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Welcome

The staff of BGMS wishes to welcome you and your child. We are all looking forward to an exciting and enriching school experience. We invite you to participate in all aspects of our program.

Buffalo Grove Montessori School Inc. began as the Arlington Heights Little People Montessori School in 1975. The school was founded by Deborah and Victor LaPorte. In 1984 the school moved to Buffalo Grove. In 1988 we moved to our current and permanent location at 950 Ellen Drive in Buffalo Grove. We currently serve approximately 100 families. Children enrolled range from six weeks old through kindergarten.

- The Buffalo Grove Montessori School Inc. is a “Not-For-Profit” corporation, organized to promote and encourage educational training and instruction to preschool age children of any race, color, and national or ethnic origin.
- BGMS Inc. is not to be confused with a charitable organization. Please consult your accountant for tax information and status.
- The 0 – 3 year old program of the Buffalo Grove Montessori School Inc. is licensed by the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services.
- The 3 – 6 year old program is registered with the State Board of Education.
- We are accredited members of the American Montessori Society (AMS).
- We are affiliate members of the Association of Illinois Montessori Schools (AIMS)
- We are accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

Our goal is to provide education/care in keeping with the Montessori philosophy of ‘follow the child’. As educators we observe each child and ascertain needs. We then create an environment and atmosphere that will nurture the child. The environment is prepared to interest your child and meet ever changing developmental needs. Independence, concentration and joyful learning are valued. We facilitate, encourage and empower the children through experiences that will lead to positive fulfillment of personal potential.

BGMS Inc. is a community sharing values, goals, methods and philosophies regarding child development and care. We adhere to Maria Montessori’s philosophy of “education for life”. We believe the Montessori Method is key to encouraging optimal growth and development. Because shared goals are critical to our partnership, your participation in parent education programs and family activities are necessary.

Our staff includes Montessori trained teachers, childcare workers, and assistant teachers who love children. Our staff is dedicated to providing maximum adult consistency for the children in our care. We participate in meetings and seminars in order to renew interests and develop new abilities. BGMS supports every employee with the opportunity to further his or her education. We support each teacher’s individuality and appreciate the special contributions each offers. We value dedication, professionalism and a sincere love of children. All staff members under go a health and background screening process including finger printing as required by the Department of Children and Family Services.

Program Information

Each child's cultural, ethnic and religious background shall be respected by the staff. BGMS does not use eligibility criteria, which screen out children with disabilities, and shall make reasonable modification in policies, practices and procedures to accommodate children with disabilities. Consideration will be given to developmental difficulties, behavioral issues and disabilities. Please make the staff aware of any special considerations or needs in regard to your child. Appropriate measures and action will be agreed upon by the parents and staff and a written plan enacted.

ALL DAY MONTESSORI

Full time care is available for children 6 weeks old through Kindergarten.
Classes are available year-round from 7am – 6pm.
School is closed for 11 holidays each year.

Enrollment Policy

Students are enrolled for the entire school year beginning June 1st or the remainder of the year, ending May 31st. Continued enrollment (year to year) is dependent upon the mutual satisfaction of parents and BGMS. Invitations for re-enrollment will be distributed each year. Our programs are subject to revisions to accommodate the needs of our families.

- Children are enrolled in the age appropriate program at the beginning of the school term. Mid-Program changes occur only as space becomes available and upon teacher and parent agreement.
- The year divides naturally into a Summer and a School Term. Classroom grouping and staffing may change at these times to accommodate the varied goals of our programs.
- Your child's attendance should be consistent and in accordance with the program he/she is enrolled.

Checklist to Attendance

- ✓ Application Card Complete /Application fee of \$25 paid
- ✓ 1st tuition payment received
- ✓ Interview with Head of School
- ✓ Orientation meeting with Head of School
- ✓ Enrollment Forms Complete and reviewed by administration
- ✓ Completed Health Form dated within 6 months of start date
- ✓ Classroom visits/Teacher introductions
- ✓ BGMS T Shirt and Tote Bag received

Tuition

Payment Schedule

Tuition is based on the yearly total charge and divided into equal monthly payments.

- The First Tuition payment is due upon acceptance and serves to confirm your commitment to attend. This payment is non-refundable.
- The Second Tuition payment is due on your child's first day of school.
- All additional payments are due the first of each month through April 1st of the school year.
- The 1st tuition payment for the upcoming school year beginning June 1st will be collected May 1st.
- **Bills will not be issued.**
 - Checks can be made payable to: **B.G.M.S.**
 - Payment can be dropped off at school. There is a box located to the left of the front door to collect your payment.
 - Payments can be mailed to: **BGMS, 950 Ellen Drive, Buffalo Grove, IL, 60089**
 - Receipts will be distributed on hallway cubbies.

FEES

- A \$25 application fee is collected. This fee is non refundable.
- A \$50 access key fee will be charged for each newly enrolled family. (2Keys)
- A \$225 Activity Fee is assessed to all Kindergartners in the spring prior to their Kindergarten year.
- Graduating Students attending the post graduation summer session are charged a registration fee of \$100 November 1st and \$125 February 1st preceding graduation.
- A late fee of \$20 will be charged after the fifth of the month. Service will be withheld if payment has not been received by the fifteenth of the month.
- A \$2.50 late fee will be charged for each five minutes of care provided after class dismissal or after school closing hours. This fee is payable to the teacher at the time of service. Parents are expected to be prompt and considerate of class schedules and school closing hours. Please notify the school should you expect to be late.
- Additional fees for field trips, special lesson, programs or photographs may be charged.
- Family Activity Fees are assessed for events such as the Valentine Ball, Pirates' Cove, seminars, classroom parties, etc. These fees will be collected at the time of the event.
- **Prices are subject to change without notice.**

Our Tax I.D. # is 36-332-8863

School Calendar

School is closed for 11 holidays each year. These days include Independence Day, Memorial Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Break, Winter Break and New Years. The actual dates scheduled for each year are listed on the calendar. Holidays, sick days and vacation days may not be rescheduled or deducted from tuition.

