



COMMUNITY HANDBOOK

LOCATIONS

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www.sundropsmontessori.com

Legal Entity Notice

Sundrops Montessori School is owned and operated by Sundrops Group LLC, a South Carolina Limited Liability Company, doing business as Sundrops Montessori (“the School”). All references in this Handbook to “Sundrops,” “Sundrops Montessori,” or “the School” refer to Sundrops Group LLC.

Handbook Authority Statement

This Handbook is intended to provide families with a clear understanding of the policies, procedures, and expectations that guide our school community. Sundrops Montessori School reserves the right to interpret, amend, or update the policies contained in this Handbook as necessary to support the safe and effective operation of the school.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Vision/Mission/Core Values

Sundrops Montessori is a network of schools with a vision of providing education for infants through adolescents that stays true to the footprint of Montessori's principles while also adapting to cultural changes. Dr. Maria Montessori's philosophy is based on scientific observation and has had a profound influence on education over the past century. It is implemented around the world proving to be effective across cultural boundaries and socioeconomic levels.

At Sundrops, we strive to educate by nurturing the social, emotional, and cognitive developmental needs for each student, individually. Our mission is to awaken your child's natural desire to learn in an environment where trust, respect, responsibility, community, and cooperation flourish. Our classrooms are specially prepared environments with materials that stimulate each student's natural curiosity and offer dynamic learning at a student's own pace.

The Sundrops community follows a core set of beliefs:

Respect

Value self-respect, respect for our environment and respect for others of diverse backgrounds and learning styles.

Empower

Inspire intellectual creativity and academic potential using dynamic, scientific materials and methods in a trusting environment.

Community

Nurture a sense of family and environment where respect, trust, integrity, and responsibility foster optimal learning.

Independence

Instill freedom with responsibility for learning self-reliance and honesty in our actions.

Peace

Maintain harmony by resolving differences through empathy, dialogue, and when necessary, mediation.

Environment

Nourish responsibility and care for the environment, for what we grow, for the air we breathe, and the food we eat.

Dear Sundrops Montessori School Family Community,

Welcome to Sundrops Montessori! As parents and educators, we understand how important it is to find a school that you feel is the right choice for your child. We are pleased that you have chosen the Montessori educational philosophy and Sundrops.

We are committed to providing a nurturing and challenging educational experience that supports the development of the 'whole' child. At Sundrops we encourage you to be an active part of this amazing experience. We work in collaboration with you to foster the development of your child and promote a healthy educational experience through our 'Parent-Teacher-Student' model highlighted in this handbook.

This handbook will help you to better understand our mission and core values, along with the curriculum, policies, and procedures for everyday life at Sundrops that allow us to achieve that mission. We encourage you to familiarize yourself with this handbook and understand the material. As always, we are happy to discuss any of these topics with you in greater detail, and to answer any questions you may have.

Your active involvement with the school and your child's education will enhance the experience for everyone involved. During the year we will be providing several parent education events to further explain the Montessori Method. We encourage our parents to attend these sessions. We also invite our parents to utilize our reference library of Montessori and parenting literature to learn more about the Montessori Method.

We are pleased with the continued support of our families, which has allowed us to provide a quality Montessori education at our campuses. The community created between this family of schools allows us to make the complete Montessori experience a reality at Sundrops. We believe our collaboration is changing the world, one student at a time, and look forward to your family finding an enriching sense of belonging and fellowship here at Sundrops Montessori School.

Sincerely,

The Sundrops Family

1.2 Right to Refuse Enrollment or Discontinue Services

Sundrops Montessori School reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to refuse enrollment or discontinue services when it determines that continued enrollment is not in the best interest of the student, the school community, or the safe and orderly operation of the school.

Inappropriate behavior includes, but is not limited to the following:

- Threatening or erratic behavior.
- Inappropriate physical contact with an employee or student.
- Personally threatening and offensive language.
- Making derogatory statements about the nature of the business or employees.
- Making false statements/comments about Sundrops Montessori School.
- Failure to disclose material information necessary for the School to safely and appropriately serve the student.

Any employee or volunteer may immediately restrict access or disengage from a situation involving unsafe or inappropriate conduct and shall notify the Administrative Team

1.3 Parent/Teacher/Student Triangle

Sundrops has adopted the following model to better define the partnership of the teacher and the parent in educating the child. This is posted in the schools and in the Community Handbook as a reminder of this partnership.

STUDENT

TEACHER

Work collaboratively to foster development of the child.

PARENT

<p>Classroom Architect, Builder & Guardian: Continually creates a classroom environment to meet the changing needs of the students (cognitive, physical, emotional, and social). Establishes and enforces classroom rules, routines, and procedures.</p>	<p>Lifetime Role Model: Promotes development of independence, responsibility, and accountability of the student by modeling and reinforcing desired behaviors. Provides boundaries and choices; uses logical consequences in discipline.</p>
<p>Instructional Designer, Facilitator and Assessor Passionate about meeting the student's needs using Montessori philosophy and methodology. Provides individual students with appropriate, challenging work. Shares information with parents regarding academic and developmental progress.</p>	<p>Respecter of Montessori Professional: Seeks to understand how things are done in a Montessori classroom. Actions reinforce the Montessori approach and support the fundamental Montessori tenet of the teacher's authority in the classroom.</p>
<p>Classroom Role Model: Promotes development of independence, responsibility, and accountability of the student by modeling and reinforcing desired behaviors. Provides boundaries and choices; uses logical consequences in discipline.</p>	<p>Collaborative Problem-Solver: Partners with a teacher in problem-solving to improve the educational experience for the student.</p>
<p>Classroom Authority: Works with students in a manner consistent with Montessori philosophy; respects the student and provides freedom within limits.</p>	<p>Instructional Supporter: Passionate about gaining a deeper understanding of the Montessori method. Reads school communications; attends parent/teacher conferences and workshops. Asks the teacher, "What can I do to support my student?" Follow through on agreed-upon steps.</p>
<p>Facilitator of Problem-Solving: Promotes the development of the student's problem-solving skills. Asks questions to help the student solve his/her own problems rather than solving problems for him/her. Allows student to experience consequences of his/her actions.</p>	<p>Facilitator of Problem-Solving: Promotes development of the student's problem-solving skills. Asks questions to help the student solve his/her own problems rather than solving problems for him/her. Allows students to experience consequences of his/her actions.</p>
<p>Collaborative Problem-Solver: Partners with parent in problem-solving to improve the educational experience for the student.</p>	<p>Volunteer: Volunteers time, energy, and resources to identify school/classroom needs. Checks the school bulletin board or contacts the Parent Council for available opportunities. Asks teachers, "How can I help?" Parent follows the lead of the classroom and respects his/her classroom guidelines and processes.</p>

1.4 Class Directory

Each family will receive a copy of their child's class directory by e-mail. Please use your directory to arrange playtimes, send invitations, arrange carpools, etc. You may request an updated parent contact list from the front office at any time.

2.0 Admissions

Enrollment in our program is open to all families of our community. We operate on a non-discriminatory basis. No one shall be excluded from any of our programs because of race, color, religion, disability, sex, or national origin. Only the student's parent or legal guardian may enroll a student (proof of custody may be required). All forms provided to you upon enrollment must be completed before your child may attend Sundrops Montessori. All requested personal information is kept confidential. Parents are required to update all emergency data as needed, including address, home, cell, and work numbers and individuals authorized to pick up your child. Current immunization information must be submitted to the school upon enrollment, and all immunizations must be current. Parents will be required to comply with all state regulations and school rules as set forth in the Community Handbook

2.1 Enrollment Process

Applications will be accepted according to the following process:

1. Parents attend an open house or pre-scheduled tour of the Sundrops campus of their choice.
2. Parents complete an observation.
3. Parents submit their registration form and \$150.00 non-refundable registration/waitlist fee to the admissions personnel.
4. Students will then be accepted into the Sundrops program of choice, or their name will be placed on the waitlist if there are currently no available spaces.

New Sundrops openings are filled from the waitlist with applications submitted during the open enrollment period. Children who are not selected during this time will remain on the waitlist.

Sundrops Montessori School accepts students in the following order:

1. Current students
2. Siblings of students currently enrolled
3. New enrollees with prior Montessori experience
4. All other new enrollees

2.2 Sibling Preference

Sibling preference is granted to the families who currently have a student enrolled at Sundrops Montessori School. However, it is important to remember that we can grant this preference only if there is availability in the desired program. Sundrops Montessori School will do our best to accommodate you as close to your desired start date as possible.

To receive sibling preference in all programs, we ask that you submit an application as soon as possible.

Please note that sibling preference will not be given to families who do not re-enroll their students with Sundrops Montessori School.

2.3 Classroom Placement

The final decision for the classroom placement is made in the best interest of the student by the admissions team. Changes in classroom assignments will only be made if the well-being of the student or program is being seriously affected and there is an opening available in another classroom.

2.4 Age Requirements

1. Students entering the Nido program must be 6 weeks old.
2. Students entering the Pee Wee program must be 13/14 months old.
3. Students entering the Wee Casa program must be 2 years old and walking steadily.
4. Students entering the Casa program must be 3 years old by the time of enrollment if new to the school and **MUST** be toilet trained. Students referred from the Wee Casa program must be toilet trained at the time of transfer.

3.0 Programs & Curriculum

Nido

The word Nido is Italian for “nest.” The Nido environment focuses on the basic needs of the infant, a safe bonded relationship between the caregivers and the child, respecting each individual child and the development of the child’s increasing sense of self and independence. The simplicity and order of our Nido environments allow for safe exploration and discovery of the world around them.

Trust is a basic need that must be nurtured in the young child. Our trained caregivers respectfully respond to the needs of each child and when doing so,

3.0 Programs & Curriculum Cont'd

this builds a relationship between the two and sends the message to the child that he is unconditionally loved and accepted.

In our Nido environment we believe in freedom of movement. You will not find children constrained in contraptions, rather you will see the infant placed on their back exploring the environment around them. They can move in a natural way and when they are ready. Our floor beds allow for the mobile infant to wake and move off the bed when ready.

Feeding in our Nido environment is done in a respectful way. The infant that is bottle-fed is held close and given undivided attention while drinking the bottle. The child that is sitting up on his own will sit at a small table, drinking from a mini glass and eating off a real plate.

Our infants have an outside area where they can get out, have fresh air and enjoy the trees and sounds of nature. They also have stroller rides at the track at the Township of Mount Pleasant.

Pee Wee & Wee Casa

The Classroom Environment

Our Pee Wee and Wee Casa classrooms are designed for children ages 13/14 to 36 months. These are environments that are set up to entice our little ones to explore in a classroom where everything they need is at their level. Here, your child paints, waters the plants, sweeps with miniature brooms, cleans up spills and works with materials that develop fine and gross motor coordination as well as focus and concentration.

