caterer is aware of the foods/causative agents not to be used in food prepared for Flowery Grove, and that appropriate food substitutes are to be provided.

Individualized Plans and Emergency Procedures

1. For each child enrolled at Flowery Grove Montessori School who has an anaphylactic allergy condition an “Individualized Anaphylactic Plan” must be completed according to the following procedure and containing the following required information:

Procedure

- a. Flowery Grove administrative staff will notify the child’s parents of the requirement to complete an “Individualized Anaphylactic Plan” for the child and will provide the parents with a copy of the plan sheet to facilitate gathering of the required information.
- b. The child’s parents will provide input and information to the development of the child’s individualized plan including consultation with any regulated health professional who is involved in the child’s health care and who, in the parent’s opinion, should be included in the consultation.
- c. Flowery Grove administrative staff will review the child’s “Individualized Anaphylactic Plan” to ensure all required information is present and correct. The child’s parents will sign the individualized plan.
- d. The child’s completed “Individualized Anaphylactic Plan” will be posted as required by this policy document, and Flowery Grove staff, placement students, and volunteers shall be informed of the child’s allergy and plan, either during the annual staff review of Flowery Grove’s policies, procedures, and individualized plans that takes place during late-August/early-September each school year, or at such time as

employment or placement at Flowery Grove commences, or at such time as revisions or updates to, or new, individualized anaphylactic plans are made.

e. The child's allergen information will be added to the published list of prohibited anaphylactic causative agents as necessary.

f. The child's parents will advise Flowery Grove as soon as possible if their child develops an allergy and requires medication, if there are any changes to the child's individualized plan (e.g., new symptoms of a reaction) or if their child has outgrown an allergy and no longer requires medication (via the "Special Dietary Arrangements" form available on the "[Parent Forms](#)" page under "Parents" at flowerygrove.org)

Individualized Anaphylactic Plan Required Information

Each "Individualized Anaphylactic Plan" must contain the following information:

- a. a description of the child's allergy;
- b. monitoring and avoidance strategies;
- c. signs and symptoms of an anaphylactic reaction;
- d. action to be taken by Flowery Grove staff in the event the child has an anaphylactic reaction;
- e. identify who may carry and administer medication for the child;
- f. whether parent/guardian consent for the child to self-administer allergy medication has been granted;
- g. whether parent/guardian consent for Flowery Grove staff to administer the allergy medication has been granted; and
- h. emergency contact information (parent/alternate emergency contact/emergency services).

Food and Nutrition

At Flowery Grove, lunch and snack are provided by the school at no additional cost to families.

Food service and nutrition requirements are addressed by a number of different guides and regulations at all three levels of governance:

1. Federally through *The Canada Food Guide*.
2. Provincially through CCEYA legislation.
3. Municipally through Hamilton Public Health

The impact of diet on concentration levels and health is well documented and the best time to instill in children a healthy attitude to food and nutrition is when they are young. We know how stubborn children can be around food, but quite often children are more open-minded amongst peers.

Lunches:

Flowery Grove is required to ensure that every child registered and participating in a full day Casa or Toddler program at Flowery Grove is provided a meal at lunch time.

Catered (Hot) Lunch:

Flowery Grove provides a catered “Hot Lunch” to children in the Toddler and Casa programs — the “Hot Lunch” program. The retained catering service will meet the requirements of its public health unit relative to food preparation, storage, and delivery, and will offer a varied menu that meets the requirements set out in Health Canada’s “The Canada Food Guide,” as indicated and approved by a nutritionist.

The catering service will be able to accommodate special dietary and feeding instructions, including food allergies, restrictions, and sensitivities, that have been provided by child’s parents, are on file at Flowery Grove, and have been communicated to the catering service. Most dietary restrictions can be accommodated other than in exceptional circumstances.

Flowery Grove strives to be a nut free facility. Nuts or nut-derivative products are not permitted and the retained catering service shall be instructed to ensure that lunches do not contain any nuts or nut products.

Drinking water is always available for children.

Food from Home (bagged lunches and snacks):

At Flowery Grove, bagged lunch requirements apply to students who require different or supplemental food, other than what is provided by Flowery Grove or it’s contracted catering service, and whose parents/guardians have completed a “Special Dietary Arrangements” form. See below.

Flowery Grove has the following requirements for “bagged lunches” (ie. food sent from home):

1. All food containers must be labelled with the child's name.
2. Refrigeration is not always possible. Please ensure that children's lunches do not contain items that may spoil if not refrigerated, or that insulated food containers and sufficient cooling packs are used.
3. Microwaves are NOT available at Flowery Grove for items to be re-heated.
4. Bagged lunches should meet the recommendations set out in the Health Canada documents “The Canada Food Guide,” or “Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide -- First Nations, Inuit and Metis.” (“The Canada Food Guide” is available in this *Flowery Grove Parent Handbook*; “Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide -- First Nations, Inuit and Metis” is available upon request.)

5. Certain foods that are high in sugar or salt content (e.g., candy, dried fruit, cookies, chips, pretzels, etc.) are not consistent with the Canada Food Guide as they offer little nutritional value, promote tooth decay, and can affect learning and development. The importance of nutritional food is heightened when bagged lunches are being provided, as the school does not control what food is offered. Program staff should monitor the content of bagged lunches and discuss with parents when there are concerns regarding the nutritional adequacy of bagged lunches.
6. **Flowery Grove strives to be a nut free facility.** Nuts or nut-derivative products are not permitted. Please take care when packing children's lunches that they do not contain any nuts or nut products.
7. Flowery Grove will always have drinking water available for children.
8. If a bagged lunch is forgotten or needs to be supplemented due to the presence of allergen containing foods or foods of low nutritional value, Flowery Grove will first attempt to contact the child's parents. If parents cannot be contacted, or cannot deliver a lunch, Flowery Grove will provide or supplement the child's lunch with items from the available daily snack food.

Snacks:

Flowery Grove is required to ensure that every child registered and participating in a full day Casa or Toddler program at Flowery Grove is offered, in addition to any meals provided, two snacks. Flowery Grove will have snack available to students during both the morning and afternoon work cycles and snacks include readily available drinking water.

Snacks provided to children in each Flowery Grove Montessori environment take into account any special dietary and feeding instructions, including food allergies, restrictions, and sensitivities, that have been provided by children's parents and that are on file at Flowery Grove.

Please do not put extra snack items in children's backpacks or send children to school with any extra snack items. Snacks from home can be a significant distraction to children and present the possibility of children with allergies or other food restrictions coming into contact with unsafe food items.

Exception: Children requiring alternative food items for specific health reasons (ex. specific food item required in conjunction with a specific medication). If your child requires alternate food arrangements, you must complete a "Special Dietary Arrangements" form available on the "[Parent Forms](#)" page under "Parents" at flowerygrove.org.

Menus:

Flowery Grove will post the menu for the catered "Hot Lunch" program on the school website on the "[Calendar, Schedules, & Menu](#)" page under the "Parents" flowerygrove.org.

Snack Menu:

Daily morning and afternoon snacks at Flowery Grove consist of a rotating variety of items such as cheese and crackers (or other grains), and raw fruits and vegetables.

Special Dietary and Feeding Arrangements:

Parents may need to make special dietary and feeding arrangements with Flowery Grove regarding food/drink in order to meet the diagnosed nutritional and health needs of their child.

Special dietary and feeding arrangements must be made in writing and may require information from relevant medical professionals. Parents must complete a “Special Dietary Arrangements” form available on the “[Parent Forms](#)” page under “Parents” at flowerygrove.org.

For each child identified as having special feeding or dietary arrangements, written instructions from a parent of the child are kept in the child's records.

Special dietary and feeding arrangements must be made in writing and Flowery Grove will follow those written instructions, in the following cases:

1. A child has a diagnosed food allergy or restriction.
2. A child at Flowery Grove is not able to receive or participate in the “Hot Lunch” program due to diagnosed nutritional or health requirements, or lifestyle choices such as cultural or religious restrictions and/or requirements.
3. A child requires, and the parents will provide, additional or supplemental snack items for specific diagnosed health reasons.

Food sent from home for students with “Special Dietary Arrangements” on file must not contain nuts or any other causative agents that may cause anaphylactic or other allergic reactions among the current student population.

Inclement Weather Policy

Stay Inside:

Outside play is an integral (and legislatively mandated) part of our programs. At Flowery Grove, students go outside for recess and dismissal unless the weather dictates that they stay indoors.

If Flowery Grove students need to stay indoors, the “gym” area of the building and/or the classrooms or room of requirement will be their activity areas, as available and applicable.

Flowery Grove students stay indoors when:

1. It is raining and students and their clothing will become wet to the point of being soaked through, causing discomfort and distraction when they are engaged in their Montessori work cycle periods. (If it is a wet, cold, dreary day, we will all be going outside for recess, as long as it is not actually raining.)

2. If a cold alert is issued by City of Hamilton's Medical Officer of Health because the temperature is at -15° C or below, or the wind chill is at -20° C or below, students will stay inside.
3. If an air quality warning is issued and the Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) is at 7 or higher, students will stay inside.

School Closures:

In cases of extreme or inclement weather, Flowery Grove follows the direction of the Hamilton Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB). If HWDSB closes, so does Flowery Grove:

HWDSB tries to post cancellation notices by 6:00 a.m. If there is a snow day, we will communicate Flowery Grove's closure to parents as early as we can via email and the school website, and you can always check [the HWDSB website](#).

Excursion and Photo Waivers

Excursions and Other Activities off the Premises:

Field trips and other activities off the premises are an integral part of Montessori education. Children at all levels may have opportunities to venture to locations outside of Flowery Grove where they can enhance their learning and development, and experience group activities in public settings. A purpose of these trips is to build a sense of community, and we may invite parents on field trips or other activities off the premises. Field trips and other activities off the premises may be of a planned, scheduled nature, or they may be the result of taking advantage of spontaneous opportunities that arise throughout the course of the school year. Planned, scheduled field trips and other activities off the premises will be announced through direct communication with children's families.

At times, parents may be required to accompany their children during whole-school community field trips or other activities off the premises. In cases where parent accompaniment is required, we ask that you be responsible for your child's behaviour during the field trip or other activity off the premises.

Children in the Toddler and Casa programs will generally participate in:

- Scheduled community field trips that may involve required parental accompaniment and supervision.
- Occasional spontaneous walks or other activities off the premises, accompanied and supervised by their Montessori guides and classroom and other school staff, that take advantage of the nearby urban and natural environments.

General “Excursions and Community Outings Waiver”:

When you complete your child's Flowery Grove registration form, you are required to provide, or not provide, permission for “Excursions and Community Outings.” If you choose to not grant permission, your child may not be able to attend certain Flowery Grove field trips or other activities off the premises, and you may be required to keep your child home from school, or to pick them up from school, at such times. The “Excursions and Community Outings” permission provides Flowery Grove with your acknowledgement of, and agreement to, your child's participation in spontaneous community outings or other activities off the premises.

In addition to the “Excursions and Community Outings” permission on the child’s Flowery Grove registration form, parents may also be required to complete and sign specific waiver forms for specific field trips or other activities off the premises. Such waiver forms may be specific to Flowery Grove, or they may be requirements of locations, businesses, or institutions directly involved in a specific field trip or other activity off the premises.

Parent Volunteer Requirements:

Parents may serve as volunteers for certain field trips or other activities. To serve as a volunteer with children where you will be responsible for the supervision of Flowery Grove students, parents must obtain and submit to Flowery Grove a "Vulnerable Sector Check." This can be obtained from the central police station (see <https://hamiltonpolice.on.ca/how-to/obtain-criminal-records-check> for more information), or you can apply online at <http://www.policessolutions.ca/checks/services/hamilton/>

Outings and Individualized Plans:

In circumstances where children have in place an individualized anaphylactic, medical, or support plan, Flowery Grove will ensure that any required steps are taken to accommodate the child’s needs while on the field trip or other activity off the premises. Such steps may include (but are not limited to):

- Confirming that children who carry their own asthma, emergency allergy, diabetes, or epilepsy medications have the required medication in their possession prior to leaving Flowery Grove.
- If children do not self-administer asthma, emergency allergy, diabetes, or epilepsy medications, Flowery Grove staff will ensure that asthma, emergency allergy, diabetes, or epilepsy medications are in the staff’s possession when leaving the school.
- Ensuring that any additional procedures to be followed for a child with a medical condition are included and/or accommodated for on the field trip or other activity off the premises, to every extent possible.
- Ensuring that any needs are requirements identified in a child’s individualized support plan are included and/or accommodated for on the field trip or other activity off the premises, to every extent possible.

