



**Woodland Hill**  
MONTESSORI SCHOOL

**Parent Handbook**  
2016-2017



## WELCOME

To new and returning parents and students, we extend a warm welcome to the new school year. Over the course of this year our children will grow in a Montessori environment to become self-assured, vibrant students who love to learn.

As parents, you play an important role in your child's success. The Montessori Method can benefit your child best when you understand the roles played by parents, teachers, and children. Please use this handbook to become familiar with Woodland Hill Montessori School. We look forward to another wonderful and productive year!

**Susan Kambrich**

*Head of School*

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# I. MISSION STATEMENT

Woodland Hill Montessori School – A diverse and engaging educational partnership of parents, teachers, children, and community – nurtures a child’s love of learning and sense of social responsibility, using the child-centered Montessori philosophy and curriculum to develop the intellectual, physical, spiritual, artistic, and academic excellence inherent in each child.

# II. EDUCATIONAL GOALS

The Montessori curriculum varies at the five levels of our school, but the goals are consistent throughout the programs:

- To enter into a partnership with parents in the education of their children
- To encourage the self-motivation and self-discipline that will lead to a lifelong pursuit of knowledge
- To lead children to mastery of precisely identified intellectual, social, and physical skills
- To help children develop a positive self-image as the key to the development of their full potential
- To foster open minds, compassion, and respect for others
- To balance self-reliance, independence, and responsible freedom with the skills of working cooperatively
- To instill in each child a sense of duty and personal responsibility for the world in which we live
- To spark in our children imagination, wonder, humor, and joy

# III. SCHOOL OVERVIEW

## A. SCHOOL HISTORY

The history of this school begins with a special person, Dr. Maria Montessori. In 1896, Maria Montessori became Italy’s first female doctor. As a physician, Maria Montessori had an opportunity to work with many different children and to observe them under a variety of circumstances. Over time, she formalized her study of children and sought to design tools to help children learn. As a result of her studies Maria Montessori concluded:

- All learning is an individual and personal experience. To be effective, education must be personal and individual.
- Certain stages in a child’s development make the child receptive to different types of learning. These stages must be identified and incorporated into an effective teaching system.
- Children are naturally both able and eager to learn when provided with the appropriate guidance, tools, and environment.
- The goal of early childhood education must be to develop in each child his natural talents and to stimulate his desire to learn.

In 1911, the Montessori learning philosophy was introduced in the United States. At that time the country was not generally open to such a progressive view of children and their learning processes. In the early 1960s many social changes occurred, including a demand for alternative education, and interest in the Montessori educational philosophy was rekindled. In 1965, a group of Albany parents in search of a higher standard of education came together. As a

result of their dedication to high educational standards, the Montessori School of Albany (“MSA”) was founded.

Initially, MSA provided a program for children aged two years, 9 months to six years old. In order to meet the growing needs of its student body and parents, a six- to nine-year-old Elementary program was introduced in 1985 to extend the unique educational experience to older children. In 1993, the nine- to 12-year-old program was added to complete the Montessori elementary school experience. In 2001, a seventh grade was added, and in 2002, the Middle School was completed with the addition of eighth graders. In the fall of 2012, Woodland Hill added a part-time Toddler program for children ages 18 to 36 months of age.

In 1966, MSA received its charter from the New York State Education Department and became formally affiliated with the American Montessori Society. In 1999, MSA became fully accredited by the American Montessori Society, and was accredited by the National Association of Independent Schools in 2003. Few schools of the thousands of Montessori schools in North America have received



this recognition. Woodland Hill is also fully accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools. In the fall of 2002, the Montessori School of Albany changed its name to Woodland Hill Montessori School (WHMS), after the move to its beautiful new eleven-acre campus on a wooded hillside in North Greenbush. In 2005, WHMS added two more classrooms to accommodate its growing student population. In 2006, an athletic field was created to give our students a place to play. In 2009, a new 11,000 sq. foot addition was added with a gymnasium, cultural arts center, art room, office space, lobby, bathrooms and kitchen.

Over the past forty-nine years, WHMS has provided an educational program with a difference. We are committed to creating a learning environment that emphasizes respect for the child, freedom of self-expression, self-education, love of learning, and personal and social responsibility. We are pleased to have you join us in fulfilling our goals.

## **B. CAMPUS AND STUDENT BODY**

WHMS is located at 100 Montessori Place, in North Greenbush, New York. The building, designed specifically as a Montessori school, is surrounded by eleven acres of open fields and wooded hills. The building design follows the Montessori principles of order, simplicity, and beauty. The natural outdoor environment is incorporated into the school building itself. Each of the classrooms is spacious and inspiring, with its own door to outside work areas and large windows bringing in the bright outdoors. The playground has areas for basketball and other games, and there are three play areas: one for Toddlers, one for Primary, and one for Elementary and Middle School. Our ample grounds are used for cross-country skiing, archery, ball games, and other activities.

## **C. CURRICULUM**

The term Montessori embodies both a philosophy and a method of education. The programs at our school focus on the development of each child's full potential using teachers specially trained in the Montessori Method and philosophy. Our teachers use both concrete teaching materials and a well-defined innovative curriculum tailored to the toddler-aged child, and through each three-year cycle from the Primary program through both levels of the Elementary program, culminating in the two year Middle School program.

The two to three-year age range at each level of our program provides a multitude of benefits that are immediately apparent when observing a typical Montessori classroom. Younger children in each group have an opportunity to observe and imitate the older students as they work. Older students have an opportunity to reinforce their own knowledge by explaining what they are doing and assisting younger children. The third year or final year in the cycle is truly empowering to the children, both socially and academically. Each child can learn and develop at his own pace within a classroom that accommodates many levels of ability and complexity.

The Montessori teacher is specially trained to observe each child and to design lessons based on that child's natural curiosity and love of learning. The teacher is responsible for preparing the educational environment within each classroom and for presenting lessons in that environment. During the course of a day, the teacher will demonstrate a wide array of concrete sensorial materials and sequential activities through individual instruction. The child soon learns to associate abstract concepts with hands-on experience. For a list of our Montessori teachers, please see Attachment A.

## **D. FAMILY COMMITMENT**

Fundamental to the operation of this school is the expectation that all members participate and support the school whenever possible. Committees are organized to assist in special programs and to help the school meet long-term goals. Teachers value the assistance and participation of parents in the classroom and in adventures beyond the classroom. Both parents and students are enriched by parents' involvement in school activities. In addition, each family is expected to contribute to the annual fundraising efforts of the school.

## **E. CORPORATE GOVERNANCE**

WHMS is an independent non-profit educational corporation chartered by the New York State Board of Regents. All parents and legal guardians of current WHMS students are members of the corporation.



The Board of Trustees is charged with the ultimate responsibility for financial, legal, and strategic planning and policy issues. The WHMS Board sets policy to be implemented by the administration and staff. Furthermore, the Board ensures the integrity of Montessori philosophy within the school. The WHMS Board consists of 13 WHMS members (parents with children in the school), the immediate past president, one teacher representative selected by the faculty. At least three of the appointed trustees shall be chosen from the community at large (not parent members). The trustees serve three-year terms. Board terms are staggered and Board members are appointed at the Annual Meeting in December.

The WHMS Board holds regular meetings eight times per year. All regular meetings of the Board are open to members, with the exception of executive sessions for confidential matters. Parents are welcome to attend. Minutes are on file in the WHMS office for access by any member of the school. The Board also holds one or two workshop/retreats to help educate, involve or work on Board skills and duties.

## IV. ADMISSIONS

WHMS admits students of any sex, race, color, creed, national, or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. WHMS does not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, color, sexual orientation, creed, national or ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, or financial aid programs.

Your child must be within the relevant age parameters to be enrolled in WHMS. You may be required to submit a copy of the child's birth certificate to the Head of School. WHMS requires children entering the Primary program be toilet-trained prior to entrance.

Enrollment preference will be given to families with a firm commitment to Montessori philosophy and who intend to keep their child in the classroom for the full cycle of the program and beyond. Preference is also given to children who have completed our Toddler program, children that are three- to four-years of age, siblings of past or present students, and to students who transfer from other Montessori schools. Classes are multi-age, and the school will make every reasonable effort to balance each class with respect to age and gender.



### THE ADMISSIONS PROCESS

#### 1. Tour and Observation

WHMS encourages parents to observe classrooms in session, tour the school, and speak with the Director of Admissions. Parents will be asked to complete an observation form. Following observation, the parents will meet with the Head of School.

#### 2. Application

Interested families are encouraged to submit a completed application form accompanied by a \$50 non-refundable fee as promptly as possible. Applicants five years of age or older must submit a birth certificate, teacher reference and/or progress reports from their current school. When these materials are received, an interview appointment will be made.

#### 3. Parent and Student Interview

The interview is an informal way for prospective parents and the school representatives to become acquainted with each other and to share pertinent information.

Toddler- and Primary-aged children will explore the Montessori classroom materials with the guidance of a certified teacher. Elementary children will visit a classroom for a half-day and Middle School students for a full day. The student will receive lessons and choose work from familiar materials.

All prospective students will be informally assessed by an appropriate teacher and prior school records will be evaluated.

#### 4. Enrollment

WHMS makes admission decisions in mid- to late-March, or later if space is available. Placement decisions are entirely within the discretion of the Head of School. Once a child is accepted, it will be necessary to complete the enrollment contract and submit any health information required by state law. Acceptance of placement in the program is confirmed by the submission of a signed enrollment contract, payment of a non-refundable \$500 tuition deposit, and a \$500 matriculation fee (for new families only). No student is considered enrolled in the school until the funds are received.

## INFORMATION REGARDING PROGRAMS AND TUITION

Please refer to the enrollment contract and Appendix C for information regarding programs and tuition.

### Financial Aid

WHMS offers a limited number of partial financial aid awards. Awards are based on financial need, space availability, and family commitment to Montessori education. The amount of financial aid is dependent upon available funds. Application forms are available in the business office. You will be asked for financial information. All requests and information are strictly confidential. If you would like to donate to the financial aid fund, please call the development office. We are not able to offer financial aid for the Toddler program.

## SCHOOL POLICIES

### A. TODDLER AND PRIMARY PHASE-IN

Phase-in is the term used in Montessori schools for the initial orientation phase of the new school year. Briefly, we know that a positive Phase-in experience is one of the most important influences in a process that will guide each child to a happy and successful learning year.

In this carefully planned Phase-in period, a peaceful and welcoming learning environment is created. The new children get an overview of how things work in the classroom, and the returning children receive reinforcement of the previous year's ground rules. Phase-in is a stabilizing period, in which the children and teachers get to know one another well. During this transition, we foster security and comfort in a smaller group before the whole class meets.

The new children are eager and excited about the year ahead and they can learn new skills quickly. Their environment throughout the year will be stimulating and exciting, where independence, freedom, and choice of materials are the rule. The children must learn how to handle this choice and freedom while respecting the materials and each other. They will learn how to care for their classrooms!

During the Phase-in period, new children become acclimated by attending short periods that become increasingly longer as the week progresses. You will be given a schedule of the exact hours of Phase-in.

We begin the year with a few core materials on the shelves that focus on specific skills and on the completion of a work cycle (taking a task from its beginning to completion). These materials introduce the child to the classrooms and allow older children to re-establish good work habits.

Montessori schools all over the world have Phase-in. Important reasons include:

- a) Children need short increments of time to establish and re-establish procedures and ground rules. They familiarize themselves with classroom materials and physical space (e.g., bathroom location, cubbies, etc).
- b) In smaller groups, the teacher can establish or re-establish a relationship with each child individually, by moving slowly, creating an atmosphere of security and emotional comfort.
- c) The gradual Phase-in allows the child to absorb and digest new concepts and ideas without becoming confused from too much information.
- d) Phase-in sets the tone of the classroom of respect and caring for each other and the environment. It sets the stage for making choices and independent learning.