Fostering Independence

“Help me to do it by myself.” Very young children working toward independence in eating, dressing and toileting are really working toward what they want to do. We consider each child as an individual, allowing them to go at his or her own pace to achieve independence. Snacks are set out for children to serve themselves when they are hungry and tiny pitchers of water with cups are given so they can pour themselves a glass of water when thirsty. Everything your child does in his or her environment encourages and fosters independence.

3.0 Programs & Curriculum Cont'd

Respect For Your Child

Our program is prominent by the way we approach your child with respect. We believe in assisting your child in becoming a self-sufficient member of our community where they have ownership of their environment.

Language Development

At this stage in a child's life, language development is on the cusp of explosion. It is vital that your child is surrounded by rich and stimulating conversation. A 20-month-old child, trying to put his shoe on, might be encouraged with "pull, use your muscles and push your foot in while you pull the tabs up." The toddler's mind absorbs the new vocabulary, which plants the seeds for reading, writing and self-expression later in life. It is always amazing to watch children of this age acquire so many new words.

Children at this age need to spend a lot of time outside. Our playground is equipped with climbing structures that are developmentally appropriate, found under beautiful trees that provide shade to the play area.

Casa

Children from 3 to 6 years old possess what Dr. Montessori called the absorbent mind. This gives them the ability to absorb all aspects of their culture and environment with very little effort. The environment has five distinct areas of study: practical life, sensorial, language, mathematics, and cultural studies.

Other subjects such as art, Spanish, biology, botany, zoology, and music are presented as extensions of the sensorial and language activities. Children learn about people and cultures, giving them a connection to the global human family.

Our teachers follow the child through their experience of the classroom environment. Based on their observations, they develop an individualized lesson plan that best suits the child's interests. This learning process allows the children to have choices regarding their education, fostering confidence and independence.

3.0 Programs & Curriculum Cont'd

The 3-Year Learning Cycle

We encourage parents to allow their children to complete the full 3-year cycle in the Montessori classroom to see fruition of the Montessori method.

1. **First Year** - student is adapting to the prepared environment. Lessons will be given to develop skills in concentration, sequencing, attention span, memory skills, auditory and visual discrimination, coordination, language, and socialization.
2. **Second Year** - the student begins to work more in-depth with letters, numbers, and the writing. The “passageway to abstraction” begins to unfold.
3. **Third Year** - brings fruition from the 1st and 2nd year. Further development of reading and writing skills. The child becomes more confident and conscious of his knowledge and is ready to move on to primary school.

Elementary

The Sundrops Elementary Program offers a unique and intimate setting that fosters confidence and growth through an authentic Montessori education.

During this stage of development, children become conceptual rather than sensorial explorers. They develop a greater understanding of abstraction and imagination. At this time the style of learning moves into research-based work that often occurs in small groups.

The teacher’s role is to guide students in a way that enables them to utilize their intrinsic motivation to learn. Elementary teachers use the “Five Great Lessons” as a way to explain grand concepts and the integration of different subjects. The students are drawn to these lessons, sparking their interest in the various disciplines that stem from each specific story.

An experiential approach infuses the Montessori curriculum to provide concrete experiences, including frequent outings into the community. Near the end of the three-year cycle, lower elementary students will naturally move towards more abstract work, problem solving and real-life

3.0 Programs & Curriculum Cont'd

application of their learning, which is the foundation of the upper elementary curriculum.

The Sundrops Elementary curriculum covers many disciplines, such as language, mathematics, science, and history. Studies are also enriched with Spanish, music, art, and yoga that are integrated into the school day and through weekly special area classes. Practical life, gardening and handwork are an integral part of each work cycle and help the students learn to care for living things and hone their fine motor skills. The classroom space extends to an outdoor learning environment where students are free to do their work.

Montessori's Cosmic Curriculum is intended to help students develop into peaceful, conscientious citizens. It allows them to cultivate their sense of being and connectedness to all things in our universe. This simple but crucial concept is the foundation for the entire method of education and helps to integrate and connect all subject matters within a student's environment.

Adolescent

Mezzo Montessori addresses the unique needs of the middle-schooler. Adolescents are going through the most profound changes in their life since infancy. Many adults look back at adolescence as a time to survive or just "get through." It does not have to be that way! We address needs by working with the whole child and not just ramping up academics as can be the case in traditional middle school.

The most important goal for each student is to reach valorization of their personality. This is Montessori's term for an adolescent gradually realizing she is capable and useful. Rising to meet expectations, having appropriate responsibilities and building character via learning from mistakes, all lead to a strong and worthy person. Middle school can be a turbulent time when children are so unsure of themselves and who they should be. Montessori's primary goal is to help them understand how amazing they are and guide them to finding how important and vital they are to the community.

All the design of the classroom and work is to help adolescents connect with seven vital drives of humans in this plane of development. Deep

3.0 Programs & Curriculum Cont'd

connection, need for solitude, meaning and purpose, joy and delight, creative outlets, transcendence and initiation; all are necessary gateways that assist the adolescent in becoming comfortable in their role and how they fit in. By making a safe place for adolescents to be themselves and try new things, the Montessori Mezzo classroom fosters acceptance of who they are and minimizes the worry of who they are not.

The Erdkiner (farm) program is a carefully constructed environment allowing for living on the land and learning self-sufficiency. The small community at the farm requires every student to play a role in order for it to succeed.

Additionally, students will have to step out of their comfort zone to try tasks they may have never imagined before. Through the farm, a connection to the land develops as well as a responsibility to the environment. With the success and growth of the farm, a micro-economy develops. Students make decisions about what to do with resources and how altering choices alters profits. Collectively, they decide what their values and goals are, and then run the farm to meet those goals.

Academically, we incorporate our Erdkinder experiences into learning opportunities as often as possible. Using garden bed plans for area math and germination rates all connect the math to the work at hand. In language, we study great novels and themes. Science units follow larger quarterly themes and often are project based. Social Studies employs parallel paths of group lessons and historical novel dissections to accomplish a more well-rounded understanding of the material. The students also have Spanish, art, music, and coding to round out their academics.

Adolescents want to know how they fit in with those immediately around them and the greater world at large. These pressing concerns are foremost in their minds as academics become a secondary concern. It is the responsibility of the environment and guide to help the adolescents to discover their answers in a safe and challenging manner. A student who completes their adolescent years at Sundrops will be secure in the knowledge of who they are and how they fit in the world. Then a whole, well-rounded young man or woman will emerge, ready for the rigor of high school and occupational pursuits.

3.1 Program Overview

Sundrops programs span infants (6 weeks) through Adolescence (9th grade). The Bridge Campus accommodates students 6 weeks to 15 years old, while the Daniel Island and Palmetto Campuses support students 6 weeks to 6 years old. Depending upon the age of your child, the program includes a daily schedule of community circle time, educational work cycles, free play, snacks, lunch, rest time and enrichment programs and activities.

Sundrops' curriculum is based upon the principles of the Montessori Method of education. Nationally recognized Montessori Teacher Training Centers certify our teachers. The curriculum is an integrated holistic approach to learning and includes:

Practical Life	Writing	Storytelling	Community Service
Sensorial	Reading	Imaginative Play/Drama	Spanish
Art	Science	Geography	Yoga
Physical Education	Music	Outside Play	Botany
Mathematics	Gardening	Food Preparation/Cooking	Zoology
Language Development	Animal Care	Global Awareness	

Additional enrichment activities are available depending upon your child's program and campus. Other enrichment programs will be available for an additional fee.

3.2 Normalization

Normalization occurs during the first 8-9 weeks and is a crucial time for the class to establish their routine, comfort level, and build their internal community. It is important that there be as few interruptions as possible during this period. This is the time that the students are establishing or re-establishing bonds with their peers and teachers and becoming accustomed to the freedom of movement in class. It allows them to build their self-confidence in their space. Once

3.2 Normalization Cont'd

normalization has taken place in the classroom, parent observations and volunteers are welcome.

Parents can directly support normalization by:

1. Driving the same route to school every day.
2. Arriving on time in the morning.
3. Parents should not enter the classroom. Goodbyes should be said at the door before the student enters the classroom.
4. Saying goodbye at the same place each day.
5. Picking up at the same time every day.

3.3 Parent Pals

The Sundrops parent pals are the hub of our community. With parents participating as few as 2 hours each month, we can make real and lasting improvements to the environment and atmosphere in which our students are educated. The following are descriptions of the various areas in which we can concentrate our energies in an organized fashion.

Each classroom will establish committees to assist the teacher with various activities including group socials, playground beautification, special events, field trips, etc.

Reading

It has proven to be an asset to our students when parents come in weekly and listen to them read in their school environment. Sound work is also a beneficial avenue for the younger students. Our Casa students will be working on perfecting their sound work and reading skills, so any extra individual attention gives them great incentive. Following a brief orientation, this program asks for consistent participation.

Events

The purpose of this group is to organize and implement the special events held on behalf of the school. Coordinating these events takes time and organization. Our parent council will formalize the concept and call upon this group to help make it all happen. We love having socials and events to enable the parent community to bond and share insights, experiences, and fun!

3.3 Parent Pals Cont'd

Gardening

The outdoor environment needs to be beautiful and attractive to students as well as the indoor environment. If you are interested in digging, planting, and generally getting dirty, this is the group for you.

Materials

The parents in this group wield scissors and gather articles to prepare materials for the environment. Projects will vary, but will include jobs such as cutting, pasting, and sewing to name a few. Most projects require no meeting time, and the teachers will leave materials in parent boxes with instructions for the project.

Outreach and Environmental

The students will be learning that they can make a huge impact on the environment and in peoples' lives. We will be recycling, conserving resources, and gathering items to help others. These will be on-going projects that we will need assistance in organizing, gathering, and delivering items.

Volunteers

We always welcome volunteers! Let us know in what capacity you would like to volunteer so that we can organize your visit. We will review some guidelines for being in the students' environment and aid in making the most of your time. When you are working as a volunteer, wear comfortable, washable, loose clothing.

3.4 Parent Resources

When you enroll your child in our school, we assume the responsibility of giving you assistance with special needs in relation to your child's school adjustment, growth, and development. The following are a list of resources:

1. Parent Education Workshops
2. Reference Library
3. Special Services Referral List
4. Support Specialist Consultant

3.5 Food Program & Nutrition

A healthy, balanced diet is essential to the students' development and their concentration. A nutritious breakfast is a great way to start the day; one consisting of proteins and carbohydrates rather than complex sugars.

