



***Tuskawilla  
Montessori  
Academy***

***Parent Handbook***

## **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

<b><i>Tuskawilla and Twin Rivers Montessori</i></b>	
Mission Statement.....	2
History.....	2
Our Philosophy.....	2
Objectives.....	3
Benefits of a Montessori Education.....	3
<b><i>The Montessori Method</i></b>	
The Montessori Materials <i>Pre-school- Kindergarten</i> .....	4
Multicultural Policy.....	5
The Montessori Materials <i>Elementary -Middle School</i> .....	5
<b><i>School Procedures and Policies</i></b>	
Enrollment Criteria.....	6
Re-enrollment.....	6
Confidentiality and Legal Matters.....	6
<b><i>Safety and Health Procedures</i></b>	
Child's Records.....	7
Illness.....	7
Medication.....	8
Accident or Injury at School.....	8
Emergency Procedures.....	9
Transportation.....	10
<b><i>General Information</i></b>	
Arrival and Dismissal.....	11
Traffic Pattern.....	12
Personal Belongings and Clothing.....	12
Dress Code.....	12
Lost and Found.....	13
Lunches.....	13
Snacks.....	13
Birthdays.....	14
The Me Basket.....	14
Nap and Rest Policy.....	14
Visiting Policy.....	14
<b><i>Academic Policies</i></b>	
Progress Reports.....	15
Standardized Testing.....	15
Homework.....	16
Failure/Incomplete.....	16
Tutoring.....	16
Attendance.....	16
Field Trips.....	17
Supervision.....	17
Athletics.....	17
Sportsmanship.....	17
Discipline Policy.....	18
Absolute Ground Rules.....	18
Matrix of Infractions and Consequences.....	18
Administration.....	18

## **TUSKAWILLA AND TWIN RIVERS MONTESSORI SCHOOLS MISSION STATEMENT**

Tuskawilla Montessori Academy, guided by the educational philosophy of Dr. Maria Montessori, is committed to providing an enriching and challenging environment where each child is encouraged to develop to his or her fullest potential academically, socially, and emotionally.

### **HISTORY**

The Tuskawilla Montessori pre-school opened in January 1986. Tuskawilla Montessori is located on over five acres of wooded land containing tall oaks, magnolia, pine, and other varieties, plus ornamental flowering trees. In 1987, the second building was opened and in January of 1995, the second elementary building at Tuskawilla, including a swimming pool and tennis court, was completed. In August 2000, the most recent building with its state of the art facilities was completed and houses the upper elementary and middle school students. In 2001, two new classrooms were added. Our future plans include a gymnasium and expansion of the preschool facilities. Our aim is to constantly strive to improve the school in all areas, including the curriculum, the physical facilities and extracurricular activities, such as clubs, athletic teams and special after school options.

Twin Rivers Montessori opened in 1990 to meet the growing needs and interest in that area. Twin Rivers Montessori is located on over three acres of land, heavily wooded, in a quiet, suburban neighborhood, with a view across the street from the Twin Rivers Country Club.

We take great pride in our schools and consider the teachers to be our greatest asset. We think you will understand why when you meet them. They show a special dedication, and a great sensitivity and understanding for each child in their care. At the present time we have an open campus.

### **OUR PHILOSOPHY**

Children are born with an innate love of learning. They are fascinated by the universe and eager to discover its secrets. At Tuskawilla / Twin Rivers Montessori Schools we make it possible for each child to learn through direct experience, in a world recognized classroom environment and through organized outside activities. Learning evolves through discovery, and we make every attempt to instill the joy of this discovery from the child's very first experience in pre-school until he/she leaves us after eighth grade.

The great mission of the child is to prepare himself/herself to become an adult. A child, in order to develop his/her physical, intellectual, and spiritual powers to the fullest, must have freedom -a freedom *with* responsibility that is achieved through order and self-discipline. A Montessori classroom is a child-centered environment, stressing respect for the child, freedom of expression, self-education using special materials, and training through use of movement and the senses.

We are dedicated to the Montessori philosophy and method of education where students can experience the joy of learning while striving to develop to his or her fullest potential.

### **OBJECTIVES**

1. To provide an environment that encourages children to develop their capabilities and interests, at their own pace, and according to their individual needs.

2. To offer a program which recognizes the uniqueness of each and every child.
3. To provide positive encouragement for the child's continued growth.
4. To provide an environment that gives the child the opportunity to learn by doing, moving from concrete to abstract concept development.
5. To offer learning opportunities to help promote perceptual motor, psychological, social, linguistic, and intellectual growth.
6. To provide an environment that will encourage independence, self-discipline and self-esteem.
7. To encourage social development by providing opportunities for sharing, taking turns, making friends, resolving conflicts, solving problems, and helping others.
8. To provide a healthy and safe environment.
9. To respect, accept, and appreciate each child.
10. To promote high academic standards.
11. To kindle an excitement for learning.
12. To actively involve parents in the life of the school.

