MONTESSORI
INTERNATIONAL PRESCHOOL

Parent Handbook

A safe, nurturing and stimulating environment where children can develop their intrinsic motivation for life-long learning and become happy, confident and responsible individuals.

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Welcome

We would like to thank you for choosing Montessori International Preschool and we ensure you that our commitment is that your children receive quality and loving care. We thrive to encourage the development of the whole child by providing them with a well-rounded, individualised educational and developmental experience that is grounded in Montessori principles.

We will also build up the children's self-confidence and self-esteem with positive redirections. It is our goal to provide a variety of exciting, stimulating activities each day so that your child can develop socially, emotionally, physically and mentally to the very best of his/her ability.

This handbook will help you become acquainted with our preschool and will help you and your child have an enjoyable time while with us. You will find our policies and procedures outlined in this handbook, as well as our schedule of activities, programme and other information. We encourage you to learn about what is going on at our preschool and about how we help your child to learn and grow in the Montessori environment.

We suggest that you file this handbook so that you can refer to it throughout the year. We invite you to raise any questions regarding the preschool with any of us. We, as staff, are delighted to have the privilege to work with you and your child.

Sincerely,



Isabel Lisack
Owner and Director



Nolwenn Hou
Head Montessori Teacher

BACKGROUND

We are an environmentally-friendly international preschool based on the Montessori educational approach with tuition in English. We have children from 2 years and 10 months to 6 years old and we are committed to providing a safe, secure and happy environment.

After almost 2 years of planning and applying for municipality approvals, Montessori International Preschool first opened its doors on 17th August 2011. We started with three sweet little girls at Isabel Lisack's home in Frederiksberg and stayed there for two weeks. Then, we moved to a temporary place owned by Frederiksberg Kommune, near the town hall. There were seven children with us and we were lucky to be very close to Frederiksberg Park where we played most afternoons.

Our Valby Location

We worked very hard to get our building approved as a kindergarten and finally, at the beginning of January 2012, we were able to settle down permanently at our present address: Søndermarksvej 13, 2500 Valby. It is a beautiful villa with a lovely garden and lots of trees, flowers and bushes in a quiet area, near the Carlsberg district. We are at walking distance of Søndermarken Park and Copenhagen Zoo. We are very happy at our present location.
We were the first English-language preschool to become a fully-fledged Private Institution in Copenhagen Municipality in 2017.

Our Frederiksberg Location

After 3 years of operations in Valby, our waiting list became so long that we knew it was essential to start a second preschool. Montessori International Preschool Frederiksberg opened its doors on 1st October 2014. We took over the property of a Danish børnehave that closed the previous year, at Maglekildevej 8, 1853 Frederiksberg C.

The Frederiksberg preschool was sold in November 2025 and is now called Vega Montessori Preschool (www.vegamontessori.dk).

Vision

Our vision is to provide the unique Montessori philosophy in Denmark as we believe it is the most valuable education for early childhood.

Mission

To develop and nurture the intellectual, creative and human potential of our children by providing them with a warm, safe, caring and stimulating environment.

Values

Dedication – we are committed to the education and safety of our children, the needs of our families and the intellectual growth of our team.
Quality – we are committed to constantly improve the conditions for our children and our team and strive for excellence through evaluation and continuous betterment.
Integrity - we are committed to act in an ethical manner driven by equality and trust.
Caring - we are committed to being sensitive and responsive to the needs of our children, our families and our team.
Teamwork - we are committed to effective partnerships between staff and the parent community.
Respect - we believe that all people should be treated with consideration and dignity. We welcome and respect diversity.
Responsibility – we are committed to professional interaction with our children, our families and each other; based on compassion, mutual respect and positive energy.

Objectives

- To provide quality Montessori education for the children
- To develop the overall potential of each child
- To allow children to work at their own pace and at their own level
- To nurture the creativity, curiosity, and imagination of every child
- To create a life-long love of learning
- To provide a loving, safe and caring environment that fosters happiness, confidence and responsibility
- To be accessible, flexible and responsive and to demonstrate a sense of urgency in our resolve and decision-making
- To inspire academic excellence
- To ensure Montessori International Preschool is a desirable place to work
- To ensure the long-term sustainability of Montessori International Preschool.

Principles

- Every child is a unique person with creative potential, the drive to learn and the right to be treated with respect as an individual
- As children are profoundly affected by society and their immediate surroundings, we create an environment in harmony with the child's natural development

- Children must be given freedom to work and move around, within guidelines that enable them to see themselves as both independent and part of a group
- Montessori materials help children to explore and master their environment through activities which aid the development of the whole personality
- Children are encouraged to work at their own pace, either individually or in co-operation with others
- Mixed age groups provide opportunities for the children to develop their social abilities within the harmonious community that is Montessori International Preschool
- Children are carefully observed on a regular basis, both individually and as a group, to assist their full development.

We promote the holistic development of each child individually by placing emphasis on:

- Establishing self-confidence and self-esteem
- Self-determination within respective age limits
- Learning to form own opinion
- Building of self-assurance and assertiveness
- Encouragement of social development
- Learning responsibility in small steps
- Learning conflict resolution
- Respect for the developmental rhythm of each individual.

CURRICULUM

Prior to age six, the child learns more easily and efficiently than at any other period in life. Research has established the critical importance of the first six years of life for a child's physical, cognitive, emotional and social development. Montessori education is both a philosophy of child development and a method for guiding such development.

How is the philosophy applied?

