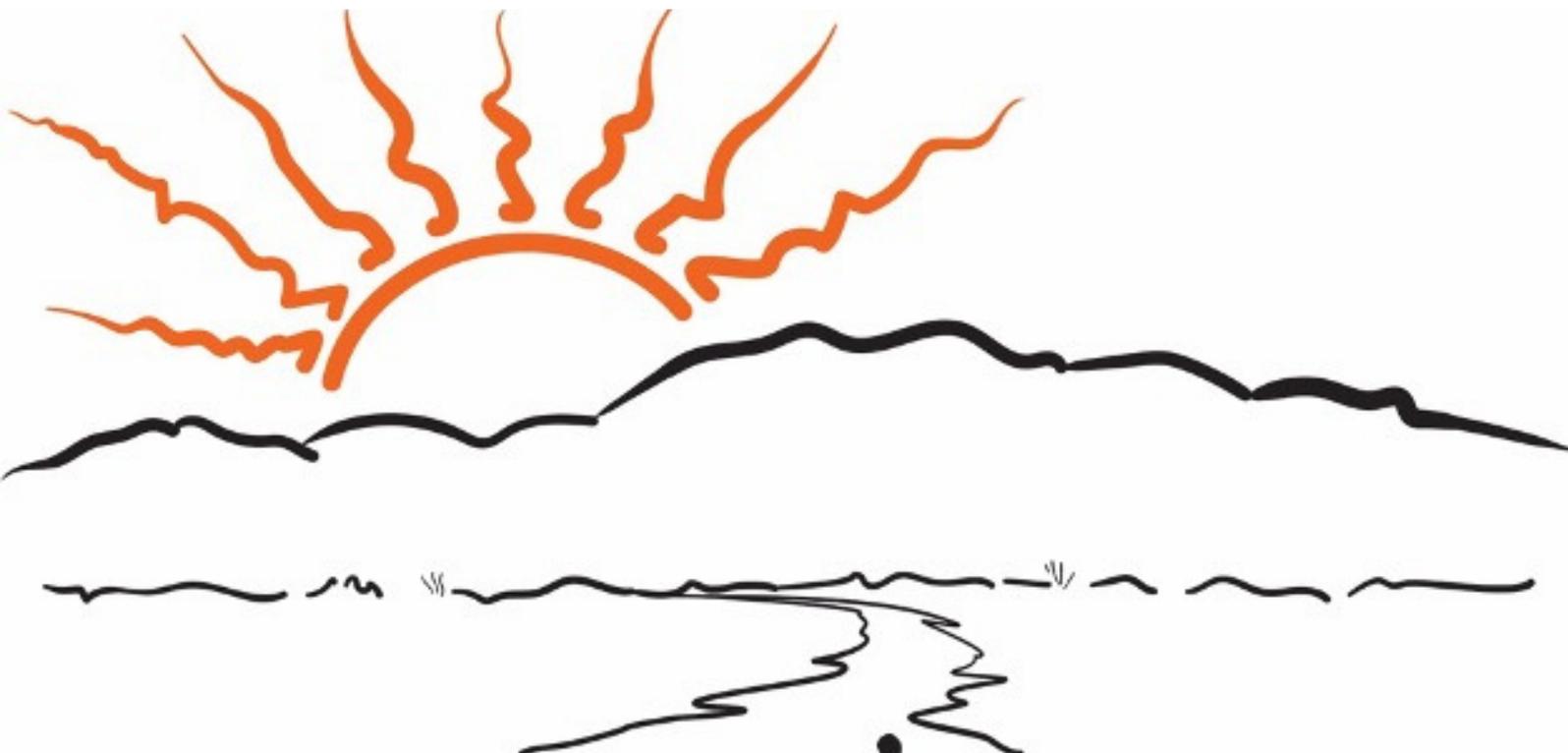


Family Guide

2022-2023



NATURE'S PATH MONTESSORI

Where the Child Leads



"We shall walk together on
this path of life, for all things are
part of the universe, and are
connected with each other
to form one whole unity."

Maria Montessori

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School Mission

Nature's Path Montessori is dedicated to honoring the human potential that lies within each child. We aspire to ignite a love of learning and cultivate a love of self, others, and the environment. We actualize the Montessori values and philosophy to guide each child according to their individual capacity and need, permitting self-development at a natural pace. We accompany a child on their path, placing stepping stones when needed to give them a foundation for a life full of joy and purpose.





"The needs of mankind are universal. Our means of meeting them create the richness and diversity of the planet. The Montessori child should come to relish the texture of that diversity."

Maria Montessori

Grounded in the Montessori philosophy of peace education and the fundamental needs of humans, Nature's Path Montessori acknowledges the intrinsic dignity and value of every person and honors the human connection with and responsibility for each other regardless of identity. We celebrate diversity in our community. Among the many identities that contribute to the richness of our community are age, ability, ethnicity, race, culture, religion, family composition, gender identity and expression, learning differences, sexual orientation, and social-economic status.

Our commitment to diversity is active and intentional in our systems, practices, and in our work with children. Ethics, empathy, and diverse ideas are heavily embedded in who we are. Dr. Montessori has created an educational pedagogy that allows for a commitment to diversity and social justice in our everyday work. As a community that is committed to fostering cultural competence and an empathetic inclusive worldview, we work to acknowledge and apply our curriculum in an intentional and developmentally appropriate manner.