3.5 Food Program & Nutrition Cont'd

Lunches

If you choose to pack your child's lunch, please send in a balanced and nutritious meal. **We ask that you do not pack sugary items in your child's school lunch.** If your child's teacher finds sweets in their lunch, they will pack them back in the lunch box to return home with the student. Include all necessary items: napkins (preferably cloth), straws, spoons, condiments, etc. If your child has a microwavable meal, please make sure it is in an appropriate container. Please do not send any meals that will need to be heated up for more than 2 minutes. Make sure your child's lunch boxes and containers are labeled and use an ice pack for preservation.

We also offer a 5-day per week lunch program at participating campuses. Parents will utilize an online ordering program to place lunch orders on a weekly or monthly basis. Lunches will be organic or natural, well-rounded, and nutritious meals that consist of an entree, sides, and water. Additional information about the ordering process and specific monthly menus will be sent out by email throughout the school year. Our lunch program is through Food For Thought. For more information, please visit their website: www.foodforthoughtcharleston.com

Snacks

At Sundrops, your child/children will receive two snacks each day, one in the morning and one in the afternoon. They will consist of organic or natural, wholesome ingredients including: fruits, vegetables, yogurt, dips, hummus, cheese, etc. If you have any special dietary needs, please be sure to inform your child's teacher and the administration so that we can accommodate them. Please also write this information on your student's DSS Form 2900 that will be emailed to you by Sundrops. You may also opt to bring in your child's snack, if you have specific foods you would like your child to have. If your student stays for the full day program, a late day snack will also be served.

3.6 Rest Time

There will be an allocated 30 minutes of rest time for the students in the afternoon. This is a time to reflect and recharge before the second work cycle. If your child naps, accommodations will be made to ensure he/she is able to sleep.

All nap mats must be able to be wiped down with a disinfectant daily. Sundrops Montessori uses yoga mats that are 4mm thick because this allows the child to independently roll up their own mat after rest. These yoga mats are also easy to clean and may be utilized in different ways. Your child's guide will provide more information about rest time in their welcome letter.

If your child is unable to sleep, once the state mandated 30 minutes of rest time is over, we will invite your student to a guided craft or story time, but nothing that our resting children would miss out on.

3.7 Outside Time

Our program includes a variety of regular outdoor activities. Free play, games, gardening, sand play, nature walks, story time, water work and picnics are some of the outdoor activities in which students will participate. If you feel your child needs to remain inside and is unable to join his or her classmates, he or she is probably not well enough to be at school. If your child has special needs for outdoor activities, please inform your child's teacher, as well as the school administration. Children should be properly dressed for the weather, so that they may adventure outside as regularly as possible. Children are not expected to play outside during inclement weather. We will make sure hats, coats and mittens that are sent to school are put on the students during winter months. Please remember to apply sunscreen as well as bug spray to your child during high exposure months.

3.8 Birthdays

We celebrate birthdays by displaying a poster board or visual timeline of the student from birth to present with photos of the student at each stage. We have a ceremony where the earth travels around the sun as many times as the student's age to help facilitate the concept. The students love this event and enjoy seeing their friends' timeline. We do permit a healthy birthday snack or activity to celebrate the student's birthday. Suggestions include fruit muffins, fresh fruit, and sugar-free popsicles.

4.0 General Policies & Procedures

Family–School Partnership

Sundrops Montessori School is built upon a partnership between families and the school community. Successful Montessori education depends on mutual trust, respectful communication, and shared commitment to the wellbeing and development of each child.

Enrollment at Sundrops Montessori signifies a family’s agreement to support the school’s educational philosophy, policies, and community expectations. Families who find that the school’s approach or policies no longer align with their expectations may determine that another educational environment would better meet their needs.

4.1 Arrival & Dismissal

Parents are not permitted to leave their child on school premises outside of each campus’ business hours. We ask that students arrive between the time the school opens and when class starts. After the students are greeted and have put their items away, they will enter the classroom and begin work. We recommend that when a parent is dropping off a student, they make their “goodbye” as brief as possible. A prolonged farewell can create uncertainty and difficulty in separating from the parent. Work cycle begins at 8:30 am in the Pee Wee, Wee Casa and Casa programs. All teachers will be engaged with the students and their tasks at this time. **Students arriving after 9:00 am must have prior notification due to an appointment or other necessary circumstance.**

Nido Program: Please have your student here by 10:30 AM in order for the Nido program to begin. The teachers and the front office must have a prior notification if your child will be arriving after 10:30 AM.

Pee Wee, Wee Casa & Casa: Please have your student here by 8:30 AM in order for the Casa program to begin. The teachers and the front office must have prior notification if your child will be arriving after 8:30 AM.

Elementary Program: Please have your student here by 8:00 AM in order for the Elementary program to begin. The teachers and the front office must have prior notification if your child will be arriving after 8:30 AM.

Adolescent Program: Please have your student here by 7:30 AM in order for the Adolescent program to begin.

4.1 Arrival & Dismissal Cont'd

When you drop your child off at school, please be sure to make direct eye contact with the staff member who is checking students in. This is to ensure your child's safety. If there is no recognition between the parent and assigned staff member, then we cannot be sure that the school is aware that your child has entered the building.

4.2 Drop-off & Pick-up

Bridge Campus/Daniel Island Campus/Palmetto Campus

- Doors open at 7:30 AM.
- Nido/Pee Wee/Wee Casa/Casa programs begin at 8:30 AM.
- Elementary program begins at 8:00 AM and ends at 3:00 PM (Bridge Campus only).
- Adolescent program begins at 7:30 AM and ends at 3:00 PM (Bridge Campus only).
- Half-day pick-up is between 11:45 AM - 12:00 PM. **If you pick up after 12:00 PM you will incur a \$40.00 drop-in fee.**
- Birth thru 6: School-day pick-up is between 2:45 PM - 3:00 PM.
- Elementary pick-up is between 3:00 PM - 3:15 PM. **If you pick up after 3:15 PM you will incur a \$40.00 drop-in fee.**
- After school program begins at 3:15 PM. **If you pick up after 3:15 PM you will incur a \$40.00 drop-in fee.**
- Late pick-up fee: **If picked up after hours (after 5:30 PM) you will incur a fee of \$40.00 plus \$5.00 per minute, per child, that you are late after 5:30 PM.**

4.3 Aftercare & Late Pick-Up

Aftercare

In order to drop into the aftercare program, you will need to call or email the front office to first find out if there is availability in the program. There may be days and times that we must refuse any extra aftercare friends due to staffing and/or ratios. **Parents must notify the front office if they are interested in utilizing aftercare. Students may not stay on campus without staff awareness and authorization.**

4.3 Aftercare & Late Pick-Up Cont'd

Late Pick-Up

-Half-day pick-up is between 11:45 AM - 12:00 PM. **If you pick up after 12:00 PM you will incur a \$40.00 drop-in fee.**

-School-day pick-up is between 3:00 PM - 3:15 PM for our elementary students and between 2:45 PM - 3:00 PM for our birth thru 6 students. **If you pick-up after 3:15 PM you will incur a drop-in fee of \$40.00.**

-After school program begins at 3:15 PM. **If you pick-up after 3:15 PM you will incur a \$40.00 drop-in fee.**

-Late pick-up fee: **If picked up after hours (after 5:30 PM) you will incur a fee of \$40.00 plus \$5.00 per minute after 5:30 PM, per child.**

4.4 Drop-Off Routine

Sometimes parents find drop-off time more difficult than their children do. Having a set routine in place will help make the transition smooth for everyone and help the normalization processes. Be sure to make eye contact with the teacher or assistant in order to be certain that it is known that your child has arrived and be accounted for by Sundrops.

Parents should drop off at the designated area and at the designated time. This will make for an easy transition into the classroom, leaving the student feeling safe and secure. Starting the day together, as a group, helps build a sense of community and helps the students feel secure. Arriving on time also reinforces being respectful, polite, and considerate of others. If a student arrives to the classroom late, it disrupts the other students and the teachers in the classroom, and it can also make it difficult for the late-arriving student to enter the classroom alone. Again, not disturbing a student's sense of order will help with normalization.

4.5 Pick-Up Routine

Parents should pick up at the designated times during the regularly scheduled business hours at each campus. Once you have retrieved your child, the student is considered in your care and not in the care of the teachers at Sundrops Montessori School.

Parents are expected to pick up their student and leave the facility in a timely manner. Staying to allow your child to play at school is strictly prohibited. Sundrops asks that prolonged conversations between parents and play dates with students occur off campus so as not to disturb the students in Sundrops programs.

4.6 Communications

We are always available to discuss your child with you. Your first line of communication is with your teacher as it relates to your child. If your discussion requires more time, please schedule an appointment so that you have our undivided attention.

Email

Please use email for general information and reminders to the administration and your child's teacher. If you have specific questions or concerns, please do not communicate about them through email, instead schedule a meeting or call the appropriate person.

Parents will receive updates and reminders from their teachers and administration through email. The school's Assistant Director will send out weekly office notes with any general reminders, upcoming event information, etc. Your child's teacher will also communicate through email and will update parents weekly on classroom events, activities, and projects.

Website

Sundrops will use the www.sundropsmontessori.com website as a vehicle for the academic/events calendar to notify parents and students of events at Sundrops as well as specific projects and events in which we are involved. This calendar will also be available via email, upon request.

Monthly Calendars

Parents will receive an emailed copy of the events and projects planned for the upcoming month. This is the Cosmic Curriculum calendar used for our birth thru 6 programs.

Weekly Notes

At the end of each week, we will email our office notes. This will include reminders about events, educational tidbits and more. Weekly notes from your student's teacher will also be emailed to parents. If you would like a hard copy, please request one from your campus/teacher.

Parent/Teacher Conferences

Parent/teacher conferences will be held twice per year. The fall conference will be scheduled in October/November and the spring conference is to be scheduled in March/April. Each teacher will arrange their own parent/teacher conference schedule and post the sign-up sheet to their classroom account.

4.7 In-Class Observations

Observing the student in the classroom prior to conferences provides parents and teachers with a common experience leading up to individual conferences. In order for students to have time to normalize, we ask that observations be scheduled for classes as follows:

-Elementary & Casa Beginning in October

A sign-up for observations will be provided via your classroom account. Parents may schedule an observation at other times by emailing the teachers. Keep in mind that your presence in the classroom can be somewhat disruptive to the students' routine. To keep things running smoothly, we ask that you take the time to review and understand our observation protocol (described below) in advance of your classroom time.

1. Observe during the morning work cycle (8:30 - 10:30 AM).
2. Observe quietly in the observation chairs provided.
3. Resist the urge to interact with the students so they will work naturally.
4. Record any questions or thoughts (clipboard and pen will be provided).
5. Respect the privacy of other students' work pace and space.