Permission to Take and Publish Images

When you complete your child's Flowery Grove registration form, you will be asked to give, or not give, permission to Flowery Grove to publish photographs or videos of your child. Photographs and video of children are considered to be a part of children's school records and are personal information under CCEYA legislation and as such the "appropriate informed written consent of a parent should be a requirement prior to the release of personally identifiable information to third parties. This includes the release of any information through social media (e.g., posting pictures to Facebook)" (CCEYA 137/15 section 73). Flowery Grove takes photos and videos of students for two purposes:

1. To communicate to parents the activities of the children in the Flowery Grove Montessori environments. As you know, parents are asked to not enter the Montessori environments other than during scheduled observation times. This is mandated at all authentic Montessori schools in order to preserve the integrity of the Montessori environments by allowing the children to view their school environment as *their* space and place, in which they can take ownership and control in order to best further their development; minimizing the number of adults in a Montessori environment is essential. As such, and because Montessori is an alternative, non-traditional form of education, what goes on in the classrooms can remain a bit of a mystery to parents. To address this, we publish photographs and videos of the children engaged with Montessori materials and in various Montessori or other school-related activities to allow parents to see their and other children at work at the various Montessori levels.
2. To promote the school and Montessori education. Prospective families who are considering enrolling their children in Montessori education at Flowery Grove will view, at great length, the published photographs and videos of Flowery Grove children in order to gain a better understanding of Flowery Grove and of Montessori as a whole.

Photographs and videos of Flowery Grove students may be published in print or online newspapers, print or online school reviews, parent communications, marketing brochures, the Flowery Grove website, Flowery Grove social media channels, or other publicly accessible, viewable, and sharable locations. If you do not agree to have photographs or videos of your child published, no such information will be published, released, or shared. **Names or other identifying elements are never published.**

Clothing at Flowery Grove

Dress Code:

Students at all levels should be dressed in clothing that is appropriate and tasteful for school. Nothing too fancy or playful as the children need to focus on their work and not on what each other is wearing.

Please try to avoid garishly branded or pop culture emblazoned clothing (e.g. Disney, superhero, movie, or corporate brands). Such items of clothing can distract students from their purpose while at school (such as pretending to be a character while in class) or introduce non-purposeful, commercial concerns into the classroom culture.

- ✿ **Shirts and sweaters:** Can be any colour as long as they do not have popular culture images on them (movie or cartoon characters, for example).
- ✿ **Pants, shorts, skirts, and dresses:** Can be any colour as long as they do not have popular culture images on them.
- ✿ **A pair of indoor shoes:** These stay at the school and are suitable for students to put on and off themselves. We ask that indoor shoes do not light up and do not have popular culture images on them.
- ✿ **Weather-Appropriate Outerwear:** Please ensure that you check the weather prior to each school day to ensure that your child is prepared for outdoor play. Always assume children will be going outside every day.
 - In the winter, please provide waterproof/resistant gloves/mitts, hats, snow suits/pants, a coat, and footwear that will keep your child warm and dry.
 - In the springtime, please send your child to school with a rain jacket, rain boots, and splash pants on rainy days.
- ✿ **Spare Clothes:** We ask that you keep at least one spare set of clothing for your child at the school. Please send the spare clothes in a re-usable bag that can travel between home and school.
 - If your child runs out of spare clothing, the school will try to have extra on hand so that your child can stay comfortable. Parents are asked to launder and return clothing provided by the school within the school week as it may be needed by another student.
- ✿ Montessori encourages independence, so please ensure that students can manage their own clothing (including outdoor clothing) when it comes to things like zippers and buttons. This is especially important for younger students who are developing washroom independence.
- ✿ Please do not send students to school in *good* or *fancy* clothes. In the normal course of the school day, students get dirty or wet and it is important that they feel the freedom to focus on what fascinates them and not to worry about getting their clothes dirty.
- ✿ Students must wear closed-toe shoes on the playground at all times for safety purposes.

Labelling Clothing:

Please label all of your child's clothing and footwear. If it is coming into the school, it must be labelled. Many students have clothing that are the same style and/or size; labelling your child's clothing will save us and your child much frustration and confusion.

Flowery Grove does not assume responsibility for lost clothing or personal items.

Lost and Found:

There is a lost and found . Please let us know if you are missing items. On a few occasions each school year, we will display lost and found items for retrieval.

Outside Play and Clothing:

Outside play is an integral (and legislatively mandated) part of our programs. **Please be sure your child is dressed appropriately for the weather each day.**

At Flowery Grove, children go outside for recess and dismissal unless the weather dictates that they stay indoors. If it is a wet, cold, dreary day, we will all be going outside for recess, as long as it is not actually raining.

A few tips and info-bits to remember for the colder, wetter weather:

- ⊗ We make the call to stay inside or to go outside for recess and dismissal at the time. If it's raining in the morning it does not necessarily mean it will be indoor recess, and the outdoor space may be wet and/or muddy. **Please always assume students will be going outside every day.**
- ⊗ Students are asked to not play *in* the mud and water, but, well, you know... Please make sure they are well stocked on spare socks and other clothes at school, and warm up the laundry machines.
- ⊗ As the weather becomes colder and snowy, **please avoid fabric or knit gloves and mittens.** They are small and convenient, but they are inevitably soaking wet within 5 minutes of outdoor play and little hands are wet and cold, or glove/mitten-less.
- ⊗ Proper footwear, hats, and mitts that fit, and weather-appropriate outerwear make the cool months better for everyone. In cold weather, layering is best. Please remember to label everything with your child's name on all outdoor clothes. Snow pants, gloves/mittens, and hats are necessary all winter.
- ⊗ In cases of extreme cold or inclement weather, Flowery Grove follows the guidelines of the City of Hamilton's Medical Officer of Health and the Hamilton Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB):
 - If a cold alert is issued because the temperature is at -15° C or below, or the wind chill is at -20° C or below, children will stay inside.

- If an air quality warning is issued and the Air Quality Health Index (AQHI) is at 7 or higher, children will stay inside.
- Please see the “School Calendar and Closures” section above, and/or “Part IV: Reference and Resources: Ref. E: HWDSB Winter Weather Bus Cancellations and School Closures” for more information about inclement weather and school closures.

Holidays and Celebrations

Holiday Closures:

Flowery Grove will be closed on the following statutory holidays during the school year:

- ☼ Thanksgiving Day
- ☼ Christmas Day (during the Winter Break)
- ☼ New Year’s Day (during the Winter Break)
- ☼ Family Day
- ☼ Good Friday
- ☼ Easter Monday
- ☼ Victoria Day
- ☼ Labour Day (during Summer Vacation)

Other Vacation Closures:

Flowery Grove will also be closed for:

- ☼ Winter Break (two weeks from late-December to early-January)
- ☼ March Break (two weeks in mid-March)
- ☼ Summer Vacation (late-June to early-September)

Cultural Celebrations:

Flowery Grove is non-discriminatory and non-sectarian. We are proud of the diversity of cultures and religions within our school community. Holidays and other times of celebration are special times for the sharing of family heritage and traditions. We want students at Flowery Grove to understand and be proud of their place in the world as defined by their family, their culture, or their religion. The following are guidelines for celebrations:

- ☼ It is appropriate to study religious and cultural events from a historical perspective.
- ☼ In general, school vacations in late December are called “Winter Holidays” or “Winter Break” (rather than Christmas, Hanukkah, or Kwanza), and the 4-day long weekend in April is referred to as “Spring Break, Spring Vacation, or Spring Holiday” (rather than Easter).

Halloween

- We know that Halloween is a very exciting time for children. However, we ask that costumes and candy are not brought to school, and are saved for after-school fun with family and friends.

Valentine's Day

- If your child wants to give out Valentine's cards at school, we ask that you have one, home-made card for each student in the class and that they do not have names on them (only your child's name). Please do not send candy or other treats to school.

- ☸ Student-initiated activities and discussions are always welcomed, supported, and encouraged. It is the goal of Flowery Grove to make every student comfortable with and proud of their family, their traditions, their culture, and their religion.

Birthdays:

- ☸ Birthday celebrations at Flowery Grove are not intended to be traditional birthday parties; rather, they are celebrated in such a way as to enhance many aspects of the educational aims of the Montessori program, such as self-esteem and the idea of the passage of time.
- ☸ To help the children understand the passage of time, we have a special in-class activity to observe each child's birthday. **Please send in photos of your child at birth and for each year of his/her life.** Please label your child's age for each photo. It is helpful if you send these photos to school a few days before your child's actual birthday.
- ☸ Parents are also welcome to send the following to school with their child on the child's birthday:
 - A plant from the child to donate to the classroom (something the child can remember and water in the days and months after their birthday, and that can grow with them).
 - Fresh flowers for the child to arrange and place somewhere in the classroom.
 - A non-fiction book to donate to the school in your child's name (something your child can read or eventually learn to read, and that reflects the individual child's interests).

Toys and Other Items

Mysterious Objects?:

Many Montessori classroom materials consist of small, attractive objects that are intentionally appealing to children. If you find any "mysterious objects" in your child's possession, please return them to the school.

Toys vs. Things to Share:

Toys at school are a distraction from your child's experience with the Montessori materials and interactions with the other children. They may also become lost or broken, and are often a source of disagreement or disappointment. Therefore, toys are not permitted at Flowery Grove, even during outdoor play time and during After School care. We have an abundance of items for free play during those times.

On the other hand, we welcome children's *special things*: items of interest to be shared with the class (Show and Tell), especially if such items relate to a current focus of the classroom. Special pictures, books or magazines, music, found natural objects, collections, art objects, and artifacts are among the items your child is encouraged to share with their class. If you have any questions regarding toys vs. things to share, please check with your child's Montessori guide before sending anything to school.

Other Information

Scholastic Book Orders:

Scholastic books orders take place throughout the year, offering children's books at discounted prices. Not only does your child benefit, but Flowery Grove receives points to use toward obtaining books for our school. Catalogues are distributed and families place orders online with Scholastic.

School Photos:

Photographs of each student are taken near the beginning of each new school year. Photo proofs and order forms are distributed from which you can order photo packages from the contracted school photo company.

Student Conduct Policies

Freedom and Limits in a Montessori Environment:

"Let us leave the life free to develop within the limits of the good, and let us observe this inner life developing. This is the whole of our mission."

Maria Montessori in *Dr. Montessori's Own Handbook*.

"To let the child do as he likes when he has not yet developed any powers of control is to betray the idea of freedom."

Maria Montessori, *The Absorbent Mind*

Freedom within limits is a central tenet of Montessori education. In general, this refers to the Montessori student being free to move about the classroom environment and to choose work that they wish, provided they have been presented with the material or activity, are using the material or working at the activity properly and respectfully, and are not disturbing or disrupting the work of

others. When children in a Montessori school are demonstrating good discipline, this is what they are doing.

Discipline Policy:

From Flowery Grove's "Program Statement":

- ☉ "Flowery Grove supports positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents, child care providers, and staff."
- ☉ "Flowery Grove encourages the children in our care to interact and communicate in a positive way by supporting their ability to self-regulate."

At Flowery Grove, children are disciplined in a positive manner and at a level that is appropriate to their actions and their ages in order to promote self-regulation, ensure health and safety, respect the rights of others and themselves, and maintain the school environment and equipment.

Flowery Grove students at all levels are learning about their worlds and how to negotiate them. Children are not "bad" and they do not get in "trouble." Rather, it is explained to them why their actions are not appropriate or acceptable, and a different way is presented. Flowery Grove students will experience natural consequences, such as not being permitted to continue using a material they are misusing, being asked to leave a game or play space if they are hurting others or being unkind, or being asked to visit a school office or other space to discuss their behaviour in an age and individual child-appropriate manner if they are disrupting the Montessori classroom environment.

CCEYA sets out a number of prohibited practices that forbid physical punishment and other harmful disciplinary practices to protect the emotional and physical well-being of children. It sets out clear direction regarding prohibited practices to support the overall well-being of children. These practices are never permitted in a childcare centre.

The following practices are forbidden by law, and are never practiced at Flowery Grove (whether they are forbidden by law or not!):

1. Corporal punishment of the child;
2. Physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a high chair, car seat, stroller or other device for the purposes of discipline or in lieu of supervision, unless the physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing a child from hurting himself, herself or someone else, and is used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent;
3. Locking the exits of the child care centre or home child care premises for the purpose of confining the child, or confining the child in an area or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is required as part of the licensee's emergency management policies and procedures;
4. Use of harsh, degrading measures or threats or derogatory language directed at or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, scare, or frighten the child or undermine their self-respect, dignity, or self-worth;
5. Depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing, or bedding; or

6. Inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.
7. Sexual abuse, sexual misconduct or engaging in a prescribed sexual act, as those terms are defined in the [*Early Childhood Educators Act, 2007*](#).

No employee or volunteer or student who is part of Flowery Grove Montessori shall engage in any of the prohibited practices set out above with respect to a child receiving child care.