We support each member of the NPM community and embrace their unique history and culture, and partner with them to create a solid collaborative community of diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging. Our hope is that every member of our community experiences a sense of belonging which allows them to reveal their true selves, engage fully with others, share their unique mind and heart and be courageous while exploring possibilities. This will create a stronger, loving, vibrant culture. Belonging creates a space for building meaningful relationships, self-expression, better psychological well-being and academic growth.

We invite every member of our community to forward the work, taking a stand for equity and justice as models for our children. We embrace this work so our children have a foundation to move through the world with a deeper understanding of and care for humanity.

Nature's Path Montessori

Is...

a quality Montessori school grounded in the philosophy of Montessori and best educational practices.

a welcoming identity-safe space where unique greatness within each member is celebrated and enhanced.

a school that prioritizes inclusive, equitable, and ethical practices.

dedicated to honoring and protecting the human spirit and the development of the child

guided by the ages and stages of human development, individual needs, and tendencies to attend to the education of the whole child.

a hamlet that encourages students to become active seekers of knowledge.

committed to guiding children to be emissaries of peace by respecting selves, others, and the environment.

a facilitator of lively and purposeful engagement in both indoor and outdoor settings where children have the freedom and the resources to pursue answers to their own questions.

a believer that a child's education is a partnership between the family, parent, child, and teacher..

Characteristics of a Montessori School

The Montessori Learning Environment

Child-Centered Environment: The focus of activity in the Montessori setting is on children's learning, not on guides' teaching. Generally, children work individually or in small, self-selected groups. There are very few whole group lessons.

Responsive Prepared Environment: The environment is designed to meet the needs, interests, abilities, and development of the children in the class. The guides design and adapt the environment with this community of children in mind, rapidly modifying the selection of educational materials available, the physical layout, and the tone of the class to best fit the ever-changing needs of the children.

Focus on Individual Progress and Development: Children progress at their own pace, moving on to the next step in each area of learning as they are ready. While the child lives within a larger community of children, each student is viewed as a universe of one.



Montessori Learning Activities

Hands-On Learning: Direct, personal, hands-on contact with either real things or with concrete models brings abstract concepts to life, allowing children to learn with much deeper understanding.

Spontaneous Activity: Children touch things and explore the world around them. A true Montessori environment encourages children to move about freely, within reasonable limits of appropriate behavior. They select work that captures their interest and attention, although guides draw their attention and capture their interest in new challenges and areas of inquiry.

Active Learning: In Montessori classrooms, children not only select their own work most of the time, but also continue to work with tasks, returning to continue their work over many weeks or months, until they can teach it to younger children. This is one of many ways that Montessori guides confirm that children have reached mastery of each skill.

Self-directed Activity: One of Montessori's key concepts is the idea that children are driven by their desire to become independent and competent beings in the world, to learn new things, and master new skills. Outside rewards to create external motivation are both unnecessary and can potentially lead to passive adults who are dependent on others for everything from their self-image to permission to follow their dreams. Montessori children construct their own sense of individual identity and right and wrong.

Freedom within Limits: Montessori children enjoy considerable freedom of movement and choice; however, their freedom always exists within carefully defined limits on the range of their behavior. They are free to do anything appropriate to the agreements of the community, but redirected respectfully and promptly.

Intrinsic Motivation: In Montessori programs, children do not work for grades or external rewards, nor do they simply complete assignments given to them by their guides. Children learn because they are interested in things, and because all children share a desire to become competent and independent human beings.



Community of Learners

Mixed-Age Groups: Montessori classrooms gather together children of two, three, or more age levels into a family group. Children remain together for several years, with only the oldest students moving on to the next class at year's end.

Family Setting: Montessori classrooms are communities of children and adults. As children grow older and more capable, they assume a greater role in helping to care for the environment and meet the needs of younger children in the class. The focus is less on the guides and more on the entire community of children and adults, much like one finds in a real family.

Cooperation and Collaboration, Rather Than Competition: Montessori children are encouraged to treat one another with kindness and respect. Insults and shunning behavior tends to be rare. Instead, we find children who have a great fondness for one another, and who are free from the one-upmanship and needless interpersonal competition for attention and prestige. Because children learn at their own pace, guides refrain from comparing children against one another.



Characteristics



Awaken & Nurture the Human Spirit

The Child as a Spiritual Being: Montessori saw children as far more than simply scholars. In her view, each child is a full and complete human being. Even when very young, the child shares with the rest of humanity hopes, dreams, and fears, emotions, and longing. From her perspective, this goes beyond mental health to the very core of one's inner spiritual life. Montessori consciously designs social communities and educational experiences that cultivate the child's sense of independence, self-respect, love of peace, passion for self-chosen work done well, and ability to respect and celebrate the individual spirit within people of all ages and the value of all life.

Universal Values: Montessori deliberately teaches children not only appropriate patterns of polite behavior, but seeks to instill basic universal values within the core of the child's personality. These values include self-respect, acceptance of the uniqueness and dignity of each person we meet, kindness, peacefulness, compassion, empathy, honor, individual responsibility, and courage to speak from our hearts.

Global Understanding: All Montessori schools are to a large degree international schools. They not only tend to attract a diverse student body representing many ethnic, religions, and international backgrounds, but they actively celebrate their diversity. The curriculum is international in its heritage and focus, and consciously seeks to promote a global perspective.

In Service to Others: Montessori's spiritual perspective leads Montessori schools to consciously organize programs of community service ranging from daily contributions to others within the class or school setting, to community outreach programs that allow children and adults to make a difference in the lives of others. The fundamental idea is one of stewardship.