### B. SCHOOL HOURS

Toddler Program	8:30 - 11:00 a.m.
Toddler II Program	12 p.m. - 2:30 p.m.
Early Care (not available for Toddler)	7:30 - 8:20 a.m.
Primary	8:30 a.m. - 2:50 p.m.
Elementary and Middle School	8:20 a.m. - 2:50 p.m.
After School care (not available for Toddlers)	2:50 - 6 p.m.

The school office is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

## C. ARRIVAL

WHMS has arranged arrival and dismissal procedures to help facilitate smooth transitions for children and convenience for parents. The following procedures should be followed for the comfort and safety of all.

### 1. Automobiles

When arriving at our school, parents of Toddlers should park in the parking lot, enter the school through the gym entrance and walk their child to the Toddler room where a teacher will be waiting to greet them. Parents of Primary children should pull up in front of the school. Parents should remain in the car. The staff will escort children from the first ten vehicles in line. After the children leave the vehicles, the first ten cars will pull out and then all cars in line will move up to reposition themselves for drop-off. **During car line times, please do not pull in front of any vehicle in line, do not make U-turns, and do not double-park, unless directed to do so by a staff member.** Kindergarten, Elementary and Middle School-aged children may enter the school on their own through the rear door (gymnasium entrance) between 8:10 and 8:20 a.m. Children under kindergarten age should never be dropped off to enter the building alone. Please do not idle your car while in the parking lot.

- Arrival time for Middle School and Elementary students is between 8:10 - 8:20 a.m. and for all other students between 8:20-8:30 a.m.
- If you are early, and not enrolled in the early care program, please wait with your child.
- If you arrive after car line, please escort your child to their classroom. If you are later than 8:40 a.m., please sign in to the office first.

### 2. Buses

Buses take precedence over all other vehicles.

**Never pass a bus with flashing red lights or a school van that is unloading children.**

Children who arrive via bus prior to 8:20 a.m. will report to the Early Care program.

### 3. Early Care Program

The morning care program runs from 7:30 to 8:20 a.m. and is provided for all bus children and those parents contracted for this program. Occasional pre-arranged drop-in care is permissible and will be billed as used. Please do not use morning care without prior arrangement. Early Care is included for students enrolled in the School Care Program

### 4. Late Arrival

Please arrive to school by 8:30 a.m. (8:20 a.m. if you are Elementary or Middle School). A child who arrives past 8:30 a.m. must be escorted to their classroom by an adult. Children who arrive past 8:40 a.m. must be signed in at the main office. If you are late more than five times, you may be asked to meet with the Head of School. Please call 283-5400 if you are going to be late.

### 5. Enrichment Days Arrival

Children participating in the Enrichment program (see Enrichment, Section VIII, C) should be escorted to the Enrichment classroom by the parent or caregiver. The location of the classroom being used will be visible on the front door. All children participating in Enrichment must be signed IN and OUT. Enrichment hours are 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. Enrichment is not available for Toddlers.



## D. DISMISSAL

Dismissal time for children in the Primary program and older being picked up by parents is 2:50 - 3 p.m.

- The procedure for picking up students is the same as for drop off for Primary through Middle School. Parents should remain in the car. Your child will be brought to you. Toddler parents will park and come to the classroom
- Buses will pick up children in the rear of the school at 2:50 p.m. All children will be escorted to the correct bus.

For your child's protection, WHMS will not release a child to someone other than a custodial parent unless written authorization is provided to the school. If written permission has not been received by the school, WHMS will call parents to confirm alternate release

arrangements and to obtain oral authorization of those arrangements before the child is released. Authorization can be granted on the emergency information form, but make sure to include a note anytime changes in dismissal are made.

Children who have not been picked up by 3 p.m. will be placed in the School Care program and parents will be billed for this time. The classroom teacher will report the placement to the Office Manager, and the Office Manager will contact the parents by telephone.

### **School Care Pick-Up and Enrichment Pick-Up**

School Care and Enrichment pick-up may occur any time between 3 and 6 p.m. Parents should park in the school lot. Each parent who has a child enrolled in School Care will be given an access code to enter the school. Check the signs on the doors for the current location of the children. Please remember to sign your children IN and OUT of these programs.

## **E. SCHOOL CLOSING**

In the event of a snowstorm, weather emergency or unforeseen school closure, please tune in to television channels 6, 10, or 13 or radio stations WROW or FLY92. If you live a great distance from the school, you may call the Head of School at 6:15 a.m. (Head of School, Susan Kambrich, 439-7110). After 7 a.m. you may phone in and listen to the school's voice mail; the message will be changed to announce a closing.

You may also register with the WNYT.com for immediate text messages sent directly to your cell phone for updated school closings. If school is evacuated or closed early, you will be notified by a phone call. We will also post early dismissals on the School Closings Network that will be on television and radio stations.

## **F. ATTENDANCE**

Parents should notify the school by 9 a.m. if a child is unable to attend school.

### **1. Absence for Toddler and Primary Children**

Daily attendance is vital for your child's development. If a student must be away for any length of time for reasons other than illness, parents should contact the school in advance to discuss the situation. A note explaining absence must be sent to school with each child upon his or her return.

### **2. Absence for Elementary Children**

New York State includes in its definition of legal absences student illness, sickness, or death in the family, impassable roads, religious observances or attendance at health care facilities. Other absences are considered illegal or as truancy. Parents should be aware that taking their children out of school for vacation could be detrimental to their education. If a vacation is scheduled, parents should discuss with the teacher the educational experiences and activities that will be learned.

A note explaining absence must be sent to school with each child upon his or her return.

## **G. CLOTHING**

Dress should allow children freedom to engage in a wide range of activities. Please help your child select clothing and shoes that allow freedom of movement. All WHMS children have outdoor playtime and/or physical education every day and should dress accordingly. Children should wear clothing that is free of violent or vulgar images. Clothing must cover midriffs, chests, and undergarments. Shorts and skirts must be long enough to reach the tip of the student's fingers. Undergarments should not be visible. Spaghetti straps are not appropriate for students in the Upper Elementary and Middle School. Students arriving to school in skimpy or inappropriate outfits will be asked to return home to change.

Younger children should wear clothing that enables them to dress themselves easily. Rubber-soled sneakers, preferably with Velcro closures, are recommended for use as indoor and gym shoes and are to be left at the school. Flip flops, jelly shoes, high-heeled or platform shoes, long skirts, and long dresses are not permitted for safety reasons. [Middle School students are permitted to wear flip-flops.] Outerwear should be appropriate to the weather. When there is snow or mud, boots are required. When it is very cold, snow pants, mittens, and hats are required.

To avoid confusion and prevent the loss of clothing, all garments should be marked with the child's name. WHMS cannot be responsible for unmarked items. Check the "Lost & Found" for missing items. The Lost and Found clothing will be donated right before Thanksgiving, the February winter break and at the end of the school year in June.



## H. LUNCH (PRIMARY - MIDDLE SCHOOL)

### Waste-Free Lunch

All children need to bring a lunchbox every day. Your child's name should appear on the outside of their lunch box. Make sure your child has a nutritious lunch including fresh fruits and vegetables. A cloth napkin, an easily folded placemat, and necessary utensils ought to be included. Water, juice, or milk should be sent in thermoses or reusable water bottles. During warm weather, include a freezable icepack in your child's lunch. Microwaving is available to warm up lunch items but please limit them. Please send food in reusable containers. Students will be bringing home trash and any uneaten food in their lunch boxes. Please do not pack juice boxes, "gogurts", candy or soda. We discourage prepackaged foods (i.e. Lunchables, Hot Pockets, Chef Boyardee, etc.). Our goal is a waste-free and nutritious lunch.

The list below provides diverse ideas for healthy foods that can be prepared and packed for your child's lunch.

<p><b>Breads</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>bagel</li> <li>baguette</li> <li>bread sticks</li> <li>crackers</li> <li>English muffin</li> <li>focaccia</li> <li>lavash bread</li> <li>pita bread</li> <li>pizza bread</li> <li>rice cakes</li> <li>rolls</li> <li>sandwich bread</li> <li>tortillas</li> </ul>	<p><b>Spreads &amp; Condiments</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>almond butter</li> <li>apple butter</li> <li>avocado (mashed)</li> <li>banana (mashed)</li> <li>brie cheese</li> <li>cashew butter</li> <li>cream cheese (lowfat)</li> <li>goat cheese</li> <li>honey</li> <li>hummus</li> <li>jam (spreadable fruit)</li> <li>ketchup</li> <li>mayonnaise/mustard</li> <li>peanut butter</li> <li>pesto</li> <li>pizza or tomato sauce</li> <li>pumpkin butter</li> </ul>	<p><b>Fillings</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>carrots (shredded)</li> <li>cheese (lite/low-fat)</li> <li>chicken</li> <li>chicken salad</li> <li>egg salad</li> <li>hard boiled egg</li> <li>nitrite-free hot dogs</li> <li>lettuce</li> <li>shrimp salad</li> <li>sliced avocado</li> <li>sliced cucumber</li> <li>smoked salmon</li> <li>sprouts</li> <li>tofu</li> <li>tuna salad</li> </ul>	<p><b>Fruits (Dried and Fresh)</b></p> <table border="0"> <tbody> <tr> <td>apples</td> <td>raisins</td> </tr> <tr> <td>apricots</td> <td>grapefruit</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Asian pears</td> <td>grapes</td> </tr> <tr> <td>avocado</td> <td>kiwi</td> </tr> <tr> <td>bananas</td> <td>melon</td> </tr> <tr> <td>blueberries</td> <td>nectarines</td> </tr> <tr> <td>cherries</td> <td>orange sections</td> </tr> <tr> <td>cranberries (dried)</td> <td>peaches</td> </tr> <tr> <td>dates</td> <td>pineapple</td> </tr> <tr> <td>figs</td> <td>plums</td> </tr> <tr> <td>mango</td> <td>raspberries</td> </tr> <tr> <td>papaya</td> <td>strawberries</td> </tr> <tr> <td>pears</td> <td>tomatoes</td> </tr> <tr> <td>prunes</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		apples	raisins	apricots	grapefruit	Asian pears	grapes	avocado	kiwi	bananas	melon	blueberries	nectarines	cherries	orange sections	cranberries (dried)	peaches	dates	pineapple	figs	plums	mango	raspberries	papaya	strawberries	pears	tomatoes	prunes	
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<p><b>Vegetables</b></p> <table border="0"> <tbody> <tr> <td>asparagus</td> <td>lettuce</td> </tr> <tr> <td>beets</td> <td>mushrooms</td> </tr> <tr> <td>bell peppers</td> <td>seaweed (nori, wakame, hijiki)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>bok choy</td> <td>shelling peas</td> </tr> <tr> <td>broccoli</td> <td>snap peas</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Brussels sprouts</td> <td>soy beans (edamame)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>cabbage</td> <td>spinach</td> </tr> <tr> <td>carrots</td> <td>squash</td> </tr> <tr> <td>cauliflower</td> <td>sweet potatoes</td> </tr> <tr> <td>celery</td> <td>yams</td> </tr> <tr> <td>cucumbers</td> <td>zucchini</td> </tr> <tr> <td>eggplant</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>green beans</td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		asparagus	lettuce	beets	mushrooms	bell peppers	seaweed (nori, wakame, hijiki)	bok choy	shelling peas	broccoli	snap peas	Brussels sprouts	soy beans (edamame)	cabbage	spinach	carrots	squash	cauliflower	sweet potatoes	celery	yams	cucumbers	zucchini	eggplant		green beans		<p><b>Treats</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>apple crisp</li> <li>applesauce</li> <li>baked chips with salsa</li> <li>dried fruit</li> <li>fruit bar</li> <li>fruit leather</li> <li>granola</li> <li>homemade cookies</li> <li>popcorn</li> <li>pretzels</li> <li>trail mix</li> <li>yogurt with fruit</li> </ul>	<p><b>Other</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>baked tofu</li> <li>bean burrito</li> <li>cottage cheese with fruit</li> <li>garlic toast</li> <li>polenta with pizza sauce and cheese</li> </ul>	<p><b>Other Grains</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>pasta</li> <li>rice</li> <li>couscous</li> <li>oatmeal</li> <li>bulgar</li> </ul>		
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Source: Wastefreelunches.org

### Pizza Lunch

As a treat for children and parents, Friends of WHMS offers a pizza lunch, usually on Fridays. The pizza lunch sign-up form will be sent home at the beginning of the year for you to review. The proceeds of the pizza lunch program are used to benefit WHMS.