A Montessori environment differs from the traditional classroom in more ways than just structure. The materials are arranged on low shelves and the child is free to choose the activities that interest him or her. The emphasis is on manipulative activities. Young children really enjoy getting their hands-on learning materials. The children also have an abundance of energy and learn through movement, so Maria Montessori felt it was necessary for the children to have activities in which they could become actively involved.

The learning materials in the environment are referred to as "works," not toys. The children work with the materials. Using this terminology gives the activities added dignity. The children enjoy calling it "work" as they can identify with the work their parents perform. In addition, the children see that purposeful work can be enjoyable.

The children do find the work gratifying in that they determine what they want to do. The children are not presented materials they are not ready for or in which they

have no interest. Through their choices, they reveal themselves. By observation, the teacher can determine interests and abilities. The joy is in the doing rather than in the end product. Many times, a child works hard on a project and the results of much of your child's work are intangible.

Built into most of the Montessori materials is a control of error. This helps the child learn when a mistake has been made. For example, if a child fails to return all of the cylinders to the correct hole in the cylinder block she will have one that does not fit. They she can figure out how to overcome this difficulty without unnecessary intervention on the part of the teacher.

Discipline is closely allied with constructive work in the Montessori environment. When children are involved with an activity, they are not interested in causing a disturbance. In addition, the children focus on their own abilities. The children thus, develop positive self-concept and self-discipline.

The role of the teacher in a Montessori environment differs from the traditional role. The teacher prepares the environment. She is not the centre of activity: the children interacting with the environment are. The teacher makes observation notes during the course of the session and uses them to prepare the environment. And, of course, she works with the children, familiarising them with the materials and guiding them in socially acceptable behaviour.

Why do we have mixed age groupings of children?

Traditional schools group the children chronologically. However, Maria Montessori felt the classroom should reflect the real world. Thus, she developed the concept of the "family group." It is a balance of children aged two-and-a half or three to six years old and the adults who guide them. This grouping works well as younger children learn from older children and the older children grow in confidence as they help the younger children. This is a spontaneous occurrence. The older children are not required to help the younger children and have many activities of their own to work on. However, they are free to help the other children and usually enjoy sharing their talents.

PROGRAMME

Opening hours and schedule

From Monday to Friday, the opening hours are 7:45 to 17:15

Here is the programme of a typical day at our preschool:

- 7:45 to 8:45 – Welcome
- 8:45 to 12:00 – Montessori 3-hour cycle including circle time
- 12:00 to 12:30 – Lunch then clean-up
- 12:30 to 14:00 – Outdoor play (longer play times outside when the weather is nice and in the summertime)
- 14:00 to 14:30 – Group activity (different every day): yoga, story time, music, dance, relaxation, science… Outside in nice warm weather
- 14:30 to 15:30 – Afternoon snack
- 15:00 to 17:15 – Arts & Crafts, free play and parent pick-up

If weather permits, we go on an outing a few times a year. This could include a picnic in the park, a visit to the aquarium, a museum, a farm and other activities.

Monthly themes

We have monthly themes that are established and coordinated by our team. They are designed to enrich all children's understanding of the world. The themes have educational, social, cultural, and emotional value. Here are some examples of our monthly themes: the solar system, dinosaurs, seasons, transportation, continents, pyramids, ocean life, etc.

Circle time

Circle time provides the children with the opportunity to interact with each other as a group. During this time, they learn about the calendar, the weather, the seasons and the months. They sing songs, learn about the materials, read stories and learn about each other. This allows the children to engage in conversation and to learn new skills through role play. The teacher also prepares the children for the day and reviews the theme of the week.

Arts and crafts

Most of our projects are focused around the seasons, holidays and monthly themes. Arts and crafts projects stimulate the child's mind to be creative. These activities also assist in the development of fine and gross motor skills. Children also achieve a sense of pride and accomplishment through the development of projects. Our programme is filled with hands-on learning activities as well as open-ended art activities. Open-ended art allows the child to explore the use of various materials and processes and enjoy what happens. Craft projects are designed to help the children develop their creativity and the use of specific skills. Uneven or lopsided projects are to be expected from children of this age. The children are in the process of learning. It is the "process not the product" that is important. Please keep this in mind and treat all of your children's projects as masterpieces!

Events and festivities

We celebrate the local Danish festivities as well as some of those from other countries, if we have children and team members who represent those countries. Here are some of the festivities that we celebrate:

- CHINESE NEW YEAR – January - February
- PANCAKE DAY (CHANDELEUR) – 2nd February
- ST VALENTINE'S DAY – 14th February
- FASTELAVN (DANISH CARNIVAL) – February
- MARTI (GREEK SPRING FESTIVAL) – 1st March
- DR. SEUSS BIRTHDAY – 2nd March
- HOLI (INDIAN SPRING FESTIVAL OF COLOURS) - March
- ST PATRICK'S DAY – 17th March
- EASTER – March-April
- EARTH DAY – 22nd April
- MOTHER'S DAY – Second Sunday of May
- FATHER'S DAY – 5th June
- DIWALI (INDIAN FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS) - Autumn

- HALLOWEEN – 31st October
- THANKSGIVING – 3rd Thursday in November
- SANKTA LUCIA – 13th December

Calendar

The preschool is closed during all Danish school holidays. Also, we close the last three weeks of July.

Environmentally–friendly preschool

The preschool emphasizes recycling and efficient use of energy supplies. The practice of automatic recycling of materials and reduced waste is essential for the overall organisation.

