

West Orange Montessori School

3 - 6 years



Parent Handbook

227 S. Main Street
Winter Garden, FL 34787

www.westorangemontessori.com

*We welcome your family to
West Orange Montessori School!*

School Phone
(407) 654-0700

Director/Head Teacher:
Michelle Dulany

We hope this handbook will answer many of your questions. We will gladly address any other concerns you have, and look forward to working with you and your child.

Typical Daily Schedule for (3-6) Primary Program

This schedule may vary from time to time, but we hope it gives you some insight into how the rhythm of our day goes.

- 8:30AM Welcome! We greet one another.
- 8:30 - 9:00 Outside play time.
- 9:00 – 9:30 Morning Circle. Welcome songs and sharing news and ideas. Calendar work, presentation of new materials, or group lessons. Thematic or unit studies provide a stimulating structure for learning about the world we live in.
- 9:30 – 11:15 Work Time. Exploration of Montessori materials in: Practical Life, Sensorial, Math, Language, and Culture. Group / individual lessons. Snack time. Children free to choose snack during work time.
- 11:15 – 11:30 Creative Circle. Story time, music-making, dance/rhythm, special activities, special guests. French lessons integrated into our day.
- 11:30 – 12:00 Outdoor Play/Morning program ends. We say goodbye to our morning friends.
- 12:00 – 12:45 Lunch Time. “Mother Knows Best” – children in full day program bring their own lunch boxes.
- 12:45 – 1:00 Playtime (outdoors, weather permitting).
- 12:45 – 3:45 Afternoon Circle/work time with Montessori materials.
- 1:00 – 3:00 Kindergarteners have individualized and small group lessons emphasizing reading, writing, and math skills.
- 1:00 – 2:00 Preschool all-day children rest and recharge time. We listen to stories, quietly resting bodies and minds. After rest, preschoolers join kindergartners.
- 3:00 Outdoor Play. School day ends. Aftercare available from 3:00–4:00PM. Building closes promptly at 4:00).

Tuition Schedule and Scholarship Program

PROGRAM	TUITION SCHEDULE	ANNUAL ¹	10-PAY PLAN ²
5-Day Preschool (M-F)	Full Day ³	\$7350	\$735
	Morning ⁴	\$5,250	\$525
Kindergarten Program (M-F)	Full Day ³	\$7,350	\$735
3-Day Preschool (M, W, F)	Morning ⁴	\$3,850	\$385
2-Day Preschool (T, TH)	Morning ⁴	\$2,750	\$275
Notes: ¹ Parents electing to pay full annual tuition receive a 7% discount. Payment for the upcoming year is due Jun 1. Contact the Director for amount due. ² 10-Pay Plan installments are due the first of each month beginning Jul 1. A two-pay option is available with half of the annual tuition due on Jun 1 and the other half on Jan 1. Parents electing this option receive a 3% discount. ³ Full Day programs: 8:30AM - 3:00PM. ⁴ Morning programs: 8:30AM - 12:00PM.			

Tuition is an annual fee payable in one of the three ways shown above. Parents must sign a Tuition Contract reflecting the chosen tuition option. Regardless of option, payments are due on the first of the month(s) indicated. If there is an extenuating circumstance which would prevent you from paying on time, please make other arrangements with the Director as soon as possible. There will be a late charge of \$15.00 for payments received after the 7th of the month in which due, or for returned checks. We offer a 5% discount off the second child's tuition for siblings.

If unpaid tuition becomes excessive without an effort to arrange for payment, the child's enrollment will be terminated. Because most of the school's expenses are fixed, refunds cannot be granted for sick days, personal vacation, or late days. *Parents wishing to withdraw their children must provide 30 days notice in writing. Parents of children who withdraw after February 1st will be required to fulfill the remaining tuition obligation.*

A tuition assistance program is available to assist qualified students. Tuition assistance will be awarded based upon proven financial need. Please see the Director for further information.