When the students transition to lunchtime between 11:00 and 11:30 AM, the teacher will be available to talk with you about your observation. You may also share your questions or thoughts at that time. Alternatively, you can email your questions to the teachers.

4.8 Classifications

Due to strict licensing guidelines and safety issues, we require that all individuals on our property be categorized as one of the following:

1. A scheduled employee during the regular course of their workday.
2. A child who is in our care (all paperwork has been filled out).
3. Parents or others during the course of regular drop-off or pick-up (this is to be approximately 15 minutes).
4. Support personnel: pre-qualified personnel including visiting therapists, enrichment teachers and professional consultants.
5. Delivery personnel: from a regular or expected company delivering items to the center (should be in eyesight of an employee at all times and arriving at an expected time).

4.8 Classifications Cont'd

6. Visitors: must be approved by the office and should be accompanied by an employee at all times. Visitors should not exceed more than once per month and be limited to a maximum of two hours.
7. Volunteer: anyone who is helping with a class party or in any other capacity or anyone who has been a "visitor" for more than once a month or for over two hours.
8. An intruder: An uninvited person in the facility - action will be taken by the staff to notify the proper authorities.

4.9 Volunteers

Any parent wishing to help chaperone an event must attend a meeting prior to the date of the field trip in order to be included on the agenda for the event.

When chaperoning a field trip with Sundrops we will ask you to:

1. Please arrive at the school with plenty of gas in your car for the trip.
2. Please give your drivers license and insurance paperwork to the office to copy and keep on file.
3. Speak to your teacher to find out who will be riding with you.
4. Parents are responsible for installing their students car seat for you.
5. On the way to the field trip, we ask that you only drive from the school to the field trip location and back again. No side trips please.
6. Once you arrive at the field trip destination, please meet up with your teacher and the rest of the group to find out the agenda for the trip.
7. During the course of the tour, please remember that you need to supervise the children who were assigned to ride with you and not just your own child.
8. Please, no cell phone usage and limit the amount of socializing with other chaperones. It is important to be alert to ensure the safety of the children.
YOU ARE THERE TO SUPERVISE.
9. Listen to the presentations and enjoy your time with the children. You may be surprised by what you learn!

Volunteers are welcome in our center. Any "visitor" who spends extended periods of time in the center will be considered a "volunteer."

4.10 Parent Code of Conduct

Some of the most important principles upon which Sundrops Montessori is founded and the basis for school rules that students at school are expected to follow, are respect for others and personal responsibility. Parents play a formative role in the development of their child's sense of justice, equality, and the dignity and worth of all members of our school community. As one of the most influential role models in a child's life, one of the ways for a parent to teach is to lead by example. Accordingly, Sundrops Montessori expects the behavior of each parent and responsible adult with students enrolled at our school to adhere to the standards of conduct set forth below.

When visiting or volunteering at the school, parents should observe all rules of the school, including checking in at the office.

1. If a parent feels that the actions of another student have infringed upon the rights of his or her child, under no circumstances shall the parent or guardian approach the student while at school to discuss or chastise them. The parents may approach the classroom teacher to seek a peaceful resolution to the situation. All issues must be dealt with through the school in the appropriate manner. Please do not approach the student's parents directly.
2. When a parent voices concern about a student other than their own, a report will be made by the teacher and the parent of the child in question will be notified of these concerns.
3. If a parent has questions or issues relating to the classroom or a class, they should first be addressed directly to the staff member in question. Parents are requested to set up a private meeting where their concerns can be discussed and the actions giving rise to such concern explained.
4. All communications regarding issues with other parents or staff at the school or school events shall remain respectful and address the issues at hand. Yelling, taunting, threatening, or abusive behavior, cursing, foul language, or derogatory remarks are not acceptable means of communication. Parents are expected to resolve issues through calm dialogue between the parties directly involved while respecting the dignity of others.
5. Parents shall protect the reputation and good name of people involved. Problems, differences of opinion and personality clashes are not resolved by involving other people in the disagreement or by taking sides in the argument. Problems should not be casually discussed with other parents

4.10 Parent Code of Conduct Cont'd

6. in the school but should be dealt with one on one with the person or persons with whom the parent has an issue.
7. It is easy for opinion to be mistaken for fact and rumors to be perpetuated by inaccurate information. Parents are expected to approach the relevant personnel within the school to verify the factual basis of a story, should they have any questions. This approach can quickly and simply clarify the events in question and the intent involved and will minimize inaccurate information being passed throughout the community.
8. Parents are expected and required to follow policy 4.11, Parent Conflict Resolution, in order to resolve an issue with staff members at Sundrops Montessori School. This policy requires that the issue first be addressed with the staff member directly and an attempt be made to resolve the conflict. If the parent does not reach a satisfactory resolution, they shall proceed through the appropriate supervisory personnel, as necessary.
9. The following guidelines should be followed during a tour or observation:
 - a. Sit quietly in the chair provided (or on the floor). The greeter in the room will show you the location of the observation chair. You may observe from different areas of the classroom. Please move about quietly.
 - b. As you observe the children's work, do not interrupt them or ask them questions. If a child comes to you to ask a question or initiate a conversation, you may respond, but please end the conversation politely and allow the child to return to his/her work.
 - c. You will notice the "quiet voices" of everyone in the room. Please speak softly as well.
10. It is important to note that Sundrops Montessori School will not provide references of any kind for personal or professional reasons.

4.10 Parent Code of Conduct Cont'd

Public Conduct, Reputation & Community Protection

Sundrops Montessori School is a private educational institution that relies upon a respectful partnership between families and the school community.

Parents agree to:

- Address concerns through the established conflict resolution process outlined in Section 4.11 before escalating matters publicly.
- Refrain from posting or publishing defamatory, misleading, or confidential information regarding the school, its staff, students, or families on social media, review platforms, online forums, or other public channels.
- Refrain from recording, photographing, or distributing images, video, or audio of students, staff, or school activities without prior authorization.
- Refrain from organizing or participating in conduct that disrupts school operations, undermines staff authority, or damages the integrity of the school community.

Concerns should first be addressed directly with the appropriate school personnel so that they may be reviewed and resolved through the school's established procedures.

Violation of this policy may be considered a material breach of the Parent Code of Conduct and may result in restriction of campus access, suspension of privileges, or termination of enrollment at the sole discretion of Sundrops Montessori School.

Disruptive or Harassing Conduct

The following behaviors may result in immediate restriction of campus access and/or termination of enrollment:

- Harassment, intimidation, or threatening communication directed toward staff or other families;
- Use of elusive, hostile, or defamatory language;
- Recording staff or students without authorization;

4.10 Parent Code of Conduct Cont'd

- Coordinating complaints in a manner that interferes with school operations;
- Public accusations made without verified factual basis;
- Contacting outside agencies in bad faith for the purpose of harassment or retaliation.
- Coordinating complaints or communications in a manner intended to pressure, intimidate, or disrupt school administration or staff.

Sundrops Montessori reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to determine when conduct rises to a level that constitutes disruption, harassment, or reputational harm.

4.11 Parent Conflict Resolution

The directors and staff at Sundrops Montessori School recognize the desire of the parent body to have a voice in the educational process of their children. The following procedure is to help facilitate a positive learning environment in which good problem-solving skills are utilized and modeled for our students. When a conflict arises between a parent and a staff member of Sundrops, the following steps should be taken; the issue must not be discussed with other parents or staff in the school but should be dealt with one on one.

Most problems can be resolved in this manner:

1. The parent should arrange a meeting with the staff member to discuss his/her concerns and attempt to come to a mutually agreed upon solution.
2. If a mutually agreed upon conclusion is not reached, the parent may arrange a meeting with the Director of Sundrops Montessori School. In this meeting the parent should discuss the attempts that have been made to settle the problem with the staff member. The Director, at her discretion, may invite the staff member to be present.
3. If there is still no closure, the parent may request a meeting with the Sundrops Board in executive session by contacting the Director of Education, Ms. Shannon Smith. The staff member and parent may be present at this meeting. This meeting is private and will be held in executive session. The decision of the Sundrops Board is final, and the conflict will be considered resolved. The Board's decision does not limit the school's authority to terminate enrollment pursuant to the Enrollment Agreement.

4.12 Clothing, Personal Items & Lost and Found

PLEASE LABEL ALL CLOTHING AND PERSONAL ITEMS- THIS WILL HELP KEEP MISSING ITEMS TO A MINIMUM.

Clothing

Have your child wear comfortable, washable, functional clothing. Shoes that are good for indoor and outdoor activity help prevent injury, such as athletic style shoes. It is important for students to feel responsible for themselves, so please make sure your child's clothing is easy for him/her to manage. LABEL ALL STUDENTS' CLOTHING. On the first day of school please send in a change of clothes to remain at school until needed. Accidents will happen even with older students; it saves embarrassment and time if the student has their own clothes to change into. Be sure to replace the extra set of clothes when they come home with a soiled outfit or when the season/weather changes.

Personal Items/Accessories

Personal items such as toys, games, sunglasses, etc. are not ALLOWED to be brought into school. Many students will end up losing or breaking their toy, not necessarily of their own accord. This causes undue upset for the students. On occasions where a student wants to share a special item with the rest of the class, please request this opportunity from the student's teacher.

Lost and Found

Although we are not responsible for lost items, we will maintain a Lost & Found basket. Every few months we will donate the items to Goodwill. Communication will go out to parents before this happens, so you are able to check for missing items.

4.13 Field Trip Policy

Sundrops will have a combination of in-school and out of school field trips which we coordinate with a unity of study. To enable your child to participate in the field trips, please sign the permission forms provided upon notification of each scheduled field trip. For off-campus field trips, we will generally utilize transportation provided by Coastal Bus Lines (big yellow bus) or other professional transportation companies. Parent volunteers are helpful to make each out of school experience is as safe as possible. Teachers will post updates and sign-up sheets so that parents may volunteer to chaperone for the field trips. Once you sign yourself up as a chaperone, it is important to understand that you are chaperoning the group, not just your student. In order to be a chaperone, you will need to attend a mandatory meeting that will outline your responsibilities for the field trip you have signed up for. If you do not attend the meeting, you will

4.13 Field Trip Policy Cont'd

automatically be removed as a chaperone for that trip. We will also have a check list for accounting for the loading and unloading of the students at every location. As per DSS regulations, a parent may only drive his/her own student to an off-campus field trip. If a teacher is present to ride in the car of a parent, this parent will be approved to transport unrelated students as well.

4.14 Technology Use at The School

The use of technology for the viewing of online content in the classroom by students and/or the teacher is pre-authorized by the program coordinator and/or the Director. The type of content viewed is for educational purposes only and supports the curriculum. The use of video and audio recording within the classroom is for the sole purpose of training and for observation for use by the teachers, Directors, Board and/or therapeutic specialists or consultants.