## I. NAP

Our three-year-olds rest in a specially designated area for at least a half-hour per day. Parents are requested to complete a form at the beginning of the year so that each child is allowed a nap adequate for their needs. Please provide a nap blanket and small pillow. The children sleep on mats. The blankets are sent home every other week to be washed.

Four- and five-year-olds are generally allocated twenty minutes of quiet time in the afternoon at which time they may listen to classical music, a read aloud book, or they can independently read or look at books.

## J. PERSONAL POSSESSIONS

Books or other educational materials that might be of interest to other children are welcome in the classroom. Be sure that your child's name is clearly marked on these items. Children are also encouraged to bring in items from nature to share with the class. Sharing these items with other children in the class will become a part of the classroom learning experience.

We do not allow children to bring toys, playthings and electronic devices including cell phones into the classroom. If a child brings non-educational playthings into the classroom, they will be stored in your child's bag until dismissal. We do allow children to bring a comfort object with them to nap time and that can either be kept in the school bag or kept with the nap blanket depending on whether the item will travel to and from school.

## K. HEALTH POLICY

### 1. Immunizations

The New York State Board of Health requires that students attending preschool, elementary school and middle school have the following inoculations or tests:

- a) Before 1 year: (3 doses) diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough (DPT), poliomyelitis, and hepB
- b) Before 30 months: hemophilus influenza type B
- c) Before 2 years: measles, mumps, and rubella (German measles) (MMR)
- d) Before entering Kindergarten or first grade: second MMR
- e) Before entering sixth grade: second MMR if not yet received
- f) A test for lead levels may be required.
- g) 2 doses of Varicella vaccine
- h) 1 dose Tdap for students entering 6th grade and above.



State law also requires that each student file with WHMS a current immunization record. Please return completed immunization forms to the school before the beginning of the year.

No record of immunization is required if the school is provided with one of the following three documents:

- a) Certificate of Religious Exemption, stating that adherence to the state law requirements conflicts with the student's religious tenets or practices
- b) Documentary medical evidence that the immunizations may be detrimental to the student's health
- c) Medical evidence of the student's existing immunity as substantiated by serological testing methods

### 2. Illness

WHMS must protect all children attending classes. Any ill child should be kept at home. Children should be kept at home for 24 hours after being sent home with a fever, diarrhea, or vomiting. They should not return to school the following day.

General Illness:

Children should be segregated from the other children and staff members for the following reasons:

1. Contagious or communicable disease
2. Fever 100.5 or higher
3. Cold or flu symptoms, e.g., sore throat, persistent cough, or sneezing
4. Rash or discharge from the nose or eyes
5. Child "not well enough to go outside"
6. Head lice

In general, children not well enough to go outside should stay home.

### 3. Medication Administration

New York State guidelines and WHMS policy agree that the administration of medication is the ultimate responsibility of the parent and not the staff. A parent may come to school to administer medication at any time. Children are sometimes permitted to administer their own medications.

WHMS will cooperate with the family and the physician in overseeing self-administration of medication during school hours if the following requirements are met:

- a. WHMS is provided with a written statement from the physician indicating the name of the medication, the times and the amount of each dose, the side effects, and the time period within which the medication is to be taken in school.
- b. WHMS receives a written request from the parents for children to self administer the medication as prescribed. (There is a WHMS form for this purpose.)
- c. The medication must be properly labeled and delivered to WHMS by an adult. All medications will be stored in the office and not with the child, unless it is an emergency response medication as outlined below. When WHMS has assumed the responsibility of overseeing self-administering of oral medication, it will be overseen by the Office Manager or another designated staff member. A record of the medication, time given, and dosage will be recorded. In the event any side effects are noted, parents will be notified. Children are able to self-administer medication if they can recognize the medication and know how much they are to take and what it is for and what happens if they do not take it.

Students must have a completed self-medication release form if they are keeping emergency response medication with them or in their locker, such as an Epi-Pen or inhaler. Children who are not able to self-medicate will not be given any medication at school.

WHMS will not administer medication except Epipen. Parents may come to the school to administer injectable medication at any time. If your child might require the use of Epipen, please contact the office. Students with Epipens must have an allergy action plan filled out and on file in the office.

### 4. Allergies and Asthma

Parents are directed to fill out the emergency information card presented with other enrollment documents at the start of each new school year. This form must be returned to school prior to the first day of class. If allergies are life-threatening or severe, parents must fill out an Allergy Action Plan. (See WHMS website or front office for a copy of the plan.)

Due to peanut and nut allergies, do not bring any food to share that contains nuts or peanuts (e.g., birthday treats, holiday parties, etc.) Our peanut policy focuses attention on peanuts because they present a special problem: They are the most common culprits in severe food allergies, and they contain an oily substance. Peanut oil residue is easily spread from hand to hand, and around school surfaces, lunch tables, and educational materials.

This policy is designed to minimize the risk of severe allergic reactions, to prepare faculty and staff to deal with allergy emergencies, and to minimize anxiety on the part of all students, faculty, and staff around the issue of food allergies. Specific measures include:

- a) No peanut butter or peanut products are knowingly served by the school.
- b) Foods containing peanut products must be labeled on the outside as having peanut products and the classroom teacher must be notified in writing. Areas of the school will be designated as “peanut-free.”
- c) Children are instructed not to share food.
- d) Hand washing before and after meals and snacks is part of the daily routine
- e) Tables will be washed after snacks and meals. This is the teachers’ responsibility in classrooms or any other schoolroom where food is eaten.
- f) Parents of children with life-threatening allergies must provide the school with a written medical treatment protocol for their child, as well as any medication prescribed by the doctor. Parents of children with severe allergies are made aware of policies and protocols. A copy of our Allergy Action plan is available in the front office, and is on our website: <http://www.woodlandhill.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/01/Food-Allergy-Action-Plan.pdf>

A trained staff member will educate and train faculty and staff at the beginning of each school year about the recognition and emergency treatment of severe food allergies, including specific information about how to administer the Epipen. The school nurse is part of a core team that coordinates the overall allergy prevention and treatment program.

This food allergy policy does not guarantee that a student will never experience an allergy-related event at school. We believe, however, that these measures significantly decrease the risk to allergic children, and that they reflect the strong value that our school places on respect for individual differences.

### 5. Physical Examination

Children entering Kindergarten, 2nd, 4th and 7th grade must have a physical examination within one year prior to the start of school. The school district will provide an exam if necessary, but a private doctor examination is preferred.

## 6. Head Lice

Head lice is a common problem among school age children and prevalent in schools. Head Lice, or pediculosis is an infestation with the human head-and-body louse, *Pediculus Humanus*. Woodland Hill Montessori School recognizes how difficult it can be to combat lice. In order to minimize the spread of lice at school, we are asking parents to partner with us in performing home checks and communicating cases of lice to the School Nurse, Head of School, or Office Manager. This will help ensure that students who have lice are treated effectively and the risk of lice spreading is reduced. WHMS will educate students and families on lice prevention and treatment several times during the school year with printed and digital information. We ask families to reinforce education at home and encourage children not to share brushes, combs, hair accessories, helmets or hats in order to reduce the potential spread of lice.

To minimize exposure, WHMS has a no-nit policy. We require students to be free of lice and nits prior to returning to school. When WHMS is notified that there are lice in the school we will notify families, with students in the same classroom, of the classroom where lice was found. Additionally, all families will be notified any time a case of lice is reported, as to promote school-wide home screenings.

The school nurse will screen the classrooms for lice as necessary. If there is an outbreak that requires more help than the school nurse can provide, an outside lice removal company will be brought in to screen. Classroom screenings will take place whenever a student has an active case of head lice. When students are sent home, or are home due to head lice, they will need to be screened by the School Nurse, Head of School, or Office Manager prior to returning to the classroom. If the student was treated by a lice removal company, a clearance letter from them will suffice. If lice or nits are found upon rescreening, the student will return home for further delousing. Students will be re-examined within 10-14 days to ensure they have remained lice free.

### **The following procedure should be followed if live lice or nits are discovered on a child's head:**

- Contact the School Nurse, Head of School, or Office Manager via email or phone.
- If a student is found to have a case of live lice or nits while at school, the student will be sent home, and is asked not to return until after treatment and clearance by either a lice removal agency or the School Nurse, Head of School, or Office Manager.
- Select a process of getting rid of the lice, a home treatment or outside agency may be used.
- Once a case of lice is reported to the school, the classroom families will be notified that a case of lice was found in the student's classroom. Additionally, the entire school will be notified to promote school-wide home screenings. The classroom where the child attends will be screened by the nurse during the school day.
- Once treatment is completed, please schedule a time for the following school day to be re-examined by the School Nurse, Head of School, or Office Manager, or provide a note from a lice agency or physician stating the child is lice-free, prior to the child returning to class.
- The child will be rescreened within 10-14 days to ensure they have remained lice free.
- For more information on identifying and treating lice please refer to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website: <http://www.cdc.gov/parasites/lice/head/index.html>

## L. BUILDING SAFETY PROCEDURES

A Fire Safety inspection is done on a yearly basis. WHMS conducts fire drills regularly throughout the year. WHMS follows safety and emergency plans that are reviewed on an annual or as needed basis. During the day, the front and back doors are locked (door can be opened from the inside). There is a doorbell on the front and back entrances, but during the school day everyone is asked to use the front door. Before school, the back door is open from 7:30-8:30 am. After school until 6 pm, parents may use access code, or the intercom/buzzer to come in. Entrances are monitored by security cameras.

## M. GENERAL EMERGENCIES

In the event that circumstances arise which would render the school building unusable, WHMS will escort children to the Branson Manor Senior Apartments at 3 Grandview Drive. If evacuation in winter occurs, WHMS has an agreement with Yankee Trails that they will provide a bus for temporary shelter until the school can be re-entered. WHMS also has emergency blankets available to provide protection. WHMS will then notify parents of the situation. A cell phone, and emergency cards will be kept at all times. Please be assured that faculty will remain with the children.

## N. VISITORS

We welcome and encourage visits to the school from parents, outside teachers, prospective families, and the larger community. Please arrange the visit with the Director of Admissions. When you visit the school, please sign in at the office. For safety reasons, we ask that you wear a visitor name tag to indicate that you are a visitor at the school.

## O. “INFANT TO WORK” PROGRAM

Beginning in the 1998-1999 school year, WHMS/MSA has instituted an “Infant to Work” Program, pursuant to which, under certain circumstances, an elementary teacher may bring an infant less than 26 weeks of age to school with the teacher on a daily basis. In order to be eligible to participate in the program, the new parent must be a full-time Montessori-certified Middle School or Elementary teacher and the classroom in which the new parent teaches must have at least one other teacher at a ratio equal to or higher than 1:20. The program has detailed general guidelines that govern participation in the program, how the infant is to be cared for at WHMS, and how problems that may arise are to be handled. An eligible teacher desiring to participate in the program must develop an Individual Plan, which must be approved by the Head of School prior to bringing the infant to WHMS. The program guidelines are available in the main office.