### **BENEFITS OF A MONTESSORI EDUCATION**

- |                                |                   |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| * A love of learning           | * Independence    |
| * Self-confidence              | * Responsibility  |
| * Consideration and courtesy   | * Self-discipline |
| * Logical thinking             | * Self-motivation |
| * Solid educational foundation | * Many interests  |

### **THE MONTESSORI METHOD**

Dr. Maria Montessori (1870-1952) formulated a method of education that created a profound influence on twentieth century education. Her work is known and recognized throughout the world. She was the first woman to graduate from the University of Rome Medical School, and became interested in the particular needs of children when she worked as a doctor treating young children.

Maria Montessori observed that young children possess a natural desire to learn, to explore, to "absorb" all they can from their environment. Her observations prompted her to formulate a unique method and philosophy for childhood education.

The Montessori classroom provides children an enriched environment, which allows maximum freedom to choose work corresponding to their individual interests and readiness, with a variety of attractive, graded materials, which invite learning through their manipulation. Children's interests lead them from one level of complexity to another, and they retain a sense of joy as the learning process unfolds naturally, at their own pace.

### **THE MONTESSORI MATERIALS -Pre-school through Kindergarten**

In the Montessori classroom, children can hold units, cylinders, nouns or fractions in their hands. They can act out verbs, pour water around three sides of a peninsula, and form a square with math beads. The materials which demonstrate these concepts for them will serve as touchstones in their memories for many years, to clarify these abstract terms whenever they meet them in future learning situations.

**PRACTICAL LIFE EXERCISES** develop the child's confidence through practical living skills such as pouring, cleaning, tying, buttoning, etc. The child enjoys these activities while he/she perfects coordination, lengthens attention span, learns good attention to detail and good working habits.

**SENSORIAL MATERIALS** develop the child's awareness and help build sound concepts with appropriate language. These materials and activities are designed to help sharpen the child's senses and help him/her understand abstractions of color, weight, shape, texture, size, sound, smell, etc.

**ACADEMIC MATERIALS (LANGUAGE, ARTS, AND MATHEMATICS)** Using a series of carefully structured didactic materials, the child learns concepts through concrete activities and then is gradually helped towards abstraction. The activities are individual as each child progresses at a different rate.

**CULTURAL MATERIALS** help the child develop an awareness of the world in which he/she lives. Dr. Montessori stressed the importance of including the fundamentals of nature study, geography, history, science, art and music in the curriculum.

### **THE MONTESSORI MATERIALS -Elementary through Middle School**

**PRACTICAL LIFE** activities in the pre-school deal with hand-eye coordination and "care of self." The elementary child learns to coordinate his abstract movement that takes imaginative steps beyond the physical limits of neighborhood and community to the universe and beyond. The elementary child questions and classifies scientific facts, grammar and much more, including moral issues of right and wrong.

**PRACTICAL LIFE EXERCISES** for middle school students include forming a mock corporation to sell lunches at school. They are involved in community service and consider career choices by spending time at selected businesses and listening to guest speakers.

**ACADEMIC MATERIALS** containing colorful manipulatives for math, language, and science are used in the elementary classroom for presenting concrete concepts. As the child moves toward abstraction, he can still visualize mental concepts demonstrated by the concrete.

Middle school academic programs work to maintain a balance of structure and flexibility. Students work on traditional subjects, and also include independent studies and projects which help them learn to pace themselves and take responsibility for their work - skills that are critical for success in later studies.

**CULTURAL MATERIALS** in the elementary class involve an in depth study of animals, plants and geography, as well as art and music. Special timelines with dramatic presentations are used in history to depict the history of man, the history of math, writing, inventions and much more.

Middle school students study the cultural subjects by writing papers, debating historical issues, field trips, and group projects. They attend concerts and plays, and make presentations to younger students, retirement centers, and parent meetings.

## **MULTICULTURAL POLICY**

We strive to create a program that truly reflects the lives of our children, families, staff and community. By affirming human differences, we seek to recognize, appreciate and respect the uniqueness of each child, and thereby:

- \* Recognize the beauty, value and contribution of each child in a multicultural policy.
- \* Provide the child a positive experience exploring similarities and differences in cultures.
- \* Encourage the child to respect other cultures.
- \* Help the child live happily and cooperatively in the world.

We invite families to share ideas with us that will help incorporate child appropriate celebration special to your cultures.

## **SCHOOL PROCEDURES AND POLICIES**

### **ENROLLMENT CRITERIA**

The program at Tuskawilla/Twin Rivers Montessori Schools is designed to meet the needs of children from the age of two and one half years through eighth grade. Our enrollment procedure does not discriminate because of race, color, religion, sex, age or national origin.

Parents interested in enrolling a child should use the following procedure.

1. Contact the school office and arrange a visit/interview. Ideally, parents will make an appointment to visit the school first without their children. This provides a chance for observation, for introduction to the Montessori approach and for questions. We recommend that parents make a list of questions before the observation visit.
2. The second visit is a child-alone interview with the prospective teacher, which allows the teacher and child a chance to become acquainted. In the case of elementary students, the admission procedure includes submitting copies of school records, letters of recommendation and interview or shadowing day.
3. Upon acceptance, the registration and supply is due. Please be sure to fill in all spaces requesting information, especially parents' work numbers and emergency numbers. Medical forms and registration fee must be in the office upon enrollment. There is a 30 day probationary period for all new students. Final admission is based on academics and behavior.