4.15 Confidentiality

According to Federal Law, all student and staff information, records and/or documentation will be held confidential. Any person or agency requesting access to or information about an individual student or staff member will be informed of this confidentiality process. The following information is to be regarded as confidential, but is not limited to name, address, telephone number, progress notes, medical records, assessments, evaluations, and hourly or salary wages.

4.16 Individual Learning Styles & Differences

Sundrops Montessori School, in line with the Montessori philosophy, recognizes and honors the unique pace and abilities of each student. Sundrops wishes to be responsive to a student's specific needs, including one with learning differences or diagnosed disabilities that may require special support.

Early Remediation

Sundrops actively accommodates students that may learn differently when supported by an honest, cooperative parent-teacher-student relationship, and when needed, an additional support program. It is at the discretion of the school to assess the overall impact of additional therapeutic support for students in the classroom's learning community. This support is subject to additional fees. There are options for funding through insurance, the state and other charitable grant organizations, if available. In some cases, students exhibit behavioral issues that are a result of a developmental delay (i.e., the ability to communicate), a sensory challenge or an emotional issue. These are all best served through early detection, assessment, and intervention. All evidence suggests that it translates

4.16 Individual Learning Styles & Differences Cont'd

into positive outcomes in terms of self-image, independence, and competence in the elementary years and beyond.

Student Retention

In the best interests of the student, the teacher, and the school's ability to support the family, the parents are expected to inform the school if their child has a previously diagnosed learning challenge, behavioral issue, or other disorder. The parents are expected to provide to the school any information that will better enable the school to support the student, including, but not limited to:

1. Individual Education Program (IEP)
2. Medical records
3. Assessments
4. Therapeutic notes

Sundrops Montessori School does not diagnose or label students. If the teacher identifies patterns of developmental challenges or learning issues, they will begin the consultation and referral process as outlined in the next section.

4.16.1 Consultation & Referral

It is our intention to provide an environment that supports the students' ability to thrive so that they can learn to their full potential. If the environment is not sufficient, the student may develop a diminished self-image and unproductive learning habits that can influence subsequent years of development. It is the school's intent to ensure that we clearly communicate any related concerns or observations to the parents in a conference or written communication.

If a student is having serious academic or behavioral difficulty, the following measures will be taken:

1. **Observations:** teachers will document these behaviors and solicit observations from the school Director and school specialists. Upon review of these observations and data, the team will meet with the parents for a conference.
2. **Referral:** if it is deemed necessary, Sundrops may recommend an evaluation from an independent professional or diagnostician to clarify the nature or source of the issue. Sundrops has a list of preferred professionals who work with families in the Montessori environment, however, the parents of the student have the sole discretion in selecting the professional or diagnostician, on a private

4.16.1 Consultation & Referral Cont'd

basis. Such an evaluation may be a prerequisite for the students' continued enrollment at Sundrops.

3. **Support Program:** the results of such an evaluation will be used to develop strategies to help the student, including support specialist(s), if necessary. If additional support services are required, a plan/program to meet the needs of the student will be discussed with the parents and will be coordinated through the Sundrops Program Coordinator.
4. Services will continue until the professional services specialist releases the student and the school assesses the student's progress. Ongoing enrollment may be dependent upon continuation of these services. Sundrops may also decide that the student's interests will be better served in a learning environment different from the one the school can offer. Sundrops has express authority, in its sole discretion, to require that the student be removed from the school.

4.17 Elementary Attendance Policy

In the Elementary classroom, being punctual and having consistent attendance is one of the steps that will set your child up for success. In a traditional classroom, lessons and work can be sent home, and can be completed by the student with help from the parent. In our environment, this is not possible as our students use specific materials and guides to give small, individualized lessons daily.

It is, therefore, very important that all efforts be made to remove the student from the classroom as little as possible. When a student is ill for a long period of time or when families take multiple vacations throughout the school year, the student loses momentum and sometimes needs extra time in the classroom to make up for the loss. Because of this, it is our policy that any student who has more than 20 days of accumulated absences in one academic year will be placed under review for retention. The guides will assess academic progress and will decide if retention is appropriate for the student.

Parents will be notified of absences in increments of 5: if a student has 10 absences, the guide will send an email home and parents will be expected to make arrangements to ensure the student's consistent attendance. After 10 unexcused absences, the guide will schedule a meeting with the Director of the Elementary Program and the student's parents in order to set a plan for the student's continued success in the environment, including a plan for regular

4.17 Elementary Attendance Policy Cont'd

attendance. If the goals of the plan are not met and the student has 20 absences or more, another meeting will be scheduled to discuss retention.

Punctuality is equally important to your child, as our day begins promptly with a meeting and an overview of the day. A student is considered tardy after attendance has been taken (8:00 AM). To emphasize the importance of being on time, every 4 tardies count for 1 absence.

5.0 Behavior Policy

5.1 Guidance & Discipline

We have parents sign a discipline policy alerting them that Sundrops Montessori School does not use or condone any form of corporal punishment. This document will be kept in each student's file. The goal is self-discipline, and we use several techniques to help students modify their own behavior. Occasionally, a student may disrupt the normalized atmosphere; when this occurs, the guide is responsible for redirecting the student's behavior in a positive manner. Based on the type of unacceptable behavior and if it continues or escalates, the following measure will be taken:

1. **Observe:** The teacher will make every attempt to see the situation from the student's point of view. At this point the teacher will ask the student questions to try and resolve the conflict. She will always involve the feelings of the student when trying to find a resolution.
2. **Discuss:** The teacher will attempt to ascertain the cause of the student's discord. Often a compromise can be met when the student is reasoned with at his/her level of capability. On occasion, a parent may receive an incident report, which is intended to keep you informed of any situations that have occurred. After 3 incident reports, both parents are required to attend a conference with the teacher/Director. Certain actions, such as fighting, will require a parent to be called to come to the school and take the student home for the day. Usually, conferences will follow such measures.
3. **Think Time:** If the student cannot compose or regulate himself or herself to the environment they will be asked to do "think time" in a designated area in the classroom. If they cannot regulate themselves in a timely manner the teacher or assistant may have to remove the student from the classroom until they can do so. Repeated incidents of this type of behavior will require a conference.

5.1 Guidance & Discipline Cont'd

4. **Conference:** Continued disruption will require a discussion as to the nature of the misbehavior. Communication between parents, teacher/Director and student is essential. The aim of these conferences is to suggest the best ways in which to deal with the disruption or behavior.
5. **Counseling and Referral:** When these conferences fail to successfully resolve a situation, we will be pleased to recommend a professional, however, the parents of the student have the sole discretion in selecting the professional or diagnostician, on a private basis. These professionals include, but are not limited to, the following areas of specialty: speech therapy, occupational therapy, behavioral and sensory integration and child psychology and/or psychiatry.
6. **Dismissal Authority:** Enrollment at Sundrops Montessori School is a privilege, not a right. Sundrops reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to suspend or terminate enrollment at any time when it determines that:
 - A student's behavior compromises safety or significantly disrupts the learning environment;
 - The school is unable to meet the student's needs;
 - Required outside support services are not obtained or maintained;
 - A breakdown in partnership between the school and family occurs;
 - A family fails to adhere to school policies or financial obligations;
 - Continued enrollment is not in the best interest of the student or the school community.

The school is not obligated to implement progressive discipline prior to dismissal and may determine the effective date of termination.

Nothing in this handbook creates a contractual right to continued enrollment.

Enrollment at Sundrops Montessori School is a privilege and not a guarantee of continued placement.

A material breach of the Parent Code of Conduct, including public disparagement, harassment, or disruptive behavior, may constitute grounds for immediate dismissal.

5.2 Guidelines for Behavior

Classroom

1. Treat others the way they wish to be treated.
2. Respect and take care of equipment and materials.
3. Walk and talk softly inside.
4. Interrupt by resting hand on person and waiting quietly for your turn to speak.

Bathroom

1. One person at a time.
2. Wait turns and use the facility in an orderly manner.
3. Use the toilet appropriately.
4. Wash hands when finished.

Lunch

1. Wash hands before eating.
2. Use good table manners (please, thank you, chewing with mouth closed, stay seated while eating, etc.).
3. Clean up after themselves. (Pack up lunch items, wipe table and clean chair and floor space).
4. Save candy and sweets for home.

Playground

1. Stay within the limits of the fenced-in playground.
2. No willful verbal or physical harm to others.
3. Playground equipment is to be used appropriately.

5.3 Unacceptable Behavior

Violent Behavior

1. Hitting, kicking, biting (See biting policy, 5.4), shoving, throwing objects, vandalism, etc.
2. Violent role-playing, including pretend gunplay.
3. Self-abuse or hurting oneself.

Verbal Behavior

1. Language that expresses disrespect for another person.
2. Abusive or inappropriate language.
3. Arguing with students and teachers in the community.

5.3 Unacceptable Behavior Cont'd

Disruptive Behavior

1. Running in the classroom.
2. Leaving the area or group without permission.
3. Lack of cooperation.

Bullying and Hazing

1. Bullying and hazing of any student by another student is not tolerated and can be cause for immediate dismissal from the school.

5.4 Biting Policy

Biting is a common and developmentally appropriate behavior in young children, especially from 9-30 months. Generally, children over the age of 3 have developed more appropriate ways to communicate. Experts in the field of child development report that biting occurs chiefly as a result of a student's incapacity to communicate. Children may become upset by a new experience and may bite as a response. While biting during the toddler years is developmentally appropriate, it is upsetting to parents and caregivers when it occurs. The goal of our policy is to replace the student's undesirable behavior with more effective ways of communication and to ensure the health and safety of everyone in our program. The following is a plan of our pre-emptive strategies:

1. For infants and toddlers, positive teething activities will be provided to comfort and soothe their gums.
2. When students bite out of frustration or anger, behavior will be redirected to some other activity and/or will be shown an alternate way to communicate what they want. We will encourage the use of language to express wants and needs.
3. Parents will be notified if their child is bitten at school. However, in order to protect the privacy of all of our families, parents will not be informed of the biter's name.
4. If a student bites frequently, staff will utilize a more intensive approach, which involves carefully observing the student to determine precipitating events and maintaining a log to help track the behavior. Conferences with parents may also be utilized to discuss the student's actions at home, search for outside resources, etc.
5. Biting incidents will be communicated to the parents of the biter to ensure staff and parents are working together to understand and prevent this behavior.

5.4 Biting Policy Cont'd

In order to ensure the safety of all students, if all attempts to stop chronic biting fail, we reserve the right to remove the biting student from the program.