Grace & Courtesy

Grace

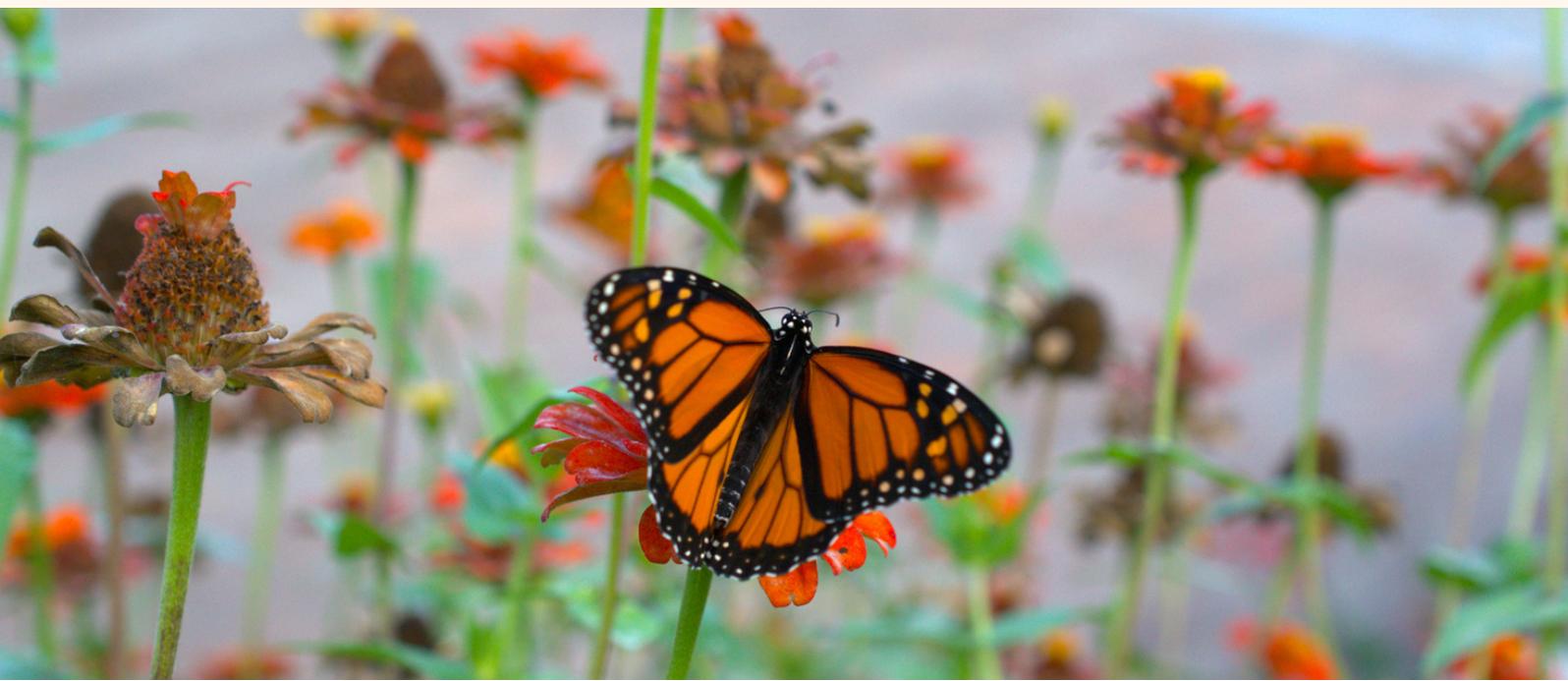
characterized by effortless beauty, kindness and warmth

Courtesy

similar to politeness but of a more voluntary, generous nature, actively meaning to be helpful

Montessori philosophy uses the phrase “Grace and Courtesy” to reflect the way in which we endeavor to engage in all of our interactions: with ourselves, with others, and with the environment in which we live. Grace and courtesy are not taught so much as modeled, and practiced, at every level of our work and play.

Imagine if every adult behaved in kind and courteous ways in our community, and all of our children absorbed that into themselves and then took it out into all of their relationships. Grace and Courtesy is a tremendous vision, and one we work towards every day in our own hearts and behaviors. Thank you for being a part of this vision.



Grace & Courtesy Agreements

- Acknowledge the intrinsic dignity and value of every person and honor the human connection with and responsibility for each other regardless of identity.
- Please follow direct lines of communication; that is, speak to the person who can directly address your concerns, provide the information you seek, or offer the support you need. Please do not gossip or vent to other parents/guardians.
- Clear, prompt, and open communication is essential. Our guides and staff are available to discuss issues with you; please be mindful that the highest priority of our guides and staff during school hours is the children. Please do not hesitate to contact the office for information and guidance and to schedule conferences with guides or administration.
- Greet every person you come in contact with in a warm, kind, and friendly manner.
- Walk and speak softly in all areas where children are working and concentrating.
- Please greet each other (child-parent/guardian, guide-parent/guardian, guide-child) when dropping off or picking up children in carline or in the office.
- While on campus, please refrain from using a cell phone (this need starts the moment you turn your vehicle into the NPM parking lot).
- Please do not use a cell phone while in carline. We need everyone to be focused and engaged in the process in order to guarantee the safety of our children.
- Use Language of Reverence and a respectful tone of voice when speaking to others.
- Suggest positive actions or resolutions.
- Listen attentively with an open mind and heart.
- Show appreciation and gratitude.
- Empathize with others. Seek to understand.
- Support our environment by reducing, reusing, recycling.
- Participate in keeping our environment beautiful.