Priority will be given as follows:

1. Returning students
2. Siblings of present students
3. Montessori transfer students

### **RE-ENROLLMENT CRITERIA**

Each January, re-enrollment forms are sent to parents. Applicants for re-enrollment must be in good standing (academic, behavioral and financial criteria met). To re-enroll your child, return the form by the date designated along with the fee specified. This will reserve your child's place for the following school year.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY AND LEGAL MATTERS**

Information with regard to family issues and personal lives will be handled confidentially. In the event of a divorce, separation, joint custody ruling, every effort will be made to treat both parents equally. Without legal documentation, we cannot act as though one parent is more fit than another to the legal rights to their child.

### **SAFETY AND HEALTH PROCEDURES**

### **CHILD'S RECORDS**

The school maintains the records listed below in each child's personal file. As required by Florida Law, each student must have up to date physical and immunizations signed by a physician.

1. Child's medical information.
2. Child's emergency medical information.
3. First Aid treatment administered for an illness or injury at school
4. Medications administered at school
5. Developmental progress report/transcript/test results
6. Attendance

It is the policy of the school that these records are kept confidential. In the event of a school transfer, the records are sent directly, upon written request, to the new school. We also maintain a copy of all previously enrolled student records.

### **ILLNESS**

Under HRS regulations and school policy, you are not permitted to send your child to school during an illness. Please DO NOT send your child to school with the following symptoms:

1. Fever -oral or underarm -99 degrees or higher.
2. Respiratory Symptoms -difficult breathing, severe coughing.
3. Diarrhea -Two loose stools in the previous 24 hours.
4. Vomiting -Two or more episodes in 24 hours.
5. Eye/Nose Drainage -Thick mucus or pus.
6. Sore Throat -Especially if fever or swollen glands in the neck are present.
7. Skin Problems -Rash, undiagnosed or contagious, infected sores.

If your child develops any of these symptoms while at school, you will be notified and asked to remove your child as soon as possible. Please be prompt because your child will be isolated, not feeling well, and would be much more comfortable at home.

If your child is absent for more than three days, please report the cause to the school. Please notify the school as soon as you know that your child has a communicable disease, so that we may inform other parents. A child must be fever free and symptom free for 24 hours (without Tylenol) before returning to school. If antibiotics have been prescribed, a child may not return to school until they have been on medication for at least 24 hours.

## **MEDICATION**

By law, we must have a medication form filled out by parents permitting us to administer prescription medicine. We cannot administer any other medication.

All prescription medication to be administered at school must be in the original container labeled with the following information;

1. Student's name
2. Name of drug
3. Directions concerning dosage
4. Time of day to be taken
5. Physician's name
6. Pharmacy name, address, and telephone number
7. Date and number of prescription

A teacher or assistant administers the medication as directed on the medication form filled out by the parent, and then fills out the required information and signs the Medical Log.

## **ACCIDENT OR INJURY AT SCHOOL**

For minor injuries, a teacher or assistant will take care of the injury, cleaning and applying a band-aid. An accident form is filled out, stating the injury, time, first aid measures given, and summary of the accident. This form is sent to parents for their information.

In case of serious accident or injury at school, parents will be called immediately after first aid is given. If parents cannot be reached, the emergency number will be called. If that person is not available, the child's doctor will be called.

Parents will be called on all head injuries, when there is a break in the skin, a lump, or bleeding.

For the safety of the children, as well as the staff, all staff has received training and is familiar with the recommendations on blood borne pathogens, which outlines procedures for hand cleaning, the use of gloves, and other precautions.

## **EMERGENCY PROCEDURES**



In the event of a national emergency, local emergency or a severe storm, we will follow Seminole County recommendations for school closings. If an emergency takes place during school hours, the children will be kept in a safe area until parents arrive.

Fire drills are practiced monthly. Students and staff exit the buildings according to the evacuation plans posted in all buildings and assemble in accordance with practiced drills. All remain in the designated area with teachers (who must take roll) until the director gives the “All Clear” sign.

Crisis drills are practiced four times a year and cover severe weather, lockdown, bomb threat, and lost child procedures.

### **FIRE DRILLS**

When the fire alarm sounds, the teacher should take the attendance book with the red and green cards. Teachers will follow the evacuation route and lead their students away from the facilities to the pre-designated areas. One adult from each building should check the bathrooms to make sure that the building is evacuated. The teacher will use the attendance book to call roll, and children must answer. If the class is all present, the teacher should hold up the green card. If not, hold up the red card, which will indicate that someone may still be inside. In the event of a red card, all available personnel will do a sweep of the building in question. When all students are accounted for, hold up the green card and text Robyn or Karon. All staff and students will wait for an “all clear” (green card signal and OK from office) from an administrator to re-enter the facilities.

### **EVACUATION PLAN**

An evacuation plan is posted at the entry of each classroom. If the #1 route is unusable, go with route #2. If both one and two are unusable, be aware that the windows may be used as a last resort evacuation.

### **CRISIS PLAN**

A crisis could be defined as a weather emergency, a local problem, or a national emergency.