Contents

Table of Contents	3
Mission Statement and Learning Objectives	4
Mission	4
Objectives	4
Who we are	5
Non-discrimination Policy.....	5
Preferences in Enrollment	5
Prerequisites for Admission	5
School Policies	6
Dress Code	6
Nutritional Policy	7
Birthdays	8
Personal Belongings	8
Discipline	9
Forms	10
Paperwork	10
Arrival and Departure Policy	11
Before and After Care Policies and Fees	11
Illness and Medication Policy	12
Emergency Procedures	12
Inclement Weather Days	12
School Calendar	12
Field Trips and Special Programs	13
Visiting our School	13
Student Evaluations	13
Communications	13
Parent Support	13
Tuition Schedule and Scholarship Program	14
Typical Daily Schedule	15

Mission Statement and Learning Objectives

Mission

The mission of West Orange Montessori School is to provide a quality preschool through kindergarten education for children ages three to six, inspiring in each child a passion for lifelong learning. Free, Public Charter Kindergarten for students 5 on or before Sept. 1. Program begins Fall of 2011.

Objectives

To provide an environment for children that stimulates a love of learning.

To support and encourage children to discover and develop their own unique talents and strengths.

To foster a strong self-image, independent thinking and reasoning skills, and self-confidence.

To help children develop positive social skills, caring and respect for others, responsibility, and a sense of community in the classroom.

To help children develop control, physical coordination and fine motor skills.

To help children learn to make independent work choices, to complete cycles of activities, and to appreciate concentration, logic, sequences and order.

The Director/Administrator reserves the right to make any and all decisions at any time during the academic year as she deems necessary in all matters of staff, curriculum, and student enrollment to ensure the fulfillment of the school's mission and vision.

Field Trips and Special Programs

We may plan field trips appropriate for the season and age group. We encourage parents who have a special skill or talent to share with us during these outings to enrich our classroom experience.

Visiting Our School

Anyone interested in observing the classroom is welcome from October through May. Please make arrangements with the Director ahead of time. Quietly observing our Montessori work time can be insightful and rewarding.

Student Evaluations

Parent-Teacher conferences are scheduled twice during the school year, with progress reports given at those times. Special conferences can be scheduled as needed. Please feel free to ask your child's teacher to set aside time to discuss any major changes or unusual events, which may affect his/her performance at school. Parent-Teacher conferences at the preschool level are optional, but are required at the kindergarten level.

Communications

Notices are frequently posted on the bulletin board with information about upcoming events, trips, meetings, etc. Please take a few moments from time to time to read the latest announcements and school events/news. Monthly newsletters will also be handed out.

Parent Support

Parents are encouraged to be actively involved in their child's educational development. The relationship between home and school should be healthy and strong to support the child's growth and development. We welcome opportunities to share ideas and information that will enhance and add to the lives of our children and to our program.

Parents are needed to come in to school to listen to emergent readers read books aloud. A calendar with one hour slots is posted.

Illness and Medication Policy

When your child shows signs of illness, please keep him/her home*. A good rule to follow concerning illness is if your child is not well enough to play outside, he/she is not well enough to be at school. We will notify all parents when a classmate contracts a highly contagious disease. If your child becomes ill at school, you or a person named on your child's authorization form will be called. Medication cannot be given without explicit written directions from the parent. Medication must be left with the child's teacher for use during weekdays. We appreciate your calling the school at (407) 654-0700 to let us know if your child will be absent. *A child who appears ill upon arrival shall not be admitted to school.

Emergency Procedures

In case of emergency, you or a person named on your authorization form will be contacted. If we can not reach you or the designated person, your doctor will be called and his recommendation followed. Your signature on your child's authorization form gives the school permission to respond to a serious accident when you cannot be reached.

Inclement Weather Days

The occasional inclement weather day will be announced on the local television stations. If severe weather is approaching the area, please tune-in to your local television and radio stations. We will contact them if we decide to cancel the day's activities.

School Calendar

West Orange Montessori will follow the basic West Orange School Department calendar, and parents will receive a copy of the calendar upon enrollment. We will be closed on Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day weekend (Wednesday thru Friday), Winter Holidays (two weeks), Martin Luther King Day, Spring Break (one week), and Memorial Day.

Who we are:

West Orange Montessori School is a private school offering a Montessori education to those enrolled. Our goal is to provide each child with an individual, developmentally appropriate educational program within the framework of a full Montessori curriculum and philosophy. This includes the use of manipulative materials on the floor and at the table. We work towards, and therefore the child has to be capable of, achieving independence with an inner self-discipline, self-motivation, love of learning, and care of self, others and the environment.