Transition

The transition of a child to a new classroom is preceded by:

- Classroom visits
- Parent notification and approval
- Formal or informal meeting with parents and teachers
- Written information regarding new schedules, activities and supplies needed.

When an opening becomes available, a director will **notify the parents**. The director and/or current classroom teacher will discuss with parents the child's readiness for a transition to an older classroom. Once approval is given, **classroom visits** are arranged to insure the child will be comfortable with the change. Written information will be distributed regarding the new classroom, covering topics such as schedules, routines, supplies, activities, location of lockers, drop off/pick up routines and changes in care. Parents are encouraged to stop in their child's new classroom to visit as well as meet the teacher.

In preparation for the new school year, a formal orientation meeting and classroom visit is scheduled to give all families new and current an opportunity to gather information about their classroom and meet their teachers. Parents are given written information about the schedules and changes to be expected. At other times of the year when a child transitions to fill a vacancy information is discussed informally at the parent's convenience.

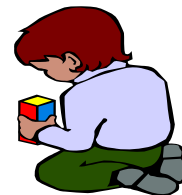
Withdrawal

- All Day students are enrolled for the entire school year beginning June 1st or the remainder of the year, ending May 31st.

The director does recognize that extraordinary circumstances may arise and she, at her sole discretion, may waive the above provisions. Extended vacations or trips abroad are not considered extraordinary circumstances.

- Should withdrawal be deemed necessary, a one month written notice must be submitted.
- If an extended vacation is taken and the child withdrawn and re-enrollment is requested you will be placed on the waiting list in order to obtain a future position.

Should either parent or staff be unsuccessful in providing the cooperation, flexibility and interest necessary for a successful school experience, BGMS will try to provide guidance in finding appropriate placement in another program.



Parent / Teacher Communication

Please Read Everything!

Check your child's locker, classroom door, front door and entry way on a regular basis for communication from us. We'll leave you notes about activities, supply needs, as well as illness alerts to keep you informed. ***Please keep us informed too!***

- Newsletters are distributed. Newsletters include information on special events, menus, classroom activities and parenting tips. Notices outlining special activities are distributed as needed. Additional news briefs will be posted on classroom doors.
- Each year BGMS provides parents with a list of phone numbers and addresses of classmates. Parents must notify the office should they wish to be omitted.
- Other pertinent information can be found in the entryway including blank forms required for medications and ointments, and change of address or emergency contacts.
- Parents are responsible for changing and keeping telephone numbers and addresses current in their child's file. Complete a "Change of Information" form and submit it to the office as needed.

No personal information will be released to other schools, agencies or services without written permission from the parent/guardian.



Call Us!

Naptime phone calls are always welcome if you'd like to chat with your child's teacher. Pick up and drop off time is too busy for parent teacher conferences, but teachers are always available when it's quiet mid-day.

Conferences & Evaluations

Teachers appreciate the opportunity to share information with parents vital to the child's progress. An informal phone conference will be scheduled in summer, winter, and/or six weeks after enrollment. Conferences are scheduled each fall and spring. Written evaluations are distributed at the spring conference.

The teacher or a parent may request additional conferences at any time. If you are in need of additional information or have a concern about your child's school experience or parenting practices, please contact your child's teacher. Should your child's teacher be unable to provide you with an adequate response to your questions, please feel free to contact the Executive Director.

Parents are encouraged to visit and participate in classroom activities at any time. Parents are also invited to observe through the observation windows located in each classroom.

Family Events

Classroom and All school family parties are held throughout the year! (i.e. Family night, Valentine Ball, Graduation and Family Fun Night at Pirates' Cove, Summer Theme Picnic and Parade and Halloween Parade and class party)

- ❖ The Valentine Ball is an annual gathering for families of currently enrolled students as well as alumni. The children practice dancing in preparation for the evening. They dress in their best for the evening and enjoy mingling on the dance floor with family and friends.
- ❖ Graduation at Pirates' Cove allows us to honor our kindergartners and enjoy a family picnic in a child-sized amusement park.
- ❖ The Summer Theme Parade/Family Picnic gathers nearby at Centennial Park. The children enjoy a parade displaying many of the season's finished products.
- ❖ The Halloween Parade gives the children a wonderful opportunity to show off their costumes to an adoring crowd of parents.
- ❖ Our enrichment groups prepare a play each spring

These events provide a wonderful opportunity for parents, staff, and children to get to know one another outside of the school environment. Participation in such family events is essential.

.Watch the news letter for dates and times.

Photos and Videos



● As per our enrollment agreement regarding photography; "Photos and videos may be used for identification, classroom or parent enjoyment, teacher training, newsletters and/or parent-teacher education or advertisement". You will be advised of any changes to our policy in writing. Should you wish to withdraw consent please contact the office.

Parent Education

Each year we set aside time for educational seminars and parent training. The exact dates for these seminars will be posted.

- Some seminars are devoted to understanding Montessori Philosophy and your child's classroom experience, while others focus on practical parenting skills to enhance your parenting experience and troubleshoot some of your frustrations.
- Your classroom observations and visits will further provide you with insights.
- Parent Discussion Groups provide information and support as well. Watch for scheduled dates.



Daily Routines

Arrival and Dismissal

Transportation to and from school is to be provided by the parent or other responsible adult.

- Only persons authorized to pick up your child as indicated on your enrollment form will be allowed to do so. Children will not be released to minors.
- Please alert your child's teacher should an unfamiliar person be scheduled to pick up your child. Prepare your authorized person to have identification available.
- A 'Change of Information' form must be completed if you wish to authorize additional persons to pick up your child.
- *School may be closed and all classes cancelled should inclement weather, mishap or special national observance occur. See page 17 for more information.*

Parking Lot

Please enter the parking lot from the North, behind the strip mall and exit to the south.

Please do not park in the North entrance and block the flow of traffic.

- ***Never leave your child unattended in your car or parking lot, on the porch or in the hallway!***
- Please do not leave your car running while you drop off your child.
- Please do not park in front of the door.

