

Oakhaven Montessori School Family Handbook

Welcome!

It is our mission to provide a safe, nurturing and diversely enriching experience for you and your family. We follow the Montessori Approach in all areas of our operation to help children fully realize their potential. We encourage family values and participation to provide the best environment to follow your child's developmental cycles and build a strong foundation for life.

Admission Policy: Families from all nationalities, religions, races and cultures are welcome.

Ages: 2 1/4 - 5 for school. 6- 12 year olds for special classes, seasonal camps and after care.

Arrival and Departure: To foster independence, allow your child to carry in their gear and walk alone. The door will be opened at 8:00 a.m. Sign in and out at the family station, noting the actual time of arrival and departure. Please arrive by 9:00 am. Children do best when they get a short goodbye. Assure them that _____ will pick them up. If someone other than the normally scheduled person is to pick up be sure to tell your child AND US!

If your child cries, give one kiss, one hug AND LEAVE! Let us know if you need help. When you are confident that your child is safe your child will feel safe too. Feel free to call later to find out how things are going. We will call if there is anything you should know.

Departure is promptly at 12:30 and 2:30 and 5:30 pm. Please allow enough time to read group notes and other announcements and be ready to go by departure time. Late pick up results in a \$1 per minute fee added to the following month's tuition.

If someone not previously authorized is picking up your child, we must have a written and signed note or a phone call to release your child. ID will be required of any person picking your child up for the first time.

Art, Hand and Paperwork: Hand work will be sent home every so often. Some will be kept for gift giving. DO NOT ask your child to make something for you! Allow your child to create his/her own experience. Limit your comments to non-judgmental remarks "I see a lot of red." "It looks like you put a lot of work into this." For a young child, art work is an emotional expression with the focus on the process, not the end product.

Attendance: Regular attendance and punctual arrival and departure is essential to benefit from the program.

Birthdays: Treats are welcome! Limit the sugar and size. A small cookie or mini muffin is ideal. We have a special birthday ceremony worksheet that we can provide to you to guide you in preparing for your child's celebration at Oakhaven. In general, you will briefly describe each year of your child's life as they circle a ceremonial sun. Please send in a picture board with 1 photo for each year of your child's life to be used during the ceremony. Your child is welcome to donate a book to the school library to commemorate their special day. Factual books are best for our age group.

Clothing: Send in several changes of labeled clothing in labeled zip lock bags. We ask that children wear loose, comfortable, easy-to-manage PLAY clothes; elastic waists and pull ons are best. Avoid overalls, headbands, belts, jewelry, make up, tattoos, nail polish, light up clothes and shoes or cowboy boots. Avoid licensed media clothing. Send sensible shoes that your child can put on and off alone. Choose clothes that can be used freely in paint, sand, water, etc. Although supposedly washable many of our art supplies do stain. We encourage your children to fully experience their time here; they will go home dirty. Girls in dresses need to wear shorts underneath to encourage freedom of movement. Children need to wear hair off their faces with clips or if longer in braids or pony tails so they can see what they are doing. During warm weather we do a lot of water play so your child will need a 2 piece swim suit, bottoms and rash guard shirt, not a one piece, towel and water proof sandals/croc type shoes. During cold weather we wear slippers or heavy socks inside. Your child needs rubber boots that stay at school for the winter as well as a warm coat with a hood, or a hat and mittens. We go out in light rain, send in proper gear.

Communication & Logs: Each child has a section in a log book at the sign in counter. During the school year from August through June you will receive regular emails that include one or more of the following: Our weekly plan, group updates and news, anecdotal notes, photos, and quotes. Injuries, incidents and health alerts are also emailed. Note any changes or news, including injuries that have left a mark, from home and initial and date the entry in your child's log section. The entire year's log notes are emailed in early June. During the summer months we keep you informed of our adventures with emailed weekly plans and regular slide shows. You can find past slide shows on the parent page on the website.

Daily Schedule: We endeavor to maintain a balance of work time, group activities and outdoor time. We follow the children's energy levels and the seasons. A general schedule can be found on the web site.

Diapers: Send in a good supply of labeled diapers and wipes and swim diapers for the summer swim season. Put them in your child's cubby. Soiled clothing will be sent home daily in a plastic bag tied to the lunch box. **If still in diapers, a \$20 monthly charge will be added to the tuition until the child is consistently using the toilet.**

Discipline: We use Mindful Parenting Tips as developed by Tulum Dothee. Attending one five week course here in either **Beginning, Intermediate or Advanced Mindful Parenting, or Personal Growth**, is required by one parent yearly.

Children who are disrespectful or intentionally injure any person, animal or plant are sent home. We have a full disclosure policy whereby all details are disclosed to all concerned parties. **Parents are required to phone other parents with whom their child has been involved in an incident, with follow up discussed, decided and results sent in by note or email to inform staff.** Our discipline policy is included in your enrollment packet.

Under no circumstances is corporal punishment allowed by any teacher or parent during school or any school related event.

Drop off: Help your child feel safe and welcome. Keep a consistent routine with the same person bringing your child to school. As you leave assure your child that _____ will pick them up. Give one kiss and hug and leave promptly. Children recover quickly once you have left, usually more quickly than the parent. Show confidence in your child and the new situation. If your child cries we will call to reassure you once your child has recovered. Feel free to call. Please feel free to call to chat with your child if you had a difficult morning at home.