Language of Reverence

We use Language of Reverence at NPM. Maria Montessori reminds us that our words are absorbed by the young child and establish the reasoning of the older child, and therefore we are committed to the highest level of respect when talking to or about children. This must be extended to include the adults in our community. We are committed to using a Language of Reverence with one another, with families, and with and about children.



Language of Reverence

	Old Language	New Language
	Parent	Families/guardians/caregivers
	Teacher	Guide
	Employee/assistant	Partners
	Girls & Boys	Children/Friends/Learners/Scholars
	Preschool/Primary	Children's House
	Special Needs Child	Child with a Disability
	English Language Learners	Multilingual Learner
	Discipline Policy	Grace & Courtesy Agreements
	Behavior Problem	Key Children
	Parent Education	Exploration & Discovery
	Before & After School	Extended Path
	Show Me Night	Follow the Child Experience



Language of Reverence

	Old Language	New Language
	Tantrum	Expressing Feelings
	Seeking Attention	Seeking Connection
	Rude	Need Work on Emotional Intelligence
	Defiant	Making a Different Choice
	Shut Down	Protecting Themselves
	Behind/Below Grade Level	Their Own Timeframe
	Fussing/Whining	Need Understanding/Compassion
	Needy	Has Unmet Needs
	Problem	Opportunity
	Manipulating	Using Their Tools
	Giving Me a Hard Time	Having a Hard Time
	Being Dramatic	Spirited
	Be Careful	Notice How...
	Bully	Struggling Socially





model for them self-discipline in our own lives.

Discipline in the Montessori environment is not something that is done to the child; nor is it a technique for controlling behavior. Our concern is with the development of the internal locus of control, which enables an individual to choose appropriate behavior because it is right for them and right for the community. Inner discipline is something that evolves. It is not something that is automatically present within the child and it cannot be taught. The role of the adult, then, is to be a model and a guide while supporting the child as they develop to the point where they are able to choose to accept and to follow the Grace and Courtesy agreements of the community.

“It is clear therefore that the discipline which reveals itself in the Montessori class is something which comes more from within than without. But this self-discipline has not come into existence in a day, or a week, or even a month. It is the result of a long inner growth, an achievement won through months of training.” -Maria Montessori

Expectations are kept simple. Take care of all people, living things and material things in our environment. It could be narrowed even further to this one simple rule, “be respectful of everyone and everything.” A great amount of time and energy is focused on teaching lessons that demonstrate socially acceptable behavior. It is imperative that we teach children everyday skills necessary for getting along with others. These special skills are taught with Grace and Courtesy lessons.



Grace and Courtesy lessons are presented through demonstration and then practiced through role-playing, and modeled by guides and older children. They are the foundation of the classroom, as they set a tone of respect and kindness. Another important consideration is that children have the same range and depth of emotions as adults, but they don't have the maturity or experience to put these feelings in perspective. The goal of Grace and Courtesy lessons is to validate these feelings and give children the tools to successfully express and manage them.

Montessori, however, is only one component in the child's life. A child's home environment and parents'/guardians' love are the most critical factors in their development. To be consistent with the process used in the classroom the parenting style at home should emphasize respect for the child's feelings, choices within acceptable limits, encouragement, conflict resolution, and natural and logical consequences for behavior. Parents/guardians will find within our school community, a family friendly environment that is ready to offer support. When schools and families develop a partnership there is greater opportunity for consistency and continuity.

It is our promise that we will do the work necessary to lay a foundation for a positive and trusting relationship with parents/guardians. We recognize parents/guardians as partners. We want to create environment within which we all remain focused on serving the development of the child. We want conversations with parents/guardians, even if difficult, to build connections between the essential members of the child's village and, in doing, help to provide more responsive, respectful and effective service to the child. We ask that parents/guardians and guides show Grace and Courtesy while engaging in dialogue. Even if the child never observes the conversations, they will benefit from mindful relationship building and intentional conflict response that we provide when we model in our practice the ways we hope they'll approach problems on their own.

The goal of the Montessori classroom is first and foremost the development of skills necessary for a productive and fulfilling life. The best academic curriculum is of no use if the child does not develop inner discipline, integrity, and respect for others and oneself. The young person who faces the world tomorrow armed with self-confidence and self-discipline is far more likely to achieve success and happiness. They will be prepared to meet any challenge and will hopefully bring to the world the peace and joy they experienced in the Montessori environment.

Courageous Conversations



We practice Courageous Conversations at NPM. The purpose of Courageous Conversations is to create a safe space for meaningful dialogue about issues regarding your child. Our desired end is to understand each other's perspective and work together to best serve the child. We know this is not always a one step, quick-fix, but rather a complicated process requiring vulnerability, respect, kindness, humility, openness, and commitment.