Positive Approaches to Behaviour Management:

The development of inner discipline and self-regulation in children is always the goal at Flowery Grove. These goals are fostered in many ways. The Montessori classroom environment is organized in an orderly and logical manner. Children choose work and materials that they are capable of doing and using properly, and are free to continue such work for as long as they wish without interference from others.

This approach alleviates many problems of discipline that might arise in more restrictive settings. In addition, the mixed-age grouping of the Montessori classroom gives younger children an opportunity to emulate the more mature behaviour of their older classmates.

Children are encouraged to handle their disagreements by talking to each other first and by attempting to resolve conflicts independently before seeking help from an adult. Skills needed for conflict resolution and problem-solving are learned as an important part of the Montessori lessons on Grace and Courtesy presented and practiced in the classrooms.

Parents are contacted in cases of a repeated misbehaviour or a single serious incident, and parents may be asked to attend a meeting with the Flowery Grove principal and/or the child's Montessori guides.

You may be asked to review and sign an "Incident Report":

- ⊗ An **Incident Report** will be completed in cases where a child has engaged in harmful or disrespectful behaviour towards another student or staff member, or has otherwise acted in a manner that the staff member feels should be communicated to the child's Montessori guides and parents (examples include biting, willfully damaging school property, or climbing over fences).
- ⊗ **Privacy**
When filling out Incident and Accident Reports, staff must respect the privacy of each child and the child's family. If more than one child is involved in an incident or accident, a separate report will be filled out for each child and other children's names will not be included in the reports.
- ⊗ **Procedure**
Accident and Incident Reports are signed by the involved staff member and at least one of the child's parents. One copy of the report will be given to the parent and one copy will be placed in the child's student records file.

In certain, and rare, circumstances, a child may be permanently dismissed from Flowery Grove due to an inability to function in a Montessori environment. Occasionally, a child needs more help than we are equipped to give. Parents will be informed if the child's Montessori guides, and/or the principal, are of the opinion that issues exist which may prove detrimental to the child's development in a Montessori environment, or the development of other children in the Montessori environment. Issues may range from specific, diagnosed learning differences to behavioural or other developmental issues, many of which are often related.

As noted in the "Withdrawal or Dismissal from Flowery Grove" section, the following are grounds for dismissal from Flowery Grove:

- ⊗ Extreme aggression, physical violence, or other behaviour that threatens the physical safety of other children or school staff members.
- ⊗ Atypical reactions to everyday activities/situations that present danger to and/or concern for the child and/or other children in the classroom.
- ⊗ Atypical behaviour in everyday activities/situations that warrant one-on-one attention for an extended period.

Outdoor, Outing, and Playground Rules:

The same expectations and approaches for behaviour, discipline, and self-regulation that apply in the Montessori classroom environments are in place when children are outside of their classrooms, whether that be on the school's playground, at a public park/playground, or on an outing such as a field trip or community outing.

When outside of the school, the space the children are occupying and the place that they are visiting is considered to be a Montessori environment and material, in context. Students who demonstrate that they are not ready to use that space-and-place material properly and respectfully may not be permitted to *use it*. It is a rare but potential situation wherein a child may not be permitted to attend a field trip or other school outing.

As regarding regular outdoor play on the Flowery Grove playground or at a public park, please see the following excerpt from the "Flowery Grove Playground Safety Policy":

- d. Staff shall allow the children to play as the children desire and see fit, with the following limitations:
 - i. Children may not engage in any *rough* play. This includes fighting and wrestling in the contexts of either conflict or play.
 - ii. Children may use any provided toys or naturally occurring playground materials for play so long as they demonstrate an ability to use such toys and/or materials in a safe and respectful manner.

[Note: as a Montessori school, the playground and the playground toys and materials are considered *Montessori materials* and, as such, staff should explain to children why they can or cannot use certain toys or materials in the relevant context.

For example, “You are showing me that you are not ready to use this hockey stick safely, so you may not use it right now.”]

Children are expected to treat each other, and staff members, with kindness and respect at all times on the playground. Staff must ensure that all children on the playground feel safe and happy. If a child is upsetting another child or causing another child to be unsafe, that child may be removed from the playground and placed under close staff supervision by accompanying a staff member on the playground; during this time of supervision, staff will explain to the child why they are being supervised and will discuss with the child what is appropriate and inappropriate playground behaviour. A staff member may release the child back to free play if they feel the child is ready to engage in safe, appropriate play.

Admission Policy

Flowery Grove Montessori School does not discriminate on the basis of race, colour, national or ethnic origin, gender, or sexuality in hiring, promotion, or training of employees, nor in the admissions, rights, privileges, programs, and activities of its students.

CCEYA places certain restrictions on the numbers of children that may be enrolled in certain programs, at certain ages.

Admission Requirements:

The following requirements must be met prior to admission:

- ☛ **Prospective Toddler** students must typically be at least 18 months old by September 1 of the school year, but younger than 30 months old (2 years, 6 months). Toddler students must be independently mobile (standing and walking, with assistance on stairs expected) and able to communicate their needs (even by way of sounds and gestures).
- ☛ **Prospective Casa** students must be at least 2 years, 6 months old by September 1 of the school year but younger than 6-years-old. Casa children must be toilet-trained (children will have toileting mishaps at school, but diapers or pull-ups are not permitted). [Note: children who begin a Montessori Casa program at the youngest allowable age may be required to complete four (4) years in Casa before they are eligible for either a Montessori elementary program or entrance into grade 1 of the public school system.]

All forms and contracts relating to admission and enrolment must be completed and signed, where applicable, in full to confirm and finalize registration at Flowery Grove.

A non-refundable registration fee must be remitted to reserve the enrolled student’s place.

Application and Admission:

Applying to and being offered admission to Flowery Grove Montessori proceeds as follows:

1. Parents complete a Flowery Grove “Application Form” available on our website: Click “Apply Now” at <https://flowerygrove.org>
2. Once an application has been submitted, reviewed, and approved due to its meeting of qualifications based on an internal rubric, and if space is available, we will contact the parents to come to Flowery Grove for a tour and/or classroom observation, and a question and answer meeting with a member of the administration team.
3. If all parties agree to proceed, parents will be asked to complete a Flowery Grove registration form.

Admission Timing:

Flowery Grove completes registration of current students for the following school year, and any siblings that may be starting school, in December of each year.

Offers of admission to approved applicants begin in the fall of each year and continue until all spaces are filled. Once all available spaces have been filled for the upcoming school year, families remaining on our waitlist will be contacted to inform them of that status and to offer the option to carry over their waitlist position to the following school year, or for spaces that may become available from time to time.

New Student Registration:

Registration of new students to Flowery Grove Montessori proceeds as follows:

1. Submission of Flowery Grove application form and completion of a tour and/or observation.
2. Submission of a completed and signed Flowery Grove registration form.
3. Submission of a non-refundable registration.

Returning Student Registration:

Registrations for returning Flowery Grove students proceed as follows:

1. Submission of a completed annual Flowery Grove registration form.
2. Submission of either payment in full or the first quarterly payment, and registration fee for new Flowery Grove sibling students.

Registration Prioritization:

Multi-year education cycles are an essential part of Montessori education. Flowery Grove offers authentic A.M.I. Montessori education. Accordingly, student registration at Flowery Grove

Montessori School is first offered to families intending to pursue complete Montessori education cycles.

For example, if a child is not completing a full Casa education cycle (3 years), that child, and any siblings, will be prioritized for registration after children completing full cycles.

Registrations at Flowery Grove Montessori School are offered to families according to the following priority order:

1. Current Flowery Grove students continuing through full Montessori education cycles.
2. Newly registering siblings of current Flowery Grove students who are continuing through full Montessori education cycles.
3. New applicants to Flowery Grove Montessori School intending to pursue full Montessori education cycles.
4. Current Flowery Grove students, and siblings, not continuing through full Montessori education cycles.

Admissions of Children with Exceptionalities and Learning Differences:

Maria Montessori began developing her model of education in an Italian hospital in order to serve the needs of children that were not being addressed by traditional education models. Montessori soon became an exceptional form of education for all children while retaining beneficial advantages for children with exceptionalities, learning differences, and other developmental issues.

At Flowery Grove Montessori School, we wholeheartedly embrace the full range of benefits Montessori offers to all children. Unfortunately, in order to best serve all our students, including children with exceptionalities, learning differences, and other developmental issues, we cannot admit every child that we could help, as much as we want to. Admissions of children with exceptionalities, learning differences, and other developmental issues is carefully considered relative to available staff resources, current student populations, supports and accommodations we can provide as a Montessori school, and access to outside agency support.

If we are not able to offer the support, staffing, or environment to best serve and suit your child, we promise to be up front and honest with you, and to provide any assistance we can in helping you find a suitable school for your child.

Individualized Support Plans and Inclusive Programming (for children with learning differences and/or other needs)

Montessori was originally developed by Maria Montessori in her work with disadvantaged and special needs children. As such, Montessori can be a beneficial and advantageous educational setting and program for children with learning differences and special needs, and Flowery Grove continues to embrace this tradition.

Montessori guides are trained to individualize and adjust instruction for children in a variety of ways. This training allows guides to successfully accommodate to children with a variety of learning differences and special needs.

Flowery Grove will develop, as necessary, in conjunction with parents and other specialist service providers, an "Individualized Support Plan (ISP)" and/or an "Individual Education Plan (IEP)" for children with diagnosed learning differences or special needs. Flowery Grove may also recommend to parents the coordination of contracted services for specialists and/or testing to help children with specialized needs; any fees for external services or specialists are the responsibility of the child's family.

Flowery Grove works in compliance with CCEYA requirements for "Individualized Support Plans and Inclusive Programming," ensuring that, for each child with diagnosed needs, there is an up-to-date Individualized Support Plan that describes:

1. How Flowery Grove will support the child to function and participate in a meaningful and purposeful manner while in our care.
2. Any supports or aids, or adaptations or other modifications to the physical, social, and learning environment that are necessary to achieve the above, where applicable.
3. Instructions relating to the child's use of the supports or aids or, if necessary, the child's use of or interaction with the adapted or modified environment, where applicable.

And,

4. That is signed by the individuals who have participated in the development of the Individualized Support Plan, and that those individuals are listed in the document and includes a parent of the child.

Furthermore, Flowery Grove Montessori programming shall reflect the individualized support plans of each child with a special need and is inclusive of all children in the program.

Please note:

Any testing, therapy, tutoring, or contracted professional services above and beyond standard and inclusive Flowery Grove program provision may be an additional expense to parents. In certain situations, parents may also be expected to arrange for the advice and assistance of professionals trained in various therapies, techniques, and service provisions, as required, to ensure the child's success in Flowery Grove Montessori School's programming and environment, including but not limited to psychologists, speech therapists, and physical or occupational therapists. If a child's needs require too many adjustments to our Montessori program, or significantly detract from meeting the needs of other children, we may recommend a more suitable learning environment.

Withdrawal or Dismissal From Flowery Grove

There is no refund or reduction in fees in cases of withdrawal, dismissal, absence, cancellation, or persistent absenteeism.

The “Flowery Grove Dismissal Policy and Procedure” informs Flowery Grove staff and parents on what warrants dismissal from the school and the steps to take in cases of dismissal.

Grounds for Dismissal:

- ⊗ Extreme aggression, physical violence, or other behaviour that threatens the physical safety of other children or school staff members.
- ⊗ Atypical reactions to everyday activities/situations that present danger to and/or concern for the child and/or other children in the classroom.
- ⊗ Atypical behaviour to everyday activities/situations that warrant one-on-one attention for an extended period.

Procedure:

1. Upon observing a situation directly related to the above stated grounds for dismissal, staff are to communicate to both the parents and the Flowery Grove administrative team what has been observed or what their concerns are. An “Incident Report” is the primary method of communication in these instances.
2. The administrative team and staff will meet to determine if a plan should be put in place with the parents or if a direct dismissal is warranted.
3. If a direct dismissal is warranted, Flowery Grove will issue a Dismissal Form to the parents/caregivers that explains the reason(s) for dismissal.
4. If a direct dismissal is not warranted, then the staff/administration team will put together a plan to work towards preventing the observed behaviour from continuing.
5. If a plan is put in place, a meeting will be called with the parents/caregivers to share the plan and ensure that all parties have a clear understanding of the plan.
6. Once a plan is put in place, if the initial behaviour(s) continues to be an issue, or other behaviour(s) for means of dismissal is observed, a direct dismissal may be issued. If a direct dismissal is issued, Flowery Grove will complete step 3. If a direct dismissal is not issued, staff are to complete steps 4-6 until such time as the issue(s) are resolved or staff/administration feel that a direct dismissal is to be issued.

Waitlist Policy and Procedure

The Flowery Grove “Waitlist Policy and Procedure” is in accordance with requirements set out in CCEYA.

Flowery Grove Montessori School will establish waitlists in cases where maximum capacity has been reached at specific program levels, when families are seeking enrolment in future school years, and when potential client families express interest in being placed on a waitlist by way of submission of a Flowery Grove application form.