ADMISSIONS

Registration statement

Montessori International Preschool is non-discriminatory in its admission policies. We believe in equal attention and care for all children without regard to sex, race, colour, creed, religion or beliefs.

Our requirements for children to be admitted at the preschool are:

- Children must be at least 2 years and 10 months old (our environment and materials are not suitable for younger children)
- Children should be toilet-trained (no more nappies / diapers and able to ask when they need to go to the toilet)
- We do not admit children who are older than 4 years old unless they have been at a Montessori school beforehand (they have missed too much of the Montessori programme by then)
- Registration form completed, application and registration fees paid
- Once admitted, children may remain at the preschool until July of the year that they turn 6 years old.

Waiting list policy

Parents/guardians who wish to have their child's name placed on the waiting list must submit a completed registration form, which can be found on our website and pay the application fee: http://montessoripreschool.dk/admissions-and-fees/

Application fee

The application fee is **DKK 500** (non-refundable)

The **application fee** is required if you would like to put your child on our waiting list. The fee is due once you have completed our online registration form.

Registration fee

The registration fee is **DKK 3.000** (non-refundable).

The **registration fee** is required once a place has been confirmed for your child. It covers all administrative costs to welcome your child to the preschool.

Tuition fees

The following tuition fees are for all children from 2 years 10 months to 6 years old:

DKK 5.750 – for children with a CPR number

DKK 10.500 – for children without a CPR number

The tuition fee is due on the **first working day of the month**. Payments should be done by bank transfer.

There is a **DKK 500 late payment fee** if it is not done on the first working day of the month. If it is still not paid after one week, then the child cannot attend the preschool until the fee has been paid.

Taking time off / Holidays

If a child takes time off from the preschool or goes away on holiday, the full fee is still due otherwise the child loses his/her place at the preschool.
Please make sure that you inform us when the child will be absent for a long period of time so that we can organise ourselves accordingly.

Termination

Montessori International Preschool reserves the right to discontinue service to a family if financial commitments are not met. Written notification will be given to the parents to allow for ample time to find alternative care. We will make every effort to resolve any problems prior to termination. Documentation will be provided upon request prior to suspension or termination.

We also reserve the right to immediately terminate the registration of a child whose parents behave inappropriately. Please see chapter *Inappropriate Parent Conduct* (in Communication section)

Leaving the preschool

Please give **two months' notice** before your child leaves the preschool. This is to give us time to prepare for a nice goodbye for your child and for the welcome of a new child who will be joining us.
Sending an email telling us the last date of your child at our preschool is required and sufficient to give us the leaving notice. If you give us less than two months' notice, then the tuition fee is still due.

STARTING AT THE PRESCHOOL

Settling-in time

We require a settling-in period so that children settle gradually and feel comfortable at their new preschool.

Our policy is that parents drop-off their child and say goodbye at the gate of the playground. We prefer that parents do not come into the preschool, even during the settling-in period! This will help the child get used to their new environment quickly and it helps foster independence right from the start.

On the first two days of attendance, parents should come at **8:45** to drop off their child and say a swift goodbye. We will let the parents know how their child is doing and we will call if he/she cries for more than 20 minutes. Otherwise, it means that the child is fine. Then, parents should come and pick up the child at **11:00**.

On the third day, if the child feels comfortable enough, he/she can stay for lunch and the parents can come and pick him or her up at around 13:00. The teachers will let the parents know when the child is ready to stay longer days.

Usually, after a week, if everything goes well, the full-time schedule can start, and parents will be able to drop their child off anytime from opening time and pick them up by closing time.

If the adaptation to the new environment is difficult or stressful, we will keep the hours short and adjust the drop off and pick up times accordingly. The teachers will be there to discuss it with the parents. The teachers are the ones who evaluate what is best for the child at our preschool so please follow their directives at all times.

Parent/Child separation

Separation can be stressful for both the parent and the child, especially in the early days. It is not unusual for a child to become teary when separating from a parent in an unfamiliar situation. Remember, this is a new environment with new faces. Please help us to make this time less stressful by adhering to the following guidelines:

- Please do not attempt to sneak out without saying goodbye to your child.
- When it is time to leave, emphasize that you will come back. Then, give a kiss and a hug and leave.
- As difficult as it may be, make your goodbye short and sweet, even if your child is crying. The longer the goodbye, the longer the child will cry.
- Do not linger around after you have said goodbye, this can confuse your child and prolong the crying.
- Our staff are trained to handle these difficult, but normal occurrences. They will comfort your child and involve him/her in an activity. Ninety per cent of the time, your child will have stopped crying within minutes of you having left.
- During the first few weeks, after the parents have said goodbye, if the child is still crying after 20 minutes, then we will call the parents back to pick up the child and we will try it again the following day.

Children with Special Needs

At the preschool, we have an outdoor elevator at the entrance of the preschool so there is wheelchair access if needed.

If a child has special needs and learning difficulties, we first have a discussion with the parents and we see if the preschool is fit to for the child's specific needs.

Pacifier/dummy policy

We do not accept pacifiers/dummies at the preschool for sanitary purposes and to prevent the spread of germs. Other children may pick up a dropped pacifier and place it in their mouth. It may also fall on a dirty floor or in the toilet and the staff may

not see it occur. If your child is still attached to his or her pacifier, then please let them know that they can have it at home but not at the preschool.
You could also have a little ritual at the "pacifier tree" (suttetræ) in Frederiksberg Park where many children say goodbye to their pacifiers for good!