Guidelines to Having a Successful Conversation

- You are on the same team with your child's guide, working together in partnership for the good of your child. Be prepared to collaborate. You can expect your child's guide to keep your matter private; to address it promptly and to be professional.
- Raise your concern as early as possible. If you are feeling emotional, you might wait until you feel calm enough to talk.
- Raise your concern directly and privately with the guide. If needed, director or Montessori facilitator will get involved only after you have had a conversation with the guide first.
- Decide if it's best to have a phone conversation or to set a formal meeting time. Email or text can be misinterpreted in so many ways. A phone call or meeting is easier to navigate. If you are truly upset about something, we would rather you seek us out and schedule a meeting.
- Please refrain from having the conversation in front of other staff, parents/guardians or other children. Please be mindful that the front office is a public space and issues and concerns should not be discussed in this space. The office staff will help you get in contact with the person most appropriate to address your concerns.
- Please refrain from getting other parents/guardians involved in your concerns. This is not beneficial to a collaborative, trusting partnership.
- Carline is not an appropriate time to have a conversation with a guide.



Courageous Conversations

- If appropriate, your child may be a part of the conversation.
- Be respectful, kind, and open to new perspectives.
- Be clear about what you want to discuss. Focus on the things that genuinely affect your child.
- Ask for clarification. Once you have all the information you can assess the situation in a more thorough manner and ask follow up questions.
- Think about what you want for your child; what would be an acceptable outcome? Is it in alignment with the Montessori philosophy?
- Keep the conversation about your child. Please do not generalize or ask questions about other children. Guides have to adhere to strict privacy laws and often cannot answer questions about other children. Please trust that guides will address concerns with the other children involved with their parents/guardians directly.
- Bring ideas and notes to the conversation. Be prepared to ask questions and to listen.
- Choose words that promote partnership. “Can we talk about how Pete can build some friendships” shows you are working in partnership. “Why isn’t Pete making friends?” may sound like an accusation.
- Finish the conversation with an action plan. This gives you an opportunity to check in again at a later date to evaluate progress.
- Finally, congratulate yourself. It can be tough and emotional work advocating for your child, but it’s one of the most important things you can do



Children's House

NPM's Children's House program is dedicated to providing a highly individualized and developmentally appropriate curriculum that is designed to enhance a natural love of learning, independence, and self-discipline. The Montessori method focuses on the whole child, the intellectual, emotional, physical, and social development of each child. Central to the Montessori philosophy is the notion that young children possess an innate drive to explore and learn about their world through systematically and purposefully investigating their environment. Whereas the children are given the freedom to choose their work and to pursue their interests in as much depth as they need, they are also carefully guided to ensure that they are receiving a balanced exposure to all areas of the curriculum. Each child progresses through a three-part curriculum consisting of practical life, sensorial, and academic topics, which includes mathematics, language, science, and cultural studies such as art, geography, and music.

Outdoor Experience

Children have the opportunity to experience the outdoors with structure and purpose accompanied by an outdoor guide. Children will take part in activities that help to develop an ecological perspective on life and a sense of responsibility for the environment. These activities help increase awareness and conceptual understanding of the natural world and a sense of belonging in the outdoors. Whether children are going on a nature walk, cultivating a garden, taking care of animals, painting, cooking, building something, or simply to enjoy the fresh air, they are able to continue to build their knowledge based on the sensorial experiences of nature, art, and working with their hands and bodies. As a result, mental work and physical exercise are held in balance within these experiences.

Nature's Path Montessori Summer

Summer at NPM brings with it what childhood memories should contain, a time of wonder and exploration. Summer triggers a sense of freedom for children, a chance to play and learn in a relaxed and fun atmosphere. Montessori principles continue to guide our work in prepared environments with a distinctive flavor of summer. NMP Montessori Summer is a perfect place for a child to enjoy and share new experiences, as well as to refresh and continue academic pursuits; it provides unforgettable memories and opportunities to build friendships. Information and applications for NMP Montessori Summer are available in early spring.

Admissions & Enrollment

Admission Guidelines

To be considered for enrollment in Children's House at Nature's Path Montessori, children must be 2.5 years of age and mastered toileting. Enrollment preference will be given to families with a firm commitment to Montessori philosophy. Classes are multi-age, and the school will make every reasonable effort to balance each class with diversity. NPM is open to all children regardless of race, gender, religion, ethnicity, disabilities, sexual orientation, or gender expression.

Admission Procedure

School Visit: We ask that you schedule an initial visit to the school. This is an opportunity to become familiar with the campus, receive information about the school, and ask questions.

Application: Interested families are encouraged to submit a completed Application Packet accompanied by a \$75 application fee.

Visit with Director: NPM will schedule a visit with parents/guardians and the Director within a week of receiving the application. During the visit, alignment between family expectations for their child and the NPM's values are explored.

Enrollment: The school will notify you within one week regarding the admissions decision. If accepted and space is available the school will issue you an Enrollment Contract. Signed contracts are due back to the office within 5 business days to hold your child's spot in a classroom. If you apply for enrollment but there are no openings, your child will be placed on the wait list until an opening exists.

Upon completion and submission of Enrollment Contract with application fee, necessary paperwork, classroom fee and deposit your enrollment is complete. All fees, tuition, and all other payments are non-refundable. Deposit is refunded upon dis-enrollment.

Family and Child Visit: NPM will schedule a visit with parents/guardians, child, and Lead Guides within a week of receiving the Enrollment Contract.

Withdrawal: Parents/guardians are asked to give a 30-day written notice. After notice is given, a last day will be decided. If a family chooses to leave without notice, any payment made for that month is non-refundable. NPM reserves the right to remove a student permanently or temporarily and may immediately terminate the Enrollment Contract if deemed necessary in the best interest of the student and/or Nature's Path Montessori.