Access Keys

- Access keys are distributed to parents or authorized persons who pick up regularly.
- \$25 is charged for each key.
- Each key is programmed with your name and the school's operating hours.
- ***Because of the fragile nature of the key reader, please do not allow your child to unlock the door.***
- In order to maintain security, please do not prop the door open, or leave it open unnecessarily.

Log In

- Parents will park and bring their child into school.
- Stop at your child's cubby and then go directly to the appropriate class and teacher.
- Similar age groups are combined at the beginning and end of the day. You will find your child's sign in/out log with your child's group.
- Parents will sign their child in by initialing their arrival time on the classroom log. Please be sure the teacher acknowledges your presence. Pick-up will be handled in the same manner with a departure time and full signature. Children will be released to parents upon signing the log.
- Always be sure the classroom teacher is aware of your arrival.
- Ask a teacher for help if you find the separation process difficult.
- Leave toys, money, candy and other personal belongings at home.
- *At Pick up and drop off time the teacher will be engaged with the class and is not available for parent-teacher conferences.*

Activities; Indoor & Outside

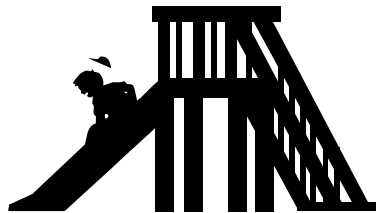
A wide variety of activities await your child on a daily basis. Classroom materials are chosen to pique your child's interest, build concentration, teach specific skills, encourage independence and to help experience the joy of learning. While toddlers study and experiment with the concept of "in" and "out", the kindergartners across the hall lay out beads to understand skip counting and multiplication. At every level, our teachers are trained to observe what your child is ready to learn and then provide that opportunity or experience. Activities to encourage physical, social, creative and academic development are always available. Vocabulary instruction, social grace, conflict resolution and nutrition education are also a part of the routine at BGMS. Outdoor play is another regular part of our routine

**When you are wondering how much fun your child has had today,
Take a look! *How dirty is he/she? Take the TIDE challenge!***

- ❖ The BGMS program is all about getting into tactile activity.
- ❖ Sand, water, paint, glue and slimy play dough are program essentials.
- ❖ **Our students love the sand and gardening. The muddier the Better!**
- ❖ Sunscreen and hot days contribute to dust and sand sticking to little bodies.
- ❖ Melting snow on the playground makes a mess of snow pants.
- ❖ .Children should come to school prepared (dressed) to participate fully. Send your child to school in play clothes
- ❖ Expect a bath to be in order for your child each and every night following a day at BGMS

Children will not be excluded from activity.

- ❖ If your child is too ill to participate in regularly scheduled school activities, including outside play, he/she is too ill to be at school.
- ❖ We are unable to provide separate programming for convalescing children.



Meal & Snack Times

Our goal is to serve meals and snacks that are nutritionally balanced, wholesome, fresh and appetizing. We have developed menus with the children's preferences in mind, while expanding their experiences with different types and combinations of food. Menus are seasonal and designed to take advantage of fresh produce when it is available. Vegetables come fresh or frozen, bread products are whole wheat when available, and fruit is most often fresh or packed in juice if canned. All snacks and meals generally exceed the nutritional requirements set by the Department of Children and Family Services and the Illinois State Board of Education both in quantity and quality. It is our sincere desire to provide the children with the highest quality food possible in a form that is so attractive that they not only eat and enjoy the food but also learn the benefits of good nutrition. Good table manners, independent use of utensils and a family atmosphere are also important elements of our meals and snacks.

In the operation of child feeding programs, no child will be discriminated against because of race, color, national origin, sex, age or handicap. As stated in the discipline policy, no meals or any part of meals shall be withheld as punishment.

Special Dietary Needs

Special diets are arranged due to medical concerns, allergic reactions, or religious beliefs. Designated special needs should be noted on the appropriate forms and discussed with the Food Program Director. Alternative menus *are not intended for food preferences.*

Instruction concerning your child's diet must be kept on file.

- Medical issues and allergies require a note signed by your doctor.
- Religious dietary requirements should be explained in a note signed by a parent or guardian.
- The Food Program Director will provide the parent and teachers with a written Special Care Plan defining food restrictions, substitutions and the BGMS care plan.
- Teachers are notified of the special needs of their students and will provide the appropriate care.

Too rushed to eat a good breakfast?

1. The infant and toddler classroom teachers prepare a breakfast at 7am.
2. 2 – 6 year old children who arrive at school in need of a snack at 7am may help themselves to cereal, milk and fruit made available in the classroom.
3. The regular morning snack is available in every classroom by 8:30 – 9:00am.
4. Please eat that doughnut at home or in the car... Health Department rules prohibit bringing home food to school. (1 child with a doughnut in a classroom presents another problem as well! Please, help us keep the peace!!)

Snacks are available to all children on site during both the morning and the afternoon. Some classes participate in a group snack, while others have individual snacks available for the children to choose at their discretion. Snacks always consist of milk or 100% fruit juice, along with a serving from another food group.

Lunch is served daily from 11:00am – 12:00pm to all children on site. The menu is varied. We encourage the children to try unfamiliar foods and create new combinations. Lunch is a special time for food, fun and fellowship, emphasizing conversation and a relaxed atmosphere. Lunch menus are posted. Extra menus are available in the wall pocket by the front office. Menu changes are posted on the hallway bulletin boards.

Naptime



Stories, soft music and dim lights help children relax and sleep every afternoon. Cots are laid out through the classroom. Children find their places and snuggle into a familiar blanket, with a nap toy to cuddle. Teachers help the children through their pre-nap routines of drinks, bathroom, handwashing, and removal of socks and shoes before climbing onto their cot.

Children under six years old who remain at school 5 hours or more must have the opportunity to rest or nap. Children in this age group who do not fall asleep are permitted to get up and shall be helped to have a quiet time with equipment or activities which will not disturb the napping children. Infants and toddlers shall be allowed to rest or sleep according to each child's individual pattern, as determined in consultation with parents. Infants have their own designated crib, while toddlers 15 months and older sleep on cots.