Toilet Policy

It is preferable that each child is potty-trained before he/she starts at our preschool. Children must be able to tell us when they need to go to the toilet and we will assist them, if needed. If a child wets himself/herself, we will change them and guide them to get dressed again. This is a great motor skills exercise! Parents should practice this at home.

Napping policy

We do not have a scheduled nap-time. We can set down a mattress so that the child is free to relax, lie down and fall asleep if he/she is tired. We will not push a child to sleep if they cannot lie down on their own. Many children stop napping when they start at our preschool as there are so many things to do and new friends to play with, so please do not be surprised if they do not nap at all during the week. If you feel that your child should nap in the daytime, then please come and pick him/her up early so that you can settle them at home.

Things to bring on the first day

We would like your child to have a little bag that he/she leaves with us at the preschool. Here is the list of things to have at the preschool at all times (please write your child's name on each item):

- a pair of indoor shoes (that are easy to put on and take off);
- 2 complete sets of clothes: 2 underwear, 2 T-shirts, 2 pairs of trousers or 2 skirts, 2 sweaters and 2 pairs of socks or tights;
- in spring and summer months: rain gear – rain boots, rain jacket and rain trousers; a summer hat or cap for sunny days
- in autumn and winter months: winter snowsuit (flyverdragt), waterproof winter boots, waterproof mittens (not gloves) and a hat or balaclava (no scarves because of the risk of strangulation)

Clothing suggestions

In Denmark, weather is unpredictable so for your child to enjoy the day inside and outside the preschool, please have him/her dress according to the weather. In addition, durable clothing that can withstand the energetic activity of young children is best. Children at our preschool will be getting their hands dirty for different activities such as painting and messy projects as well as mealtimes so we would suggest **easily washable clothing that can resist being soiled repeatedly**. When buying indoor or outdoor clothing for preschool, please make sure that it is **simple enough so that your child can put them on himself/herself**. This way your children can enjoy their day without being concerned about their clothes.

Shoes:

- No shoes with shoelaces nor buckles as long as your child has not mastered putting them on on their own.

- Recommended: Velcro shoes, slip on shoes, running shoes or sandals with a good strap that the children can easily run around in.

PLEASE LABEL ALL CLOTHING WITH YOUR CHILD'S NAME.
We cannot be responsible for lost or damaged clothing.

We request that jewellery and all accessories (sunglasses, watches, purses, fancy dress, headbands, etc.) are left at home as they cause a distraction in the classroom. If your child insists on bringing them on the way to the preschool, then please take them with you when you leave.

According to our Montessori principle, we prefer that the children do not wear clothing with superheroes, princesses nor imaginary people as the children are too young to understand that these characters do not exist. We also prefer no costumes nor tutus and sparkly/frilly clothing as they are very distracting. Also, comfort and ease are the key words! We have special celebrations at the preschool when we all dress up (Halloween, Fastelavn, etc).

When your child comes home and changes clothes, please check the pockets for blocks or objects that may be part of our classroom materials. We are ***never*** angry with a child for taking something home and ask that you also not get angry and just explain that we need them at the preschool for other children to work with. We know the child loves the item as much as we all do — so please just return it.

We request that **no toys nor teddies** are brought to the preschool as they cause envy and jealousy among the other children and they could be damaged or lost. If your child needs to bring a small toy from home, then please take it with you when you leave.

Please keep in mind that we cannot be responsible for any lost or damaged items brought to the preschool.

Signing in and out

We will sign in and out your child on our Famly App when you drop him/her off in the morning and pick him/her up in the afternoon. You can send a message on Famly if your child comes in after 9:00 or is being picked up before 12:00. It will help us get organised.

Pick up by an authorised person

Children will be released only to either their parent/guardian or a person who is authorised to pick them up. We must be notified in advance if someone else is to pick up a child. We must be given the name, a photo (or a physical description) and the telephone number of that person. Ideally, we would like to meet the person first so that we are familiar with them. If we do not know the person picking up the child, we will call the parents first and confirm that this person is authorised to leave with the child. If we cannot get in touch with the parents first, then the child will have to stay with us until we can contact them.

Late pick-up

It is important that you come and pick-up your child before the preschool closes at the end of the day. If you come late, it will not only distress your child but also keep staff from leaving on time. If it occurs more than once, there will be a **250 kr. fee** to cover the extra time that the staff needs to stay at the preschool with your child.

Attendance

Parents should notify us when a child will not be attending the preschool for a long period of time or when they take a holiday so that we can organise ourselves accordingly.

The best way to notify us is through the Famly App or to send an email to:

- *info@montessoripreschool.dk*

THE CHILDREN'S ENVIRONMENT

At Montessori International Preschool, one important habit that we like to instil in children is respect for the environment. We would like it to be the children's responsibility to help care for their environment, and to share their work in that environment when they are ready to do so.

Casa Dei Bambini

Maria Montessori called her very first school "The Children's House" because she wanted it to be their domain. A secure, ordered, loving environment set up just like a real home – in preparation for real life.

We like to create a routine during drop-off and pick-up times as routines reinforce the child's innate love and inner need of order. We therefore also expect parents to follow these guidelines to help the children settle in nicely and peacefully every day.

Drop-off routine

The very best way you can enhance this is by saying a quick goodbye to your child when you drop him/her off in the morning at the gate. It would be best if you did not linger to make the drop-off as quick and quiet as possible. There will always be a staff member around to welcome your child.