Non-discrimination Policy

West Orange Montessori School admits students of any race, color, nationality, and ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. West Orange Montessori School does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, nationality, and ethnic origin in the administration of its employment, education policies, or other school programs.

Preferences in Enrollment

1. Enrolled students re-enrolling for the new school year
2. Siblings of current students.
3. Students transferring from other Montessori schools.
4. New students.

Prerequisite for (3 - 6) Primary Program Admission

All students must be at least 2½ years old. All students must be completely toilet trained—and able to manage themselves. Children should wear clothing with elastic waists! Children should also be able to take direction from teachers, and behave appropriately during brief circle times.

School Policies

Dress Code

Children work and play actively. To maintain good health, we require that the children comply with the following basic standards of good attire:

1. Children should feel that they can participate in all school activities without fear of reprisals should clothes become soiled. Children should also like what they are wearing.
2. Since most activity takes place on the floor or at tables, and the children paint, wash, and work in the garden, they should be dressed in comfortable, washable, non-restricting clothing.
3. The children should wear clothing which they can manage themselves. Elastic waist pants, and sensible slip-on or Velcro shoes work well for young children.
4. Children should wear rubber soled shoes (not black soled shoes), such as tennis shoes, which permit active participation in gross motor activities and permit them to move quietly in the classroom. No dress shoes. Indoor slippers to be worn during class time are encouraged.
5. We do not feel that clothes with Ninja Turtles, Power Rangers or other fantasy characters are appropriate—please save these for home. Also musical shoes or shoes with flashing lights are very distracting and should be avoided.
6. All clothing, including outer garments, should be marked with your child's full name.
7. Please bring the following on the first day of school:

A container with your child's name and extra clothing will be kept at school. Please include two pairs of underwear, socks, pants, and a shirt. Clearly label each article with your child's name.

Arrival and Departure Policy

The first few days at school for the 3 - 6 year old can be overwhelming. Please be patient in regard to your child's initial reaction. Every child has an adjustment period, usually about one month. Take time to talk about what school will be like during the summer and weeks leading up to the start of school. Please be consistent in the daily routine of dropping off your child.

Upon arrival, you are welcome to stay a few minutes with your child, then say a cheerful good-bye and promptly leave the child in the care of the teachers. (You may observe any time after the first month.) Please be assured that if there is a problem, we will call you. At departure time, whether at noon or at 3:00, please say good-bye to the attending teacher, so that we are able to consciously hand the responsibility for your child back to you.

We ask that you respect school hours and be punctual. If there is a special reason for your child to be left early or to be picked up late, please call and make arrangements for before or after care.

Please indicate on your child's application the names and telephone numbers of all persons authorized to pick up your child from school. If possible, please talk to your child ahead of time if a relative or someone other than yourself will be picking him up from school, and notify the school as well.

After Care Policies and Fees

A low key, creative activity time is available for all children needing to extend their regularly scheduled program. The following fees apply:

After Care (M-F, 3:00-4:00PM) - \$5 per day, or \$25 per week (for 5 days, 3:00-4:00PM). It is the parents responsibility to keep track of all aftercare hours and pay accordingly.

If you know that you will need after care please call as soon as possible. Prompt pick-up of your child at or before 4:00PM is expected. \$5 per every 15 minutes will be charged after 4:00PM. *Please be prompt.*

Forms

All of the following forms must be on file before the student can begin school.

1. Tuition Schedule/Parent Contract
2. Authorization/Permission Form
3. Immunization Record
4. Completed Student Application
5. Enrollment/Photo Release Contract

Parents must inform the school of any change in telephone number during the year. In case of emergency, these numbers are crucial.

Paperwork

Our Montessori program involves a lot of work with hands-on materials. The philosophy behind this work is to make sure the child can visualize the lesson he/she is learning. Children work with learning materials which lead to comprehension of abstract concepts. Paper activities come at the end of this process. If your child does not have papers (other than painting, etc.), please don't think he/she is doing nothing at all. He/she is learning through the use of the materials. Please see the typical schedule shown later in this handbook.

"Every day a child should take home: love in his heart, knowledge in his head, but not necessarily something in his hand."