5.5 Student Safety & Conduct - Elementary & Adolescent Programs

Sundrops Montessori School is committed to maintaining a safe, orderly, and respectful learning environment. Conduct that threatens the physical or emotional safety of students or staff will result in disciplinary action, up to and including suspension or dismissal.

The determination of whether a student's conduct compromises safety or the integrity of the learning environment shall be made solely by the School and shall be final.

The School may consider prior behavioral history, severity of conduct, and impact on the community in determining consequences.

A. Physical Aggression

Definition:

Physical aggression includes, but is not limited to:

- Hitting, kicking, slapping, pushing, or shoving
- Throwing objects at another person
- Tripping or physical intimidation
- Intentional destruction of property
- Threats of physical harm
- Possession or use of any object as a weapon

Disciplinary Action

Consequences will be determined based on severity, intent, and safety risk. Administration may accelerate disciplinary action at its discretion.

First Incident (Non-Injurious):

- Immediate removal from classroom
- Parent notification
- Same-day dismissal
- Suspension (1-3 days or longer)
- Behavioral contract
- Probationary enrollment
- Required outside evaluation at family expense
- Termination of enrollment

5.5 Student Safety & Conduct - Elementary & Adolescent Programs Cont'd

Second Incident

- Immediate removal from classroom
- Mandatory parent conference
- 1-3 day out-of-school suspension
- Written behavioral agreement required
- Re-entry meeting prior to return
- Continued enrollment is contingent upon the student's ability to participate safely.

Third Incident

- Immediate suspension
- Administrative review of enrollment
- Probationary status or required outside behavioral evaluation at family's expense
- Re-entry contingent upon documented support plan

The school reserves the right to terminate enrollment if safety cannot be reasonably assured.

Severe Conduct

The following may result in immediate suspension or dismissal regardless of prior history:

- Assault causing injury
- Credible threat of serious bodily harm
- Use of an object as a weapon
- Escalating pattern of violent behavior

Administration may bypass progressive discipline in cases of serious misconduct.

B. Verbal Aggression, Harassment & Bullying

Bullying and harassment include intentional, repeated, or significantly harmful behavior directed toward another student or staff member.

This includes:

- Threats or intimidation
- Name-calling or degrading language
- Targeted teasing

5.5 Student Safety & Conduct - Elementary & Adolescent Programs Cont'd

- Social exclusion intended to harm
- Spreading rumors
- Written or electronic harassment that impacts the school environment
- Discriminatory or biased remarks

All reports will be investigated at the discretion of administration.

Consequences may include:

- Parent notification
- Restorative measures
- Suspension
- Probation
- Termination of enrollment

Severe or targeted harassment may result in immediate suspension or dismissal.

C. Enrollment Status Following Serious Misconduct

Continued enrollment is contingent upon a student's ability to participate safely and appropriately in the learning environment.

The school may require outside therapeutic support as a condition of continued enrollment. Failure to comply may result in dismissal.

Disciplinary Process

All reports will be investigated. The school will determine whether conduct meets the definition of bullying or harassment.

First Verified Incident

- Parent notification
- Documentation
- Student conference
- Required restorative action
- Behavior expectations clearly outlined

Second Verified Incident

- Mandatory parent conference
- Possible 1-2 day suspension

5.5 Student Safety & Conduct - Elementary & Adolescent Programs Cont'd

- Written behavioral contract
- Re-entry meeting

Third Verified Incident

- Suspension
- Probationary status
- Possible termination of enrollment

Severe or Targeted Harassment

Immediate suspension or dismissal may occur in cases involving:

- Threats of violence
- Harassment based on protected characteristics
- Sustained pattern of targeted behavior
- Significant disruption to school environment

Administration retains sole discretion in determining appropriate disciplinary action.

Enrollment & Discretion Clause

Sundrops Montessori reserves the right to:

- Determine consequences based on individual circumstances
- Require outside evaluation or counseling at the family's expense
- Place a student on probation
- Terminate enrollment when a student's behavior compromises safety or the integrity of the learning environment

Nothing in this policy limits the school's authority to act immediately to protect students and staff.

The School's decisions regarding discipline, probation, suspension, or dismissal are administrative determinations and are not subject to appeal except as outlined in Section 4.11.

6.0 Health & Safety

6.1 Sending A Student Home

When it has been determined that a student must go home, the procedures are as follows:

1. If sick, the student must be sent home for a fever of 100.4 or higher, after two bouts with uncontrolled diarrhea, after vomiting or for any unexplainable rash or oozing sores.
2. Notify the parent.
3. If the parents are unable to be reached, proceed by contacting someone on the emergency pick-up list.
4. Thirty (30) minutes will be given to pick up the student. If the 30-minute time frame is exceeded, the late pick-up charge may go into effect.
5. For any student who has been sent home from school sick, you must have a note from the doctor stating that your child is healthy enough to return to school in close proximity to other students and teachers. This policy has been in place since we returned from the COVID leave in March of 2020.

6.2 When A Child Can Return

These guidelines are recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Public Health Association. These guidelines will be observed unless your child has a doctor's release that specifically re-admits them to the school prior to the guidelines listed below.

Fever Free Must be fever free for 24 hours with the exception of an ear infection. In case of an ear infection, the student may return after treatment of antibiotics has started and a doctor's note stating the illness is an ear infection.

Vomit Free Must not have vomited for 24 hours.

Uncontrolled Diarrhea Defined as an increased number of stools compared with the student's normal pattern, with increased watery stool and/or decrease formed consistency that cannot be contained by the diaper or toilet use. The student cannot return until he/she has had normal stools for 24 hours. If a student is on medication that causes diarrhea, we need a doctor's note on file. If the student is teething we can allow them to continue

6.2 When A Child Can Return Cont'd

	coming to school at that time as long as a doctor determined that this is the cause of the diarrhea.
Conjunctivitis (Pink Eye)	24 hours after documented treatment for conjunctivitis has begun.
Mouth Sores	Must have a doctor's note stating that the student is non-infectious.
Rash	With any rash accompanied by a fever or behavior change, the student cannot return until they have a doctor's note stating that the illness is not a communicable disease.
Infestations (e.g. head lice, scabies)	Cannot return until 24 hours after appropriate treatment has begun and the administrator must check student before re-entering the school. Must have a doctor's note stating that the student is non-infectious.
Tuberculosis	Must have a doctor's note stating that the student is non-infectious.
Impetigo	Until drainage stops and the student has received at least 48 hours of effective antimicrobial treatment.
Strep Throat	24 hours after documented treatment has been initiated.
Varicella (Chicken Pox)	Cannot return until 7 days after onset of rash or until all lesions have dried.
Shingles	Student needs to be excluded only if the sores cannot be covered by clothing or a dressing, until the sores have crusted.
Whooping Cough	Cannot return until 5 days of appropriate treatment has been started.
Mumps	Cannot return until 9 days after onset of swelling of glands near the ear.

6.2 When A Child Can Return Cont'd

Hepatitis A	Cannot return until one week after the onset of illness or until after immune serum globulin has been given to the appropriate students and team members in the program as directed by the responsible health department staff.
Measles	Cannot return until 6 days after the rash appears.
Rubella	Cannot return until 6 days after the rash appears.
Ringworm	Cannot return until 24 hours after starting treatment or a doctor's note saying non-infectious.
Hand, Foot, Mouth	Cannot return if there are open sores. May return once sores have scabbed over and are no longer open and oozing.
MRSA	Children are excluded from school and childcare based on the SC School and Childcare Exclusion Rules.
Lesions	Exclude children with draining lesions that cannot be covered with a dressing, or draining lesions that are covered with dressing, but drainage saturates dressing, until drainage stops and the child had received at least 48 hours or effective antimicrobial treatment. Children who do not have draining lesions, who have antibiotics prescribed, may return to school after they have received at least 48 hours of effective antimicrobial treatment and lesions are showing signs of healing (decreasing in size).
Contact Precautions	Contact precautions, including appropriate disposal of possibly infectious materials, must be used if/when dressings are changed in the school or childcare setting.
Outbreaks	DHEC may change these recommendations in the event of outbreaks or clusters of illness.

6.3 Accidents & Injuries

Minor accidents may happen during the course of the day. We will comfort the student and make sure he/she is taken care of. An accident report will be written and/or a call will be made to let you know the nature of what happened.

In case of a more serious accidental injury, we will make an immediate attempt to contact a parent. If we cannot reach you, we will call the student's physician as indicated on the DSS 2900 form, included with your tuition and acceptance letter. Whoever is traveling with the child to the hospital will travel with the child's records. If necessary, we will also call an ambulance or paramedics. Until the arrival of the parent, physician, ambulance or paramedics, a director will be in charge and will make all decisions about the care of your child. The nearest medical facility will be utilized in the event hospitalization is required for your child. It is to your child's benefit that you keep the school up to date on pertinent phone numbers, emergency contacts and other important information.

Campuses and Closest Hospital for Emergency Care:

1. Bridge Campus - East Cooper Medical Center
2. Daniel Island Campus - East Cooper Medical Center
3. Palmetto Campus - MUSC or Roper St. Francis

6.4 Authorization For Pick-Up

Your child's application package provides a space for persons other than immediate family to pick-up your child. For your child's protection, we will exercise the right to check the identification of anyone who is unfamiliar to us. We are unable to dismiss a student to anyone other than the parent or guardian without specific permission for each instance. **We must have written or verbal permission for each instance. An ID will be required for anyone other than parents to pick up a student. In order to have an alternative person pick up, you will need to do the following:**

- **Call the front office to inform them of the new person picking up.**
- **Email your child's teacher and the front office to let everyone know that there will be an alternative person picking up and who that person is, along with the date and time of pick up.**

6.5 Medicine Authorization Policy

Medication, over the counter OR prescribed, may be administered during the school day with written permission of the parent or guardian on a medication authorization form. Please be sure to fill out the medicine authorization sheet at the front office of your campus, otherwise we will be unable to administer the medication. All medicines should be clearly labeled with the original label containing your child's name and amount, expiration date, and pharmacist. We are unable to give Tylenol, aspirin, cough drops, vitamins or over the counter medication without proper medical authorization. These should also contain your child's name and be in its original container. It is a good idea to let your child's teacher know when he/she is taking any medicine at home. Never send any medications of any type in your child's lunch box or bag. Always give the medication directly to either the Director or teacher. Sundrops would prefer not to have to administer any medicines, if possible.

6.6 Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse

State law requires that every employee of a licensed day care or preschool facility, who in the course of employment reasonably believes a student has suffered sexual abuse, physical abuse, or denial of critical care, shall immediately notify the Department of Child Services.