There is no fee to be placed on a Flowery Grove waitlist.

For the purpose of Flowery Grove Wait Lists, “maximum capacity” is as follows for each level:

Toddler: 15 students

Casa North: 24 students

Casa South: 24 students

Furthermore, certain CCEYA legislated regulations and Flowery Grove policies shall affect various aspects of the number and make-up of each classroom environment, thereby affecting families’ positions on the waitlists:

1. As a Montessori school, Flowery Grove levels are made up of children from multi-age age groupings. In certain circumstances, and to the best of our ability, we may seek to balance the number of children in each classroom environment, at each age-level. Therefore, waitlist priority and position may be given to children of a specific age, in certain cases.
2. The “Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014” contains regulated limits on Casa classroom environment make-up. Under a certain licensing tier, only a certain percentage of the Casa classroom student population can be made up of children who are 2-years 8-months old as of Sept. 1 during each school year. Waitlist positions may be affected by this regulation, in certain cases.

Waitlist Positioning:

Flowery Grove application forms are submitted electronically. Each application form receives a digital date and time stamp upon submission; those date and time stamps are used to determine the initial waitlist position, on a first-come/first-served basis, subject to the potential circumstances outlined above.

Each application is reviewed against an internal rubric and applications may be prioritized above earlier applications accordingly.

Each family shall move up the waitlist as children above them are placed in Flowery Grove Montessori classroom environments, or when other families choose to be removed from a waitlist.

Access to Waitlist Position:

Families that have chosen to be placed on a waitlist may contact Flowery Grove via email (at registration@flowerygrove.org) to inquire about their current position on the waitlist. In order to maintain the privacy and confidentiality of all families on a waitlist, access to full waitlists will not be permitted.

Timeframe of Waitlist Enrolment Notifications:

Flowery Grove completes registration of current students for the following school year, and any siblings that may be starting school, in December of each year.

Offers of admission to approved applicants begin in the fall of each year and continue until all spaces are filled. Once all available spaces have been filled for the upcoming school year, families remaining on our waitlist will be contacted to inform them of that status and to offer the option to carry over their waitlist position to the following school year, or for spaces that may become available from time to time.

Part II: Program Handbooks

The Toddler Program

The Toddler program is designed to meet the development needs and intrinsic interests of children between the ages of 18 months and 3-years-old.

Toddlers are motivated to learn from and adapt to their surroundings, soaking up knowledge through sensorial experiences. The Toddler Montessori environment offers a rich curriculum fostering independence in movement, communication, and self-care. Purposeful activities form the basis of the daily work cycle that guides children through cognitive development, receptive and expressive language development, the strengthening of fine and gross motor skills, and an introduction to social skills and relations outside the home.

The Toddler program includes four core curriculum areas:

- Practical Life (including self-care skills such as toilet learning)
- Movement
- Sensorial
- Language

In addition to the gross motor activities available in the classroom, students enjoy daily free play either in the school courtyard or gymnasium. Toddlers learn to engage and cooperate with other children, as well as continuing to enjoy independent activities in parallel play with their peers.

Typical Daily Toddler Routine

(see chart on next page)

Arrival:

- ☛ Children arrive at Flowery Grove, are greeted by a member of staff, and proceed to the playground.
- ☛ Children transition to the Toddler classroom where they independently hang up coats, other belongings, and take off outdoor and change into indoor shoes, with assistance from guides as needed.
- ☛ Children enter the classroom.

Montessori Work Cycle:

- ☛ Children are guided to choose materials from the different Montessori activity areas.
- ☛ Some children will receive presentations to introduce and reinforce concepts that specific Montessori materials work to develop.
- ☛ Snack is available during the work cycle; the steps involved are also a Montessori activity.

Outdoor recess.

Lunch.

Nap.

Montessori Work Cycle:

- ☛ The afternoon work cycle primarily involves awakening from nap, toileting, snack, and self-care in preparation for dismissal.
- ☛ Montessori activities are available and students may choose materials from the different Montessori activity areas.

Dismissal.

- ☛ Parents pick up children at the outside gate.

Daily Toddler Schedule:

Our daily schedule may change slightly from time to time depending on the needs and capabilities of the children. Please find our general schedule below:

Arrival: 8:00-8:45
Work Cycle: 8:45-11:00
Recess: 11:00-12:00
Lunch: 12:00-12:45
Nap: 12:45-2:45
Work Cycle: 2:45-3:30
Dismissal: 3:30
After Care: 3:30-4:30

Snacks and Lunch:

- ☼ Flowery Grove provides a morning and afternoon snack and a nutritious hot lunch. We request that you ensure your child has a healthy breakfast before arriving at school.
- ☼ We offer water to the children throughout the day.
- ☼ The children help to prepare the snacks in the classroom.
- ☼ We eat as a community, setting our table, serving, eating, and cleaning up together. Each child plays an important role in this activity.
- ☼ Table etiquette and manners are our focus when eating together.
- ☼ We stress good nutrition; we want to avoid processed foods, additives, and sugar in particular.
- ☼ Should your child have any dietary concerns or allergies, please make us aware of them on your Flowery Grove registration form or via the [Special Dietary Needs form](#) as new issues arise or are resolved.

Illness:

Please see the “Disease and Illness” section of this handbook for general rules surrounding children and illness from Hamilton Public Health. Due to the communal nature of the Toddler program, and toddler children’s still-developing personal hygiene practices, extra precautions are taken to keep everyone healthy in the Toddler environment.

In the interest of each child’s health, **please keep your child home if they show any signs of illness such as fever, vomiting, or diarrhea.** If your child is unable to participate in the school community activities they should be resting at home.

Please notify the school when your child contracts a contagious disease such as mumps, chicken pox, measles, etc., so that other parents can be notified. Names are never shared.

In general, children with a contagious disease should be kept at home for 24 hours after fever and symptoms have subsided. Serious or prolonged illnesses should be reported to us.

Absence and Other Notifications:

Please notify the Flowery Grove office (office@flowerygrove.org; 905-525-4283) for the following reasons:

- ☼ If your child will be absent from school; please include the reason, including specific symptoms if unwell.
- ☼ If your child is to leave early or is to leave with someone unknown to their teachers.

- ⦿ If your child will be late to school.
- ⦿ If the parents are going to be out of town, please let us know and include the length of absence and with whom the child will be staying or whom will be caring for them.
- ⦿ If anything change in the child's home life (death in the family, major illness, parent away on a trip, new pet, major milestone, etc.) as this can have a significant impact on their school days.

The Casa Program

The Flowery Grove Casa dei Bambini (“Children’s House”) program is for toilet-trained students between the ages of 2.5–6-years-old (with the understanding that young children will have toileting mishaps). It is a sensory-rich environment of discovery designed to promote a love of learning and deep concentration. It is an individualized, bilingual program that helps each child develop physically, emotionally, cognitively, and socially, at their own pace.

The Montessori curriculum helps each child gain self-confidence, independence, physical development, and the tools necessary for academic progression. The multi-age group provides opportunities for peer learning and mentorship, both in the classroom and on the playground.

The Montessori Casa environment consists of four areas: Practical Life, Sensorial, Language, and Mathematics, and contains elements of a Culture curriculum within the four core subject areas. Children are given a careful balance between direction, guidance, and freedom in all areas.

Practical Life:

In the Practical Life area of the Montessori Casa environment, children learn how to function successfully in their own environment. The practical life area has activities that surround the child with everyday life activities, such as pouring, cutting, and sweeping. As children at this age continue to adapt to activities of the home and family environment, these activities guide them to an understanding of how things work. Through care of the environment, care of the person, and grace and courtesy, the practical life area is the foundation for all the other areas of the classroom. The activities aid the child in developing control and co-ordination of their movements, concentration, independence, self-esteem, and responsibility. Practical life activities include:

- ✿ Exercises involving proper use of mat, chair, door, tray, grain, water, funnel, sponge, and folding.
- ✿ Care of self, including washing hands, grooming, sewing, and dressing frames (learning to zip, button, and snap), as well as personal hygiene activities such as blowing noses.
- ✿ Care of the indoor environment, including dusting, sweeping, polishing, furniture washing, mopping, folding, plant care, and flower arranging.
- ✿ Food preparation, including setting a table, preparing fruit and vegetables, and pouring.
- ✿ Care of the outdoor environment, including sweeping, shoveling, pulling weeds, and collecting leaves.
- ✿ Grace and courtesy skills, including greetings, shaking hands, excusing oneself, not interrupting, introductions, and saying please and thank you.

Sensorial:

Montessori developed materials for the Sensorial area that represent abstractions such as length, volume, and colour. The Sensorial materials allow the child to work with abstract ideas using concrete activities. Through these activities, the child also learns corresponding language and has the freedom to manipulate and learn from their own work.

The early years are the critical years for the development of the senses. The main objective of the Sensorial area is to refine and develop the five senses. Classification, contrasting and comparison of colour, shape, smell, feel, temperature, weight, and texture are all explored. All of this broadens the child's ability to proceed to a higher level of activity.

Specific sensorial activities include:

- ⊗ Language and experience involving Cylinder Blocks, Pink Tower, Broad Stair, Red Rods, Colour Tablets, and Geometric Solids.
- ⊗ Activities involving the Geometric Cabinet (circles, rectangles, irregular figures, triangles, and polygons), Constructive Triangles, Binomial Cube, Trinomial Cube, Knob-less Cylinders (graduation and comparison), stereognostic senses (rough and smooth boards and fabrics), and discrimination exercises (Mystery Bag, Smelling Bottles).

Language:

The Language area focuses on the enrichment of spoken language, as well as the development of writing and reading. Children are presented with a broad and varied vocabulary applied to all areas of the curriculum, and are encouraged to develop their conversational skills in both English and French. The French-speaking assistant provides an immersive experience, material-based vocabulary lessons, and uses music and song to encourage second language acquisition.

Children are given the keys to express themselves in writing through classic Montessori materials such as the Sandpaper Letters and Moveable Alphabet before they progress to reading. Specific language activities include:

- ⊗ Enrichment of vocabulary and concepts through questioning activities, conversation, naming materials, story-telling, classified cards, and poetry.
- ⊗ Sandpaper Letters and Moveable Alphabet.
- ⊗ Phonetic Object Game and Reading Cards.
- ⊗ Key phonograms used in making words, sentences, and stories.

Mathematics:

The primary purpose of the Montessori mathematics materials at the Casa level is to lay a sound quantity and numeral foundation. Children are intuitively interested in numbers, quantities, and the decimal system. Manipulative materials are utilized in the mathematics curriculum to provide independent, hands-on experience with mathematical principles. These materials assist the children in developing number sense and awareness of quantity in relation to numeric symbols, as well as a deep understanding of the decimal system and place value.

Work is also undertaken to solve equations in all four operations, as well the memorization of addition/subtraction and multiplication/division tables, relative to each child's individual pace and progress. Children are also introduced to work with fractions.

Specific mathematics activities include the following:

- ⊗ Numbers one to ten.
- ⊗ Decimal system (units, tens, hundreds, thousands).
- ⊗ Teens and tens.
- ⊗ Short and Long Bead Chains.
- ⊗ Memory work on addition, subtraction, division, and multiplication.
- ⊗ Sensorial introduction to fractions.

Culture:

Elements of the Culture curriculum are found within each of the four core subject areas, introducing young students to customs, visual art, and music from around the world. The Montessori Bells are a foundation material for the children's study of music to develop their ear and an understanding of intervals of sound through the C Major scale. Other culture materials develop the children's interest in physical and social geography, and provide an introduction to the study of botany and zoology. Activities in the Culture area often complement activities in other areas, such as the Practical Life and Sensorial areas.

In terms of science, Casa children learn about living and non-living things, plants and their parts, animals and their parts, life cycles, metamorphosis, and the physical sciences. Seasons and temperature are also part of science work.

Specific science activities include:

- ⊗ Living things, including plants, animals, and introductions to their classification, such as vertebrates and invertebrates.

- Non-living things, including natural and human-made distinctions.
- Botany cards, language, and extensions of the involved materials.
- Zoology, including vertebrates, general characteristics of birds, fish, reptiles, amphibians, and invertebrates.

Social studies work consists of geography, history, calendar, time, holidays, maps, and world cultures.

Specific areas of focus include:

- Geology.
- Geographic knowledge-building materials, including a sandpaper globe, painted globe, map of the world (continents and oceans), maps of the continents, needs of humanity, land and water forms (island/lake, cape/bay, gulf/peninsula, isthmus/strait, systems of lakes/archipelago); many of these materials also reinforce motor-skills development.
- Word study definitions that complement language area work.

Children are also introduced to various forms of art, and they work to develop the skills required to create their own artistic expressions. Many of these skills complement the fine-motor work they perform in other areas of the classroom in preparation for future writing work.