Annual Tuition

The tuition charged each year is for the academic year. Deposit due at time of enrollment in the amount of one-month's tuition. Deposits shall be refunded to Parents or Guardians under the following circumstances: (i) their child completes the NPM program; or (ii) the Parents or Guardians provide the 30-day written notice prior to terminating this Contract. The first Deposit provided by Parents or Guardians shall be credited to each successive Enrollment Contract; provided, this Contract or any successive Contract has not been terminated at any time.

Payment Options

- Payment may be divided into two equal payments at the beginning of each semester with a 5% discount
- Payment may be paid up-front with a given 10% discount.
- Payment may be divided into 10 equal payments due on the first of each month.

Tuition Contingencies

- Since the tuition is based on an annual fee, the varying number of school days in each month has no bearing on the cost.
- Tuition is not adjusted for absence due to illness or vacation.
- If your child is not able to complete the school year, a minimum of a 30-day notice is required in writing. If a family chooses to leave without notice, any payment made for that month is non-refundable.
- Tuition costs are reevaluated each year; you will be notified of any changes when it comes time to reenroll for the following year.
- If paying monthly, and a payment is due the 1st of the month, if it is not made by the 8th of the month, a \$25 late charge will be applied to the account.
- There is an annual \$100 supply fee that is non-refundable.
- There will be a \$25 fee for returned cc or checks.

Tuition Assistance

- A 10% discount will be given to the first sibling and 5% to additional siblings.
- NPM admission process seeks to select those families who we believe would be compatible with a Montessori approach to education. Our admissions decisions are made independently of a family's ability to pay full tuition. We offer partial financial aid awards to families depending on their level of need and the funds we have available.
- NPM recognizes that from time to time emergencies may arise in a family that makes it temporarily difficult to make tuition payment. Funds may be available to assist families at this time.



Extended Path

The mission of Extended path is to create a meaningful environment enriched with enjoyable, purposeful activities through focus and direction. Our goal is for the atmosphere before and after school to be calm, fun, comfortable, and safe; children may feel “at home” before they go home. Extended path not only continues Montessori education but reinforces the caring environment throughout the entire day. Children extend their daily development (socially, academically, physically, emotionally, and spiritually). They are guided by a dedicated staff that are Montessori guides and/or coached by a Montessori guide. Children participate in community group activities (sports, songs, games, community building) and Outdoor Environment activities (animal care, gardening, composting, arts and crafts, cooking, building, sensorial work and campus beautification). They can also, read, or play educational games. Furthermore, Grace and Courtesy lessons are taught and practiced.

Extended Path Payment

- Fees for Extended Path are billed at an hourly rate on the first of each month based on total hours of use in the preceding month.
- They are calculated based on time of arrival and or departure, excluding school hours.
- The hourly rate is \$5.00/hour for the oldest enrolled child and \$3.00/hour for each additional child in the family (rounded up in 30-minute increments).
- A parent/guardian will sign each child out of Extended Path. There is a 5-minute grace period after 5:30.
- Once the time is 5:36 pm, you will be charged a fee of \$1 per minute per child, retroactive to 5:30 pm. The fees are due, in cash, payable to NPM when you pick up your child.



School Year Calendar

We follow Mesa Public School schedule for school closures. Please refer to the calendar that will be provided separately for a list of days off of school.

School Day Schedule

7:30 am to 8:00 am	Extended Path
8:00am to 8::20 am	Morning Carline
8:30am to 11:30 am	Morning Work-Cycle
11:30 am	Carline for half-day students
11:30 am to 12:30 pm	Lunch and Outdoor Exploration
12:30 pm to 2:30 pm	Afternoon Work-Cycle
2:30 pm to 2:50 pm	Afternoon Carline
3:00 pm to 5:30 pm	Extended Path



Attendance

Absences

- In case of an absence, please call or email office prior to the start of the school day.
- Vacations should be planned around regularly scheduled breaks.
- Ten consecutive days of unexcused absences will be cause for automatic withdrawal.
- Frequent patterns of absences may result in a meeting with the guide and/or director.
- Please provide advance warning to guide and/or office if your child will be late or needs to leave school early for any reason.
- Please make any dental or doctors appointments after 2:30 pm.

Tardiness

- It is important that children arrive on time, as the beginning of the school day sets a tone for the classroom. Children who are rushed and arrive late may not be in the right frame of mind to begin their activities.
- The school day starts at 8:30 am. A child is considered late if they are not inside the classroom at the start of the school day.
- Frequent tardiness may result in a meeting with the guide and/or director. Due to the nature of the Montessori method, late arrivals are very disruptive to a student's school experience.

Sign In/Out

- Children must be signed in and out each day by a designated parent/guardian (18 years and older) as required by the State of Arizona's Department of Health Services
- Children will only be released to those that are authorized to pick them up with written consent from parent/guardian. Photo identification will be requested for verification of identity before releasing a child. No child will ever be released to a parent/guardian or any other person who is under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol.

Carline Procedures

- For the safety of all the children, staff and families, please drive slowly and with caution at all times, but especially during drop off and pick up when the parking lot is busiest.
- Please refrain from using cell phones during arrival and departure times.

Late Arrivals and Early Departure

- Please come to the front door and an office staff will let you in to sign your child in or out.

Immunization

Any child enrolling in an Arizona school must be adequately immunized, Exemptions to these requirements are granted for medical, religious and other objections, provided that the waiver forms are properly prepared, signed and delivered to school administrators. Forms for these exemptions are available a Arizona Department of Health Services.