School Supplies

Children are invited to bring a small blanket and quiet stuffed animal to school for naptime only. 2-6 year olds may include a small travel size pillow as well. ***Nap toys are to remain at school for the entire week*** and not be removed from school on a daily basis. All other belongings, such as purses, jewelry, money, cars, & candy are easily misplaced at school and therefore inappropriate. Special times will be provided for sharing treasured things. Notice will be given of these times.

Clothing should be comfortable and appropriate for weather and active classroom participation. Machine washable play clothes are best. Clothing should be easy for the child to manage independently. Labeling is especially important for outerwear items; however, labeling of every article is a good practice in order to prevent loss or confused ownership.

Frequent outdoor play is an important part of our regular program. All children participate daily, in all aspects of our program. Alternate care cannot be provided. Please dress your child appropriately. (Snow pants, mittens, hats, boots, raingear...no sandals)

- Sandals are not an appropriate choice for the playground. The rocks, sand and wood chips will cause injury to your child's feet if they are not protected with shoes & socks.

Infants: At least 2 full changes of clothing, diapers, wipes, infant food (as needed)

Toddlers: 3 full changes of clothing including socks, diapers, wipes, and blanket for nap.

Twos: 3 full changes of clothing including socks, underwear or diapers and wipes (if necessary), blanket, naptime toy and a small pillow (optional)

3-6 year olds: 1 full change of clothing, naptime toy, blanket and a small pillow.



Special Notes Celebrations

Birthdays

We have prepared a Birthday party routine that is both SPECIAL and CONSISTENT for each child in our program. We enjoy birthdays at school with a celebration of each child's life. Celebrations for each group are designed to match the needs and abilities of the children.

- Please do not send additional treats, presents, balloons, etc.
- *Do not distribute invitations at school. Refer to your BGMS phone book for addresses needed to mail Birthday Party Invitations outside of school. Locker distribution is not allowed. (It is our hope to avoid hurt feelings)*

Infant & Toddler Classes

A lunchtime celebration with a birthday song, a picture and a party hat make the day special. (Visitors and birthday treats are difficult for this group to manage due to 'stranger anxiety' and varied individual dietary needs.)

Two / Three Classes

A special presentation is made during a group time to celebrate the child's special day. Children prepare treats to share with their friends at school after lunch or nap. ***Parents of the birthday child are welcome to join us for their child's birthday celebration, BUT at this age, your child will expect to go home with you after the party.*** After nap parties work out very well for this reason.

- Talk to your child's teacher about the date & time and special preparation for your child's celebration.

3-5 All Day classes

The children help make birthday cards and a banner decorates the classroom. Children prepare treats to share with their friends at school after lunch or nap. A special presentation is made during a group time to celebrate the child's special day. Parents of the birthday child are invited to join us for their child's birthday feast!

- Talk to your child's teacher about the date & time and special preparation for your child's celebration.

Classroom Parties

Special holiday parties are held in each of our classrooms. These parties are planned by individual classroom teachers. We'll bake cookies together, show movies of the classroom or the children will give a performance. You may be asked to contribute by bringing a treat or other party items. Any food brought to school for such a party must be prepared in a kitchen approved by the health department (i.e. Jewel, a Bakery, etc.) Packages must arrive unopened. **NO HOME BAKED GOODS WILL BE SERVED TO THE CHILDREN.**

Health & Safety

In order to minimize exposure to germs we require that children wash their hands when they arrive at school. Hand washing is our best defense against illness throughout the year but particularly during cold and flu season. Children receive consistent instruction about hand washing, eating and toileting. Support us by encouraging good hygiene habits for your children. Please help us by bringing children into the classroom bathroom when dropping off in the morning. We also advise that children wash their hands before leaving school in the evening. Protect your family by getting into the hand washing habit!



Staying Healthy

We also take some extra steps during cold and flu season or whenever we need to combat a wave of illness. Teachers remove shared items like play dough and water activities. Markers, paint brushes and work trays are sanitized in addition to the regular classroom sanitation schedule. Teachers step up the supervision of hand washing. Group snacks are served. Teachers serve lunch to the children. Please help us prevent the spread of illness by keeping your child at home whenever you suspect he/she may be contagious.

- Up to date physicals and immunizations are required. Please keep us informed as your child receives immunizations between physicals. New health forms are required upon entry and every 2 years thereafter.
- Should you have a special requirement concerning emergency and/or health procedures, please indicate this on your enrollment form, child information sheet and discuss it with a director.

Special Needs

Enrollment forms specifically request information about special needs and / or unusual circumstances that may need regular staff attention. Dietary issues are documented with notes from doctors or parents as the regulations require. Other issues or disabilities that require braces, hearing aids or special attention need to be documented on your enrollment form so an appropriate plan can be written.

- Discuss your child's special need with a director upon enrollment. We need to agree how the staff at BGMS can or will address this need.
- A written plan for accommodation will be completed with your help.
- The classroom teacher and the director will discuss the accommodation. Teachers receive a copy of the completed Special Needs form and are responsible for educating assistants and substitutes about your child's special needs.
- Accommodations are reviewed with parents and staff and updated annually or as needed. Changes are recorded, discussed with and distributed to the classroom teacher.
- Our director has participated in training for Children with Disabilities

ILLNESS

Children shall be screened upon arrival daily for any obvious signs of illness. If symptoms of illness are present, the child care staff shall determine whether they are able to care for the child safely, based on the apparent degree of illness, other children present and facilities available to care for the ill child.

CAUTION: The effects of a fever reducer (Tylenol, Advil, Aspirin, etc.) will interfere with a responsible determination regarding a return to school. Make sure your child is no longer influenced by any medication when you make a decision to send your child back to school. If a fever is still present your child is likely to be contagious. The cause of the fever must be addressed.