Nutritional Policy

Our genuine concern for your child's development and health are the primary reasons behind this school's nutritional guidelines. Only children staying for the full-day program will bring lunch boxes.

Lunch time is a fun break in your child's day. To keep it interesting, please provide a variety of healthy, nutritious foods. In general, the quantity of food eaten by the preschool child is relatively small, therefore what is eaten should be something your child enjoys and is also nutritious. It is very difficult for the staff to ask your child to eat something when the child does not want to do so. *Please do not send your child to school with soda, candy, caffeinated drinks, breakable containers, or junk foods loaded with sugar.* Please provide your child with adequate protein in his/her lunch, i.e. yogurt, peanut butter, healthy sandwiches, cheese, meat, etc. Your child should be capable of managing his or her lunch. Packaging should reflect sensitivity to the environment. Our school will be composting and recycling.

Children enrolled in morning program will be given a nutritious snack, and will go out to the playground at 11:30, where they will enjoy outdoor play until they are picked up between 11:30 and 12:00 noon from the playground. (There will be a charge after 12:00 noon.)

Children enrolled for the full-day program will enjoy outdoor play from 11:30 – 12:00 noon, when the morning students will depart. Lunchtime will be from 12:00 noon – 12:45pm. We will be encouraging good manners and clean eating and appreciate your support of this at home. Please send a placemat and cloth/paper napkin for your child to use to organize and manage his or her lunch. Children will clean up any mess or spills they make. Full day preschool students will enjoy a rest time from 1:00 – 2:00pm each day. The children may rest, nap, and listen to soothing music while we recharge for the afternoon!

Birthdays

We would like to celebrate your child's birthday at school. On the birthday, you may send your child's "life story", perhaps presented in a small photo album or a poster to share at group time. We will read the story and show the photos as a miniature of "This is Your Life!" We will also have the traditional Montessori Birthday Walk. This helps your child begin to understand the passage of time in a meaningful, fun way. Feel free to bring a birthday snack to share with everyone. Good examples are muffins or cookies—no frosting, please, because of the mess!—or other healthy foods. Please do not bring overly sweet items loaded with excessive sugar.

Personal Belongings

Children will have their own cubbie where work will be kept. Any paperwork will be taken home from this cubbie each day when the child leaves. Children enjoy bringing books, shells and interesting leaves, rocks, pictures, insects, etc. to share for "Show & Tell" each week. Items of special class interest and educational value are always welcomed. If your child has something to share, please label the item or container so that it can be safely returned to you.

Please DO NOT allow your child to bring toys to school. They are distracting and difficult for the child to really share. A small soft toy for rest time is permitted for the preschool age child. If your child takes a nap, please bring in a small pillow and a small blanket. These should be clearly marked with the child's name and placed in a plastic bag which should also be labeled.

These items are to be brought to school each Monday and will be returned to the parent on Friday to be washed and returned to school the following Monday. We provide mats for all nappers.

Discipline

The most important rule for a teacher and parent to remember in the area of discipline, is that the teacher must control the children who are unable to control themselves, yet give them the opportunity to develop the self-discipline so desperately needed. One of the goals of moving children into more independence is helping them move from needing to be externally controlled or motivated by adults, to being internally controlled and motivated. This is true self-discipline.

The general limitations of classroom freedom require respect for others and for the environment. Specific requirements are:

1. No physical aggression of any kind.
2. No taking of materials from another either with, or without permission of the child in possession.
3. No interference with work and concentration of others.
4. Never doing for the children what they are able to do for themselves.

Children are expected to:

1. Work only with those materials which have been presented to them.
2. Choose their own work.
3. Handle materials carefully, quietly and appropriately.
4. Return materials to the proper location.
5. Avoid interfering with the work of other children.
6. Be kind to, and considerate of, all.

The children will be introduced to these concepts through a few simple ground rules that will be revealed and reviewed at circle time. Children who repeatedly violate limits may need to sit in an isolated area in "time-out" to have an opportunity to think about their behavior. Those children will be made comfortable and will be treated gently and lovingly. The attention that the teacher has to provide will be given warmly and very quietly. Being isolated only means being withdrawn from the overly stimulating closeness of other children. Children will not be left completely alone, but will have the reassuring presence of an adult nearby.