### **SEVERE WEATHER (Tornado, Hurricane, or Storm)**

Code Yellow refers to storms and would be sent via intercom to the classrooms. If the crisis is listed as possible, the children will be kept in classrooms with teachers. If the crisis is listed as a warning or imminent, the class should go, as calmly as possible, into the center of the building or the place with no windows. Students and staff should take the “self-protection position,” in which students crouch to their knees and cover their heads with their hands. Take attendance and call the office if anyone is missing. All staff and students should remain in the building until an “all clear” signal is given.

In the event of storm damage (trees down, power outage, etc.), check for a telephone message by calling Tuskawilla or Twin Rivers Montessori or check our website and Facebook for notices. Generally, we will follow Seminole County recommendations for school closings.

### **CRISIS/LOCKDOWN-**

Code Black would be sent via telephone or personal contact to the classrooms and teachers. Teachers will check outside their classrooms and bring everyone inside. If physical education class is in session, they should immediately proceed to the nearest classroom.

(1) Lock doors, close and lock windows, and close blinds. Each classroom has a secure place, such as a closet, restroom, or even blockaded area under tables in which the students may be gathered. Teachers take attendance and record the names of all present. Be prepared to give that list to authorities.

(2) Do not call the office unless it is an emergency. Stay off the phone. If gunshots or loud noises are heard, students are to remain quiet and in their secured area.

(3) Remain in lockdown until you are notified, face to face, by a member of Administration or a law enforcement officer. Disregard any requests made over the phone or intercom, even if made by Administration. Only comply with face to face directives from Administration or law enforcement **officers**.

## **LOST CHILD PROCEDURE**

The safety of children at Tuskawilla/Twin Rivers Montessori is our top priority. We must always be vigilant in the supervision of the students and constantly aware of the presence of every child.

If a student's location is suddenly unknown, we will follow this procedure:

1. Inform the office.
2. **Any available staff should start checking restrooms, closets, and outside areas.**
3. All available staff should start checking the entire campus, including parking lots, playgrounds, lunch areas, starting close to the last location where the child was seen and radiating outward.

When the child is spotted, call the office and the search will end.

## **GRIEF CRISIS PLAN**

Loss of a parent, family member, friend, teacher, or child can be a very difficult and traumatic time for a child. Often, when a student experiences a loss, such as death or illness, the school becomes a refuge where the student can find support and comfort. This is the time for the school community to come together and reach out to the grieving child and family.

Tuskawilla and Twin Rivers Montessori Academy has developed a plan that includes the following:

1. A crisis team consisting of administrators, teachers, and parents
2. A team member designated to inform the children
3. A team member designated to communicate with the family
4. Plan a chain to inform the school community
5. Have help available in the form of counselors if necessary
6. Consider ways that volunteers can help the grieving family by:
  - a. Preparing and delivering food or meals
  - b. Helping with household tasks, such as laundry, shopping, etc.
  - c. Helping with the care of the children
  - d. Offer children creative tools and values that promote hope and resilience

The end goal should be to provide a safe place where children are free to express their emotions and find support.

## **BOMB THREAT**

**Code Red refers to a bomb threat.**

Get as much information from the caller as possible. When the call is complete, do not use school phones for any reason. Use personal cell phone to call 911. Do not touch light switches, air conditioner controls, fire extinguishers or fire alarm devices.

Stay calm and evacuate students as quickly as possible. Teachers should make a visual sweep of the area, and take attendance book with green and red cards, plus personal cell phone. Evacuate to the designated area used in fire drills. Remain in the designated area until Administration issues further instructions. Do not re-enter the building until cleared by the Fire Department or police.

In the event that we should need to evacuate this location, we would move to Tuskawilla Middle School. Tuskawilla Middle School is located on the same side of the road as our school and can be reached by school bus or walking if necessary.

## **TRANSPORTATION**

The school van is used to transport children from the Twin Rivers school to the Tuskawilla school and for field trips. The school procedures for the safe operation of the school van are as follows:

1. Drivers must have a Class C, CDL license by the state of Florida.
2. The school van's equipment includes seat belts, a First Aid kit, fire extinguishers, flares, etc.
3. The school provides for regular maintenance and repair of the van.

The following rules are observed by children traveling in the van:

1. Seat belts must be fastened before the van can move.
2. Windows are kept closed.
3. The student's back needs to be against the seat.
4. Students may talk and sing, but excessive noise is not allowed.
5. All students must stay in their seats.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **ARRIVAL AND DISMISSAL**

**PRE-SCHOOL-** Extended care students may arrive as early as 7:00 a.m. Full and half day students should not arrive before 8:15 or there will be an additional charge. Payment is due at the time of pick up for extra hours at \$6.50/hour/child. Please have your child at school by 8:30 a.m. to ensure maximum benefit from classroom time.

When arriving or departing, parents are asked to remain in their cars and our "greeter" will assist the child from the car and direct him/her to the classroom. Please park your car in a designated parking spot if you need to exit your vehicle for any reason. We find that this method of separation decreases anxiety for both parent and child. If you arrive after the start of class, there will be no greeter and you are responsible for assuring that your child is safely in the building. Please walk your child to the back door of the classroom for entrance. If you arrive after 8:45, you will need a pass from the office.

Dismissal for half-day students is 12:00 p.m. and full day is 2:45 p.m. There is early dismissal every Wednesday at 2:00 p.m. Late pick-ups will be charged an additional fee.