1. Children with diarrhea, fever and those with a rash combined with fever (oral temperature of 101°F or higher or under the arm temperature of 100° F or higher) shall not be admitted to the school while those symptoms persist, and shall be removed as soon as possible should these symptoms develop while the child is in care.
2. Children need not be excluded for a minor illness unless any of the following exist, in which case exclusion from the school is required:
 - A) Illness which prevents the child from participating comfortably in program activities;
 - B) Illness which calls for greater care than the staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children;
 - C) Fever; Children may return to school only when fever free.
 - D) Unusual lethargy, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing or other signs of possible severe illness;
 - E) Diarrhea
 - F) Vomiting two or more times in the previous 24 hours, unless the vomiting is determined to be due to a non-communicable condition and the child is not in danger of dehydration;
 - G) Mouth sores associated with the child's inability to control his or her saliva, until the child's physician or the local health department states that the child is non-infectious;
 - H) Rash with fever or behavior change, unless a physician has determined the illness to be non-communicable;
 - I) Pink eye (purulent conjunctivitis) is a highly contagious and common childhood illness. Children with pink eye will be sent home. Pink eye must be treated. Your child may return to school when symptom free (no more redness or discharge) at least 24 hours after treatment has been initiated;
 - J) Impetigo, until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated;
 - K) Strep throat (streptococcal pharyngitis), until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated and until the child has been without fever for 24 hours;
 - L) Head lice, until the morning after the first treatment;
 - M) Scabies, until the morning after the first treatment;
 - N) Chicken Pox (varicella) Children will be sent home and may return to school after all the blisters have dried out and crusted over. The process of breaking out and crusting over take at least 6 days. Stop in the office for a check before your child returns to class;
 - O) Whooping cough (pertussis) until five days of antibiotic treatment have been completed;

- P) Mumps, until nine days after onset of parotid gland swelling;
- Q) Measles, until four days after disappearance of the rash; or
- R) Symptoms which may be indicative of one of the serious communicable diseases identified in the Illinois Department of Public Health Control of Communicable Diseases cod (77 Ill. Adm. Code 690)

- Please call our office if you have questions regarding particular symptoms your child may exhibit.
- Should your child become ill at school, he/she will be isolated and you will be notified immediately. Should you not be available, an attempt to reach your listed emergency contacts will be made.
- Report to the school the cause of your child's absence. If you have confirmation of a communicable disease, please call school immediately. Notice of such illnesses will be posted for the parents of your child's classmates.

If your child is too ill to participate in regularly scheduled school activities, he/she is too ill to be at school. We are unable to provide separate programming for convalescing children.

Medication

Medications shall be administered as required by physician subject to receipt of appropriate releases from parents. Medication consent forms are available in the office or from a teacher. Forms must be complete in their entirety prior to the administration of medication.

A record of medication administered at school will be kept by your child's teacher. This log contains the date, time, dosage and the name of the person who administered the medication.

Prescription and non-prescription medications must be kept in the original container and marked with the child's name, directions for administering, date, physician's name, prescription number and pharmacy. Ask your pharmacist for an additional labeled container to keep some of your child's medication at school.

Non-prescription medication may be administered upon parental permission. Such medications shall be administered in accordance with package instructions, and must be labeled with the child's name and date.

We can administer Aspirin or aspirin substitutes only with a physician's written permission outlining the specific purpose and guidelines for use. Dosage, times and date must be included in the note from your doctor and may not exceed 5 days.

All medications are kept in medication boxes and are out of the reach of the children



Sunscreen

BGMS will provide sunscreen for your child to be administered as needed with your permission. Our classroom teachers have recommended we purchase a brand of sunscreen that is long-lasting and easy to apply. Details on the brand and ingredients will be available for you to look over. Sunscreen permission forms need to be completed as usual. If you prefer to provide your own sunscreen, be sure to label it with your child's name and give it to your child's teacher with your completed permission form.

Whether or not you use our sunscreen during the day, we ask that you apply an initial dose of sunscreen before you arrive at school. Your assistance is very much appreciated.

Check the sunscreen column on the classroom log to confirm that application. Following manufacturer instructions, we will apply a mid-morning dose and another after nap if the children go back out to play in the afternoon.

School Closure

While we do everything we can to remain open during extreme weather it is not always possible. We use closing of School District 21 as a guide to make our decision but it is not always definitive. The school district will sometimes close due to extreme cold, which makes it dangerous for children to wait at bus stops or outside waiting for school doors to open. This type of closing would not affect us. On the flip side, snow storms may make travel for BGMS staff excessively dangerous. In the event that the weather is questionable please call school *before you leave the house*. A school closing message will be placed on our voice mail as soon as a decision is made. Should closing be deemed necessary you will receive a phone call from a BGMS staff member. Because phone numbers often change, especially work and cell numbers, it is important to keep the office informed of any and all changes to insure that you can be reached.

Emergency Procedure

The safety of our school environment where your children spend much of their day is a top priority at Buffalo Grove Montessori School. In the unlikely event of an emergency situation involving BGMS, school administrators will take the necessary precautions and will communicate closely with police, health and fire departments to ensure the safety of students and staff.

If we are required to spend more than a few extra hours in this emergency state, the school does keep a regular supply of food and water on hand. Please try to avoid calling the school as this will tie up emergency telephone lines. Our plan is to stay on site (950 Ellen Drive, in Buffalo Grove) with the children until children are picked up unless local authorities direct us elsewhere. Parents are advised to listen to the television or radio for emergency information.

While no one knows for certain when and where an emergency situation will arise, please be assured that the safety of students is our main concern.

All classes participate in regular fire and tornado drills.

Special Notes for the Infant Classroom

Basic to our Montessori philosophy is the concept of *follow the child*. This means that your baby will call the shots! Our job is to respond by meeting the needs of the baby as indicated. **We feed babies when hungry, comfort when upset, nap when tired, etc.** We do not wake babies to be fed, force feed or withhold foods. Sometimes the BGMS routine is different than the home routine. There are many differences between the school and home environments; activity levels, stimulation, stresses, noise...therefore your baby may eat or sleep at different times when at BGMS. Your baby may settle into two routines HOME/BGMS. As infants grow they establish regular meal and nap times.

It is important that you the parents and we the caregivers work closely together to provide the best possible care for your baby.

- The information that you provide prior to your babies 1st day at BGMS will be a great help to his/her teachers. This information will be used as flexible guidelines as your child's day to day needs are identified.
- Completion of the parent portion of your baby's daily sheet is very important. Your input provides the timely relevant information that will further serve to assist our teachers in interpreting your babies behavior/needs daily.