## VI. PRIMARY PROGRAM

### A. CURRICULUM

Profound respect for each child characterizes the three- to six-year-old Primary program. This program fosters growth in independence and problem solving; the development of order, concentration, and coordination; the nurturing of oral communication skills; and the stimulation of the child’s joy in discovery learning.

Practical Life is the area of development in which the child creates, controls, changes, or cares for his physical environment and his physical well-being. Practical life is the most basic and essential area of Montessori development. There are three goals of practical life that make it a foundation of the child’s future life as a whole:

1. Through these activities the child grows to respect and love the physical work around him, both natural and manmade.
2. The child develops techniques and skills that are basic to other areas of development.
3. The child unites his growing body, developing intelligence, and will.

The success of our work depends upon this foundation. The child chooses what he will do. The child acts upon his decision with intelligence. The child’s use of his body within the environment is an act of work. The work process, freely chosen, done with self-discipline, using physical skills in an intelligent way, is the child’s daily product. The result is a free child, creating through his work a free adult.

Sensorial exercises are done with an extensive set of materials, each of which isolates one sensorial property and expands upon it: e.g., shape, weight, texture, or pitch is matched, graded, or contrasted. The sensorial work allows the child to develop his sensory awareness and organize his perceptions to form concepts and abstractions. The purpose of this work is threefold:

1. The satisfaction of the work with the materials
2. The ability to perceive one’s environment with sensitivity and intelligence
3. The appreciation of the natural order that intelligent awareness cultivates in one’s life

Cognitive work in math and language develops from concrete sensorial materials that the child manipulates, forming the foundation for the use of symbols. The child will first have the experience before he or she uses the symbols that represent it. With the symbols, the child begins to communicate what he or she knows and does. Thus, a child’s school life is not divorced from reality and does not become something apart from life, but rather is a natural development of his personal being.

Arithmetic, geography, reading and writing, grammar and syntax, music, art, science, algebra, and geometry are developed in gradual stages from the concrete sensorial to the abstract conceptual through sequential materials and exercises and repetition of these exercises. Each child works from his own choice at his own pace, successfully completing self-correcting materials.

### B. CLOTHING AND SUPPLIES

Please send your child to school in comfortable clothes. T-shirts and sweatshirts with the WHMS logo are available through Lands End, but are not required.

Each Primary child is asked to bring “indoor shoes” to class on the first day of Phase-in. Velcro sneakers are a good choice and will be used for gym class as well as for everyday indoor shoes. These shoes will remain in your child’s cubby.

Each Primary child must bring in two changes of underwear and socks labeled with the child’s name. These clothes will be used if a change of clothes is needed. Please send them to school in a labeled zip-top plastic bag. If this clothing is used, please send back replacements the next day.

Each child, Lower Elementary and younger, is required to carry an open top bag at least nine inches by twelve inches in dimension. The open top bags facilitate the delivery of written communications and your child’s work. Bags with the school logo are available for purchase through Lands End.

## C. SNACK AND FLOWERS

During the course of the day your children get hungry, frequently before lunchtime. Accordingly we ask each family to supply snack for an entire week for your child’s class. As your week approaches, we will send home a basket with a note that specifies exactly which foods will be needed. These foods are often prepared and consumed as Practical Life lessons.

We also ask each family to supply fresh cut flowers to add to the beauty of each environment and to permit the children to enjoy the process of flower arranging. It is not necessary to purchase flowers if you have flowers in your yard available to you. Each family will be requested to provide flowers and snack no more than three times per year.

## D. “SPECIALS” CLASSES

### The Role of Specials in a Montessori Classroom

Each experience the child has with art, music, languages, and physical movement helps to develop the whole child. Early exposure to the arts will give children the tools necessary to enjoy art, music, and movement as a part of their daily lives. A latent talent for the arts exists inside of us all. It is the Specialists’ job to spark children’s interest, bring out their talent, and help them reach their potential. The study of another language encourages children to be part of a global community, while at the same time giving them a valuable skill.

The following Specials classes will be offered to Primary children:

- 1. Physical Education:** We offer our Primary children opportunities for gross movement both outside and inside the classroom. In addition, the children have developmentally appropriate physical education classes twice a week. Please ensure that your child has sneakers in school on these days.
- 2. Spanish:** The Spanish program follows a Montessori curriculum and is staffed by a native Spanish teacher who is Montessori certified. The program focuses on oral comprehension, vocabulary, and basic pronunciation skills taught through games, songs and activities.
- 3. Art:** Process over product, the cultivation of art appreciation, and the knowledge of art history are the elements found in our daily art program.
- 4. Movement:** The structure of class is composed of four goals: Encouraging Healthy Bodies; Challenging Personal Best; Inspiring Creativity, Imagination, and Play; and Exploring Collaboration. These four goals are the roots through which children explore dance using Laban Movement Vocabulary. Movement is a way for children to experience and describe movement using space, time, effort, and body concepts. The class inspires learning, creativity, collaboration, imagination, and play, and combines dance, yoga, brain gym, circus arts, tumbling, mindfulness, and physical education.
- 5. Music:** This program of singing and movement is offered to the Primary children. The emphasis is on the personal enjoyment one can feel while singing and performing, as well as the appreciation of music for its own value. There are two music performances each year.

## POSITIVE APPROACHES TO DISCIPLINE IN THE PRIMARY

The development of inner discipline in a child is always the goal at WHMS. Self-discipline is fostered in many ways. The classroom environment is organized in an orderly and logical manner. Children choose work that they are capable of doing and are free to use it as long as they wish without interference from others. This approach alleviates many problems of discipline that might arise in another kind of environment. In addition, the mixed-age group gives the younger children an opportunity to emulate the more mature behavior of the older children.

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



Misbehaviors in the Primary program are handled with the following positive responses:

- Opportunities are provided for the child to express and define his or her feelings. The teacher should always engage in active listening, which is modeled by the teacher to the child.
- The teacher sets the tone for bringing the child into harmony by avoiding harsh words and sudden reprimands. A child who has misbehaved may be requested to work for a while near the teacher.
- The child will be gently redirected by the teacher toward work which will engage the child's interest.
- The child will be assigned to a temporary seat.
- The child repairs minor damage to the environment.
- Careful physical restraint (bear hug) is permitted when a child appears out of control. Single-handed grips usually evoke a defensive, if not destructive, response.
- The child's misbehavior will be discussed with the Head of School.
- The child's parents will be contacted by phone or in person in the case of repeated misbehavior or of a single, serious incident.

Every effort will be made to help children have a successful experience at WHMS. In the case of continual misbehavior that requires on-going intervention, the following steps may be used:

- Recommendation or requirement of counseling or other diagnostic evaluations.
- The child will be referred to the child study team for recommendations.
- The child will be referred to the school counselor for counseling sessions.
- The child may be suspended.
- The family may have to find other placement for the child.

## VII. ELEMENTARY PROGRAM

### A. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE ELEMENTARY PROGRAM

The basic Montessori philosophy continues with an increase in the growth of independence and problem solving. It encourages a mature sense of justice and fairness; reinforces oral communication and written communication; provides for repetitive experiences in all academic skills; fosters development of imagination and creativity; and provides the impetus for meeting the requirements of New York state as well as those of the Montessori curriculum. The basic components of a Montessori Elementary program are:

- 1. Individualized Instruction** Learning starts with the child. The Montessori teacher observes the child's interests and abilities and creates an environment in which these can flourish. An integral part of the Montessori curriculum is that the teacher must respect and follow the child. The teacher's ability to be effective in this role is enhanced by the extended three-year relationship.
- 2. The Prepared Environment** In a Montessori classroom, the children are surrounded by concrete materials that enhance and explain what they are studying. In effect, the curriculum is always on display and the children are free to explore their interests in depth. The teachers' carefully prepared lessons facilitate the child's use of the materials.
- 3. Multi-Age Groupings** Every child works at his or her own level. Younger children learn through the observation of older children. Older children reinforce their own learning by helping younger children. Older children also have opportunities to develop leadership skills while serving as role models for the younger children. Cooperation and social responsibility are encouraged and a strong community develops.
- 4. Integrated Curriculum** The Montessori Elementary curriculum expands the sense of order that was nourished in the Primary environment to study the order of the Universe. Life is everywhere interrelated. Timelines are used to make connections between disciplines. The Montessori interdisciplinary approach to elementary education permits children to view the world around them with a continued sense of wonder.



Testing: In the Lower Elementary, the students are given the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills, a standardized test in May. In the Upper Elementary the ELA test is administered to the fourth- and sixth-year students, the Math is given to fifth- and sixth-year students and the Science tests are given to the fourth-year. The New York State tests are given throughout the year, according to the New York State Education guidelines. These tests provide information to parents and teachers about student learning.

## B. "SPECIALS" CLASSES

### The Role of Specials in a Montessori Classroom

Each experience the child has with art, music, languages, and physical movement helps to develop the whole child. Early exposure to the arts will give children the tools necessary to enjoy art, music, and movement as a part of their daily lives. A latent talent for the arts exists inside of us all. It is the Specialists' job to spark children's interest, bring out their talent, and help them reach their potential. The study of another language encourages children to be part of a global community, while at the same time giving them a valuable skill.

The following special classes will be offered to Elementary students:

- 1. Music:** The Elementary children are taught by a music specialist; they participate in many aspects of music appreciation from learning to read music to playing songs on the recorder. The children also take part in performance sessions to reinforce a natural love of rhythm. There are two performances each year.
- 2. Art:** The art program helps students develop specific art skills as well as learn about artists and art movements. Process over product, the cultivation of art appreciation, and knowledge of art history are the elements of our art program. In addition to art as a part of the classroom curriculum, an additional art class is given a specialized art instructor.
- 3. Physical Education:** The children participate and learn about a variety of games and activities to help develop a variety of physical skills. Examples of the rotating physical education classes include: dancing, gymnastics, aerobics, soccer, basketball, and volleyball. Two physical education classes per week are taught by a specialized physical education instructor.
- 4. Spanish:** The program follows a Montessori curriculum and is staffed by a language specialist. The twice-weekly program focuses on oral comprehension, vocabulary acquisition, and cultural appreciation.

As part of our program in the Upper Elementary and Middle School, students will be enhancing their experience by selecting a specialty music or art option. Students will have the choice of classes that may include a computer design class, chorus, art club, gymnastics team, chamber ensemble, study skills, or school band.



## C. TRANSITION

The Elementary environment has much that is familiar to children who have attended the Montessori Primary program. The child who has mastered the primary environment now begins again as the youngest, meeting new peers, and becoming familiar with new routines and expectations. While first-year students are excited about these challenges, there may also be an adjustment period. Feel free to discuss specific issues with your teacher. It is normal for your child to feel tired in the afternoon at first, but he or she should adjust quickly.

In the Upper Elementary class, students are faced with new freedom and with a corresponding increase in responsibility. The 9- to 12-year-old needs changes as he or she develops new mental, emotional, and social skills. As children develop, so does the responsibility each has for their work and personal belongings.

## D. CLOTHING AND SUPPLIES

Your child should bring "indoor shoes" to class. Sneakers are recommended, since they are needed for gym as well. These shoes remain at school in your child's cubby. Flip-flops, high-heeled or platform shoes, long skirts and long dresses are not permitted for safety reasons.

Please allow your child to choose comfortable play clothes for school. Sweatshirts and pants are very practical. T-shirts and sweatshirts with the WHMS logo are available through Land's End, but are not required.



Each child in the Lower Elementary is required to carry an open top bag at least nine inches by twelve inches in dimension. PLEASE DO NOT SEND YOUR LOWER ELEMENTARY CHILD TO SCHOOL WITH A BACKPACK. The open top bags facilitate the delivery of written communications and your child's work. The "Montessori bags" are available for purchase at Land's End. Students in the Upper Elementary and Middle School may bring backpacks.