Specific art activities include:

- Developmental skills including cutting, use of brushes, using glue, drawing, colouring, and metal insets (no, sadly, not metal *insects*).
- Exposure to works of art.

Music in the Casa environment includes the development of skills, appreciation for music, and the development of auditory discrimination and fine-motor skills.

Specific music activities include:

- Bell exercises to help develop perceptions of high vs. low sounds, matching, and scale.
- Singing, and exposure to different types of music.

Typical Daily Casa Routine

Arrival:

- ☛ Children arrive at Flowery Grove, are greeted by their Montessori guide and independently hang up coats and change into indoor shoes, with assistance from guides only if needed.
- ☛ Children enter the classroom.

Montessori Work Cycle:

- ☛ Children are guided to choose materials from the different Montessori activity areas.
- ☛ Some children will receive presentations to introduce and reinforce concepts that specific Montessori materials work to develop.
- ☛ Snack is available if a child wishes; the steps involved are also a Montessori activity.

Lunch.

Outdoor recess.

Montessori Work Cycle:

- ☛ Children are guided to choose materials from the different Montessori activity areas.
- ☛ Some children will receive presentations to introduce and reinforce concepts that specific Montessori materials work to develop.
- ☛ Snack is available if a child wishes; the steps involved are also a Montessori activity.

Outdoor play and dismissal.

- ☛ Parents pick up children at the outside gate.

Daily Casa Schedule

Arrival:	8:00-8:45
Work Cycle:	8:00-11:45
Lunch:	11:45-12:30
Recess:	12:30-1:30
Work Cycle:	1:30-3:00
Recess:	3:00-3:30
Dismissal:	3:30-4:00
After Care:	4:00-4:30

Illness:

Please see the “Disease and Illness” section of this handbook for general rules surrounding children and illness from Hamilton Public Health. Due to the communal nature of the Casa program, and Casa children’s still-developing personal hygiene practices, extra precautions are taken to keep everyone healthy in the Casa environments.

In the interest of each child’s health, **please keep your child home if they show any signs of illness such as fever, vomiting, or diarrhea.** If your child is unable to participate in the school community activities they should be resting at home.

Please notify the school when your child contracts a contagious disease such as mumps, chicken pox, measles, etc., so that other parents can be notified. Names are never shared.

In general, children with a contagious disease should be kept at home for 24 hours after fever and symptoms have subsided. Serious or prolonged illnesses should be reported to us.

Absence and Other Notifications:

Please notify the Flowery Grove office (office@flowerygrove.org; 905-525-4283) for the following reasons:

- ☛ If your child will be absent from school; please include the reason, including specific symptoms if unwell.
- ☛ If your child is to leave early or is to leave with someone unknown to their teachers.
- ☛ If your child will be late to school.
- ☛ If the parents are going to be out of town, please let us know and include the length of absence and with whom the child will be staying or whom will be caring for them.
- ☛ If anything changes in the child’s home life (death in the family, major illness, parent away on a trip, new pet, major milestone, etc.) as this can have a significant impact on their school days.

Part III: CCEYA Required Policies

As a holder of a childcare license, Flowery Grove is required to develop, implement, and make available a number policies and procedures. Some of those policies are published, in whole or in part, elsewhere in this handbook as they affect elements of Flowery Grove's day-to-day operations. All required CCEYA policies are available to view at the links below.

[Anaphylaxis Policy and Procedure](#)

[Attendance and Daily Written Record Policy and Procedure](#)

[Criminal Reference Check Policy and Procedure](#)

[Emergency Management Policy and Procedures](#)

[Flowery Grove Montessori School has in place emergency management policies and procedures as required under the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014, ONTARIO REGULATION 137/15, GENERAL, section 68.1. In cases of emergency, families will be notified by email and/or posting at flowerygrove.org and/or telephone, as the circumstance dictates; please see the linked policy document above for details.]

[Fire Safety Procedures, Drills, and Evacuation Policy](#)

 [HFD Approved Fire Safety Plan](#)

[Implementation and Review of Policies, Procedures, and Individualized Plans](#)

[Medication Administration Policy and Procedure](#)

[Monitoring Compliance and Contraventions](#)

[Nutrition Policy](#)

[Parent Issues and Concerns Policy and Procedure](#)

[Playground Safety Policy and Procedures](#)

[Privacy Policy](#)

[includes information about student records and information]

[Program Statement Implementation Policy](#)

[Safe Arrival and Dismissal Policy and Procedure](#)

[Sanitary Practices Policy](#)

[Serious Occurrences Policy](#)

[Sleep Policy and Procedure](#)

Staff Training and Development Policy

Supervision of Volunteers and Students Policy

[here, “students” refers to adult students engaged in educational placement requirements]

Vaccine and Immunization Policy

Waitlist Policy and Procedure

Water Flushing and Sampling Policy and Procedure

Part IV: Reference and Resources

Reference A: Flowery Grove Program Statement

CCEYA brought into effect the requirement for child care centres in Ontario to develop a “Program Statement” that includes 11 goals and how they will be achieved. The goals are derived from *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario’s Pedagogy for the Early Years* (HDLH) — the common provincial framework to guide programming and pedagogy in licensed child care settings.

How Does Learning Happen (HDLH):

Subsection 55 (3) of the *Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014* (CCEYA) authorizes the Minister of Education to issue policy statements regarding programming and pedagogy for the purpose of guiding licensees of child care and early years programs and services in developing their programs and services.

Under this authority, the Minister has named *How Does Learning Happen? Ontario’s Pedagogy for the Early Years* (HDLH) as the common provincial framework to guide programming and pedagogy in licensed child care settings.

HDLH is a professional learning resource that provides a common framework to help licensees focus on knowledge from research, theory, and practice on what’s most important for children. It encompasses a broad range of program philosophies and approaches and may look quite different when put into practice in a variety of settings.

Flowery Grove Montessori School’s interpretation of Montessori pedagogy and programming is consistent with the Minister of Education’s Policy Statement as set out in *How Does Learning Happen?* It is important to note that Montessori pedagogy often describes children’s activities as “work” where HDLH describes children’s activity as “play,” but the activities, as experienced by a child, are one and the same.

Legislated Goals and Implementation Approaches:

1. Promote the health, safety, nutrition, and well-being of the children

Goal: To uphold the highest of standards in regard to the health, safety, nutrition, and well-being of the children in attendance.

Approach: Flowery Grove has established policies and procedures that provide clear guidance towards meeting regulations and standards established by municipal, provincial, and federal government bodies and agencies.

- **Sanitary Practices:** Flowery Grove adheres to the directives of Hamilton Public Health regarding licensed child care facilities. This policy covers requirements for cleaning, illness, and other items such as hand washing, animals, and food safety.

- ⊗ **Fire Safety:** Flowery Grove has developed a fire safety plan in accordance with provincial legislation and as approved by the Hamilton Fire Department.
- ⊗ **Emergency Management:** Flowery Grove has in place emergency management plans that meet the requirements of provincial legislation and that are consistent with those used and known by the Hamilton Wentworth District School Board and Hamilton Emergency Services.
- ⊗ **Vaccine and Immunization:** Flowery Grove adheres to the Hamilton Public Health schedule and process for vaccine and immunization reporting, suspension, and exemption.
- ⊗ **Vulnerable Sector Check:** Flowery Grove adheres to provincial legislation requiring all staff that interact with children in licensed child care to submit a vulnerable sector check as performed by the Hamilton Police Service.
- ⊗ **Medication Administration:** Flowery Grove adheres to provincial legislation regarding the administration of medication to children during their time at school.
- ⊗ **Serious Occurrences:** Flowery Grove adheres to provincial legislation regarding the reporting, posting, and review of defined serious occurrences.
- ⊗ **Prohibited Practices:** Flowery Grove adheres to provincial legislation that sets out which actions are strictly prohibited at all times.
- ⊗ **Sleep Policy and Procedure:** Flowery Grove adheres to provincial legislation regarding the provision for and monitoring of children whom require sleep during the school day.
- ⊗ **Supervision of Volunteers and Students:** Flowery Grove adheres to provincial legislation requiring supervision of volunteers and educational placement students.
- ⊗ **Playground Safety:** Flowery Grove adheres to provincial legislation regarding the size, safety, and inspection of playground spaces, including review by certified inspectors.
- ⊗ **Nutrition Policy:** Flowery Grove adheres to provincial legislation regarding nutrition provision and requirement, as recommended by the Canada Food Guide.

In addition, Flowery Grove staff ensures the health, safety, nutrition, and well-being of the children via:

- ⊗ Regular communication between staff regarding the conditions of the indoor and outdoor spaces. Staff are responsible for providing a safe, organized, clean, and productive environment for the children at all times.
- ⊗ Staff check and note issues of student health each day and illnesses are recorded and tracked.
- ⊗ All staff have and maintain up to date infant/child first aid and cpr certification.
- ⊗ Staff undergo annual anaphylaxis training.
- ⊗ Staff model and practice effective hand washing at relevant times such as before and after food preparation, before and after diapering and/or helping with toileting and changing of soiled clothes.
- ⊗ Staff wear gloves while diapering and helping children with bodily functions/toileting to prevent the spread of infectious material.
- ⊗ Provision of a morning and afternoon snack and hot nutritional lunch for Toddler and Casa children. All menus are planned according to the Canada Food Guide and include vegetarian and non-vegetarian meals (along with accommodation for other dietary needs of children).

- ☼ Water is accessible to children throughout the day at a designated area in each classroom and children are welcome to bring personal water bottles which they may have access to throughout the day.
- ☼ Relevant staff hold a valid Food Handlers certificate and follow relevant guidelines regarding food handling, storage, and serving.
- ☼ Allergy and Restriction lists are posted in the kitchen and each classroom.
- ☼ Staff sit with children during meal times to ensure safe consumption, positive social interactions, table etiquette, and enjoyable meal times.

Well-being of Children:

Flowery Grove recognizes that children need a strong sense of self and should always be striving towards independence. The well-being of the children is determined by both their physical wellbeing and their emotional well-being, and both these needs should be met to ensure ideal cognitive and social development. At Flowery Grove, these needs are met through organized daily Montessori schedules providing a high level of stimulating and age-appropriate individualized education plans and positive interactions modelled by staff.

- ☼ Daily schedules include a balance of quiet and active experiences, indoor and outdoor time, individual, small group, and class activities, child- and adult-initiated activities supported by teachers, and a curriculum, prepared environment, and materials that meet the strictures of the Montessori philosophy.
- ☼ Schedules provide rest time, if applicable.
- ☼ Flowery Grove follows the Montessori philosophy in all classrooms and activities.
- ☼ All head teachers are trained at recognized Montessori education centres.
- ☼ The Montessori curriculum provides an individualized education plan through a sensorial, well-rounded, productive education including practical life, language, mathematics, and culturally appropriate skills.
- ☼ Staff *follow the child* to best meet their needs and interests, and provide extra materials to continue their educational journey.
- ☼ Staff provide a positive, proactive approach for interacting and guiding the children which aligns with the Montessori philosophy.

2. Support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents, child care providers and staff.

Goal: To develop and maintain strong, positive relationships between staff, parents, and children in order to create an optimal learning environment and experience.

Approach: Develop and maintain relationships based on working together for the benefit of each child by fostering a high level of trust between, and mutual respect for, staff members and parents/caregivers. In doing so, Flowery Grove staff and children's families can honour the learning process of, and have equal confidence in, each individual child.

- ☼ Flowery Grove parents are welcomed and encouraged to attend various opportunities to learn about their child's work in the Montessori environment their child attends. Primarily, these opportunities consist of scheduled visits to the classroom during which the child

shows parents their past and current work, and give parents and Montessori guides an opportunity to discuss the child's work. Building a solid relationship with the parent will allow the child to have a better educational experience because both parent and teacher are on the same team, the team of the child. The child has the opportunity to take pride in their classroom, a space which should feel like a second home. This interaction between parent and child within the classroom can influence the home and family life of the child and his/her family.

- Ongoing communication with the parent will occur at parent-teacher conferences, which are held 2 times per school year.
 - Flowery Grove offers parent education events that explain the Montessori philosophy in greater detail and provide the parent further understanding about their child's learning.
 - Parents are provided classroom and administrators email and other school contact information and are assured that no question is too small or trivial.
-

3. Encourage the children to interact and communicate in a positive way and support their ability to self-regulate.

Goal: To adhere to the practice of authentic Montessori education so as to allow each child to experience the benefits of developing and learning in prepared environments that encourage positive communication and self-regulation.

Approach: Montessori education has a number of *touchstone* guiding principles and practices that Flowery Grove staff adhere to and that allow children to develop positive communication skills and self-regulation abilities.