Teachers are available as you come and go for conversation or by phone throughout the day. We'll get back to you ASAP should the class need our total attention at the time you call. Nap times are good for phone calls.

Concerning Food...

We follow many rules concerning the food you/we provide for your child. The Health Department, Department of Children and Family Services, and the State Board of Education all provide guidelines and or requirements regarding the feeding of your child. Because your child may progress from formula/breast milk only to a complete menu of table food, you will experience many changes in the course of a year.

At the Beginning:

- ✓ Bottles should be labeled with names on both bottle & lids (lids are required).
- ✓ All bottles/food is dated when it arrives and must be used or sent home that day.
- ✓ Only formula, breast milk or water can be placed in a bottle.
- ✓ We stock Nestle brand 'Good Start' formula powder if you would like us to provide it.
- ✓ Juice can be served in a cup.
- ✓ Formula shall be milk-based, unless otherwise indicated in writing by the child's physician.
- ✓ Bottles cannot be warmed in the microwave.

When your child begins to eat solid food:

- ✓ Please talk to your child's teacher and indicate changes on the daily sheets.

****Introduce new foods at home first and keep us informed about any adverse reactions. ****

- ✓ We have a basic supply of infant foods available. We will be glad to provide these foods for your child. They include:
 - Rice Cereal (prepared with formula)
 - Applesauce or Strained Bananas, or Pears
 - Strained Apricots w/ Pears & Apples or Peaches or Plums w/ Apple
 - Strained Peas or Green Beans
 - Strained Carrots or Squash or Sweet Potato

- ✓ You have the option of using our supplies exclusively, supplementing our menu with food you provide or providing all of your child's food during this time of transition. Infant meal guidelines are posted.
- ✓ Other transitional foods we have available include Cheerios, graham crackers, saltines, fresh & canned fruit. These will be offered to your child as you indicate a readiness for these items.
- ✓ The selection of food we have available may change.
- ✓ A labeled section in the cabinet is provided for you to store shelf-stable foods for your child, including extra formula, baby cereals and other foods.

As your child transitions to table food:

- ✓ Menus are posted and available by the office.
- ✓ All foods are chopped to safe and manageable sizes.
- ✓ Your child will practice with plates and utensils on the own tray.
- ✓ Your child will join the group meal at the table following experience using dishes.
- ✓ Check the menus to be sure they are appropriate for your child. Alert the teacher if you prefer an alternative. (Ex. A child may eat all foods, but still drink formula or eat fruit and vegetables but not meat)
- ✓ When infants transition from formula to milk, whole milk is served.
- ✓ Children under two years of age are served whole milk unless low fat milk is requested (in writing) by the child's physician.
- ✓ Regular substitutions due to allergy or religious beliefs must be documented in your child's file. Allergy issues require a note from your doctor. Religious issues require a letter from the parents.

Outdoor Activities

Fresh air is a high priority of our program for children of every age. Our strollers have infant seats to accommodate those who are not able to sit up as well as upright seats for those who are. The wagons still offer back support and the safety of being buckled in but allow for more freedom and visibility. Neighborhood strolls are often the highlight of the day. We may sit on the porch and sing songs while we watch the weather. On particularly beautiful days, the teachers may stroll the children all the way to Riley Park and feed the ducks!

The playground and garden areas are a great place to enjoy sunshine and fresh air as well. Toddlers enjoy the sandbox, the stairs and slide and riding toys, while the less mobile babies may lounge on a blanket in the grass.

Expect your child to be outdoors every day. We try to get everyone outside at least briefly, even if the weather is cold. Send shoes and/or socks to keep feet warm on a walk.

Birthday Celebrations

Group birthday celebrations for our infants need to be simple and enjoyable. While older children will enjoy their parents company for lunch; infants & toddlers may have difficulty separating when a parent has to return to work for the afternoon. Extra visitors create anxiety and disrupt routines. Birthday treats are problematic too, since not all babies are able to eat the same foods. We will take pictures and celebrate to commemorate the day with your child's classmates. Please respect the limitations of the babies and plan more elaborate celebrations for home.

Special Notes for Young Toddlers

As infants grow they establish regular meal and nap times. The toddler class is small group centered as meals and naps become more unified. Listed below are specific changes in our program for toddlers.

- *No more Daily sheets.* Menus are posted for snacks and meals. Menus are posted with extras available by the office. Check the “Diaper Log” for the schedule of diaper changes and notes about needed supplies. Diaper are changed approximately every three hours and as needed throughout the day. Toddlers nap as a group, usually between 1-3pm.
- *Snack, meal and nap schedules shift as the group matures.* The schedule adjusts to meet the needs of the children. (As young toddlers, the group may sleep earlier and longer. Late in the year, lunch may be later.)
- *Transitioning off pacifiers, bottles and training cups.* We’re prepared to deal with the spills as toddlers master their cup handling skills. Bottles are not offered unless needed, and pacifiers are generally reserved for naptime.
- *Toddlers sleep on cots.* Our cots are just the right size and low to the ground. Please send a blanket to leave at school for the week. We’ll send it home on Friday for washing.
- *Extra clothing should be stored in your BGMS bag and kept in your child’s locker.* There is still classroom space for storing diapers & wipes in the toddler changing area.

Outdoor Activities

Fresh air is a high priority of our program for children of every age. Neighborhood strolls are often the highlight of the day. Our wagons offer back support and the safety of being buckled in but allow some freedom of movement and excellent visibility. We may sit on the porch and sing songs while we watch the weather. On particularly beautiful days, the teachers may stroll the children all the way to Riley Park!

The backyard is a great place to enjoy sunshine and fresh air as well. Toddlers especially enjoy the sandbox, the stairs and slide and the riding toys. In the summer, opportunities for water play will add excitement to the day.

- Expect your child to be outdoors every day. We try to get everyone outside at least briefly, even if the weather is cold. Please send boots, hats and mittens so your child is always prepared for the weather.