Our policy concerning this contains the following:

1. A staff member shall report the suspected or alleged child abuse or neglect to child protective services or to a local law enforcement agency as prescribed by the state law. This is to be done by any means available within 24 hours of the required report. Written documentation shall also be sent to the Department, Child Protective Services, and any local law enforcement agencies previously notified within 3 days of the initial report, and maintain written documentation of a child abuse or neglect report on facility premises for 12 months from the date of the report.
2. A staff member shall report the suspected or alleged child abuse by a staff member to the Department of Social Services and to local law enforcement agency as prescribed by state law. A staff member shall also send written documentation to the Department and to any law enforcement agency previously notified within 3 days of the initial report and maintain written documentation of a child abuse report on the facility premises for 12 months from the date of the report.

The oral and written reports shall contain the following information, or as much

6.6 Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse Cont'd

thereof as the person making the report is able to furnish:

1. The names and home address of the student, phone number, date and year.
2. The student's explanation as to what happened.
3. The nature and extent of the student's injuries, what the marks look like and color of bruises.
4. The date CPS was called, name of reporter and caseworker.
5. Any other information or comments which the person making the report believes might be helpful in establishing the cause of the injury.
6. If the police were called.

Legal sanctions for failure to report are as follows:

1. Any mandatory reporter who knowingly and willfully fails to report a suspected case of child abuse is guilty of a simple misdemeanor.
2. Any mandatory reporter who knowingly fails to report is civilly liable for the damages caused by such failure.

Any mandatory reporter who in good faith makes a report of child abuse or participates in the investigation of child abuse has immunity from any liability, civil or criminal. Records and/or information pertaining to the abuse may be released to the child abuse investigator without releases required in other situations.

To report child abuse anytime, day or night, call:

NATIONAL CHILD ABUSE HOTLINE: 1.800.422.4453

6.7 Emergency Procedures

The school is well equipped to handle most emergencies. We have procedures in place for emergencies that require evacuation of the building such as fire and bomb threats and chemical spills as well as those for emergencies in which the students must remain indoors such as tornadoes and earthquakes. The students will practice emergency procedures and fire drills throughout the year. Each campus has a detailed emergency plan that you are welcome to see should you have any specific questions.

6.7 Emergency Procedures Cont'd

Intoxicated Parent Procedure:

If an intoxicated parent comes to pick-up his/her child, Sundrops staff will try to detain the parent. The administrator or teacher on duty will contact another person on the emergency list and request that they pick up the student. If alternative arrangements cannot be made, the school will follow applicable state guidance and law enforcement recommendations. The parent will be informed that the police and child protective services will be called to inform them of the incident.

Intruder Procedure:

If an unknown individual gains access to the property/building, a staff member will see if they can be of assistance. This staff member will determine if the individual is an intruder and try to get them to leave the property. During this time, another staff member will then use the designated code to alert other team members in the building and to contact the police. If possible, children will be taken to a designated area in the building. Staff will then proceed as directed by the police. An attempt will be made, by all staff members who are taking care of the children, to keep them apprised of the situation. Staff members who approach alleged intruders would refrain from putting themselves, the children, or other staff members in an endangering situation. If the situation becomes hostile, they should try to escape or do what the individual asks until the authorities arrive. The remainder of the staff will be ensuring the safety of the children and will respond accordingly.

6.8 Inclement Weather

If inclement weather prevents us from opening the school, we will follow the Charleston County School District's decision about the school closing. However, if there is a delayed opening due to bus issues, we will not follow CCSD's decision as we do not bus our students. We will follow CCSD's decision to delay opening due to storms.

In the event of an impending hurricane, Sundrops Montessori School will not make a decision to close until the hurricane has moved to Florida or the equivalent off of the East Coast.

Refer to local news reports on radio and television regarding school closings. We will contact parents if the school must close during the course of the day.

6.9 Tracking Children

Sundrops Montessori School uses a hard copy roll system and a tracking system to keep track of the students. Example: If a child needs to leave the classroom for speech or activity such as Karate, it is documented by the child's teacher as well as the teacher the student is going to.

6.10 Liability Insurance

Sundrops Montessori School complies with the minimum insurance coverage as suggested by our independent agent. For more information concerning policies and liability, see management.

6.11 Free and Full Access

Parents have free and full access to their children at the facility unless a court ordered document mandates otherwise. The parents/legal guardians and DSS have unlimited access to the facility. Sundrops Montessori School insists that while visiting the children be honored with peaceful words and movements unless court orders stipulate otherwise.

7.0 Fundraising

Sundrops Montessori School is a privately owned company that receives no funding from any city, state, or federal agency. Tuition fees that are charged are our only source of funding to pay salaries, taxes, insurance, facility costs, and classroom supplies. At various times throughout the year, Sundrops will sponsor fundraising activities. The purpose of these fundraisers is to provide funding directly to specific educational or teacher related programs that enhance the programs offered by Sundrops. No funds raised at any of our fundraisers will go towards any administration costs, but directly towards specific programs in the school. Participation in any fundraising activity is optional.

7.1 Sundrops CARES

We are excited to launch the Sundrops CARES foundation to support our children's growth and development both in our learning environment as well as in our community!

7.1 Sundrops CARES Cont'd

The CARES foundation was formed as a Parent Led organization with representation across all Sundrops Campuses to enrich the experience of every child who attends Sundrops. Some of the ways we plan to do so include:

1. Expanding and building more **enrichment programs**.
2. Updating **equipment and spaces** such as our playground and classrooms.
3. Provide **scholarships, gift cards, and other necessities** to those families in need through our school community.
4. Obtain grants to support our organization and **control tuition costs**.
5. Create philanthropic ways to initiate our **children giving back** to our community.

Our mission is to provide the strongest Montessori experience possible to all of our children and grow our community so that every child has access to experience the magic of the Sundrops Montessori philosophy we have come to love.

8.0 Tuition Procedures and Policies

The Tuition Agreement, Re-Enrollment & Agreement Form, and these Tuition Policies collectively govern the financial obligations of enrollment at Sundrops Montessori School. In the event of any inconsistency between this Handbook and an executed Tuition Agreement, the terms of the executed Tuition Agreement shall control.

Enrollment Commitment

Enrollment at Sundrops Montessori reserves a student's place within the program for the full academic year. Accordingly, tuition represents payment for reservation of enrollment space rather than payment for daily attendance. Tuition reflects the cost of maintaining that reserved placement, including staffing, classroom environments, and program continuity. For this reason, tuition is calculated on an annual basis and represents a commitment for the entire program term indicated in the Enrollment Agreement or Re-Enrollment & Agreement Form, regardless of daily attendance. It is important to have a list of procedures and policies, so you are fully aware of your financial responsibility as well as the structure of our tuition requirements while enrolled in our school.

8.0 Tuition Procedures and Policies Cont'd

Below is a list of items discussed in this section:

- 8.1 Application
- 8.2 Tuition Agreement & Enrollment Forms
- 8.3 Re-Enrollment & Tuition Agreement
- 8.4 Tuition Payment Options
- 8.5 Payment Procedures
- 8.6 Payment Protection Plan
- 8.7 Sibling Discount
- 8.8 End of the Year Credit
- 8.9 Returned Payments
- 8.10 Delinquent Account Interest
- 8.11 Withdrawal & Early Termination
- 8.12 After Care & Late Pick-Up
- 8.13 School Closures

8.1 Application

To begin the enrollment process, families are encouraged to tour the campus prior to submitting a completed application. A \$150 non-refundable application/waitlist fee is due at the time of application. Please note that only one campus may be selected by application.

Once an application is received, the student will be placed on the campus waitlist. Space availability depends upon whether the requested start date can be accommodated. When an opening becomes available, the campus Admissions Director will notify the family. Upon acceptance of the offered space, the required enrollment forms and tuition agreement will be sent via email.

Enrollment space is limited at each campus. If an offered spot is declined, the family may request to remain on the waitlist for an additional six (6) months. If a spot is declined a second time, the student will be removed from the waitlist. At that point, a new application and application fee will be required for future consideration.

8.2 Tuition Agreement & Enrollment Forms

Upon acceptance of enrollment, the Tuition Agreement, Enrollment Forms, and initial invoice shall be transmitted electronically to the Parent/Guardian. All required documents must be fully completed, signed, and submitted prior to the child's first day of attendance to ensure the student's file is complete and in compliance with all applicable DSS requirements.

8.2 Tuition Agreement & Enrollment Forms Cont'd

Tuition is calculated and billed on an annual basis and represents a contractual obligation for the full academic year. Execution of the Tuition Agreement constitutes acceptance of financial obligations described in this handbook. Tuition reflects the reservation of the student's place within the program and the operational costs required to maintain that placement, including staffing, classroom environments, and program continuity. Tuition is not determined by daily attendance and shall not be reduced, prorated, or refunded due to absence, illness, vacation, or other personal circumstances except as expressly provided in these policies.

Families may choose either the Monthly Payment Plan or the Full Payment Plan, as outlined in Section 8.6.

If a student enrolls after the commencement of the school year, tuition shall be prorated based on the student's official start date and calculated in accordance with the current school year's published tuition rate.

Payment options are set forth in Section 8.4, and all payment procedures, requirements, and obligations are detailed in Section 8.5.

By executing the Tuition Agreement and Enrollment Forms, the Parent/Guardian acknowledges receipt of and agrees to abide by the Sundrops Montessori Community Handbook, including but not limited to the Parent Code of Conduct and Student Conduct Policies, as amended from time to time.

8.3 Re-Enrollment & Agreement

8.3.1 Re-Enrollment Process

Re-enrollment materials for the upcoming academic year are distributed during the winter enrollment season. Families wishing to reserve their child's placement for the following school year must submit the completed Re-Enrollment & Agreement Form along with the applicable Re-Enrollment Fee by the stated deadline.

Re-enrollment is intended for families who are committed to returning to Sundrops Montessori for the upcoming academic year. Because classroom placement, staffing, and program planning occur well in advance of the school year, timely submission of re-enrollment materials is essential.

8.3.2 Commitment to Enrollment

Submission of a signed Re-Enrollment & Agreement Form constitutes a commitment to enroll for the upcoming academic year.

Once the form is received and accepted by the school, a binding contractual agreement exists between the Parent/Guardian and Sundrops Montessori School.

The contractual obligation for the upcoming academic year is established upon execution of the Re-Enrollment & Agreement Form and acceptance by the school, regardless of whether the student ultimately attends or begins the school year.

If a family later elects not to enroll after signing the agreement, the Early Withdrawal Fee described in Section 8.11 shall apply. Until paid in full, no financial release will be granted and the remaining annual tuition obligation shall remain due.

8.3.3 Enrollment Term

The enrollment term is defined by the program dates listed in the Re-Enrollment & Agreement Form or Enrollment Agreement. Financial responsibility remains in effect for the entire stated program term, regardless of daily attendance.