- *Grace and Courtesy* is a ubiquitous practice in every Montessori environment and is presented and repeated in a variety of ways to all children every day. Children learn that positive communication is both graceful and courteous, and children learn to self-regulate in order to maintain their grace and courtesy.
- *Freedom Within Limits* is a Montessori guiding principle that sets clear limits for each individual child within which they have the freedom to explore and be responsible for their learning and development. Children develop self-regulation skills while negotiating the shifting landscape of their freedom, and they experience and practice positive communication as limits are presented as goals to work towards expanding rather than as prohibitive strictures.
- *One of each Material* is an intentional practice in Montessori classrooms wherein there is not one of each material for every child but rather one material for each environment. This practice requires children to self-regulate and practice patience, and to communicate in a positive manner to express desires to use the material next or to express that they are still using it.
- *Protect the Work Cycle* is the job of the Montessori guide in each environment and involves creating and maintaining a classroom culture of calm, peaceful, quiet, engaged, and focused work. Children learn to self-regulate in order to maintain the classroom culture and to communicate in a positive manner by respecting the work and focus of others and by not interrupting the work or conversations of the teachers or other children.

In Addition:

- ☼ Flowery Grove Montessori staff model appropriate communication and language with others to help the child absorb behaviours appropriate to a positive environment.
 - ☼ Flowery Grove Montessori staff model self-regulation through considered and intentional actions and emotional displays at all times.
 - ☼ Flowery Grove Montessori staff will adhere at all times to proper, authentic Montessori methods and practices. Montessori has been shown by contemporary evidence-based research to be a significant contributing factor to the development of executive functioning skills, including self-regulation.
-

4. Foster the children's exploration, play and inquiry

Goal: To *Follow the Child* in order to let children explore their surroundings and activities in a positive, respectful manner that will increase the child's love of learning, the respect they have for their work, their ability to concentrate, their determination, their problem-solving skills, and the feeling of importance and significance that they ascribe to their explorations and inquiries.

Approach: The practice of authentic Montessori education inherently fosters children's exploration, play, and inquiry.

- ☼ Montessori guides allow for exploration with an activity as long as the exploration demonstrates respect for the material, respect for others, and is safe.
 - ☼ Montessori assistants at Flowery Grove are trained to understand exploration and to respect the children's ability to do so.
 - ☼ Montessori guides and assistants encourage questions and help to answer them the best that they can, and are encouraged to say to a child "I don't know, let's see if we can find out."
 - ☼ Montessori guides work with parents to help answer any questions the child has at home that may or may not pertain to school and/or their Montessori education.
 - ☼ Older children are invited to take an inquiry-based approach to their learning.
-

5. Provide child-initiated and adult supported experiences.

Goal: Develop and maintain Montessori prepared environments that offer activities and experiences that can be child-initiated and adult supervised in order to support individual needs, tendencies, and development in areas of both individual strengths and weakness.

Approach: The practice of authentic Montessori education provides children opportunities to choose their own work from a set of possibilities presented by the Montessori guide in the context of supporting the child's development.

- ☼ Montessori practice requires a specific procedure that leads the child from high degrees of adult support to greater degrees of independence both in the work the child chooses and the manner in which they engage, work with, and complete the task.
- ☼ Children at an authentic Montessori school are invited to choose their own work from a presented set of activities that meet their developmental stage and progress.

- ☛ Montessori guides keep records that allow them to see the child's progress within the classroom and give direction to what to present to the child next.
 - ☛ Montessori assistants understand and refer to the guide's record book and keep their own records on what new activities (ex. French) they can introduce to the child to help further the child's learning and maintain their enthusiasm for activities in which they are struggling.
 - ☛ Montessori guides and assistants constantly observe the children's behavior with the materials and activities, as well as with each other, in order to refine the degree and type of supports offered to each individual child.
-

6. Plan for and create positive learning environments and experiences in which each child's learning and development will be supported.

Goal: Maintain authentic Montessori prepared environments and practice in order to provide positive learning environments and experiences that meet the development needs of each child as a unique individual.

Approach: Planning for and creating positive learning environments and experiences in which each child's learning and development is supported is integral to any authentic Montessori programme.

- ☛ Montessori classrooms are positive learning environments because they focus on progress and development (rather than the right or wrong repetition of delivered content).
 - ☛ Montessori materials have built in error control, removing the need for negation relative to student learning.
 - ☛ Montessori education treats each child as a unique individual with their own learning styles and their own developmental pace, and each child progresses through the Montessori curriculum in their own way and at their own pace with the support of Montessori guides.
 - ☛ Flowery Grove staff are instructed to help children learn to celebrate the discovery of things they don't know or things they want to get better at — that it's good to make mistakes so that we can work together to learn.
 - ☛ Flowery Grove staff constantly refine their practice and planning through support and education via staff meetings, individual meetings with classroom staff and the vice-principal/principal, and professional development events.
 - ☛ Flowery Grove staff are trained to understand how important it is to be joyful in the classroom, with the children, and also with their colleagues, in order to maintain the environment as a safe, positive space.
-

7. Incorporate indoor and outdoor play, as well as active play, rest and quiet time, into the day, and give consideration to the individual needs of the children receiving child care.

Goal: Create, maintain, and adhere to a daily schedule that prioritizes the sanctity of the Montessori work cycle while providing for children's needs for outdoor and active play as well as time to rest and experience calm and quiet periods.

Approach: The Montessori school day is divided into two, long work cycle periods that allow children to engage with a variety of materials and activities, or to focus for long periods of time on a single piece of work, as their developmental needs demand. The schedule allows Flowery Grove to incorporate active outdoor periods (weather permitting) before, between, and after the work cycles, and periods for quiet or rest during the work cycles.

- ⊗ Children have periods scheduled for unstructured, active outdoor play before, between, and after the morning and afternoon work cycles.
 - ⊗ During both the morning and afternoon work cycles children are welcome to choose activities that allow them to sit quietly or to join adult-led quiet group activities.
 - ⊗ Activities such as stretching, yoga, and physical games are incorporated into the curriculum.
 - ⊗ Children may choose activities that vary in degrees of being active or restful, as suits their individual needs.
 - ⊗ The lunch period is a family-style lunch that allows children to eat and rest in a calm, quiet environment.
 - ⊗ During the afternoon work cycle, younger children that require a mid-day nap are welcome to do so in a designated space that is supervised according to Flowery Grove's "Sleep Policy and Procedure."
 - ⊗ Staff at Flowery Grove will adhere to the schedule for the day and understand that individual needs must always be taken into account when executing the schedule.
 - ⊗ The daily schedule may be revised in order to better meet the needs of children.
 - ⊗ Flowery Grove Montessori School recognizes the unique abilities, interests, and requirements of each individual child. As such, we give great consideration to each child's individual needs in relation to their indoor and outdoor activities, as well as their rest and quiet time. This is carefully planned for and monitored by interaction with, and observation of, each child.
-

8. Foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents about the programme and their children.

Goal: To use effective communication tools to facilitate positive partnership relationships with students' families in order to ensure children's success in the programme.

Approach: Provide a multi-faceted communications approach that provides numerous reciprocal communications avenues between parents and the school.

- ⊗ Provide an up to date, legislatively compliant Parent Handbook that serves as an introduction to the school and its operations and as a reference source for answers to questions parents may have.
- ⊗ Phone calls to new parents after their child's first day and first complete month of school.
- ⊗ Verbal or written reports distributed prior to winter break and at the end of school year meetings.
- ⊗ Verbal communication at pick-up, or through phone and email communication as necessary.
- ⊗ Parent-teacher conferences twice during each school year: at the end of term 1 and term 3.
- ⊗ Face-to-face meetings as required due to circumstance.

- ☛ Ability for parents to observe in the Casa and Elementary classrooms.
- ☛ Host “Show and Share” events for parents to enter the classrooms to observe and interact with their children as they show and demonstrate their work.
- ☛ Weekly update posted to school website containing school information, important dates, and individual classroom notes and photos.
- ☛ Host Parent Education evenings each school year to explain in more detail specific aspects of the Montessori method.
- ☛ Field trips to encourage engagement between families in the context of, and in conjunction with, the school.

9. Involve local community partners and allow those partners to support the children, their families and staff.

Goal: To enhance the effectiveness of Flowery Grove’s programme by working with a variety of community partners to enhance operations and support systems.

Approach: To seek out and remain open to working with community partners that can enhance the children’s and their families’ Montessori experience at Flowery Grove and improve the support and extra-curricular opportunities available to benefit them.

- ☛ We welcome the knowledge and guidance of various support programs in the community to ensure the highest quality care possible, such as:
 - Public Health
 - Hamilton Fire Department
 - Ministry of Children and Youth Program Director
 - Canadian Council of Montessori Administrators
 - Foundation for Montessori Education
 - College of Early Childhood Educators
 - Other community support systems as required (ex. occupational therapists, psychoeducational assessment professionals, speech therapists).
 - ☛ We seek out and take advantage of opportunities in the community to expand the children’s educational experience, such as:
 - Visits and interaction with local businesses for field trips.
 - Resource borrowing through visits to local library.
 - Tours of local museums and art galleries.
 - Invitation to parent community to visit classrooms and share information about their work in the community or share a special talent or interest with the children.
 - Work with local charitable organizations to assist in their ventures (ex. food drives, clothing drives, toy drives).
-

10. Support staff, home child care providers or others who interact with the children at the child care centre or home child care premises in relation to continuous professional learning.

Goal: To develop and maintain a culture of life-long learning among Flowery Grove staff, equivalent to that curated for the children, that supports staff in pursuing constant development of their theoretical and practical approaches to educating children in a Montessori school. As educators, we are responsible for igniting the love of learning in the child therefore we too must continue along this journey.

Approach: We will always be open minded to new research, innovations, or other ideas that represent advances in the delivery of Montessori education and the effective support of children as unique, independent learners; furthermore, we will remain open to instances wherein we do not know answers and will always promptly seek out information to better serve the children.

- Flowery Grove schedules professional development days throughout the year wherein staff are required to focus on bettering themselves and their Montessori environments. Professional development days may include:
 - Montessori and child care philosophy/theory discussions and how to achieve their practical applications.
 - Attending Montessori specific conferences or workshops.
 - Observing at other AMI (Association Montessori Internationale) schools.
 - Discussions about classroom best practices beyond specific teaching issues, such as modeling emotional regulation, negotiating interpersonal relationships, or demonstrating how to work with others.
 - Updates to policies and procedures and how to implement them.
 - Developing and enhancing the Montessori environments through the development and production of new materials.
 - Updating Montessori teaching albums.
- Flowery Grove staff are also expected to stay up to date with developments in childhood education beyond Montessori theory so as to best serve the children and be able to discuss and share current research evidence and practices with parents, and acknowledge the similarities and differences between Montessori and other educational approaches. Non-Montessori-specific sources for staff development training include, but are not limited to:
 - The Ministry of Education publication, *How Does Learning Happen*, provides a range of resources to support professional learning for individuals, for teams, and with others in the community.
 - The College of Early Childhood Educators framework for Continuous Professional Learning (CPL) is another resource available to licensees and RECEs. The CPL programme is designed to help RECEs reflect on, plan for and document their professional learning in a meaningful way. CPL is mandatory for registered early childhood educators, as prescribed in Ontario Regulation 359/15: Continuous Professional Learning.
- Ongoing learning also applies to knowing the children in attendance at Flowery Grove. As such, Flowery Grove teaching staff maintain ongoing, open communication with children's parents/guardians to receive up to date information on the children, such as their eating

habits, sleeping patterns, significant life events, etc. in order to best serve the child in the classroom.

11. Document and review the impact of the strategies set out in clauses 46 (a-j) on the children and their families.

Goal: Develop and maintain a safe, healthy, happy, and productive environment in which children can embark upon their journey of education.

Approach: Constantly evaluate our policies and procedures, and the goals and approaches laid out in this Program Statement to make sure that we are always improving in offering the best environment for the wellbeing of the children.

- Flowery Grove will review our Program Statement annually, at which time we:
 - Document the impacts of our goals and approaches on the children and their families.
 - Make revisions in the form of additions, deletions, or refinements to the goals and approaches laid out in the Program Statement.

Reference B: The Canada Food Guide and Other Nutrition Information

The *Canada Food Guide* was updated in 2019 ([click here to access The Canada Food Guide](#)). Also included here is additional information from Health Canada specific to children and healthy eating that we have combined for your reference.



Additional Information from Health Canada:

By 12 months, your child needs a variety of foods from the food groups.

- ☼ Establish a schedule of regular meals and snacks for your child.
- ☼ Breastfeed as long as you and your child want to continue.
- ☼ Continue to give your breastfed child a vitamin D supplement of 10 µg (400 IU). This provides a daily source of vitamin D.
- ☼ If you are no longer breastfeeding, offer 500 milliliters (mL) of homogenized milk (3.25% M.F.) each day. Your child may like to drink a lot of milk. You should limit them to 750 mL each day to not affect their intake of other foods.
- ☼ Higher-fat, nutritious foods are an important source of energy for your child. Examples include breast milk, homogenized cow milk (3.25% M.F.), cheese, avocado, nut butters, and some fish such as salmon or trout.
- ☼ Limit fruit juice and do not offer sweetened beverages. If your child seems thirsty, offer water.
- ☼ Eat together as a family as often as you can. Be a role model; try new and nutritious foods yourself.