Birthday Celebrations

Group birthday celebrations for our infants & toddlers need to be simple and enjoyable. While older children will enjoy their parents company for lunch; infants & toddlers may have difficulty separating when a parent has to return to work for the afternoon. Extra visitors create anxiety and disrupt the toddlers’ routines. Birthday treats are problematic too, because we are reluctant to introduce your toddler to unnecessary sweets. We will take pictures and celebrate to commemorate the day with your child’s classmates. Please respect the limitations of the toddlers and plan more elaborate celebrations for home.

Special Notes for the Tod/Twos and Two/Threes Classroom

Toddlers and two year olds are busy building new skills, they are increasingly aware of their surroundings and sensitive to change.

- A positive attitude towards separation is the most important thing to keep in mind for both you and your child. Your child's teachers are available for assistance if you need help when separating.
- Please let us know of any changes in your child's routine that may affect his/her work style or behavior at school. Being informed about business trips, visitation schedules, moving to a new home, or a new baby can help us understand and accommodate behavior changes.

Gaining independence by learning to dress yourself is part of the two year old experience!

We spend time helping the children to help themselves dress and undress everyday. Some styles of clothing are easier for the children to maneuver. Dress your child in clothing that is simple and easiest for your child to manage. Snaps, zippers, small buttons are almost impossible for your child to manage independently. Elastic waist pants make dressing an easier task. Velcro shoes are easy for your child to put on and take off. High top gym shoes and tie shoes are more difficult to manage. Remember that your child will be more active than ever before. We work with water, paints, glue and sand on a regular basis. Please send your child in play clothes. Normal school activities can dirty or stain clothing.

Extra clothes should be stored in your child's bag. **Bring at least three pairs of extra clothes (including socks).** *Label every piece of clothing you send to school.*

Moving from diapers to underpants . . .

- We ask that children still in diapers be sent to school with wipes and a package of diapers to be stored in the bathroom. We will notify you when your child is getting low so you can bring more to school.
- We approach potty training when your child has an interest and feel that your child is ready for this challenge. We will communicate with you and agree on the right time to begin potty training at school. We will need extra underwear and clothes sent to school. A potty chair as well as a low toilet is available at all times.
- Please share your home routines with us, so we are better prepared to accommodate your child's needs here at school.

LITTLE CHILDREN...BIG CONFLICT! !

Interactive play results in contact and sometimes conflict with others. Developing communication skills and limited physical abilities can be frustrating. Pushing, shoving, spitting and biting are behaviors that can occur. Instruction and/or redirection and/or correction are a natural and necessary aspect of the learning process. Teachers are constantly providing directives and encouraging appropriate means to resolve conflicts. Accidents and conflicts can occur unexpectedly and out of reach of the teacher. No one wants his or her child to be hurt. No one likes to think of his or her child as the aggressor. Teething, ineffective communication skills and/or social inexperience can trigger a physical impulse such as biting. We try to recognize and prevent inappropriate behavior and offer appropriate responses when it does occur. For instance, we offer the biter a teething ring, or something to chew on. We give information and teach critical communication skills ("Tell him to stop", "I don't like that", and "No"). We try to support appropriate behaviors to replace or relieve the conflict.

TOYS FROM HOME

Toys need to stay at home or in the car! They get lost, broken or cause disturbances in the classroom. Reassure your child that their toy will be waiting for them in the car when you return to take them home. Home toys are for home, school toys are for school. There are many toys to choose at school.

NAP TIME

Your child is encouraged to nap or rest on their cot. You can bring a blanket, small pillow and nap toy for your child. The nap toy should be an item your child is willing to leave at school for the *entire* week. These should go home each Friday to be washed. After your child has rested, they are invited to get up and work with art materials or other quiet activities until most of the children are awake. The school provides cot sheets. They are changed and laundered weekly. Cots are also sanitized weekly or more frequently if needed. Nap toys may be exchanged on a weekly basis when pillows and blankets go home on Fridays for laundering. A new toy can be chosen to return to school along with clean pillows and blankets on Monday morning.

Outdoor Activities

The wagons continue to get this group out into the neighborhood. Our wagons offer back support and the safety of being buckled in but allow some freedom of movement and excellent visibility. Strolling the neighborhood in search of colored leaves or watching for bunnies and squirrels is great fun. Fresh air is a high priority of our program for children of every age. We may sit on the porch and sing songs while we watch the weather. On particularly beautiful days, the teachers may stroll the children all the way to Riley Park!

The backyard is a great place to enjoy sunshine and fresh air as well. Toddlers especially enjoy the sandbox, the stairs and slide and the riding toys. In the summer, opportunities for water play will add excitement to the day.

Expect your child to be outdoors every day. We try to get everyone outside at least briefly, even if the weather is cold. Please send boots, hats and mittens so your child is always prepared for the weather.

Birthday Celebrations

The children help make birthday cards and a banner decorates the classroom. A special presentation is made during a group time to celebrate the child's special day. Children prepare treats to share with their friends at school after lunch or nap and a special gift is chosen from the Treasure Chest. ***Parents of the birthday child are welcome to join us for their child's birthday celebration, BUT at this age, your child will expect to go home with you after the party!*** After nap parties work out very well for this reason.

- Talk to your child's teacher about the date & time for your child's celebration.

Special Notes for the 3 – 6 Classroom

Children entering the 3-6 year old classroom are increasingly independent and managing more of their daily self care routines. Please be consistent in expecting your child to follow school rules.

- Children can NEVER be left alone . . . in the classroom, in the hallway, on the porch, etc.
Your child should be with you until they are with a teacher.
- Food from home should not come into school (Cereal & fruit is available at 7am, Snack by 8:30)
- Toys, money, etc. should be left at home...Leave it in your car for pick up time if you must.
- Please supervise your child's choice of nap toy. It should stay at school and *not make any noise!* Also, please send a small pillow, large ones are difficult to store.

Enrichment Programs

Wednesdays from September to May are extra fun days for our 3-6 year olds. Beginning before lunch and continuing until nap all of our All Day 1, 2, 3 and 6 students will be included in special activities.