Pick-up routine

The pick-up is at the gate when the weather is nice and in the dining room when the weather is bad.

Your child's progress

Montessori children will often insist on pouring their own water or juice, getting dressed all by themselves, opening containers or packets and generally focusing on activities and concentrating on their interests for new or extended periods of time. These early years can be sensitive times because your children are absorbing and learning so much, but they *are* all about building successes.
It is therefore not in your child's best interest to discuss their progress in front of them, it can be hurtful and damaging for your child to hear about their behaviour, work or

efforts discussed in detail. Your children are growing and developing at a faster rate than they ever will, their intelligence and entire being are involved in this transformation, as they learn from their environment and shape who they are going to be as an adult. This includes the impressions they receive from the adults in their life. We must at all times dwell on the positives. And we urge you to talk about any concerns you may have regarding your child, even at home, **after your child's bedtime**. Basically, don't speak in front of your children if you have issues to discuss.

Twice per year, we will have Parent-Teacher Meetings when we will discuss your child's progress (usually in November and in May).
We also organise a 'Show Me Day' twice a year (Please see section below on Communication).

Should you have a concern about your child and you would like to discuss it in more detail, please send an email to let us know and we will organise a meeting with one of the Montessori teachers at a convenient time. *info@montessoripreschool.dk*

If the teachers feel that they have something to discuss with you, they will also ask for a meeting. Please assume that the day went well if we do not call you aside for a one-on-one discussion.

FOOD AND MEALTIMES

Mealtimes

At Montessori International Preschool, all food provided for meals and snacks is included in the tuition fee. We serve hot meals based on a vegetarian diet, made with organic ingredients, as much as possible. You can see a sample of our menu on our website, there are variations according to seasons:
http://montessoripreschool.dk/food-and-weekly-menu/

We believe that a healthy diet is essential to children's wellbeing and ability to learn. We foster an environment of healthy eating and an interest in good, fresh food. Cooking activities and monthly topics encourage children to explore food from its source to the plate. We provide a balanced menu which gives your child the best possible chance to thrive and flourish.

We cook and prepare our food in our own kitchen. This ensures we know exactly what is in the food and helps us make sure any allergies are avoided. We also try to use seasonally available fruit and vegetables. These tend to be available from local sources, so are fresher, tastier and travel less – all making our menu more nutritional and helping us to do our bit for sustainability too. We try to introduce a wide variety of ingredients and flavours to the children so that they can grow up being healthy and feeling positive about trying new foods.

Please know that children will eat when they need food. They see their friends and teachers eating the very same meals, and usually join in. If it varies from day to day, we are not concerned. If your child consistently does not appear to have an interest in food, we will discuss this with you.

Snack time

Morning snack is available between 9:30 and 10:30 every day. We have a special snack area where children can eat together at the same table. They serve themselves with what is available on the day and once they are finished, they clear the table, wash-up their dishes, dry them and tidy them away in their appropriate place so that the next children can have their snack too.

Afternoon snack is served between 14:30 and 15:30 every day. It is open to all the children, whenever they are hungry. No child is obliged to have a snack if they are not hungry.

Drinks

We encourage the children to drink water throughout the day. There is always a jug of water and glasses available for them to serve themselves when they are thirsty. We only serve water to the children. We do not give processed juice nor milk to them.

Friday parent lunch

At our preschool, we have Friday Parent Lunch. Every Friday, a child has the opportunity to bring lunch from home to share with everyone else. We still provide a meal and parents can prepare anything else to be served with their child. As we are a vegetarian institution, we would prefer vegetarian food. We prefer not having any meat-based foods, as there are children with special meat free diets. Friday parent lunch is purely voluntary. The schedule is flexible to accommodate the parents' schedule.
Examples of food to bring: hard-boiled eggs, salads, dips, savoury pancakes, vegetarian croquets, vegetarian pizzas, falafel, rice, pasta dishes, couscous, sandwiches, fruit, etc.

Good table manners

We believe it is important to develop the child's social skills. Mealtimes are very important in this respect. The children lay and clear the tables. They serve themselves and sit together to enjoy the pleasure of a meal, which becomes an educational and social occasion promoting good manners.
Finally, they put away the dishes and clean up, promoting responsibility for the entire mealtime. It would be great if you could also practice this at home!

Allergies and intolerances

If your child has any allergies or food intolerances, please let us know so that we can get organised and inform the whole team.

Birthdays

Birthdays are a special time and we like to celebrate them with all the children. For the child's birthday, we have a special Montessori birthday circle. The parents are invited to attend this celebration which is usually done right after lunch at 12:40.

Food Agency

Since we cook at our premises and serve hot meals to the children and staff, our kitchen is controlled and checked by the Food Agency (Fødevarestyrelsen) who

regularly come and make sure that we follow their policies and regulations. Every year, they provide a Smiley Report: www.findsmiley.dk

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES

Health policies

For the health and well-being of your child and of others at the preschool, please keep your child at home if he/she exhibits any of the following **symptoms**:

- Lethargic behaviour
- A fever (a child should remain at home for 48 hours after the fever is gone and/or prescribed antibiotics administered for 48 hours before a child returns to the preschool).
- Sore throat, nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea (the child should remain home for 48 hours after the last episode as diarrhoea is very contagious).
- Red, "crusty", itchy eyes (conjunctivitis or pink eye is very contagious). The child must be kept at home for 48 hours while being treated with antibiotics and should only return to the preschool if there is no discharge from the eyes.