Children may not bring distracting materials like huge loose-leaf binders, pens with multiple colors, or fashion pencils and erasers.

## F. CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND DISCIPLINE POLICY

The students are introduced to the skills of active listening and conflict resolution, as an important part of Montessori grace and courtesy lessons. Basic skills are demonstrated and examples practiced that give students appropriate choices in social situations that require: taking turns; reacting to problem situations; understanding another's point of view; communicating that understanding clearly; stating one's feelings and needs; creating win-win solutions to conflicting needs; and acting as a third party mediator for others with conflicting needs. Woodland Hill teachers received ongoing professional development in peaceful conflict resolution and anti-bullying advocacy. We make every effort to prevent bullying and to encourage students to talk openly about issues, conflicts and their feelings.

### WHMS Ground Rules

We treat ourselves, each other, and the environment with care and respect.

We maintain a quiet, calm atmosphere at our school.

We resolve our problems through talking, listening, and understanding.

### FREEDOM AND RESPONSIBILITY: DISCIPLINE IN THE ELEMENTARY

Each student at WHMS is expected to act honestly and courteously, to show respect for the rights, feelings, and opinions of others, and to conduct himself in an appropriate manner. Our students are expected to display the good judgment, behavior, and a positive attitude that is the cornerstone of constructive relationships.

All students are expected to behave in age-appropriate ways. All students must be sensitive to the presence and needs of different age groups. If appropriate behaviors cannot be settled within the classroom, then the Head of School will be involved and parents will be called for a conference.

Day-to-day rules are needed in any community to set identifiable standards and to provide consistency so that the community's members are treated fairly. Our aim in personal discipline, as in academic discipline, is to help our students understand that their choices in behavior have consequences for which they will be held responsible. Therefore, school discipline issues are generally handled by the child, his peers, and the classroom teacher.

The following behaviors are considered to be serious and not within the usual parameters of acceptable classroom behavior:

- Taking any action which may be judged prejudicial to the school, whether at school or when acting as a representative of the school.
- Abusing, harassing, deliberately intimidating or physically harming another person or displaying any form of racial, ethnic, sexual, or religious prejudice.
- Lapses in integrity, such as lying, or showing disrespect towards another's work or taking credit for the work of others.
- Refusing by words or actions to work to one's ability.
- Stealing or vandalizing.

If a child in the Elementary or Middle School program engages in any of the above behaviors, the teacher may implement:

- The teacher should always engage in active listening, which is modeled by the teacher to the child.
- The teacher sets the tone for bringing the child into harmony by avoiding harsh words and sudden reprimands. A child who has misbehaved may be requested to work for a while near the teacher.
- The child will be gently redirected by the teacher toward work which will engage the child's interest.
- The child will be assigned to a temporary seat.
- The child repairs minor damage to the environment.





- The child may be suspended.
- The family may have to find other placement for the child.
- Head of School will speak to the child.
- Teacher calls the parent to discuss the situation or a parent-teacher conference is arranged to collaborate on a strategy to help the child.
- Placing an account of the incident in the student's file- in cases of bullying, a bullying report will be filed.
- Putting the child on probation for a period of time commensurate with the severity of the offense. The probation may include suspension from special classes, from outside play, or from lunch with classmates.
- Suspending the child from school for a period of time commensurate with the severity of the offense.
- Expelling the child.

- Careful physical restraint (bear hug) is permitted when a child appears out of control. Single-handed grips usually evoke a defensive if not destructive response.
- The child's misbehavior will be discussed with the Head of School and/or child will speak to Head of School.
- The child's parents will be contacted by phone or in person in the case of repeated misbehavior or of a single, serious incident.

Every effort will be made to help children have a successful experience at WHMS. In the case of continual misbehavior that requires on-going intervention, the following steps may be used:

- Recommendation or requirement of counseling or other diagnostic evaluations.
- The child will be referred to the child study team for recommendations.
- The child will be referred to the school counselor for counseling sessions.

## **BULLYING**

Woodland Hill takes bullying very seriously. If you feel that your child is being bullied or you are concerned about any bullying happening at WHMS, please talk to your child's teacher or the Head of School. If you do not feel comfortable about talking to someone, please fill out a Bullying Incident Report (Appendix D, page 52) and the Head of School will take action to make sure steps are taken to stop the bullying from occurring.

## **BEHAVIOR REPORTS**

Unusual behavior or unresolved conflicts during recess or other times are to be reported to the child's Head Teacher for further action, in accordance with the WHMS discipline policy described above. Parents whose children attend half day will be informed of behavior issues upon pick-up. Elementary and Middle School students may also report incidents. Any chronic, extreme, or especially unusual behaviors should be reported to Head of School by the classroom Head teacher. For serious behavior incidents that require immediate assistance, the teacher will fill out an incident report detailing the circumstances of the incident. A copy of the incident report will be given to each of the child's parents who were involved in the incident, as well as to the Head of School and the classroom teacher.

## **G. UPPER ELEMENTARY CLASS TRIP**

Although all the Elementary students attend many functions and events outside the school, the Upper Elementary students help to plan and organize an extended field trip. In the Upper Elementary, overnight trips have included trips to Nature's Classroom and similar science camp experiences.

## **H. COMMUNITY SERVICE**

The Elementary and Middle School plan community service projects throughout the year, which may include, for example, working with the elderly at the Eddy Adult Day Care Center, picking vegetables for the food pantry, cleaning up litter around the school, and helping to organize clothing at ConcernsU. The Upper Elementary and Middle School children will also provide a service of their choice to the Toddler and Primary children.

## VIII. MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAM

### A. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE MIDDLE SCHOOL PROGRAM

Dr. Maria Montessori observed students of all ages and envisioned the ideal environments for each of the Four Planes of Human Development. Her vision of educational reform was to have educators objectively observe the natural needs of students and create an environment ideal for their development.

The Third Plane, from ages 12 to 18, was revealed as the age that children explore and discover their place in the adult world. It is an emotionally sensitive age, an age of uncertainty and a time to discover one's strengths and weaknesses. Dr. Montessori saw adolescence as typified by being in a "state of expectation" and having specific characteristics:

- Need to strengthen self-confidence
- Sensitivity to rudeness and humiliation
- Self-Consciousness
- Self-Awareness
- Exploration of new roles and abilities as an adult
- Desire to perform useful, productive, and creative work
- Desire for adult activities
- Desire for increased self-sufficiency
- Need for large muscle activity
- Self-exploration in conjunction with exploring society
- Exploration of personal ethics, of physical and mental ability, and usefulness to society
- Need for justice and personal dignity



### B. MIDDLE SCHOOL CURRICULUM

The following curriculum areas will be a part of the WHMS middle school:

**Social sciences, science, and geography:** The child integrates history utilizing themes from earlier studies in natural and cultural history, including interdependency, evolution, life cycles, matter and energy, behavior and cultural mental health, physical health, agriculture, government, manufacturing, communication, world systems, earth preservation, and so on, in the context of social responsibility and governance. Primary readings from each historical period are emphasized. Special attention is given to American History during Middle School.

**Language arts:** The child develops confidence in self-expression utilizing the seminar, oral presentation, debates, drama, video, photography, essays, playwriting, poetry, and short stories; explores related accounts of historical and philosophical material through literature utilizing components of style, genre, characterization, and interpretation. Group discussions are important as a means for encouraging students to compare and contrast the thoughts expressed by others and to more critically examine their own thoughts.

**Spanish/Latin:** Spanish and Latin are both taught to Middle School students. A heavy emphasis is placed on conversation, grammar, and verb conjugation. Students learn about the cultures of Spanish-speaking countries. Activities include writing skits, small group conversations, and presentations to each other.

**Mathematics:** The child uses higher-order thinking skills to solve problems in relation to a variety of challenges, from practical money transactions to algebraic relationships; explores in-depth numbers, properties, simple equations, higher measurement, computer calculation and graphics, geometric proofs, and algebraic equations.

#### Math Acceleration Policy

Students who are accelerated in math will be given a more challenging curriculum that moves more rapidly. In the Lower and Upper Elementary this is facilitated by small group and individual lessons and students moving at their own pace. In Middle School, students are divided into groups and taught in accordance with Regents expectations. In public school, students are placed into math classes based on their previous math classification. We want to ensure that all students are placed appropriately, whether in public or independent high school settings.

Note: The textbooks listed are used as resources and may change.

On Grade Level: 7th and 8th grade would take a Pre-Algebra program preparing them to enter Algebra in 9th grade.

**Single Acceleration:** Students who are more advanced in math in Upper Elementary will have an accelerated curriculum in 7th grade. This is a Pre-Algebra program (text Holt Pre-Algebra). In 8th grade students would take Algebra (Holt- McDougal) They will be eligible to take the Algebra regents at the end of the 8th grade year. Students who successfully complete this program would be eligible to begin Geometry in 9th grade.

**Double Acceleration:** This is rare, and only for the truly talented and self-motivated student. In 6th grade students will complete Pre-Algebra (text Holt Pre-Algebra) in 7th grade they will take Algebra (text Holt Algebra) and in 8th grade, Geometry. The Geometry program is online with a tutor and some classroom teacher support. Students are eligible to take the Algebra Regents Exam in 7th grade and the Geometry Regents Exam in 8th grade. Students who successfully complete this program would be eligible to begin Algebra 2/Trigonometry.

A study team made up of teachers and Head of School determine who is eligible to advance is based on:

1. Standardized test scores reflecting 95% or higher.
2. Student demonstrates independence, motivation and desire to work in an independent environment.
3. Teacher recommendation.
4. Parent support and understanding of independent nature of program.

Talented math students may also opt to remain in the single accelerated class, and this is often optimal because there is the opportunity for extension, deeper exploration and collaboration.

**Fine arts:** The child utilizes a discipline-based arts education plan which presents individual artistic areas of painting, acting, singing, composing, photography, dance, and sculpture, and includes a general education for aesthetic literacy which integrates the arts with other academic endeavors.

**Service Programs and Practical Life:** Working in a soup kitchen, farming as a community venture, and apprenticeships or mentorship in the workplace are part of an advancing “going out” that gives the adolescent a combined vocational and liberal arts curriculum with a particular emphasis on economic enterprise. Students can also be involved with fundraising, organizing a trip, building shelves or materials for the school, or any number of activities to enrich the students’ educational journey.



## C. UNIQUE ASPECTS OF MONTESSORI MIDDLE SCHOOL

- **Multi-aged groupings:** Students work together, role modeling, teaching, and learning from each other. Children can learn at their own pace, not necessarily according to age, but also to aptitude and motivation.
- **Individual attention:** Teacher-to-child ratio is conducive to individual attention.
- Education and enjoyment of the global community, peace education, and embracing diversity.
- **Community service:** Students have several projects in community service throughout the year, which may include food service to soup kitchens, reading to the vision-impaired, visiting and interacting with the elderly, and community beautification projects.
- **Peer mediation:** Students are trained to be mediators, to help others solve problems or conflicts in a peaceful and productive way.
- **Real life experience:** These may include gardening, cooking, and woodshop. Children are also taught financial skills such as running a store, balancing a checkbook, and balancing and tracking financial records.
- Integrated curriculum with large blocks of time for learning interdisciplinary topics.
- **Extensive going-out experiences:** Students will take part in the planning the trips and outside experiences. WHMS offers at least one extended trip per year, most recently to Boston and Puerto Rico.

## D. ASSESSMENT

Assessment is based on the three primary goals of all Montessori classroom work:

1. To help children learn to work independently and in a manner that contributes to the classroom community;
2. To help the students form a conceptual framework that will enable them to organize and analyze all their learning experiences; and
3. To stimulate the ability of students to think abstractly and critically about the world.