Safe feeding tips:

Always supervise your child when eating. Make sure your child is sitting upright and is not distracted. Do not let your child eat while walking or running, or while sitting in a moving vehicle.

- ☼ Introduce common food allergens one at a time. A food allergen can cause an allergic reaction in some children (like itchy skin, upset stomach or wheezing). Wait two days before introducing a new food. That way, if your baby develops a reaction, you'll have a better idea of what food might have caused it. (See below for more on food allergens and allergic reactions).
- ☼ Do not offer solid foods that are hard, small and round, or smooth and sticky. These foods can cause choking.
- ☼ Do not offer herbal teas, sports drinks or other drinks with caffeine or artificial sweeteners.

During early childhood, two to five years:

Children need enough calories for growth. Nutritious foods that contain fat, such as milk or peanut butter, can provide a concentrated source of calories for young children.

Serve nutritious small meals and snacks to young children to meet their daily recommended Food Guide Servings. Because they have small stomachs that tend to fill up quickly, children need to eat small amounts of food throughout the day. Most prefer meals and snacks on a regular schedule and in familiar surroundings. The amount of food eaten at each meal and snack will vary day-to-day depending on the child's appetite, activity level and whether they are experiencing a growth spurt. Their appetite may also fluctuate when they are excited or overly tired. Also, it is quite normal to see children lose interest in any activity in a short time, including at mealtimes. When hungry, young children will focus on eating. When satisfied, their attention turns elsewhere.

Over time, the variations in the amount a child eats tend to average out to provide the calories and nutrients needed. This is especially true if the child is encouraged to eat healthy foods when hungry and to stop when full. Eating foods from each of the four food groups and including a small amount of unsaturated fats is the best way to make sure that children get the nutrients they need. A multivitamin is rarely needed for healthy children who are growing well and following Canada's Food Guide.

Put it Into Practice:

Families and caregivers play a big role in creating a positive eating environment. The early childhood years are a time to discover new foods and to develop a love and appreciation for healthy eating. Build on the fact that young children are eager to learn. Even simple activities such as helping to cut open a pumpkin or making muffins are ways children learn about food. Preparing food gives children a feeling of accomplishment and encourages them to try these foods. For example, potatoes that a preschooler has helped mash or radishes they picked from the garden are more appealing than those that just appear on the table.

- ✿ Prepare meals that include foods from each of the four groups. For children, one Food Guide Serving from a food group such as Meat and Alternatives can be divided up into smaller amounts of food served throughout the day.
- ✿ Make sure to offer children a total of two cups of milk or fortified soy beverage every day. This will help meet their requirement for vitamin D.
- ✿ Offer a variety of nutritious foods, including some choices that contain fat such as milk and peanut butter.
- ✿ Make time for healthy eating so that children don't feel rushed. Set regular times for meals and snacks. This helps to establish a healthy routine.
- ✿ Sit down and eat with children. Provide a pleasant setting. Leave the television off during meal times.
- ✿ Let children help with simple food-related tasks. Ask them to set the table or help to wash the vegetables.
- ✿ Keep in mind that while parents and caregivers are responsible for what children eat, children are responsible for how much they eat. Offer suitable portions with options for seconds.
- ✿ Be patient. If an unfamiliar food is rejected the first time, it can be offered again later. The more often children are exposed to new foods, the more likely they are to accept them.
- ✿ Be a positive role model for children. They will be more likely to enjoy a variety of foods and to try new foods if you do.
- ✿ Organize fun and easy physical activities such as bicycling, walking, dancing, games of ball or tag in the summer and sledding or building a snowman in the winter. Young children rely on parents and caregivers to provide opportunities for physical activity.

Food Allergens and Allergic Reactions:

Food allergies among Canadians have received a great deal of media attention lately. Most allergic reactions to food are caused by nine categories of foods. Even trace amounts of those foods can cause a severe or life-threatening reaction in some people.

In Canada, there are nine priority food allergens (substances which causes allergies):

- ☼ peanuts
- ☼ tree nuts (almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, hazelnuts [filberts], macadamia nuts, pecans, pine nuts [pignolias], pistachio nuts, and walnuts)
- ☼ sesame seeds
- ☼ milk
- ☼ eggs
- ☼ fish (including shellfish and crustaceans)
- ☼ soy
- ☼ wheat
- ☼ sulphites
- ☼ mustard

Reactions to these allergens among allergic individuals range from mild to severe. Trace amounts of these foods can potentially be found in a wide range of food products including snack foods, health foods, baked goods, seasonings, and many other foods.

Health Risks of Food Allergens:

Allergic reactions happen when the body's immune system reacts to a particular protein or irritant. The reaction may be caused by food, insect stings, and medications.

When someone comes in contact with an allergen, symptoms may develop quickly and have the potential to progress rapidly from a mild reaction to a severe one. The most dangerous of these symptoms include breathing difficulties, a drop in blood pressure, or shock, which may result in loss of consciousness and even death. Severe allergic reactions can occur quickly and without warning. A person experiencing an allergic reaction may have any of the following symptoms:

- ☼ Trouble breathing, speaking, or swallowing
- ☼ A drop in blood pressure, rapid heartbeat, and/or loss of consciousness
- ☼ Flushed face, hives or a rash, or red and itchy skin
- ☼ Swelling of the eyes, face, lips, throat, and tongue
- ☼ Anxiousness, distress, faintness, paleness, sense of doom, and/or weakness
- ☼ Cramps, diarrhea, and/or vomiting

There is currently no cure for any food allergy. The only way to prevent a reaction is to totally avoid the specific food. Should a severe reaction occur, the appropriate emergency treatment is an injection of epinephrine (adrenaline). People with known food allergies should carry an autoinjector of epinephrine, which allows them to give themselves an injection of adrenaline.

Adrenaline should be administered as soon as the symptoms of a severe allergic reaction appear. This should be followed up with further treatment and observation in a hospital emergency room.

Severe allergic reactions are not predictable. You may have a mild reaction one time and a severe one the next time, or vice versa.

How Preschoolers Approach Eating:

Early childhood is an exciting time of change. Bodies are growing. Skills are being mastered. Attitudes are forming. Although every child is different, the following traits are common among preschool children and influence how they approach eating:

- ⊗ A Natural Curiosity: Youngsters explore their world by touching, seeing, hearing, smelling and tasting. Most two and three-year-olds take great pleasure in experimenting with new foods. A banana is likely to be carefully inspected and squashed between the fingers of curious two-year-olds before reaching their lips. Three-year-olds love to discover surprises such as a special fruit or an animal- shaped sandwich served as a snack. "Why" becomes a frequently used word, especially by four and five-year olds. Because of their innate inquisitiveness, they may, for example, need to know why the bread is brown before trying it. It is through the curiosity which preschoolers bring to food that they learn to enjoy an expanding range of foods.
- ⊗ Striving for Independence: Two- and three-year olds are striving for greater independence. Deciding whether to eat or not is something they can easily control. For example, they may insist on a familiar food one day and reject it the next. These whims are normal. Meanwhile, four- and five-year olds like helping adults by selecting food at the supermarket, then preparing and serving it.
- ⊗ A Need for Security: Because they need the security of what is familiar to them, two- and three-year olds look for structure in their lives. Most prefer meals and snacks on a regular schedule and in familiar surroundings. Many toddlers insist on having their milk in a certain cup, their food cut in preferred shapes or the same food for lunch over several days. New foods may be refused with the common refrain "I don't like it, I've never tried it." As preschoolers get older, they tend to be more willing to try unfamiliar foods that are prepared and served in different ways.
- ⊗ Limited Attention Span but Growing Sense of Purpose: The ability to focus on one thing increases considerably between the ages of two and five years. This applies at mealtimes too. When hungry, young children will focus on eating. When satisfied, their attention turns elsewhere. Playing with their spoon is more interesting than eating the food before them. Although parents may become concerned when the child dawdles over uneaten food, it is quite normal to see children lose interest in any activity in a short time.
- ⊗ Imitate People Around Them: Preschoolers can learn to like a wide assortment of foods by eating with friends and family members who enjoy these foods. Children easily pick up subtle messages about how others view foods. For example, a four year-old boy may be reluctant to eat turnip -- a food his father is not fond of, whereas he eagerly eats cabbage -- his father's favourite.

For preschoolers, healthy eating is:

- ⊗ being curious about new foods and ways of eating them;
- ⊗ examining the chicken sandwich before they eat it;
- ⊗ accepting toast only if it is cut in triangles;
- ⊗ trying only a bite of squash today - maybe more tomorrow;
- ⊗ drinking milk only if they can pour it into their own glass;

- ☉ loving carrots on Tuesday, refusing them on Wednesday;
- ☉ insisting the apple be whole - not in slices;
- ☉ wanting a peanut butter sandwich for lunch every day for a week;
- ☉ gobbling up the cookies they helped to prepare when they are fresh from the oven;
- ☉ preferring simple foods they can recognize;
- ☉ drinking soup out of a coffee mug just like mom's.

Strive for Variety:

Use foods and cuisines enjoyed by different ethnic and cultural groups. Children eat according to the eating traditions of their family. These traditions are a valued aspect of their culture. Many of the foods appearing in the rainbow design of the Food Guide – for example, tofu, sweet potato, bok choy, rice and pasta – are those enjoyed by various ethnic and cultural groups living in Canada. Different cuisines also use common foods such as chicken and fish in ways that show their ethnic and cultural uniqueness.

Learning to appreciate food as prepared and enjoyed by other ethnic and cultural groups can add to the interest children already have in food and eating. For example, by exploring a staple food such as bread in its many forms – pita, bannock, focaccia, bagels, chapattis – children can begin to appreciate the cultural diversity that food choices reflect.

A Vegetarian Family:

A family may not eat meat or fish, however may eat milk products and eggs. As lacto-ovo vegetarians, the parents use the Food Guide to choose foods from all the food groups. Instead of meat they prepare a variety of dishes using tofu, other legumes such as dried peas, beans and lentils, nuts and nut butters, and eggs to meet the recommended number of servings from the Meat and Alternatives food group. Children can get enough protein, iron and zinc by consuming milk products, legumes and grain products every day and eggs a few times a week. At least two cups of milk is consumed every day by drinking it, having it on cereal, as well as in soups and puddings made with milk. This ensures an adequate intake of vitamin D, calcium and vitamin B12, a vitamin that is found only in foods of animal origin.

Do Children Need Vitamin-Mineral Supplements?

Eating a variety of foods is the best way to ensure an adequate intake of nutrients. If a child is eating according to the Food Guide, is growing well and is healthy, vitamin-mineral supplements are rarely necessary. They may be indicated for special situations such as vitamin D supplements for children who do not consume enough vitamin D-fortified milk. Some children may not be eating a variety of foods as recommended in the Food Guide because of cultural preferences, health concerns such as food intolerances or personal food dislikes. Ways to improve the child's eating pattern, including suggestions for alternative foods and different ways of preparing foods which the child may accept, can be discussed with parents and caregivers. If supplements are indicated, a dietician or doctor can provide guidance on the type, amount and duration. Like all medications, supplements should be kept out of children.

How to Introduce New Foods:

Parents and Caregivers can help preschoolers accept a wider selection of foods by:

- ⊗ being role models. Children are more eager to eat foods that they see family and friends enjoying;
- ⊗ presenting food in appealing ways by combining different colours, textures and shapes of food;
- ⊗ offering small amount of new food alongside a familiar one, without pressure to eat the new food;
- ⊗ serving a new food when children are with their peers;
- ⊗ encouraging them to become familiar with different foods by helping to grow, buy, prepare or serve them;
- ⊗ being patient. If an unfamiliar food is not accepted the first time, it can be offered again later. The more often children are exposed to
- ⊗ new foods, the more likely they will taste them and learn to accept them;
- ⊗ not using foods as rewards. For example, withholding a sweet dessert until all the vegetables are eaten may establish a preference for the dessert and a dislike for the vegetables;
- ⊗ respecting individual food preferences. Every child has different likes and dislikes.

Ref. C: Flowery Grove Observation Guidelines

We are very excited that you will be visiting us for an observation. We would like you to read the following guidelines before your observation. We strive to have as little interruption in the classroom as possible so that you will benefit from your observation. This is an opportunity for us to share with you what Montessori education looks like through seeing children, teachers, learning materials, as well as the less tangible atmosphere that is "home" for children for so much of their school day. We know from experience that what you will actually see will be biased by your presence in the class.

See “Casa Observation Guidelines” on the next page.