Please remember that a sick child will be much more comfortable at home than at the preschool. If your child's illness makes him or her sleepy, weepy or cranky at home, he/she will be more so at the preschool.

***** Please do not send a sick child to our preschool as they will feel miserable and also potentially infect others, including the staff *****

Parents will be contacted to pick up their child if any of these symptoms occur at the preschool:

- Severe pain or discomfort
- Acute diarrhoea
- Episode of acute vomiting
- Elevated temperature
- Sore throat or severe coughing
- Yellow eyes or jaundice skin
- Red eyes with discharge
- Infected & untreated skin patches
- Difficult or rapid breathing
- Skin lesions that are weeping or bleeding
- Swollen joints
- Visibly enlarged lymph nodes
- Stiff neck
- Blood in urine

Once the child is symptom free or has a doctor's note stating that he/she no longer poses a serious health risk to himself/herself or others, he/she may return to the preschool.

Any of the following **contagious diseases** need to be signalled to the preschool and the child must be kept at home until the child presents no risk to himself/herself or others:

- Respiratory illness

- Gastrointestinal illness
- Chicken pox (the child can return to the preschool after 6 days have elapsed since the onset of the rash or once all sores have dried and crusted)
- Giardia lamblia
- Impetigo
- German measles
- Hepatitis A
- Head lice, scabies or other parasitic infections
- Haemophilus influenza
- Salmonella
- Scabies
- Measles
- Shigella
- Meningococcus
- Mumps
- Strep Throat
- Tuberculosis
- Whooping cough
- Herpes

Administering medication

Whenever possible, we ask that all medication be given to the children at home. We do not administer any medication at the preschool as we are not trained in doing this and we do not want to risk your child's health.

Sun protection

To ensure sun safety awareness, we are encouraging the following sun protection measures:

- Children should wear sunscreen lotion.
- Sun hats are recommended especially in the summertime (please make sure to label all items with your child's name).

We also have sunscreen lotion at the preschool and if the sun is particularly strong, we will show the children how to apply it on themselves. Please let us know if your child is allergic to any ingredients in lotions (such as paraben, etc.).

Immunisations

We recommend that all children be immunised before they start at our preschool. If you need help in knowing what the Danish regulation is regarding immunisations, please ask your doctor or General Practitioner (GP).

First Aid and emergencies

We have all our staff update their First Aid certificates every 3-4 years so in case of minor injury or accident the staff will administer basic first aid.

Please be sure to let us know of any special medical considerations or allergies before the child starts at the preschool.

The communication procedure when there are accidents with the children is:

- If a child gets hurt but it is just a little scratch, then we deal with it and usually use a plaster / band aid

- If a child gets a little hurt in the head area, then we write a report to explain what happened (this report is given to the parents)
- If we feel that a child needs special attention right away, then we call the parents to pick up the child to take them to the doctor or eventually the hospital, if needed
- If it is an emergency, we call the ambulance (112) and tell the parents where the child is being taken to. One of the staff will accompany the child to the hospital and stay with him/her until the parents arrive.

We have a few First Aid kits at the preschool and we take one with us when we go on outings and trips around town.

Child accident insurance

Any child enrolled at our preschool is covered by accident insurance:

- While on preschool grounds when we are in session
- While taking part in our supervised activities
- While we are on an outing or trip

We have Child Accident Insurance (Børneulykkesforsikring) through Tryg which covers the following:

- Death – 10.000 kr.
- Invalidity – 143.500 kr.
- Dental Injury – 7.200 kr.
- Eyeglasses – 11.000 kr.

Child protection regulation

In accordance with Danish law, all staff working at Montessori International Preschool have been checked and submitted the following two documents:

- "Straffeattest" – general criminal record
- "Børneattest" – criminal record in relation to working with children

Child abuse and neglect procedure

In Denmark, corporal punishment is illegal. All staff are required by law to report child abuse and neglect to Social Services. If a child shares with an adult at the preschool that they have been hit at home by a parent or guardian, then we will report it. Please click below to read about the law regarding corporal punishment in Denmark: http://montessoripreschool.dk/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Corporal-Punishment-Law-Denmark.pdf

Safety and security

Your child's safety is a top priority at Montessori International Preschool. Parents should make sure that the gate to our preschool remains closed when they leave. Children may be released only to those persons authorised in writing by the parent/guardian.

Fires and disasters

A no smoking policy is applied at the preschool.
The preschool is equipped with smoke detectors, fire hoses and a fully-approved fire alarm system which is directly connected to the local fire department.

DISCIPLINE AND BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT

Montessori discipline is gentle and respectful. We usually have issues with our children if we err on the side of too much or too little freedom. When children are given responsibility and independence, they will grow in confidence in themselves. They also need to know they are loved and valued for who they are, not for what they have achieved.

The Montessori approach does not punish unacceptable behaviour and we do not offer prizes or rewards for good work. We believe children derive satisfaction from their own achievements. We would recommend the following book regarding this: Punished by Rewards by Alfie Kohn.

Your child will take his or her direction from you and respect you for your consistency and rules. Children know they are not ready to manage their own life.

Discipline

Children at the preschool learn self-discipline through the enforcement of three simple rules:

- Respect of self;
- Respect of others;
- Respect of the environment.