Illness

For the protection of all of the students at the school, the school staff reserves the right to send a child home whose health (according to Department of Health guidelines) poses a threat to other children in the program. An ill child should be kept home if any of the following apply.

- You must wait 24 hours after vomiting, diarrhea, or a fever over 99 degrees has subsided before bringing your child back to school (without fever reducing medication).
- Require more rest time than what is provided by the NPM program including unable to play outside
- Children with communicable diseases as defined by Arizona Department of Health Services (DHS) may not come to school, nor be readmitted until the recommendations by the Arizona DHS have been met.
- Should a child be diagnosed with a communicable disease, the school requires a doctor's note upon the student's return, to verify that the child is no longer contagious. If a communicable disease is reported in a classroom, a health notice will be posted outside of that classroom and a notification emailed to parents/guardians.

Illness or Injury at School

- In case of illness or serious injury during school hours parent/guardians will be notified by phone. We request that you pick up your child within 45 minutes of contact from the school.
- If it is an emergency, we will call 911 and tell parents/guardians where the child is being taken to. One of the staff will accompany the child to the hospital and stay with them until the parents/guardians arrive.
- If the parent/guardian cannot be reached, the office will call the alternate pick up names on the emergency card.
- Parents/Guardian are responsible for updating the school on current emergency information (addresses, phone numbers, or emergency contact information).



Child Safety Policy Statement

NPM is committed to ensuring a safe environment physically, academically, and emotionally for all our children. We are committed to providing students with a learning environment free of discrimination, harassment, or intimidation. This includes physical, verbal, and written acts.

School Safety Policies

- NPM's programs are regulated and monitored by the Arizona Department of Health Services (DHS). All DHS inspection reports are available upon request.
- Notifications: Designated parent/guardian or their authorized emergency contacts will be notified immediately of any accidents, injuries, or illnesses. Behavioral incidents will be communicated on a case by case basis, depending on the seriousness of the incident (determined by the guide). You will be contacted either immediately by phone for urgent matters, or at the end of the school day for less serious matters.
- Fire Safety inspection is done on a yearly basis. NPM conducts fire drills regularly throughout the year. We follow safety and emergency plans that are reviewed on an annual or as needed basis.
- During the day, all entrances to the building are locked (doors cannot be opened from the inside by children). There are doorbells and cameras on the main entrance.
- All schools, are required by law to inform Child Protective Services at the Department of Human Services of any suspected abuse or neglect of children. By law, a suspicion of child abuse generally means that the reporter has “reasonable cause to believe” or “reasonable cause to know or suspect” that a child is being maltreated physically, emotionally or mentally. Employees are trained in identifying abuse and neglect. NPM staff have received abuse prevention training
- All employees are subject to criminal screening through the State Police, and fingerprinted as mandated by the State of Arizona.
- Volunteers and visitors are required to have fingerprint clearance cards if they are not accompanied by a NPM staff member.
- The Montessori School is a private property. No weapons of any sort are allowed on our campuses or smoking of any kind.
- Should the facility be scheduled for pest control services, parents will be informed 48 hrs before services are performed. Pesticides are applied during non-school hours.
- We ask that parents/guardians do not use cell phones in any capacity while on campus. Arrival and departure are important transitions times for children and it is important that adults are present for them to share the excitement of their day.
- Families are asked to sign a Photo Release Form to state whether they allow their child(ren) to be posted on our social media pages and/or website.

Allergies

Please inform the school if your child has any type of allergies

Lunch

- Good nutrition is essential to the development of your child. Lunch not only provides essential fuel for our bodies, but universally, it serves as a social function. Lunch time provides us the opportunity to teach Grace and Courtesy, Practical Life lessons and environmental practices.
- NPM places an emphasis on good nutritional health. Please provide your children with healthy whole nutritious foods. A list of recommended foods will be provided.
- We ask that you try to pack lunches that won't leave non-compostable or nonrecyclable materials behind.
- Children will eat and drink with reusable cups/plates/utensils, which we provide. They will be washed everyday.
- Please include your children in the process making and packing their lunches.
- To promote independence, please send lunch in a lunchbox that your child can easily carry and open independently. Please label lunch box. Smaller lunchboxes are preferred
- To promote independence and avoid excessive trash, please use reusable containers.
- We will provide water or milk during lunch, so we ask that other drinks not be sent.
- We encourage the use of wide-mouth thermoses for hot foods and one that can be easily opened.
- Your child's lunch box will be stored in refrigerator, so no need for icepacks.
- If a child forgets their lunch we will notify parent/guardian to bring one. If the parent/guardian cannot be reached, or cannot bring a lunch to the child, one will be provided
- We DO NOT utilize microwaves so plan lunches accordingly.

Snack

- Snack will be assigned on a weekly basis. A snack calendar for the month will be sent out via email. Each child will be assigned to bring a week's worth of snack approximately two to three times a year. A list of snack ideas will be provided.
- Snack should be brought to the classroom before 8:30 am on Monday morning.
- Along with snack we ask you to bring fresh flowers. Flowers will be used for a variety of Practical Life lessons including flower cutting, leaf cleaning, flower pressing, and potpourri making.