**Assessment in the Montessori classroom is performance-based and takes many forms:**

- **Self-assessment:** Children are continuously required to assess their own goals and their progress through individual conferencing between teacher and child. The self-correcting nature of most of the Montessori materials aids students in the process of self-assessment.

- **Portfolios:** Children collect selected work into portfolios and record lessons in journals. These are periodically reviewed by teacher, child and parents.
- **Peer teaching:** Children who have mastered a unit of study are continually encouraged to demonstrate that mastery as they teach what they have learned to other students or check the work of younger classmates.
- **Peer review:** At the end of units of study, children create many kinds of projects. These are shared with the class and reviewed by peers.
- **Teacher Assessment:** The teacher observes student's progress and keeps daily anecdotal records. Records are kept of lessons given, practiced, and mastered. The teacher also records homework assignments and tests students on some material. Students are given a percentile score on their performance about every six weeks as per the calendar.
- **Tests:** WHMS students are given benchmark assessments in Reading/Language Arts and Math. Students also take all New York State tests. Students in grades 7 and 8 take the NYS tests, and have the option of taking the Regents tests in science and math.
- **Parent Conferences:** Conferencing among teacher, child, and parents is an integral part of the assessment process.

## E. COMPUTER AND INTERNET USE

Woodland Hill Montessori School is pleased to offer access to the Internet in elementary and middle school programs. Students using school-provided Internet access must demonstrate responsible behavior online just as they do in a classroom or other area of the school. The same general rules for behavior and communications apply.

The purpose of school-provided Internet access is to facilitate communications in support of research and education. To remain eligible as users, students must act in a manner consistent with the educational objectives of teachers.

School access to the Internet is a privilege, not a right, and it entails responsibility. The school will take every reasonable precaution to ensure that a student will not access objectionable materials. Users are instructed to notify a teacher if they accidentally access something objectionable from a school computer and should do so immediately. Users are instructed that they should not provide personal information or agree to meet with strangers that they meet on the Internet. Users should notify a teacher if someone on the Internet requests personal information or asks to meet with them. Users should not expect that files stored on school-based computers are private. Electronic messages and files stored on school-based computers may be treated like school lockers. Administrators and faculty may review files and messages at any time to maintain system integrity and ensure that users are acting responsibly.

Lower Elementary teachers will carefully monitor computer use of students, letting them know to how to use the computer appropriately.

Students will each sign an agreement of the computer rules. See Appendix E.



## IX. AUXILIARY PROGRAMS

### A. SCHOOL CARE

The purpose of the school care program is to provide safe and nurturing care for WHMS students before and after school while school is in session. In the school care program your child may participate in planned activities or use the unstructured time to play in a relaxed environment. Please provide extra fruit or another healthy snack, packaged and labeled separately. The WHMS school care program incorporates the Montessori philosophy into your child's after-school activities. School care is not available for Toddlers.

#### Admission

The school care program is open to all children enrolled in WHMS Primary program and older on a space available basis. The school care contract is sent home with the general enrollment contracts. Choices for number of days per week are listed, along with the c

urrent rates. If you sign up for school care, indicate the number of days your child will attend, with a minimum of three days per week. These days cannot be transferred or changed to other days of the week. The schedule is filled on a first-come first-serve basis. If a particular day is full, you will be contacted to specify another day.

For safety reasons, drop-in care is offered only when space is available. Drop-in care is intended to provide help for parents who find themselves unexpectedly unable to pick up their children. Please call the school as soon as the need arises.

Children who have not been picked up by 3 p.m. will be placed in the school care program. The classroom teacher will report the child's placement in school care to the office. Drop-in care will be billed by the business office.

### **School care Pick-Up**

Parents should use the rear entrance and check in with the school care coordinator to pick up their children. Parents are advised to read the notice on that door to determine the location of the children at the time of pick-up. (For details, see Dismissal, Section V.) All children in the school care program must be signed OUT by a parent or designated caregiver. Parents who pick up their children after 6 p.m. will be billed by the school at a rate of \$25 per child, per 15 minutes after 6 p.m.

## **B. EXTRACURRICULAR PROGRAMS**

Extracurricular programs are offered on a space available basis to our student body in the Primary program and older. The classes are divided into Primary and Elementary/MS groups. These classes assist parents by providing for the pursuit of special interests by the children while eliminating the additional chauffeuring.

The special lessons vary depending upon interest and availability but may include: art, dance, drama, gymnastics, tennis, science club, ski club, Spanish club, and music. A registration form will be e-mailed each session for sign-up for the following session. Information about the classes is also available on our website.

## **C. ENRICHMENT**

The purpose of the Enrichment program is to provide quality child care for WHMS students on those days when classes are not in session. The Enrichment program is not available for Toddlers. Enrichment provides full child care on most school holidays. Payment must be made at the time of registration. There are no refunds for Enrichment days. A three-business day cancellation notice is required for you to receive a credit (\$5 cancellation fee will apply.) In the unlikely case of low enrollment, specific Enrichment Days may be cancelled or the times modified. Parents will receive as much advance notice as possible if the day is cancelled, and will receive a full refund. The hours of the Enrichment program are from 7:30 a.m. – 6 p.m. Please refer to "School Policies" (Section V) for Arrival and Dismissal procedures. All students in the Enrichment program must be signed IN and OUT by a parent or designated caregiver.

## **X. SPECIAL EVENTS AND PROGRAMS**

### **A. FIELD TRIPS AND SPECIAL GUESTS**

Part of the educational focus at WHMS is to plan educationally sound, interesting field trips and to invite lecturers and performers to our school.

#### **Special Guests**

During the course of the year, WHMS teachers will schedule guest visits to help the children to learn about a variety of topics, usually tied to what the children are studying. If you can participate or know of anyone who would be a good special guest (artist, computer expert, dentist, doctor, foreign visitor, horticulturist, musician, police officer, ornithologist, or anyone with an interesting profession or hobby to share), please let us know so that we can schedule a visit. Our parents are often wonderful guests as well.



## Going Out

Going Out, or field trips, offer enrichment opportunities beyond the classroom setting. Some field trips include the entire school; others include only one class or age group. Field trips allow children to see, hear, and experience what we cannot offer within the classroom walls. The trips usually relate to the topics being studied, but also may be scheduled to observe steps in a process (such as trips to a printing company or a recycling plant) or places and events that foster community awareness (such as a service organization or a hospital). We also attend musical events and visit museums of art, science, and history in the area. We try to give ample notice for field trips, along with a permission slip for each trip. The blanket permission slip that each family returns with the enrollment package is used only after phone contact with a parent when the permission slip for the current trip has not been returned.

We ask that parents of toddlers and three-year-olds drive their children on field trips for safety reasons.

## Parents on Field Trips

Although WHMS uses school buses for most field trips, parents sometimes are asked to drive some of the students and to act as chaperones during field trips. The following are some guidelines for parents' use in driving children on WHMS field trips:

- 1. Qualifications:** All drivers must be a parent, grandparent, or designated caregiver of a child presently enrolled at WHMS. Drivers must hold a current valid driver's license with no moving violation points. Each vehicle must have an up-to-date inspection sticker that verifies that the state-mandated requirements for safety have been met.
- 2. Pre-travel:** WHMS requires that all parents make a safety inspection of their vehicles prior to driving on any WHMS field trip. Each driver should have a first aid kit and reflectors in the car.
- 3. Rules for Children:** Children must wear properly adjusted seatbelts. Children must ride in a child restraint system until they are eight years old. Children must remain in an assigned seat with a seatbelt on until the driver tells them they can remove the seatbelt. Children must maintain quiet voices when riding in the car. Car doors may only be opened and closed by the driver. Children ages 12 and under must ride in the back seat. For more information please go to <http://www.nysgtsc.state.ny.us/media/QuickTipbooster-law.htm> for more information.
- 4. Operation:** Drivers must obey all traffic regulations. Each driver will receive written directions to every field trip destination and a list of children being transported and/or chaperoned.
- 5. Accident:** First check the children. If a child is injured, comfort the child but use discretion if injury to the back or neck is suspected or if bones could be broken. Stay with the injured child until the Head of School arrives, even if the parents arrive first. After police (and ambulance, if necessary) are called, please notify WHMS of the event and particulars, including the identification of any hospital destination. WHMS will notify the parents.

Parents who are accompanying students on field trips are chaperoning, or helping to supervise children on the trip. Parents are to serve as role models by keeping silent during performances and presentations, and by helping to monitor student behavior.

## B. BIRTHDAYS

**1. The Birthday Walk** In the Toddler and Primary, each child is honored in a special celebration called "The Birthday Walk," an international Montessori tradition. Parents share in this important occasion by helping their child select photographs from each year of her life and by helping her prepare a written history of milestones reached and fun times had during each year. Parents recite these milestones as they accompany their child on their walk around the "sun," once for each year celebrated. Following the birthday song, classmates are invited to give a special message to the birthday child. Parents should make every effort to participate in this beautiful ceremony with their child. In the Elementary and Middle School, birthday celebrations are handled differently. Your child's teacher can explain how birthdays are celebrated in his/her class.

Parents may also bring in a special treat of food to share with the children and teachers in the class. Your child's teacher will discuss this with you before the event. Children with summer birthdays often select a date during the school year to celebrate their birthday.

**2. Invitations and Presents** If you are planning a birthday party for your child, please do not send invitations to school unless all the children in the class are invited. If your child is attending a party after school, please do not send gifts to school with your child. We have found that these situations can be upsetting for those who are not invited.

**3. Birthday Book** To celebrate your child's special day and grow our libraries, we ask each family to donate a library book to the school on their child's birthday. A book is truly a gift that keeps on giving. Your child feels a sense of pride to see her name inscribed in a book. Children are also interested in the books given by their friends. When considering a "birthday book," you can ask the teacher for a suggestion, or you can allow your child to choose a favorite book. The presentation of a birthday book can be an integral part of your child's birthday celebration.

## C. PARENT-CHILD EVENTS

WHMS and Friends of WHMS plan a number of events that permit you to share with your child aspects of their education—or just plain fun. Please check the calendar for upcoming events. Calendar events are also described in the ‘Calendar Notes’ section of the calendar. The following are some examples from recent years:

**Fall Family Day:** This is a fun event that includes games, food and activities and is a great way to meet new families at WHMS.

**Grandparents’ and Special Friends’ Day:** Your child is the teacher as she explains the work she does and teaches how to use those mysterious Montessori materials. Grandparents, special friends, and children also enjoy brunch together.

**WHMS Fairs:** Each year there is a different Fair with a display demonstrating much hard work and learning.

**Holiday Celebrations, Music Concerts, and Moving Up Ceremonies:** Your children will entertain you at these special events.

## D. SCHOOL SPIRIT FRIDAYS

Also known as Montessori Pride Days, Fridays are the day when all children are asked to wear school colors (burgundy or forest green) to show their school spirit. Montessori T-shirts and sweatshirts, available through Land’s End, are encouraged.

## E. PARENT EDUCATION MEETINGS

WHMS believes that parent education is an important component of a child’s education. Accordingly, there will be several parent education breakfasts or evening meetings throughout the year conducted by WHMS teachers or other education professionals. The topics will be announced before each meeting, and the teachers will consider requests or suggestions from parents for specific topics. Generally, the teachers will speak about child development, Montessori materials and methodology, and the philosophy of their classrooms. These meetings include suggestions, discussion, and a hands on introduction to the curriculum and materials. The more you understand your child’s work, the more you can appreciate and enjoy his or her education and discoveries.

Twice per year, the school hosts a Voyage, a half-day parent education event when our program from Primary through Middle School is highlighted in a hands-on program with the teachers and other parents. See the school calendar for details.

## F. CLASSROOM OBSERVATION

All parents are welcome to observe our classrooms at any time.