Children learn to respect others after they have the experience of being respected. This is one of the basic principles of the Montessori philosophy and effective discipline. It is important for children to establish a sense of autonomy and self-confidence, to believe that they are worthy of respect and to know how to live among people in a disciplined way.

Respect of others encompasses being kind to others, helping others, respecting the rights of others (not interrupting other children at their work, using a quiet voice indoors, etc.), and this rule is also expanded to include plants and animals.

Respect of the environment includes taking care of the materials that are so vital to their development (dusting, polishing, putting away properly, handling with care, etc). In that way, the children grow in self-esteem and by controlling their environment, they are able to control themselves.

Behaviour management

All staff at Montessori International Preschool manage behaviour in a non-punitive, age-appropriate manner. As much as possible, staff will follow the process of positive discipline (positive phrasing), which instructs children as to what they should do rather than telling them what not to do.
The children will begin to learn self-control by observing the natural consequences of their behaviour. Teachers will quickly intervene if a problem does occur and redirect the child to a more appropriate activity. Language is utilised to help the children begin to identify their feelings and learn to deal with them in a socially acceptable manner.

The children will be encouraged to learn problem-solving skills and become self-correcting. They will be given the opportunity to choose alternatives that will enable them to participate in a socially acceptable manner without reinforcing their negative behaviour. The staff will assist in pointing out logical consequences to both positive and negative behaviour. If a child's behaviour is repeatedly unmanageable within a group setting, parents will be consulted, and an individual behaviour plan implemented. Parents can help the staff to understand better the child and to know if there is any extra information that could help with any behavioural issues, such as changes at home or family circumstances.

No child shall be subject to physical punishment, humiliated, frightened, verbally abused, or denied food, rest or bathroom facilities. Children will never be disciplined for toileting accidents, sleep habits, or food consumption. Any violation of this discipline policy should be reported to the preschool manager immediately.

Unusual happenings or changes at home

In order to meet the varying needs of your child, please advise us of any changes as they occur. A change in the home environment may tend to alter your child's behaviour. If you observe sudden changes in your child's behaviour or attitude, please let us know so we can work together in assisting your child through the adjustment period. A parent changing jobs, a death in the family, a new baby, or other changes from normal routine will have a great impact on most children and we would like to help.

Support and advice

As an educational institution, we have access to the local Support Office if we consider that we need advice and guidance regarding certain children. This will be done with parental consent.

The Support Office is an interdisciplinary organisation that provides advice and guidance on children and young people with special needs. It is their mission in collaboration with parents and professionals around the children to:

- arrive at an understanding of pedagogical and psychological issues surrounding children in different kinds of difficulties
- conduct an educational and psychological assessment of the problem in relation to children's social context in institutions
- give advice and guidance to children, parents and institutions, including arranging contacts with other agencies that may be of help.

Through the Support Office, we can consult psychologists, social workers, support teachers and speech therapists. Please let us know if you would like us to contact any of these experts for your child.

COMMUNICATION

Parent communication

Communication between home and the preschool is extremely important in order to ensure the wellbeing of your child. Please feel free to discuss any concerns you have with us (away from your child's ears!). It is usually not possible for you to have a

long conversation with the teacher at drop-off or pick-up times as she is also responsible for all the children in her care. If you have a special concern, a meeting may be arranged. We provide many opportunities for parents to receive information on the progress of their child as well as the activities and events at our preschool.

- **Parent-Teacher Meetings**: We offer Parent-Teacher meetings twice per year (November/December & May/June). During these meetings, each child's progress will be discussed. It is always lovely for you to see the Montessori philosophy reflected in your child, and we generally have an agenda from the practical to the educational, which we like to share with you. Should you have a need for an extra meeting with your child's teacher, this is also possible, usually on a Wednesday afternoon. Please send us an email.
- **Progress Reports**: The progress report is constantly being filled out by the teachers to provide parents with an overview of the child's progress. The report will be discussed during the Parent-Teacher meeting, and it will be given to the parents once the child leaves the preschool.
- **Show Me Days**: These afternoons are an invitation to come into our Montessori environment and share in your child's daily activities and joys. Your children are the leaders on these occasions, showing you the work that have inspired them, what they have achieved as well as what they are still trying to perfect. It is an afternoon where we would encourage you to be the observer, quietly guided by what your child is ready to share. They are organised twice a year.
- **Information and Calendar**: Please see the calendar in our monthly newsletter to know about festivals, outings, days that we are closed and bank holidays.
- **Email:** We will send emails on a regular basis to inform you of new events and different information that we would like to share with parents.
- **Famly**: We post a weekly photo album on this App for parents to enjoy with their child. This App can also be used for parents to let us know about sickness and holidays.
- **Website**: We will be updating the website with news and any new policies and announcements. In the event of changes in policies, the parents will be notified in good time.
- **Facebook**: We also have a Facebook presence (please "like" our page!) and we will be posting news that could be interesting for those who are following our progress and our activities. Please let us know if you would like anything added to our page.

Inappropriate parent conduct

Parents must be aware that adults serve as role models for children. Our preschool is responsible for protecting the children in our care and for providing a safe workplace for staff members. Therefore, it is critical that, while on our site, parents conduct themselves with professional and rational behaviour at all times.

Our team is committed to the improvement of the preschool and we welcome feedback from parents and always try to resolve any issues as quickly as possible. Sometimes, however, parents pursuing certain issues can treat staff in a way that is unacceptable. While we recognise that some issues are important, we will not accept threatening or harassing behaviour. We expect everyone to treat all staff with courtesy and respect.