- ❖ Kindergarten age children will be grouped for traditional school simulations and preparation. (Kindergarten Supplement)
- ❖ Three and four year olds will be included in an all new format of stories, puppets, flannel board, singing, dancing, drama, gross motor and group play.

Teachers will alternate between the groups as the year progresses, sharing areas of special interest and skill. It's a great opportunity to address same age interests and explore and expand other friendships. The children enjoy mixing up the groups, visiting other classrooms and interacting with different teachers. The change of pace and scene is an exciting addition to our daily routine.

Kindergarten ***"The Icing on the Cake"***

The Montessori kindergarten experience is the culmination of the Montessori pre-primary cycle. Kindergarten is not a separate program. Kindergartners gather in their classrooms each morning to receive daily presentations. It is our goal to provide a solid educational foundation for your child that prepares him/her for success in every area of life. The materials the children used in earlier years help to develop the concentration, coordination, and work habits necessary for the completion of more advanced exercises. Transfer out of the Montessori experience at the kindergarten year can interrupt the progress of the beginning reader and the budding mathematician.

Overall, we at Buffalo Grove Montessori School are dedicated to providing the best for your child. Kindergarten age children still need hands on learning opportunities. We believe that a firm foundation of self esteem, confidence, independence, and a mastery of academic basics are the best tools we can provide your child with to insure a successful school experience and to preserve their thirst for knowledge. Let us offer your child the kindergarten experience that will help him or her be successful.

Children enrolled in our kindergarten program will need the following supplies in a labeled plastic school box. These supplies are needed only during the school year.

- 1 set thin markers**
- 1 scissors**
- 1 glue stick**
- 2 pencils**



Field Trips

Special activities, such as swimming lessons and field trips are an important part of our curriculum. Attendance at such times will indicate participation on the trip.

- During the winter months we arrange trips to see plays or burn off extra energy at an indoor playground. We also welcome guests for special presentations (music/movement, magicians, and puppets) in the classroom.
- We arrange a session of swimming lessons for Kindergartners and graduates.
- All the children 3 years and older swim at Eagle Pool in August.
- Other trips are arranged each year to enhance the summer experience.

Whenever swimming is included in the program, alternate activities will be available for children who do not participate in swimming. A private transportation company will provide bus transportation. Additional fees may be charged and notice of such trips will be given. Parent participation is welcome.

Auxiliary Programs

A variety of extra programs are offered for those who choose to participate. These programs are available between 4:30 and 6:00 pm and will not interfere with our day. Choices available in the past have included dance/exercise/gymnastic type classes, art /drawing, music, computer, and Spanish language classes. Information about our current programs can be found by the front door. Enrollment is limited. Notices are posted during registrations periods. All fees are payable directly to the provider.



Guidance / Discipline Policy

Guidance/ Discipline is the on-going process of helping children develop inner controls so that they can manage their own behavior in socially approved ways. The goals of setting limits (discipline) are to help the child develop self-control, to help him/her assume responsibility for his/her actions and gain awareness of the rights of others. Simple and understandable rules shall be used with children. Limits and consequences shall be consistently enforced and explained to the child before and as part of any disciplinary action. For example: "You may not hurt another child with your body or your words." Discipline shall be developmentally related to the child's act and shall not be out of proportion to the particular inappropriate behavior. The child shall be made aware of the relationship between the act and the consequences. Firm positive statements about behaviors or redirection of behaviors are the accepted techniques for use with children. Preschool and school-age children shall have reasonable opportunity to resolve their own conflicts. Other means of setting limits may include redirection to a more appropriate activity, loss of privilege or activity where misbehavior occurs, firm positive statements about what else can be done, and when age appropriate, helping children resolve their conflicts. Removal from the group may be used as another alternative for children more than 24 months old. This period shall never exceed 1 minute per year of age. Discipline shall be the responsibility of the teachers who have an on-going relationship with the child.

In accordance with state law, no child shall ever be subject to corporal punishment inflicted in any manner upon the body, or to verbal abuse. Meals, or any part of meals, may not be withheld as punishment, nor may any child be punished for toilet accidents.

In accordance with state law, The following behaviors are prohibited in all child care settings:

1. Corporal punishment, including hitting spanking, swatting, beating, shaking, pinching, and other measures intended to induce physical pain or fear;
 2. Threatened or actual withdrawal of food, rest or use of the bathroom;
 3. Disciplined for toilet accidents;
 4. Abusive or profane language;
 5. Any form of public or private humiliation, including threats of physical punishment; and
 6. Any form of emotional abuse, including shaming, rejecting, terrorizing, or isolating a child.
- Removal from the group to help a child gain control shall not exceed one minute per year of age. Removal from the group shall not be used for children less than 24 months of age.

Children do exhibit aggressive and or inappropriate behaviors from time to time. Instruction and/or redirection and/or correction are a natural and necessary aspect of the learning process. Injury can occur accidentally or as a result of peer conflict. Interactive play encourages contact with others. Communication skills and physical abilities are developing. Pushing, shoving, spitting and biting are behaviors that can occur. Teachers are constantly providing directives and encouraging appropriate means to resolve conflicts. Accidents and conflicts can occur unexpectedly and out of reach of the teacher.

Every situation must be assessed in accordance with its particular factors, situational attributes along with personalities involved. A specific plan will be written for responding to a child's pattern of unacceptable behavior. Parents and staff who affect the child shall be aware of the plan and cooperate in its implementation. All plans will be documented and shared with parents. In the event resolution can not be accomplished, program termination will follow.

Parents and Staff:

In accordance with D.C.F.S. Standards, all parents and staff are required to sign acknowledging the receipt of the Guidance and Discipline Policy at the time of their enrollment (Parent Handbook) or employment (Staff Policy Acknowledgement).

I / We, _____
(Please print)
the parents of _____
(Please print)

have received the Buffalo Grove Montessori School Parent Handbook.

- I understand that common goals are foundational to our relationship as parents & teachers.
- I agree that my/our participation in both parent training and family events are a high priority.
- I have read this handbook and agree to abide by all the procedures and policies therein for the duration of my child's participation in the program.

Signature & Date