If you would like to observe a class, we ask that you simply sign in at the office and pick up a visitor’s badge. In the Toddler and Primary classrooms, our viewing windows facilitate the observation of your child in a natural manner. If you would like a formal in-class observation, we ask that you schedule an appointment in advance to minimize the disruption to the classroom and to make sure that the class will be in the room when you visit.

We encourage you to observe. Seeing the children at work is to experience the Montessori philosophy in action. To make your observation more meaningful: take a look around the room and notice the amount and diversity of activity; the range of ages; the types of materials; the individual and group activity; and the interaction of the children. Focus your attention on the teacher and notice the composure, the teacher as observer, and the respect the teacher shows each child. Focus your attention on your child and notice the succession of activities; the concentration on work; enthusiasm and self-satisfaction in each activity; and the child’s respect for other children, the materials, and the teachers.

During a formal in-class observation, we request that you adhere to the following guidelines: sit quietly in the observation chairs indicated; try not to make your presence felt; do not initiate conversation; and do not handle the materials. We recommend these guidelines to minimize interference in the children’s peaceful environment. Feel free to make notes of items you would like to discuss during your conference with the classroom teacher.





## G. CLASS PHOTOS

Photographs of each student and class are taken in the fall of each year. Please consult the school calendar for the date. We suggest that your children dress for this occasion. All parents are asked to sign a release form that gives WHMS permission to publish photographs of their child in articles, ads, or the web page. The child's name will not be used.

## H. YEARBOOKS

Yearbooks provide a record of your child's year at WHMS and will be cherished as a source of memories forever. Children love nothing more than to be reminded of what they did, who their friends were, and how they looked "when they were little."



# XI. ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES

## A. COMMUNICATIONS

WHMS considers open communications with parents to be an essential part of our mission. Only through open communication and coordination of our efforts can we work together as partners in your child's education and development.

### Social Media

Social media (such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, blogs, etc.) can serve as a bridge between teachers and families in the WHMS community, but care must be taken to ensure respectful communication and confidentiality. Interacting on-line with is no different than interacting with these individuals or groups face-to-face—i.e., we are required to maintain the principles of respect, dignity, prudence, and professionalism and concern for the safety and protection of children, parents, families and Woodland Hill Montessori School in all interactions.

Woodland Hill Montessori School provides information for parents of WHMS through the WHMS website, weekly bulletins and notes, class lists, the school directory and WHMS Facebook page, emails, etc. These communications are strictly for informational purposes and content is not to be redistributed to public forums or in any other inappropriate manner.

### WHMS Website

The WHMS website can be found at [www.woodlandhill.org](http://www.woodlandhill.org). This site serves as a virtual space to share school information with the public as well as other relevant information with WHMS community. The website contains photographs only of children whose parents have signed releases. On the website is a school calendar that you can access for the latest information.

### Class Lists and the School Directory

Class lists and the directory provide contact information for parents to communicate one on one with another about birthday parties, play dates, social purposes, etc. We value each parent's privacy and so class lists and any parent information provided by WHMS must be used responsibly and discreetly and not to be used for non-school related business without express permission from the individual users. Parent emails, addresses, and phone numbers are not a means to communicate publicly with the entire community. All communication pertaining to WHMS must be first given to the administration for distribution.

### Messages and Phone Calls to and from WHMS

The best time to call the school is between 8:00 a.m. and 4 p.m. If you call the school at other times, please leave a message and someone will return your call. In the event of an emergency, keep calling until one of the staff answers. The extension for the school care program is #39. If you need special help after school hours, you may call the Head of School at home. (Head of School, Susan Kambrich: 439-7110 (home) 339-7668 (cell) or email [skambrich@woodlandhill.org](mailto:skambrich@woodlandhill.org))

Most school notices will be sent to you via e-mail, however, please check your child's bag daily. If you change your e-mail address, kindly let the office know.

All notes to administration or faculty are to be attached by safety pin or clothespin to the Montessori bag. Please label any envelopes with name and contents. Your child's teacher will remove all messages and send them to their proper destination. E-mailing can often be the most effective means of communicating with your child's teacher. Teacher e-mail addresses are the firstinitiallastname@woodlandhill.org (e.g. [skambrich@woodlandhill.org](mailto:skambrich@woodlandhill.org) for Susan Kambrich).

### Newsletters

*The Messenger* is our primary means of formal communication with you. It is published in an electronic version and e-mailed, usually weekly during the school year. Please read it for news, important information, reminders, and calendar changes or additions. A class newsletter is emailed every week. It is written by your child's teacher to keep you apprised of classroom work and activities, field trips, and special notices.

### Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences will be held twice each year in the fall and spring. The conference dates are set forth on the school calendar. Please schedule an appointment at least two weeks prior to conferences. You will receive information about scheduling in an e-mail.

Conferences help teachers and parents to understand better the progress of each child and the class as a whole. You will have an opportunity to review your child's progress report and to discuss any questions with the teacher. WHMS believes that conferences provide vital information and feedback.

If desired, your teacher will meet with you at any mutually agreed upon time. For an immediate concern, you may ask to meet after school, after all the children in the class have been released. Also, teachers are willing to hold telephone conferences as the need arises. For less urgent concerns, please ask the teacher in advance for an appointment.

### Changes in the Home

Changes in the home can have a profound impact on your child's attitude, behavior, and performance at school. Please inform your child's teacher of major changes that might affect your child. Any unusual event or change in behavior at school will be reported to you by the teacher.



### Suggestion Box

Parents are encouraged to communicate joys or concerns by placing messages in this box, located in the main office. Parents may also ask staff members who supervise arrival and dismissal to place their notes in this basket. You are also encouraged to e-mail, visit or call Susan Kambrich with any suggestions.

## B. STUDENT RECORDS POLICY

All persons having access to children's records may not discuss or disclose personal information regarding the children or their families. In the presence of school officials, children's records are available to parents and to persons authorized by parents in writing. Your child's entire school record is available to you for review and comment. Please make your request in writing to the Head of School. You may use the Head of School's office or the main office to examine your child's file. These files must remain in the school.

## C. FINANCIAL MATTERS

For account information, contact our business manager, Sue Evans, at [sevans@woodlandhill.org](mailto:sevans@woodlandhill.org). If you have any questions or problems regarding the payment of tuition, please inform us promptly.

WHMS is dependent on tuition income for its operating capital. Timely tuition payments ensure the school's ability to meet expenses. The enrollment deposit is nonrefundable, and should be received by the date specified in the enrollment contract.

The full year's tuition is due on June 1, but for your convenience, this amount can be divided evenly into 10 monthly payments or two semi-annual payments. SMART tuition handles all installment tuition payments and there is a fee.

For semi-annual payments, the first payment is due on June 1; the last payment is due on December 1.

You will receive reminders by mail and phone if your payment is late. If a payment is not received within 60 days, you may be asked to withdraw your child from the school until all outstanding payments are made. WHMS reserves the right to refuse admittance to class, and to withhold release of transcripts for any student whose financial account is not paid by the dates specified. Delinquent accounts may also be turned over to a collections agency.

No refund or cancellation of tuition will be made by WHMS for any absence (including medical), withdrawal, or dismissal, and you are obligated to pay the full remaining yearly tuition, as specified in the enrollment contract. For this reason, we recommend your voluntary participation in the Tuition Refund Plan. Contact the business office for details.

## D. WITHDRAWAL POLICY AND PROCEDURES

1. When a child's enrollment is terminated by the family after June 1, the full remaining tuition is due as specified in the enrollment contract. Tuition insurance is available. Call the business office for details.
2. WHMS reserves the right to terminate the enrollment contract of any student if the student or parents are not suited to the program of the school or for lack of payment of specified charges.

## XI. WHMS COMMITTEES

Woodland Hill relies on the volunteer efforts of our community for a variety of duties, including fundraising, community building and fulfillment of our mission.

### A. BOARD OF TRUSTEES

President	Katherine Singh	
Vice President	Pete McCorkle	
Treasurer	Wendy Gilman	
Secretary	Frederick Galt	
Immediate Past President	Michael Endler	
Teacher Representative	Marion Heller	
	Michael DeLeonardis	Jonathan Ripchick
	Tamara Gatchell	Christopher Russell
	Nuhar Jaleel	Tobi Saulnier
	Julie Knox	Kim Seabury
	Marcus Q. Pryor	



#### 1. Charge or Mission Statement

The Board of Trustees is charged with the ultimate responsibility for financial, legal and strategic planning and policy issues. The WHMS Board sets policy to be implemented by the administration and staff. Furthermore, the Board ensures the integrity of Montessori philosophy within the school.

#### 2. Membership

The WHMS Board consists of 13 WHMS members (parents with children in the school), the immediate past president, one teacher representative selected by the faculty. At least three of the appointed trustees shall be chosen from the community at large (not parent members). Board terms are three years and are staggered and elections are held every year at the annual meeting in December.

The Board of Trustees is always seeking new membership. Board trustees are expected to attend and participate in all meetings, attend school functions, serve on committees, and to participate in the fundraising efforts of the school. Please contact Katie Singh, Chair of the Committee on Trustees, if you are interested in serving.

#### 3. Regular Meeting Times

The WHMS Board six meetings per year, usually on the third Monday of the month at 6 p.m. All regular meetings of the Board are open to members, with the exception of executive sessions for confidential matters. Please consult the calendar on the [www.woodlandhill.org](http://www.woodlandhill.org) site for exact times and dates.

#### 4. Agenda/Meeting Summary/Meeting Minutes

Collected Minutes are on file in the WHMS office for access by any member of the school.

### B. FRIENDS OF WHMS

Co-Presidents: Jackie Santilli and Ashley Parks  
[Friends@woodlandhill.org](mailto:Friends@woodlandhill.org)

#### 1. Charge or Mission Statement

Friends of WHMS is a separately incorporated parent association of WHMS. Friends members focus on fundraising, social, and community-building activities.

The purposes of the Friends are:

- to support and sponsor events and activities that complement the program at WHMS,
- to nurture the spirit of community among the parents, faculty, staff, and alumni of WHMS and to promote social interaction among WHMS, its families, its neighbors, and the community at large.

Through the Friends of WHMS, parents are given the opportunity to help the WHMS community through planning special events and fundraising for the school.

## **2. Parent Liaisons**

Every Montessori class has two parents who help facilitate communication among the members of their child's class and with the school as a whole. The parent liaisons also attend the monthly meeting of the Friends of WHMS, our parents' organization. Friends help plan events and enlist support for fundraising and social activities.

## **3. Parent Mentors**

Every new Montessori parent gets a returning parent as a "buddy." This more experienced Montessori mom or dad is available to answer all your questions. Parent mentors make you feel welcome at our school. Give them a call. Parent mentors will answer your questions and help you feel welcome as a member of our WHMS community.

\* Please let your child's teacher know if you would like to be a parent liaison or a parent mentor next year.

## **4. Activities**

Activities include: Fall Family Fun Day, Parent Education breakfast, Hoffman Car wash fundraiser, the Holiday Celebration, and many more.

## **5. Membership**

All parents and guardians of children at WHMS, and all WHMS faculty and staff are members of Friends.

## **6. Regular Meeting Times**

Friends of WHMS meets once a month. Please check the calendar for exact dates. Parent liaisons, chosen from each class, are expected to attend the monthly meetings. Friends Meetings are open to all parents and guardians. Please come to a meeting to see how you can get involved!

## **7. Agenda/Meeting Summary/Meeting Minutes**

The agenda is presented at the meeting. Summaries of meetings and periodic Friends notices will be published in the Messenger.



## **C. BUILDING AND GROUNDS COMMITTEE**

### **1. Charge or Mission Statement**

The Committee is charged with the stewardship of, and planning for, all aspects of the buildings and grounds of Woodland Hill Montessori School. The Committee is also responsible for organizing volunteer efforts for general school and maintenance (inside and out).