We reserve the right to immediately terminate the registration of a child whose parent behaves inappropriately.

The following actions are grounds for immediate dismissal (please note, however, that this is not an exhaustive list of inappropriate behaviours):

- acts of violence, including assault and battery
- harassment of or threats against the staff, other parents, or children
- possession of illegal substances or firearms
- verbal or physical abuse of any child
- profanity
- indecent exposure

Photo policy

We take photos of the children every day and we share them with the parents in a weekly album in the Famly App. This will give an insight into their everyday life at the preschool.
This photo policy applies to the use of any electronic photographic equipment used at our preschool, which includes cameras, tablets and mobile phones.

Policy statement

We aim to ensure that there is a strong link between the preschool and home, and one of the best ways of ensuring that parents/guardians are kept up to date with their child's activities is through the use of shared photographs. This policy sets out how we use photographs as part of the daily reality of life at the preschool, the purposes for which they are taken and how they are shared within the preschool and on social media. It also outlines the rights of the parent/guardian in relation to their child's photograph. The aim of the policy is to safeguard the privacy and safety of the children entrusted to our care.

Principle

We use photographs:

- to create a friendly, welcoming environment by including photos of friends in the cloakroom and in the entrance (with the children's basic information – date of birth, country of birth, parents' nationalities)
- to record a child's work in the classroom
- to share what happens at the preschool with parents/guardians
- to record a special outing (field trip) or event/celebration at the preschool

Policy and procedure

We are aware of the need for sensitivity when taking and sharing photographs and observe the following:

- Parental/Guardian permission will be sought for all photos to be viewed outside the preschool –e.g. on our website and on Facebook
- Staff use the preschool's mobile phones to take photographs of children
- The mobile phones remain securely stored at the preschool at all times.
- Photographs will only be taken if the child is comfortable to be photographed.
- No photographs are taken in the toilets
- No photographs are taken while a child is in a state of undress

- Parents/Guardians may choose not to give consent and are also free to change their consent choice at any time during the period of their child's attendance at the preschool.

Parental consent

- Written permission from parents/guardians will always be obtained before photos/videos of children are taken, used or published.
- The consent form is given once the child starts at the preschool
- A record of all consent forms are kept securely on file
- Should permission be withdrawn by parents/guardians at any time, then all relevant images will be removed and disposed of and the record will be updated accordingly.

Here is a copy of the questions from the consent form with regards to Group photos and portraits:

- May we take group photos and portraits of your child?
- May we display group photos and portraits of your child within the preschool?
- May we post group photos and portraits of your child on the Famly App (where only parents and employees can view the photos)?
- May we post group photos and portraits of your child on our Facebook page? (Photos will not be deleted from the Facebook page once the child has left the preschool.)
- May we post group photos and portraits of your child on our website? (Photos will not be deleted from the website once the child has left the preschool.)
- May we use group photos and portraits of your child for their goodbye books?

Parents/Guardians photographing children at events

- On these occasions the rights of every child to refuse to be photographed must be respected.
- Parents/guardians are permitted to take photographs or video footage of events for private use only.
- The right to withdraw consent will be maintained and any photography or filming on site will be open to scrutiny at any time.
- Photos and videos taken by parents should not be shared elsewhere (e.g. posted on social media site)

Usage of systems to share photos with parents/guardians

- The preschool uses the Famly App to upload and share images of children with parents.
- The photos are also saved in our preschool's private Dropbox folder, which is only accessible through our computers
- Once in a while, we post photos on our Facebook page of children whose parents have given their consent

Use of professional photographers

- A professional photographer comes to the preschool once a year for the yearly group photo and individual photos.
- Photographers will only take photos if they receive a written consent from the parents whose child is being photographed.
- Photographers will not have unsupervised access to the children.

Change of address or telephone

Please let us know as soon as you change either your address or telephone number so that we can easily get in touch with you.

Release of personal information

Montessori International Preschool will release a child's records and information upon written request from the parent. In all other instances, the records will be held in confidence. A parent may review his or her child's files at any time.

Data protection

All personal data regarding your child and his/her family is handled in accordance with the Data Protection Law, Section II, Chapter 4.
We will keep all data for up to three (3) years at the preschool, with the parents' consent. Parents will be asked to sign consent forms regarding data protection.

Parental involvement

There will be different times and ways that parents can get involved in their child's preschool experience. You are welcome and encouraged to participate in any of these:

- Accompanying on field trips
- Celebrating cultural festivities
- Volunteering to help with projects and activities.

We also encourage parents with special talents such as fire fighters, police officers, doctors, dentists, etc. to come and visit our classroom during the year. The younger children feel much more secure in the classroom setting instead of going on a field trip. Please speak to us about becoming involved and we can set up a schedule for you.

Field trips

Outings and field trips will be planned occasionally. The parents will sign a consent form which is valid for the duration of the child's attendance at the preschool.

We welcome parents to join us for trips if needed. If you do not wish for your child to participate in the field trip, notify us so that other arrangements can be made for the day.

Some examples of field trips are Søndermarken Park, Frederiksberg Gardens, The Blue Planet (Aquarium), Museums, Farms, etc.

Life-long results

You stand before a very special time in your child's life where 80% of his/her mental development is taking place (before 6 years of age), the importance of favourable conditions during these years can hardly be over emphasised, and we are here to help.
You started when you made the decision to set your child up with a Montessori education. We believe you will see life-long results.

THANK YOU!