### **ELEMENTARY and MIDDLE SCHOOL-**

Extended care students may arrive as early as 7:00 a.m. If you arrive before 8:00a.m, please take your child to the extended care building (second building). Students should not arrive before 8:15 a.m., unless they are designated as extended care, or there will be an additional charge. Payment is due at the time of pick up for extra hours at \$6.50/hour/child. Please have your child at school by 8:30 a.m. Students that arrive after 8:45 a.m. must sign in the office. If you arrive after the start of class, there will be no greeter and you are responsible for assuring that your child is safely in the building. Please walk your child to the back door of the classroom for entrance. If you arrive after 8:45, you will need a pass from the office.

When students have to leave early because of illness or appointments, parents must come to the office and sign the students out. Florida law requires 180 days of school per year. All elementary and middle school children must have a written note for tardiness, early dismissals and absences. The school day ends at 3:00 p.m. All students should be picked up no later than 3:15 p.m., unless they are extended care, have extracurricular activities, or there will be an additional fee. Between 3:00 p.m. and 4:15 p.m., your child will be on the elementary playground or the fourth 1640 building. After 4:15 p.m., your child will be sent to the extended care

building (second building). There is early dismissal every Wednesday at 2:00 p.m. Please park your car in a designated parking spot if you need to exit your vehicle for any reason.

## **TRAFFIC PATTERN**

All arrival and dismissal should use the Dike Road entrance, from 8:15 a.m. – 8:45 a.m. and 2:45 p.m. - 3:15 p.m., and on Wednesday from 1:45 p.m. – 2:15 p.m. At other times, you may enter from Tuskawilla Road to Montessori Point. Preschool parents may proceed directly to the preschool building until 3:00 p.m. After that time, cars will be in one lane of traffic to pick up or drop off elementary and middle school students. There is one lane of traffic flow at all times for safe entry and exit of students from vehicles.

Teachers will assist with dismissal, helping students into cars if necessary and checking ID's of unknown persons picking up. Traffic will enter the school property from Dike Road in one traffic lane. Traffic will stop in front of the fourth building to drop off or board students. At the stop sign, cars may turn left at the end of the fourth building and proceed to the first Pre-school building for drop off or pick up. They will then exit at Tuskawilla Road. The rest of the traffic lane going by the fourth building will continue to the second building stopping to unload and board first through third grade students and pre-school students.

Preschool students who have older siblings will be picked up at the second building with the first through third grade students.

Additional teachers will monitor students going to aftercare, sports, and clubs. Aftercare students and the bus transferring students to Twin Rivers will be held until the traffic has cleared (approximately ten or fifteen minutes). Parents needing to talk to teachers after school should be by appointment only. Please do not talk to teachers during arrival or dismissal times.

## **PERSONAL BELONGINGS/ CLOTHING- Pre-school-Kindergarten**

- \* Children should wear play clothes appropriate for both indoor and outdoor activities.
- \* To foster independence, please select clothing that is manageable by your child. Items such as difficult belts, snaps, overall, and ties inhibit independence.
- \* In the interest of safety, sandals or boots may not be worn to school. Soft-soled shoes are preferred.
- \* Preschool children must keep a complete change of clothing at school in a ziplock bag. Please label each item and the bag.
- \* Toys must be left at home.
- \* T -shirts with inappropriate themes or pictures (discriminating, violence, etc.) should not be worn to school.

You may discover tiny cubes; puzzle pieces, beads and other items in your child's pockets. Please return such items to school.

## **ELEMENTARY & MIDDLE SCHOOL DRESS CODE**

The purpose of the dress code is to encourage an atmosphere that is conducive to learning. Furthermore, we believe that personal pride and pride in one's school are influenced by appearance. Classroom teachers will check for appropriate dress. If a student is out of code, he/she may be sent to the office, and parents may be called to bring appropriate clothing, or the student may be sent home. Students who violate the dress code face consequences ranging from detentions to not being allowed to attend class, depending on the degree of the

violation. Students dressed immodestly will not be admitted to class.

## **MONDAY THROUGH THURSDAY:**

**ALL:** The following clothing/style may NOT be worn: baggies, jams, unnatural hair color, bandannas, hats, distracting hairstyles, visible underwear, any clothing that is offensive (ie. drug, alcohol, sexual reference), immodest, torn, or inappropriate. No visible body or facial piercing (lips tongues, noses, etc.) No sandals or flip-flops. Acceptable shoes include; low-cut athletic shoes, loafers, top-siders, shoes with laces must be tied.

**BOYS** - Solid color (any color) polo shirt with collar and sleeves, and solid khaki /navy shorts/slacks. Belts should be worn when appropriate and shirts tucked in. Shorts and slacks must be worn at the natural waistline. Sweatshirts may be worn over dress code shirts. Hair must be above the eyebrows and top of the shirt collar.

**GIRLS** - Solid color (any color) polo shirt with collar and sleeves, and solid khaki /navy skirts, shorts/slacks. Belts should be worn when appropriate and shirts tucked in. Shorts/slacks must be worn at the natural waistline, and the length may be from the middle of the knee to 4" above the knees.