Tuition obligations remain in effect even if a student withdraws, ceases attendance, or does not attend through the final date of the program term unless otherwise provided in these policies.

8.3.4 Re-Enrollment Commitment Window

To allow for responsible planning of staffing, classroom placement, and program resources, Sundrops Montessori School establishes a defined re-enrollment commitment window each year.

Families wishing to reserve their child's placement must submit the completed Re-Enrollment & Agreement Form and applicable fee by the stated deadline. Enrollment spaces not confirmed by the deadline may be released to students on the waitlist.

8.3.4 Re-Enrollment Commitment Window Cont'd

Families who choose to re-enroll after the deadline may be required to join the waitlist, and placement cannot be guaranteed.

Sundrops Montessori cannot hold enrollment spaces for families who are awaiting admission decisions from other schools, lottery programs, or public school choice placements. Families who are uncertain about their plans are encouraged to decline re-enrollment and reapply later if space remains available.

8.3.5 Acknowledgment of Financial Responsibility

By submitting the Re-Enrollment & Agreement Form, the Parent/Guardian acknowledges understanding of the tuition structure, payment obligations, withdrawal policies, and other financial terms outlined in this Handbook and in the executed Tuition Agreement.

The school cannot guarantee that a previously enrolled student's space will remain available after the re-enrollment deadline.

8.4 Tuition Payment Options

Monthly Payment Plan

1. Automatic Payment Authorization

The Parent/Guardian is required to provide valid credit card or bank account information for the purpose of establishing mandatory automatic monthly tuition drafts. Personal checks will not be accepted unless submitted through an approved fund and expressly authorized in advance by the Finance Department.

2. Credit Card Processing Fee

All tuition payments made by credit card shall be subject to a non-refundable 3.5% processing fee

3. Advance Payment Obligation

Tuition is payable 1 month in advance at all times. For students beginning enrollment immediately, the Parent/Guardian shall be responsible for payment of the current starting month's tuition in addition to 1 month of advance tuition.

8.4 Tuition Payment Options Cont'd

4. Draft Schedule

Following receipt of the initial payment, tuition shall be automatically drafted on either the 1st or the 15th of each month, in accordance with the selected payment schedule.

5. Payment Protection Plan Requirement

Enrollment in the Payment Protection Plan is mandatory and shall be included in the monthly tuition obligation. The Parent/Guardian acknowledges and agrees to the terms outlined in Section 8.6 regarding the Payment Protection Plan.

Full Payment Plan

1. Accepted Forms of Payment

Tuition under the Full Payment Plan must be remitted by debit card, check, or ACH transfer. If payment is made by credit card, a non-refundable 3.5% processing fee shall apply.

2. Payment Deadline

For the annual program (mid-August through July), full tuition payment is due no later than July 1, prior to the start of the academic year. If enrollment begins after the start of the academic year, full payment shall be due upon submission of the Enrollment Forms and executed Tuition Agreement.

3. Payment Protection Plan

Enrollment in the Payment Protection Plan is optional under the Full Payment Plan. Please refer to Section 8.6 for complete terms and conditions.

8.5 Payment Procedures

Tuition may be paid through a monthly payment plan or paid in full. Tuition is calculated on an annual basis to support the full operation of the school, including staffing, classroom environments, and program continuity. Because tuition reflects the reservation of a student's place within the program for the academic year, it is not based on daily attendance and cannot be reduced, prorated, or refunded due to absence, illness, vacation, or other personal circumstances.

8.5 Payment Procedures Cont'd

Families who choose to pay tuition in full by the due date will receive a 3% discount. To qualify for the discount, full payments must be made by debit card, check, or ACH. Credit card payments are subject to a 3.5% processing fee and are not eligible for the full-payment discount.

For families enrolled in the monthly payment plan, payments are due one month in advance. At the start of the school year, the first tuition payment is due on July 1st or July 15th, depending on the selected billing date.

8.6 Payment Protection Plan

The Payment Protection Plan fee is \$35 per month. This fee is mandatory for families enrolled in the monthly payment plan and optional for families who choose the full-payment option.

The Payment Protection Plan is designed to relieve families from the obligation to pay the remaining balance of the school year in the event of early withdrawal. When the plan is in place, the early withdrawal fee will be limited to one month of tuition under the monthly payment plan, as outlined in Section 8.11.

If the Payment Protection Plan is declined under the full-payment option, no refund will be issued in the event of withdrawal.

8.7 Sibling Discount

A sibling discount of 5% shall be applied to the lowest tuition rate for families with two or more children concurrently enrolled. The discount applies only to tuition and does not extend to fees, aftercare charges, late fees, or any other ancillary costs.

The school reserves the right to modify or discontinue the sibling discount policy with advance written notice.

8.8 End of the Year Credit

An end-of-year credit in the amount of \$400.00 shall be applied to the final scheduled tuition payment of the academic year.

This credit is contingent upon the student remaining enrolled through the final day of the school year. In the event of early withdrawal for any reason, the end-of-year credit shall be forfeited, and no prorated or partial credit shall be issued.

The end-of-year credit has no cash value and shall not be refunded, transferred, or applied to any outstanding balance other than the final tuition payment of the academic year.

8.9 Returned Payments

Any payment returned for any reason, including but not limited to insufficient funds, closed accounts, or declined transactions, shall be subject to a \$35.00 returned payment fee.

The returned payment fee, together with the outstanding tuition balance, shall be due immediately upon notice. Failure to remit payment in full may result in suspension of services and/or termination of enrollment at the school's discretion.

8.10 Delinquent Account Interest

Any outstanding balance that remains unpaid for more than 60 days shall accrue interest at the rate of 1.5% per month (18% annually).

Interest shall be assessed monthly and shall apply only to the portion of the account that is more than 60 days past due. Interest will continue to accrue until all past-due amounts are paid in full and the account is brought current.

The school reserves the right to suspend a student's attendance and/or withhold school services if an account becomes materially delinquent. Enrollment may also be subject to termination in accordance with the policies outlined in this Handbook. Any such action will be communicated to the Parent/Guardian in writing.

8.11 Withdrawal & Early Termination

In the event a student withdraws prior to the conclusion of the school year, an Early Withdrawal Fee shall apply. The Early Withdrawal Fee shall be equal to 1 month of tuition calculated at the monthly payment plan rate. Any end-of-year credit described in Section 8.8 shall be forfeited and shall not apply in cases of early withdrawal.

Upon notification of withdrawal, a Withdrawal Form will be provided for completion. Once the completed form is received and the Early Withdrawal Fee has been satisfied, tuition drafts and account records will be updated accordingly. Until that time, scheduled tuition drafts will continue as outlined in the enrollment agreement.

Families are encouraged, but not required, to provide advance written notice of withdrawal whenever possible. Advance notice assists the school in attempting to fill the vacated space and maintain classroom continuity.

However, providing notice does not waive or reduce the Early Withdrawal Fee described in this section. The Early Withdrawal Fee applies regardless of when notice is provided.

Tuition obligations continue until (a) the completed Withdrawal Form is received and accepted by the School and (b) all applicable Early Withdrawal Fees and outstanding balances are paid in full. Until both conditions are satisfied, scheduled tuition drafts shall continue, and the Parent/Guardian remains financially responsible under the executed Tuition Agreement.

While the school may attempt to fill the vacated space, placement is dependent upon timing and availability. In some cases, families on the waitlist may have already secured alternate care, and the school may be unable to fill the space for the remainder of the school year.

The School shall not be required to provide academic services during any period in which tuition obligations remain unpaid.

8.11 Withdrawal & Early Termination Cont'd

Administrative Dismissal

In cases of administrative dismissal due to behavioral concerns, safety violations, material breach of the Parent Code of Conduct, financial delinquency, or other policy violations, Sundrops Montessori School retains sole discretion in determining the effective date of termination.

Administrative dismissal does not relieve the Parent/Guardian of financial obligations under the executed Tuition Agreement. All outstanding balances, including applicable Early Withdrawal Fees and forfeited End-of-Year Credits, shall remain due and payable.

Financial obligations shall remain governed exclusively by the terms of the executed Tuition Agreement and Payment Protection Plan, if applicable.

The school reserves the right to amend policies, procedures, and tuition rates with reasonable notice. Continued enrollment constitutes acceptance of such modifications.

In the event of any conflict between this Handbook and the executed Tuition Agreement, the Tuition Agreement shall control.

8.12 After Care & Late Pick-Up Policy

A \$40.00 drop-in fee shall be assessed if a student is picked up later than the designated time associated with the student's selected enrollment option. To avoid this fee, students must be picked up no later than the following times:

- Half-Day Session - Pickup by 12:00 pm (excluding Nido)
- School Day Session - Pickup by 3:00 pm
- After School 4:30 pm Session - Pickup by 4:30 pm
- After School 5:30 pm Session - Pickup by 5:30 pm (excluding Nido & Daniel Island)

If a student is not picked up by 5:30 pm, a late pick-up fee of \$5.00 per minute shall be assessed beginning at 5:31 pm and continuing until the child is signed out.

All drop-in fees and late pick-up charges will be invoiced separately and shall be due on receipt. No grace period shall apply to any pick-up time.

8.13 School Closures

Tuition is calculated on an annual basis and shall not be reduced, prorated, credited, or otherwise adjusted due to scheduled school closures, including but not limited to winter break, spring break, traditional holidays, or teacher in-service/training days. Tuition remains due and payable in full regardless of whether school is in session during such scheduled closures.

The school reserves the right to modify the academic calendar or operating schedule as necessary. Families are responsible for reviewing the official school calendar. Any schedule changes will be communicated in advance through the Sundrops newsletter or other official school communication.

8.14 Contract Integration & Policy Authority

The Re-Enrollment & Agreement Form, Enrollment Agreement, Tuition Policies & Procedures, and the Sundrops Montessori Community Handbook collectively constitute the full agreement governing enrollment and financial obligations.

In the event of any inconsistency between documents, the terms of the executed Tuition Agreement and these Tuition Policies shall control.

8.14 Contract Integration & Policy Authority Cont'd

No oral statements, informal communications, or prior understandings shall modify or supersede the terms of these policies unless confirmed in writing by Sundrops Montessori administration.

Handbook Acknowledgement

The Parent/Guardian acknowledges receipt of the Sundrops Montessori Community Handbook and agrees to abide by its policies as a condition of enrollment.

Parent Initials: _____

Parent/Guardian Agreement

I/We acknowledge that we have reviewed the full Tuition Policies & Procedures and the Sundrops Montessori Community Handbook. We understand that this summary highlights key provisions but does not replace the full agreement.

Parent/Guardian Name (Printed): _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____