Casa Observation Guidelines

Thank you for taking the time to observe in our environment. An observation is an opportunity for you to get a glimpse of how a Montessori environment functions. There are a few things to consider when you are observing in the classroom:

- The observation chair is an adult sized chair, intended for observers only. It is placed in a specific spot in the classroom. The children are aware of this. This is the space where observers can see the classroom from an open perspective, while allowing the environment to operate as usual with as little disruption as possible.
- The guide will not be available to answer any questions during the observation; please ensure you make note of any questions and feel free to ask after the observation is complete.
- The children may approach you. The best way to ensure that you are seeing an accurate depiction of the space is to politely say “Hello,” and tell them that you are here to see them do their work. Please refrain from engaging in conversation with them.
- Please refrain from using devices while observing. It is best for your observation, and not all families grant permission for photos or videos of their children to be taken.
- When your observation is complete, please quietly exit the classroom; do not feel the need to say goodbye to the children or the guides. We thank you for joining us, and hope that you thoroughly enjoy your time in the environment.

When you are observing, you may want to take some of the following questions into consideration:

1. Are the children choosing work independently?
2. Is the guide the focal point of the classroom?
3. How do the older children engage with the younger children (and vice versa)?
4. Are the children focused on their work?
5. How do the children solve conflict?
6. How do children transition from one activity to the next?
7. Is the environment productive? Respectful? Engaging?

“Wait while observing. That is the motto for the educator. Let us wait, and be always ready to share in both the joys and the difficulties which the child experiences. Let us have endless patience with [their] slow progress, and show enthusiasm and gladness at [their] success.” — Maria Montessori

Ref. D: Montessori References and Resources

A Montessori Glossary:

Absorbent Mind: A mind able to absorb knowledge quickly and effortlessly. Montessori said the child from birth to six-years-old has an “absorbent mind.”

Analysis of Movement: A technique used by Montessori teachers. The adult, when showing a complex action to a child, breaks it down into its parts and shows one step at a time, executing each movement slowly and exactly. The action thus becomes a sequence of simple movements and the child has a greater chance of success when “given the liberty to make use of them.”

Children’s House: The English name for Montessori’s *Casa dei Bambini* (Italian). A place for children from 3-6-years-old grow and develop. (Often simply referred to as Casa).

Classification: Sorting. Allocating or distributing according to common characteristics. The young child engages in classification activities because the process is essential for the construction of the intellect. The Montessori classroom offers many opportunities for classification.

Concentration: The act of concentrating. The young child focuses his or her attention on aspects of the environment essential for development. From a Montessori perspective, concentration is “a consistent activity concentrated on a single work –an exercise on some external object, where the movements of the hands are guided by the mind.” Deep engagement.

Concrete to Abstract: A progression both logical and developmentally appropriate. The child is first introduced to a concrete material that embodies an abstract idea, such as size or colour. Given hands-on experience, the child’s mind grasps the idea inherent in the material and forms an abstract object of knowledge.

Control of Error: A way of providing instant feedback. Every Montessori material provides children with some way of assessing their own progress, putting the control in the hands of the learner and protecting the child’s self-esteem and self-motivation.

Coordination of Movement: One of the major accomplishments of early childhood. Through the child’s own activity, she refines muscular coordination and consequently acquires increasingly higher levels of independent functioning. Because of this developmental need, children are drawn to activities which involve movement and especially to pastimes which demand a certain level of exactitude and precision.

Cycle of Activity: Little children, when engaged in an activity that interests them, will repeat it many times and for no apparent reason, stopping suddenly only when the inner need which compelled the child to activity has been satisfied. To allow for the possibility of long, concentrated work cycles, Montessori advocates a 3-hour uninterrupted work period.

Development of the Will: The ability to will, or choose to do something with conscious intent, develops gradually during the first phase of life and is strengthened through practice. The Montessori environment offers many opportunities for the child to choose. Willpower, or selfcontrol, results from the many little choices of daily life in a Montessori school.

Deviations: Behavior commonly seen in children that is the result of some obstacle to normal development. Such behavior may be commonly understood as negative, (a timid child, a destructive child, etc.) or positive (a passive, quiet child). Both positive and negative deviations disappear once the child begins to concentrate on a piece of work freely chosen.

Discipline from Within: Self-discipline. The discipline in a well-run Montessori classroom is not a result of the teacher's control or of rewards or punishments. Its source comes from within each individual child, who can control his or her own actions and make positive choices regarding personal behavior. Self-discipline is directly related to development of the will.

False Fatigue: A phenomenon observed in Children's Houses around the world – often at approximately 10:00 a.m. The children seem to lose interest in work, their behaviour becomes disorderly, and the noise level rises. It may appear as if the children are tired. However, if the Montessori guide understands this is simply false fatigue, the children will return to work on their own and their work will be at an even higher level than before.

Grace and Courtesy: An aspect of Practical Life. Little lessons that demonstrate positive social behaviour help children adapt to life in a group and arm them with knowledge of socially acceptable behaviour -- practical information useful both in and out of school.

Human Tendencies: A central tenet of Montessori philosophy is that human beings exhibit a predisposition towards exploration, orientation, order, abstraction, work, self-perfection, communication, and a spiritual (social) life.

Isolation of a Difficulty: Before giving a presentation, the Montessori guide analyzes the activity to be shown to the child. Procedures or movements that might prove troublesome are isolated and taught to the child separately. For example, folding cloths are shown before table washing, an activity requiring folding. A task should neither be so hard that it is overwhelming, nor so easy that it is boring.

Indirect Preparation: The way nature has of preparing human intelligence. In every action, there is a conscious interest. Through this interest, the mind is being prepared for something in the future. For example, a child will enjoy the putting together of various triangular shapes, totally unaware that because of this work the mind will later be more accepting of geometry.

Jobs of Practical Life: One of the four areas of the Montessori prepared environment. The jobs of practical life resemble the simple work of life in the home: sweeping, dusting, washing dishes, etc.

These purposeful activities help children adapt to their new community, learn selfcontrol, and begin to see themselves as a contributing part of the social unit. Their intellect grows as they work with their hands; their personality becomes integrated as body and mind function as a unit.

Learning Explosions: Human development is often not slow and steady; acquisitions seem to arrive suddenly, almost overnight, and with explosive impact. Such learning explosions are the sudden outward manifestation of a long process of internal growth. For example, the explosion of spoken language around two years of age is the result of many months of inner preparation and mental development.

Mathematical Mind: All babies are born with mathematical minds. That is, they have a propensity to learn things which enhance their ability to be exact and orderly, to observe, compare and classify. Humans naturally tend to calculate, imagine, abstract and create. But this vital part of intelligence must be given help and direction for it to develop and function. If mathematics is not part of the young child's experience, his subconscious mind will not be accepting of it at a later date.

Maximum Effort: Children seem to enjoy difficult work, work which tests their abilities and provides a sense of their growing power. They exult in giving their maximum effort. A tiny child will struggle to carry a tray with juice glasses or push a heavy wheelbarrow whereas school age children, if allowed to make up their own problems will prefer to sink their teeth into a challenging equation $(1+2+3+4...+10)$ rather than drill on $3+5=$ and $6+2=$.

Mixed Ages: One of the hallmarks of the Montessori method is that children of mixed ages work together in the same class. Age-groupings are based on developmental planes. Children from 3 to 6 years of age are together in the Children's House. Six to 9-year-olds share the lower elementary, and the upper elementary is made up of 9 to 12-year-olds. Because the work is individual, children progress at their own pace; there is cooperation rather than competition between the ages.

Normalization: If children are repeatedly able to experience periods of spontaneous concentration on a piece of work freely chosen, they will begin to display the characteristics of normal development: a love of work, attachment to reality, and a love of silence and working alone. Normalized children are happier children: enthusiastic, generous, and helpful to others. They make constructive work choices, and their work reflects their level of development.

Prepared environment: The Montessori classroom is an environment prepared by the adult for children. It contains all the essentials for optimal development but nothing superfluous. These include order and reality, beauty and simplicity. Everything is child-sized to enhance the children's independent functioning. A trained adult and a large enough group of children of mixed ages make up a vital part of the prepared environment.

Presentation: The teacher does not teach in the traditional sense, but rather shows the child how to use the various objects and then leaves him free to explore and experiment. This is called a

presentation. To be effective, it must be done slowly and exactly, step by step, and with a minimum of words.

Repetition: The young child's work is very different from the adult's. When an adult works, he sets out to accomplish some goal and stops working when the objective is achieved. A child, however, does not work to accomplish an external goal, but rather an internal one. Consequently, they will repeat an activity until the inner goal is accomplished. The unconscious urge to repeat helps the child to coordinate a movement or acquire some ability.

Sensitive Periods: Young children experience transient periods of sensibility and are intrinsically motivated or urged to activity by specific sensitivities. A child in a sensitive period is believed to exhibit spontaneous concentration when engaged in an activity that matches a particular sensitivity. For example, children in a sensitive period for order will be drawn to activities that involve ordering. They will be observed choosing such activities, becoming deeply concentrated, sometimes repeating the activity over and over, without reward or encouragement. Young children are naturally drawn to aspects in the environment that meet their developmental needs.

Sensorial Materials: The sensorial materials were created to help children in the process of creating and organizing their intelligence. Each scientifically designed material isolates a quality found in the world such as color, size, shape, etc., and this isolation focuses the attention on this one aspect. The child, through repeated manipulation of these objects, comes to form clear ideas or abstractions. What could not be explained by words, the child learns by experience working with the sensorial materials.

Simple to Complex: Moving from the simple to the complex is a principal used in the sequence of presentations in a Montessori classroom. Children are first introduced to a concept or idea in its simplest form. As they progress and become capable of making more complex connections, they are eventually able to handle information that is less isolated.

Three Hour Work Cycle: Through years of observation around the world, Montessori understood that children, when left in freedom, displayed a distinct work cycle that was so predictable, it could even be graphed. This cycle, with two peaks and one valley, lasted approximately three hours. In Montessori schools, children have three hours of open, uninterrupted time to choose independent work, become deeply engaged, and repeat to their own satisfaction.

Three Period Lesson: The first period is Naming: "This is thick. This is thin." The second period is Recognition: "Give me the thick. Give me the thin." The third period consists of The Pronunciation of the Word: "What is this?" In three simple steps, the entire learning process is brought into play. The three period lesson is used for giving language.

Work: From an evolutionary perspective, the long period of childhood exists so children can learn and experiment in a relatively pressure-free environment. Most social scientists refer to this pressure-free experimentation as "play," although Montessori prefers to call this activity the

“work” of childhood. Children are serious when engaged in the kind of play that meets developmental needs. Given freedom and time, they choose purposeful activities over frivolous ones.

Writing to Reading: In a Montessori environment, children usually begin writing before they can read. They are keen to create words with a box of loose letters (the moveable alphabet) or write their words with chalk or pencil. About six months later, they begin to understand what reading means, and they do so only through associating it with writing.

Montessori Resource Links and Videos:

There are some great videos that will help you better understand Montessori education:

- [The Montessori Classroom: “The Three Year Cycle”](#)
- [Pediatric Neuropsychologist Steven Hughes PHD Discusses Montessori Education.](#)
- [Trevor Eissler: A Parent to Parent Argument for Montessori Education](#)

Ref. E: HWDSB Winter Weather Bus Cancellations and School Closures

As noted above, Flowery Grove takes advantage of the Hamilton Wentworth District School Board inclement weather process, which tries to post cancellation notices by 6:00 a.m. If HWDSB closes, so does Flowery Grove. If there is a snow day, we will communicate that to you as early as we can in the mornings via email and the flowerygrove.org “Home” page, and you can always [check the HWDSB website](#). For your information and reference, the process HWDSB uses to determine whether or not to close schools is as follows:

During severe winter weather, the difficult decision to remain open or to close is always made with the safety and security of our students and staff in mind.

A school cancellation is a tough decision – and some families may disagree with HWDSB’s call. Families can always make the choice they feel is best when it comes to sending their child to school. Here are some guidelines to remember:

- *When bad weather is expected, Hamilton-Wentworth Student Transportation Services (HWSTS) carriers check weather reports, road conditions and road clearing, starting as early as 4 a.m.*
- *School boards have varied policies on cancellations. The HWDSB Rule is: Severe weather + Bus cancellation = Schools and Administrative Buildings are closed. When HWDSB cancels busing due to inclement weather, we have deemed the roads unsafe and this triggers the closure of schools and administrative buildings.*
- *HWDSB will announce the cancellation of school and board operations by 6 a.m.*

Remember, Flowery Grove students and families travel to school from all areas of Hamilton, and sometimes beyond. We follow HWDSB’s lead because they have the resources and procedure to assess conditions across the entire greater Hamilton area. It may not look too bad at your house, but conditions may be much worse elsewhere. Thank you.

THANK YOU
FOR CHOOSING FLOWERY GROVE MONTESSORI
SCHOOL