**FIELD TRIPS-** All students must wear their school blue crest polo shirt with khaki, pants or skirts.

**SCHOOL T-SHIRTS** - School T-shirts are worn every Friday. Jeans may be worn only on Fridays.

**PHYSICAL EDUCATION-** Dress Code for Upper Elementary and Middle: Blue shorts, white T -shirt and tennis shoes for P.E. only.

## **LOST AND FOUND**

Lost and Found is located in the main office, 1<sup>st</sup> building or 4<sup>th</sup> building. Any items not claimed within 30 days will be donated to charity.

## **VALUABLES**

Do not bring valuables or large sums of money to school. The school is not responsible for the loss or theft of personal items on campus. Electronic games are not allowed in school.

## **LUNCHESES**

We would prefer that lunch boxes be a small sack style or other soft-sided lunch container. Please include a colorful cloth napkin to be used for laying out the lunch. Remember to include a spoon for foods requiring one and provide straws if the child is not bringing a juice box or sipper thermos. Reusable containers are recommended for ecological reasons. Please make sure your child can open and close containers independently. We encourage the children to use common rules of courtesy during lunch, such as polite conversation and cleaning up before going to play.

School lunches should include foods from the main food groups with emphasis on fresh fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and protein. No glass containers, soda, coffee, or candy is allowed. A better attention span and a more calm behavior will be the result of a healthy, sugar and chemical free lunch.

## **SNACKS**

Pre-school snacks are served twice daily, a.m. and p.m. Emphasis is placed on nutritious snacks: Elementary snacks are served during extended care in the afternoon. Snack time is designated to:

\* Provide the child the opportunity to develop an interest and taste for a variety of foods.

- \* Provide an opportunity to develop skills in food preparation.
- \* Develop positive social skills in sharing food with a small group of friends.
- \* Provide responsibility of cleaning the snack area and preparing it for friends.

Snacks may consist of crackers, cut-up veggies or fruits, seeds, raisins, non-sugared cereals, bread products and fruit juices.

## **BIRTHDAYS**

**PRE-SCHOOL** -We enjoy celebrating your child's birthday at school. To make the day more special for your child - to make the idea of time seem more real to the children -we ask that you send a short year by year autobiography (special events) of your child.

We will read it aloud as part of a candle ceremony. You may send pictures if you wish. They will be returned that day.

**PRE-SCHOOL AND ELEMENTARY**- We ask that you try not to send sugar loaded treats. Some suggestions are: fresh fruit, cheese and crackers, muffins, popcorn, and frozen yogurt.

## **THE ME BASKET -PRESCHOOL**

The ME BASKET is our way of sharing in class. We have a special basket, which the child will bring home when it is his/her turn to share. No more than three items may be brought and they must fit entirely inside the basket.

Please encourage your child to bring an item of educational interest, e.g. flowers, a doll dressed in a foreign costume, things for nature study, post cards or pictures of other countries or people. Please send a note of explanation with the items, to describe them to the children.

Please include a plastic bag to ensure the safe return of the items allowing another child to have a turn with the "ME" basket.

## **NAP AND REST POLICY**

All pre-school students who are not four years old by September 1st and attend school until 3:00 pm or longer will participate in a rest period.

The school provides rest mats. Do not bring pillows or backpacks. Infant receiving blankets or crib sheets blankets may be brought to school for rest time. They must be no larger than 3 x 2 feet and less than 1/4 inch thick Pre-school rest blankets will go home on Friday to be washed.

Young children really need a rest time to help them relax and unwind from their busy morning schedule. This quiet time enables them to have a more positive afternoon and be happier children at home with you at the end of the day.

## **VISITING POLICY**

All visitors should report to the office, located directly across from the preschool building, and at that time, they will be given a "pass" that should be worn while on school property. If a pass is not visible and there is no log-in information, you will not be permitted into the classrooms. Staff/Teachers will ask that you go to the front office to sign in and get a pass. The Teachers/Staff have the right to check with the front office to

make sure that you signed-in properly. A visitor is defined as anyone who is not part of the staff or student population, including parents, except at arrival and dismissal.

The school has an open observation policy and you are welcome to visit your child's class. We do need your cooperation to help safeguard the child's need for an orderly, prepared environment, ensuring minimum interruption of and interference with the child's work.

It is for this reason that we request parents who wish to visit the classroom to schedule such with the school secretary, and during the visit to closely observe the Visitor's Observation Guidelines from (available in the school office).

## **ACADEMIC POLICIES**

The quality of education depends upon the school environment as well as the home environment. If the expectations are consistent in both home and school, the child will develop more rapidly and with more self-confidence. We encourage parental involvement in the school community. The best interest of students should always be the primary concern of parents and educators.

If parents have any specific concerns, suggestions, or critiques, they are strongly encouraged to bring them to the attention of the school in the following order: teacher/coach, principal/director.

## **PROGRESS REPORTS**

Our aim in assessing progress is to always look for the positive qualities in the child's work. We believe that children learn and develop better in a non-competitive classroom that stresses "learning the material" rather than striving to memorize in order to receive an "A" on a test. Elementary and middle school students are encouraged to review and retake tests where the results show an insufficient amount of knowledge to master a concept. A failing grade only serves to damage the self-esteem and set the child up for future failure. For this reason, class work will not have letter or numerical grades in grades 1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup>. There will only be positive or helpful comments. However, progress reports for grades 4<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> will have a simple letter grade system.