Clothing

- While we recognize and support the child's desire for self-expression, we do request that children refrain from wearing jewelry and accessories that may be a distraction and/or safety hazard.
- Clothing should allow children freedom to engage in a wide range of activities and freedom of movement.
- Children should not worry about getting messy and need to be able to maneuver their clothes independently, particularly in the bathroom. This is not possible with overalls and jumpsuits with tight straps, belts, and tight pants. Pants with an elastic waist are easiest for children to handle.
- You can support your child to be self-sufficient by purchasing comfortable, washable clothing with large buttons, big zippers, velcro, and elastic.
- All children participate in outdoor exploration every day and should dress accordingly, especially in hot and cold weather.
- Please provide a full set of extra clothing, including socks and underwear. Please put all items in a plastic bag labeled with the child's name.
- Outdoor shoes should be sturdy and allow for safe outdoor work and play. Closed-toe shoes tennis shoes with velcro are best until a child can manage laces independently. Clogs, party shoes, cowboy boots, shoes that or open-toed sandals are not appropriate for safe outside play. Please avoid flashing shoes, shoes that make noises, and those that have cartoon or fantasy characters.

Labeling

- All clothing shoes must be labeled clearly with your child's first and last name. This helps our staff to send your child home with the appropriate belongings.
- If unlabeled items are found we will place them in the NPM Lost and Found for a designated amount of time.

Birthday Ceremony & Sharing



Birthday Ceremony

Maria Montessori developed a very special ritual to honor a child's birthday called Celebration of Life: Walk Around the Sun. Your child celebrates with their classmates by walking around the "sun" and their growth and maturity is shared through pictures from each year of their life that guardians can send to school. This simple but meaningful ceremony focuses on the child and is not conducted in a party atmosphere.

- The date will be arranged in cooperation with the guide and parent/guardians. Summer birthday ceremonies will be scheduled throughout the school year.
- Parents/guardians may attend the birthday ceremony which is generally at the end of the afternoon work-cycle.
- Children will make a birthday snack with their classmates to honor their birthday, so no need to send in a birthday treat.
- 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. This can be a distraction.

Sharing

- Children are invited to bring in an item they would like to share with their community the day they bring snack.
- Appropriate items to bring include; things your child is interested in like cultural or scientific artifacts, awards, photos, items from nature etc. Please contact your child's guide if you have questions about an item your child would like to bring.

Personal Items

- Please ask your child to leave all toys, stuffed animals, money, jewelry, sports equipment, and personal electronics at home.
- If any of these items find their way into the school we will keep them safe for the child until we can return them to their parent/guardian.

Conferences

We believe good communication between home and school is essential to the best learning environment for the child. Parent/guardian-guide conferences are scheduled in the fall and spring. Together, parents/guardians and the child's guide will review a progress report that highlights your child's social, emotional, and academic growth. Together you will also develop goals and next steps for your child. If children live in two households we ask that both parents/guardians attend the conference. You may request a meeting with your child's guide anytime throughout the year.

Journey & Discovery Evenings

Nature's Path Montessori urges all parents/guardians to participate in the Journey & Discovery Evenings with the NPM guides. We will journey and discover together as we strengthen our partnership, by offering discussions that focuses on the Montessori philosophy, principles and practices, parenting strategies, and child development topics etc. You are your child's first and primary guide and your experience and insight are vital to a successful school experience.

Follow the Child Experience

Children love to share their classroom community and present the work they have been engaged in to parents/guardians and family members. It is always a very special evening for your child to share what they love about school.

Partner with Us

- Speak with us anytime with our open-door policy.
- Observe in the classroom.
- Learn new strategies to improve parenting skills by attending Journey & Discovery Evenings
- Learn more about the Montessori philosophy and methods.
- Work with us on NPM Community Service projects.
- Sign-up for Conferences
- Attend special and fundraising events
- Provide feedback
- Share ideas and concerns.
- Share your culture, profession, skill, talent, hobby etc. with the children.
- Participate in school-wide work day to maintain the school environment.
- Support the care of our animals.

Observations



Parents/guardians are encouraged to observe in the classroom. Spending time observing in a Montessori classroom provides you with an excellent and unparalleled opportunity to see what life is like inside a Montessori school and classroom. Your experience in the classroom will give you an insight as to what your child experiences as a Montessori student. If you are interested in observing a classroom please call the office to make an appointment, so we can avoid having more than one observer per class period.

Observation Guidelines

- Please plan to observe for a period of 25 to 30 minutes.
- Please enter quietly and sit in the observation chair.
- Try not to engage the children in conversation. If they come up to you and ask you a question or show you something, a simple answer such as “I’m a watcher today”, a smile, or a nod of acknowledgment should be enough to satisfy them.
- Try to observe the entire classroom and not just your child.
- You might want to jot down comments and questions during your observation to share with guide after your time in the classroom.
- Most of the work being done falls into five major categories: practical life, sensorial, exploration, language, and mathematics.
- You will note that some children are able to become absorbed in their work, while others are not. The degree of this absorption in a task is an indication of the degree of the child’s normalization. The normalized child is one who works purposefully, intently, independently, and with a spirit of joy in their work.
- Look for qualities of independence, self-discipline, social interaction, attention, concentration and joy.
- In the guide look for: awareness of class dynamics, sensitivity to individual children, helps the children initiate work, provides requested assistance, and demonstrates use of materials through individual lessons.
- If you have a child in the class, please keep in mind the fact that your own child will be excited by your presence. They may try to perform for you, They may become shy, They may not be able to tear themselves away from your side. In any case, their behavior in the class will probably be somewhat different than usual. For this and many other reasons, it is unwise to try to compare your child with the others.



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