### **2. Recent Activities and Planned Activities**

Recent activities include: brainstorming areas to be addressed by a Master Plan, coordinating the Spring Work Day in May. Planned activities include: coordinating the Fall Work Day, coordinating the development of individual classroom gardens, and pursuing a facilitator for developing a comprehensive Master Plan.

### **3. Membership**

Committee membership is open to all interested parties, including individuals with specific skills in architecture/space design, landscape/gardening, construction/carpentry, and navigating local zoning/planning boards.

## **4. Regular Meeting Times**

Meetings are posted on the web on the school calendar.

## **5. Agenda**

The agenda is developed prior to the meeting and circulated via e-mail.



## D. DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

### 1. Duties and Responsibilities

The Development Committee works on various aspects of fundraising at WHMS to benefit the overall financial health and longevity of the school, and to promote the mission of WHMS.

### 2. Membership

Committee membership is open to interested individuals who can further the mission of the committee. Skills needed include: fundraising, community development, computer skills, organizational skills, financial planning. Special events and ad hoc subcommittees are also formed as needed and volunteers are encouraged to get involved.

### 3. Regular Meeting Times

The meetings are usually held every other month and are posted on the web on the school calendar.

## E. DIVERSITY COMMITTEE

### 1. Purpose

The Woodland Hill Montessori School Diversity Committee is an inclusive working group of parents, teachers, staff, and students, who are committed to increasing the awareness of diversity issues within the school community. Through an active admissions recruitment and administrative hiring process we are growing a diverse school community that recognizes and respects differences across race, ethnicity, religions, socio-economic class, physical ability, sex, sexual orientation, and gender expression. In con-

formance with the philosophies of Maria Montessori, who believed education should assist children in being socially responsible citizens of the world, the Diversity Committee values a multicultural and anti-bias focused curriculum. We seek to provide a safe, open environment where children are exposed to non-sexist, multicultural learning experiences and are able to explore bias issues in an age-appropriate way as part of their daily routine. The Diversity Committee's purpose is to increase awareness and appreciation of benefits of diversity for all of our children and the entire school community.

### 2. Membership

Membership is open. All are encouraged to attend.

### 3. Meeting Times

Meetings are quarterly, and announced in the Messenger.

## F. FINANCE COMMITTEE

Chair Wendy Gilman

### 1. Purpose

The Finance Committee, made up of the Head of School, Board Treasurer and Business Manager, as well as other members of the school, approves and plans for the yearly budget, monitor and modify as necessary. It also recommends to the Board changes in tuition fees and personnel policies with financial implications. The Finance Committee reports to the Board.

### 2. Membership

The membership of the finance committee includes administration, Board and community members. Membership is limited, but please contact Sue Evans, Susan Kambrich, or Wendy Gilman if you are interested in joining the committee.

### 3. Meeting Times

Meetings are usually held on the second Thursday of the month.

## APPENDIX A

### FACULTY

#### Toddler Teachers

*(Head Teacher and Assistant Teachers)*

Michelle Edwards, Marion Heller, Tina Claus, and Ashley Fuda

#### Primary Teachers

*(Head Teachers and Assistant Teachers)*

Liz Cahrenger and Kristen McDermott  
Christine Caruso and Jessa Pelizari  
Jennifer Graham and Ashley Ciccone  
Cassandre Hall and Lourdes Ortega  
Stephanie Puchner and Erin Mergil

#### Lower Elementary Teachers

*(Head Teachers and Assistant Teachers)*

Julie Adams and Kristen Padula  
Sandy Blakeman and Olga Febus  
Kristi Favaloro and Ann Ayers

#### Upper Elementary Teachers

Cindy Bishop and Owusu Anane  
Patrick Cartwright and Vinita Shekhar  
Andrew McClain and Michele Praileau

#### Middle School Teachers

Leah Johnson  
Cora Heiser  
Brittany Gonzalez  
Denise Stark – Latin  
Sara O’Connell - Spanish

#### Specials Teachers and Instructors

Nieves Gonzalez-Montejano - Spanish  
Charles Austin – School Band  
Susan Gordon – Music  
Ben Kelts – Physical Education  
Janis Rink – Art  
Marla Bracco – Violin  
Catherine Shane-Lydon – Piano  
Maggie Schmonsky – Reading Specialist  
Tami Meek – Consultant Teacher  
Bethany Burroughs – School Counselor  
Toni Roland – Math Specialist  
Ted Riese – Librarian  
Katja Higgins – Teacher Aide

## APPENDIX B

#### WHMS Committees

##### Development Committee

Chair: TBD

##### Diversity Committee

Chair: TBD

##### Finance Committee

Chair: Wendy Gilman

### ADMINISTRATION

Susan Kambrich

*Head of School*

Susan Evans

*Director of Finance and Operations*

Kris Gernert-Dott

*Director of Admissions and Community Outreach*

Moira Rienzo

*Director of Development and Communications*

Meg Parascandola

*Office Manager*

Meghan Johnson

*Director of Auxiliary Programs*

Danielle Hall

*Business Office Assistant*

Jeremy Kelly

*Business Office Associate*

Michael Early

*Building Superintendent*

#### Maintenance Staff

Jaylon Glasgow

Barbara Secor

#### School Care Staff

Amanda Bentley, *Assistant Director of School Care*

Kelsey Carter

Mary Dame

Krysten Houser

Emily Meister

Shaneque Nelson-Cook

Larissa Pierre

Alexia Rohl

Katy Whitcher

Please see the WHMS website for bios and pictures of our faculty and staff at [www.woodlandhill.org](http://www.woodlandhill.org)



## APPENDIX C

### PROGRAM AND ENROLLMENT INFORMATION

#### Programs

Toddler: ages 18-36 months, part-time enrollment only  
Primary: ages three through six  
Lower Elementary: ages six through nine  
Upper Elementary: ages nine through 12  
Middle School: ages 12 through 15

#### School care

(a) 7:30 - 8:20 a.m. and 2:50 - 6:00 p.m., or (b) Early Care, 7:30 - 8:20 a.m. only

#### Matriculation Fee

For the first school year in which a family has a child enrolled at WHMS, a one-time, non-refundable \$500 matriculation fee is due when the Enrollment Contract is signed and returned to WHMS.

#### Enrollment Deposit

A non-refundable \$500 per child enrollment deposit is due when the Enrollment Agreement is signed. This deposit will be credited towards the 2015-2016 annual tuition.

#### Tuition

##### Toddler

Three mornings or three afternoons	\$5,485
Four mornings or four afternoons	\$5,995
Five mornings or five afternoons	\$6,610

##### Primary, age 3 – Part time, (five mornings/week or three days/week)

\$9,610

##### Primary, ages 3 – Kindergarten, full-time

\$11,865

##### Lower Elementary, grades 1-3

\$12,175

##### Upper Elementary, grades 4-6

\$12,480, required activity fee \$325

##### Middle School, grades 7-8

\$13,250, required activity fee \$325

- Middle School students will also take a trip in the spring that requires an additional cost.

#### School Care

Five days a week	\$2,820
Four days a week	\$2,665
Three days a week	\$2,400
Five days a week until 4 p.m.	\$2,050
Early Care only: Contact Business Office	

Families with more than one child enrolled at WHMS will receive a ten percent (10%) reduction in tuition for the second child, a twenty percent (20%) reduction for the third child and a 30% reduction for a fourth child. This reduction will apply to the lowest annual tuition amounts and applies to Primary, Elementary and Middle School tuition only, not school-care fees or any other fees or charges.

#### Payment Options

To allow flexibility in the payment of tuition, WHMS offers the following payment options:

Annual Payment: Due on June 1.

Semi-annual Payment: First half due June 1, second half due December 1.

Monthly Payments: Ten equal payments, due on the first of every month, beginning in June, and continuing until March.

WHMS uses a tuition service called SMART, which charges a yearly fee. Payments received after the tenth day of each month will be subject to a late fee.

#### Tuition Refund Plan

A tuition refund plan is available. The cost is 3% of tuition per student per year payable with the June 1 tuition payment. WHMS strongly recommends this plan: no refunds will be granted after June 1 for any reason, and any outstanding tuition will be due in full.



## APPENDIX D

### WHMS Bully Reporting Form

The faculty and staff at Woodland Hill Montessori School want for each child to feel safe at school. Sometimes students feel intimidated to talk about a problem that they are having with bullying. Complete this form to report to administration any problems you are having with other students or adults while you are at school. It is important that detailed information is given so action can be taken. You can also tell an administrator or teacher about any bullying you may have experienced. Either way, we will keep your information confidential.

## Part I. Reporting

Type of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Who is the victim? If more than one, include all names: \_\_\_\_\_

Who is the perpetrator (person doing wrong)? If more than one person, include all names:

\_\_\_\_\_

Time and Date incident happened: \_\_\_\_\_

Please state where incident happened (example: hallways, outside, etc.):

\_\_\_\_\_

Brief Description:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Your name (Optional): \_\_\_\_\_

Please return form to Susan Kambrich, [skambrich@woodlandhill.org](mailto:skambrich@woodlandhill.org)  
WHMS 100 Montessori Place, Rensselaer, NY 12144 or turn into the office.



**THIS SIDE OFFICE USE ONLY**

## Part II. Investigation

- 1. Investigator(s): \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. Position/Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. Interviews:
  - Interviewed aggressor    Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Interviewed target        Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Interviewed witnesses    Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_
  - Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. Any prior documented incidents by the aggressor?       Yes     No
  - If yes, have incidents involved same target or target group     Yes     No
  - Any previous incidents of BULLYING, RETALIATION                 Yes     No

Summary of Investigation: *(Please use additional paper and attach to this document as needed)*

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### III. Conclusion From Investigation

1. Finding of bullying or retaliation:

Bullying  Yes  No

Retaliation  Yes  No

Discipline referral only  Yes  No

Incident document as: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Contacts: Target's parent/guardian Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Aggressor's parent/guardian Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Any additional legal/professional consults: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Action Taken:

Loss of Privileges  Detention  Outside Referral  Suspension

Community Service  Other \_\_\_\_\_

4. Describe Safety Planning: \_\_\_\_\_

• Mediation between aggressor and target:  Yes  No Date: \_\_\_\_\_

• Follow-up with target: Scheduled for: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Completed: \_\_\_\_\_

• Follow-up with Aggressor: Scheduled for: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Completed: \_\_\_\_\_

Report forwarded to Head of School:  Yes  No Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of person completing this form: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX E

### INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE AGREEMENT

1. I will only use the Internet and computers with the teacher's permission, and for the purpose that the teacher has requested.
2. I will respect copyright laws and will make sure to show where I found information, and will not copy it without permission.
3. I will not enter inappropriate or hurtful language into the computer.
4. I will stay safe on the Internet by making sure that I never share personal information, like my full name, address, or telephone number. If anyone on the Internet tries to meet with me, I will refuse, and tell my parents or teachers immediately.
5. I will let my teacher know immediately if I see anything on the Internet that is inappropriate or that makes me uncomfortable.
6. I will not use social networking sites, chat capabilities, or my personal email (unless given permission by a teacher) during the school day or in after-care.
7. I will respect the school computer equipment. I will be sure to take good care of the equipment I use, and will not change any desktops, controls or anyone else's files.
8. I will only use my own passwords that have been given to me by the teacher.
9. I will not put any disks or CDs into the computer unless they are approved by the teacher.
10. I will only use email for a class project directed by my teacher. Any mail will be sent or received by my teacher.
11. I will only download information onto school computers under the direction of my teacher.
12. I will not buy or sell anything using the school computers.
13. If I bring my own laptop to school, it is considered a "school computer" during the school AND in after-care and all of the aforementioned guidelines apply.
14. I understand that I will only be able to use school computers if I follow these rules.

*\*computer refers to any electronic devices*

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

den sein

German

Wood

세계인류의 평화가 이룩되도록

Korean



**Woodland Hill**  
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