Progress Reports are sent home two times during the school year in pre-school and four times a year in the elementary and middle classrooms. The purpose of the progress report is to inform parents on the nature of the child's work in the classroom. If there are some areas of concern, the teacher will inform the Director, and we will work with the parents to find the best method to help the child succeed.

Conferences may also be held where the parents and teachers are able to discuss the child's progress, not only academically, but also emotionally and socially. Our most important goal is to help the child develop a positive self-image and a love of learning. Independence and good work habits will surely follow which lead to success in school work and in life.

A Parent Conference Day is scheduled after the fall and spring report cards. Appointments for 15 minute sessions with teachers may be made through the office or teachers.

Grades and records will be kept in the office until all books, athletic and music material have been returned and school bills are current. Quarterly Progress Reports will not be given out if school bills are not current.

## **STANDARDIZED TESTING**

Testing is an important component of Tuskawilla Montessori Academy's program. We currently use the Terra Nova/ CTBS test for grades K-8. The primary purpose is to point out strengths and weaknesses.

## **HOMEWORK**

Homework is designed to make more efficient use of in-class time and to help develop the student's abilities to work independently. NO homework will be assigned during holidays and no homework will be due immediately' upon return from holidays.

## **STUDENT PLANNERS**

Student planners are issued to first through sixth grade students for the purpose of recording assignments and homework. It is also a means for parents to correspond with the teacher. Students should have this planner with them at all times.

## **FAILURES/INCOMPLETES**

If a student fails a class, in order to be promoted, he/she must attend summer school at Tuskawilla or take Florida Virtual School equivalent classes.

## **TUTORING**

The school will set up an after school tutoring program for students needing additional help. If you are interested in tutoring, please contact the office for fees and more information.

## **STUDENT ATTENDANCE**

We believe that the classroom experience cannot be duplicated. Every student is expected to be at school every day, on time, and prepared, except in the case of approved travel, illness, family catastrophe, religious holiday, or school-sponsored event. Generally, students will not be granted permission to miss class except in unusual or specially approved circumstances.

### 1. Parent Verification of Absence

Regular student attendance is the responsibility of the parent/guardian. It is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to notify the school when the child is absent or has missed school. The Administration has the authority to determine if an absence is excused. A written note with date, reason, name, and parent signature must be turned into the office.

### 2. Excused Absence –

An excused student absence is defined as:

- A. Sickness or injury\*
- B. Medical treatment provided by a licensed physician.
- C. Observance of religious instruction or religious holidays.
- D. Death of a family member.
- E. Absences due to an approved trip (school or personal).

\* A student may be excused for a continued or repeated illness up to 10 attendance days in span of 90 calendar days. After this period of time, a doctor's verification will be required. Work missed due to an excused absent will be made up in a reasonable time that takes in consideration the nature and duration of the absence. The rule is one day for each day missed. Anyone absent on the day of a long-term assignment must send in the assignment. STUDENTS assume full responsibility for making proper arrangements for make up work.

### 3. Unexcused Absences Absence from class for any other reason other than those identified shall be unexcused.



#### 4. Tardy policy

Students who arrive after 8:30 a.m. should report directly to the office and an adult must sign them in. After two unexcused tardies during a semester, the student may face the following disciplinary action: a warning and/or a parent conference.

#### 6. Truancy

The State of Florida defines truancy as 15 or more absences within a 90 day period. After a student accumulates 10 absences during a semester he/she will be required to bring a doctor's excuse for each subsequent absence or to have prior approval, otherwise the absence will be unexcused. Chronic illnesses and family emergencies will be considered on an individual basis. No grade reduction as punishment – only for missed work due to unexcused absence. Academic grades only reflect student achievement, not behavior, absences, tardiness.

### **FIELD TRIPS**

To be eligible to go on a field trip, students must provide written permission from a parent/guardian and they must be in good standing in academics, attendance, and behavior. School rules and policies will be observed at all times during a school-sponsored trip.

Students must abide by the following rules:

1. Use good behavior on the bus.
2. When departing from the bus, listen for instructions.
3. Stay with your group and chaperone.
4. If you become separated, ask for help from an employee or park attendant, but stay where you are.  
**DO NOT GO LOOKING FOR THE GROUP.**
5. Be polite and well-mannered at all times.
6. You will enjoy the field trip more if you listen to the guide and take part in all of the activities.

### **CHAPERONES**

Chaperones are vital to the safety and success of a field trip. Chaperones are responsible for a small group of children during the field trip. For the safety of the children, all chaperones and volunteers will have a background screen, which will be paid for by TMA. All chaperones must have the "Guidelines for Teachers and Chaperones Tracking Sheet" for roll count, head count and initialing.

### **SUPERVISION**

All students leaving classes need to have a pass. Administrators randomly monitor halls and buildings, as well as grounds, for safety purposes. Teachers monitor hallways to insure a safe and swift transition between classes. Teachers are stationed at strategic places during lunches and recess to oversee and supervise the children on the playground. Children are not allowed to climb fences or play behind bushes, and are always to be within the sight of a teacher or assistant.

### **ATHLETICS**

Our Athletic program provides growth in skill development, personal fitness, leadership, sportsmanship and team play through organized competitive sports. We offer the following team sports beginning in kindergarten: swimming, basketball, soccer, cheerleading, flag football. In order to participate in sports, students need to be academically eligible (overall grade of "C.")

### **SPORTSMANSHIP**

Good sportsmanship at athletic events, at home and away, is very important. All students and parents are expected to follow the following guidelines for sportsmanship conduct:

- ❖ Show respect for opponents, players, coaches, and officials at all times.
- ❖ Refrain from using inappropriate language.
- ❖ Know, understand, and respect the rules of the contest.
- ❖ Recognize and appreciate skill in performance, regardless of team .

**DISCIPLINE POLICY**

Schools must ensure that age appropriate, constructive disciplinary practices are used for children.

1. Children shall not be subjected to discipline that is severe, humiliating or frightening.
2. Discipline shall not be associated with food, rest or toileting.
3. Spanking or any form of physical punishment is prohibited.

Natural or logical consequences are used where possible and appropriate. A reflective period is used to assist the child who needs to calm down, redirect behavior or make a thoughtful choice of activity.

Conflict resolution is used to help children learn to express feelings, state clearly wants and needs, and settle disputes with peers with respect rather than aggression. Our policy is to reinforce positive behavior, not negative behavior.

From time to time, the parent may be called to have a conference concerning the child's behavior and arrange for both school and home to work together to help the child.

Should undesirable behavior continue in spite of all in-class attempts to correct it, parents may be asked to remove the child until the behavior is under control. Should incidents recur upon the child's return to school, the school reserves the right to request the child's withdrawal.

**ABSOLUTE GROUND RULES**

The school operates on the assumption that everyone in the school will take good care of every person. The purpose of ground rules is to aid in the development of self-respect and respect for others. When determining the consequence of violating a ground rule, the following circumstances should be taken into consideration:

1. Age and/or grade level of student
2. Frequency and seriousness of misconduct
3. Attitude of student

Students must:

1. Bring appropriate materials to class.
2. Complete work assigned.
3. Use class time properly.
4. Obey lawful directions of teachers, school bus drivers, school administrators and other personnel having official authority over students, such as chaperons.

**MATRIX OF INFRACTIONS AND CONSEQUENCES**

Many of the infractions listed do not happen at this school. However, these behaviors should happen, this is the procedure we will follow.

**Matrix of Infractions and Consequences**

<b><i>Infractions</i></b>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Aggression		O			O			O	O	O	O	O
Battery										M	M	M

Bomb Threat										M	M	M
Bus Rules Violation	O				O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Cell Phone Misuse			O		O	O	O	O	O	O		
Cheating	O		O			O	O	O	O			
Computer/Calculator Misuse	O		O			O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Contraband			M		O	O	O	O	O	O		
Disrespect	O	O			O	O	O	O	O	O		
Disrupting Class or Campus	O	O				O	O	O	O			
Dress Code Violation	O		O			O	O	O				
Drug/Alcohol Violation			M							M	M	M
Failure report to detention								O	O	O		
False Alarm										M	M	M
Fighting									O	O	O	O
Forgery			M		O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Harassment					O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Horseplay					O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Inappropriate / Obscene Act	O	O			O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Insubordination	O	O			O	O	O	O	O	O		O
Lying/Misrepresentation	O	O			O	O	O	O	O	O		
Sexual Battery										M	M	M
Tardiness							O	O	O			
Theft		O	M	M	O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Threat/Intimidation		O			O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Unauthorized items	O	O	O		O	O	O	O	O			
Unauthorized Publication			O				O	O	O	O	O	O
Unsafe Act		O			O	O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Vandalism				O		O	O	O	O	O	O	O
Weapons Violation			M							M	O	M
Zero Tolerance										M	M	M

**Consequences**

M – Mandatory Consequence
O – Optional Consequence

**Directions**

1. Verbal Reprimand	8. Detention
2. Time Out	9. In-School Suspension
3. Confiscation	10. Out-of-School Suspension
4. Restitution	11. Recommended for Expulsion
5. Bus Probation	12. Referred to Law Enforcement
6. Bus Expulsion	
7. Work Detail	

**ADMINISTRATION**

**Terry DeLong**

**Lois Phillips**

**Dr. Thomas Phillips**

**Tuskawilla and Twin Rivers Montessori does not practice discrimination based upon race, color, religion or national origin in the admissions of students or the employment of faculty and staff.**

**Tuskawilla Montessori School  
1620 Tuskawilla Rd.  
Oviedo, Florida 32765**

**Twin Rivers Montessori School  
1270 Lockwood Blvd.  
Oviedo, Florida 32765**

**Associate Member of the American Montessori Society and accredited with the Association of Independent Schools of Florida. NCPSA Gold Seal Quality Care Program. Accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (Advanced Ed).**

**Visit us on the web at [www.tuskmont.org](http://www.tuskmont.org)**

**or email us at : [tmsadmin@tuskmont.org](mailto:tmsadmin@tuskmont.org)**

**last updated 2/16/2018**