Emergency Procedures: Emergency procedures are in the log book. In addition our emergency policy is found in your enrollment packet. In the event of an emergency not requiring evacuation, your child will be kept and cared for here at the school. If evacuated we will notify all the parents and meet at the Briarpatch Parking Lot in Grass Valley. It is essential that you keep your emergency information COMPLETE and UP TO DATE in the log book. Every child must have an emergency pack that stays at school (see your enrollment packet).

Enrollment Procedure. Come visit first without your child. If you like what you see, bring your child and spouse within one week to make sure we are a match. A non refundable \$50 enrollment fee holds you child's space. Once your enrollment fee is paid you will receive your enrollment packet and the guidelines for new student visits. You have one week to fill out your packet, return it and set up your child's visits. If you do not return the packet and schedule your child's visits within a week you will lose your child's space.

Enrollment Packet: Must be completed and submitted prior to admission.

Enrollment Procedure. Come visit first without your child. If you like what you see, bring your child and spouse within one week to make sure we are a match. A non refundable \$50 enrollment fee holds you child's space. Once your enrollment fee is paid you will receive your enrollment packet and the guidelines for new student visits. You have one week to fill out your packet, return it and set up your child's visits. If you do not return the packet and schedule your child's visits within a week you will lose your child's space.

Family of the Month: The family of the month brings in 6 - 12 library books on the subject being studied, provides relevant decorations, flowers or other items from nature (live or dried) to arrange, prepares a special snack, creates hands-on activities to share, helps make materials, gives a presentation, organizes a field trip, serves as the liaison between the school and new parents or whatever creative activity you are inspired to share. The purpose is to encourage family interaction to enrich the experience for the entire school community. A sign-up sheet will be posted.

Family Station: Found on the counter at the entrance. Includes the group notes, sign in and out sheet, sign up sheets, notices and various log books. Be sure to sign in and out, read the daily group notes and other notices. Notices are sent via email and posted and changed regularly. Please provide us with a current email address that you check regularly.

Field Trips: They're fun. Organize or suggest one and come with us. Even a picnic at the park is a hoot. Parents may accompany us or you may feel free to allow your child to go with the class on the local trips. We always appreciate parent volunteers on these outings. We try to take a couple of longer family trips per year. These usually fall on a Thursday or Friday through the weekend. The school is closed on the days that we go out of town. Of course, all field trips are optional and you will receive plenty of notice.

Fundraisers: Various fundraisers are held throughout the year.

Grievances: Our goal is to make the Oakhaven Community the best we can. Sometimes we have to make decisions for the welfare of the group as a whole rather than what might be best for any individual child or their family. We welcome the opportunity to resolve any issues you might have. Here's what you can expect. A 15 minute meeting will be set up with Tulum and at least one other parent volunteer teacher. We focus on problem solving rather than complaints. Of course we hope to find a satisfactory result for all of us. Sometimes that is not possible and it is in the best interest for all concerned to end our relationship. If at any time any disrespect occurs during the meeting our business is concluded and enrollment of that child is no longer an option.

Holidays: Let's celebrate different culture's festivals. Share yours!

Hours: Drop off: 8:00 to 9:00 a.m. Pick up: 12:30, 2:30 and 5:30 p.m.

Illness: We are not licensed to care for ill children. Any child who appears ill on arrival or becomes ill is sent home. Keep your child at home for at least 24-48 hours after the following symptoms disappear (even if taking antibiotics):

- fever, within 24 hours of 100 oral degrees or higher
- rash on the arms, chest, back or neck
- eyes-red or with yellow coloring or discharge
- runny nose with green discharge
- mouth sores
- difficulty swallowing
- red inflamed throat
- excessive or bark-like coughing
- congested wheezing
- stomach ache with fever
- vomiting
- diarrhea if more than once in 2 hours
- unusual irritability
- extreme sleepiness
- sores on scalp
- lice or nits in hair
- any communicable disease for which your child has no immunity or vaccination

If any symptoms are noticed during the day, your child will be made comfortable and you will be notified to make arrangements to pick up your child ASAP. Any communicable disease will be posted along with symptoms. Call to let us know if your child is unwell and staying home for any reason.

Your child may return to school:

- 24 hours after their temperature has returned to normal
- antibiotics have been administered for a full 24 hours (see pinkeye note below)
- symptoms have subsided
- chicken pox sores are completely scabbed over
- all lice and nits removed from hair and scalp
- in the case of communicable diseases, the length of exclusion will be determined by the type of disease and the availability of treatment to be determined by the Nevada County Health Department or Sierra Care Pediatrics.

*Pinkeye: child may return to school 24 hours after symptoms have disappeared; please continue antibiotic drops 48-72 hours after symptoms subside.

Immunizations: Children must have all necessary immunizations and a completed blue card BEFORE being admitted, exclusions are available for personal beliefs. Update your card whenever your child gets any immunizations.

Injury: If injured away from school and evidence remains such as bruises, scabs, scratches etc., notify us AND make a note in your child's log section with details including type of injury and how it occurred. Date and sign entry. If your child is injured or injures another child here at school, the incident will be noted in the log and a report will be completed and placed in your child's log section. You will receive a call or email with details as well. Initial the log entry and take the report home. If your child injures or is disrespectful to someone, his homework is to dictate or write an apology note, sign it and bring it the next day. For example: "Dear _____, I apologize for _____. The next time I will _____. To make amends I will do _____ with/for you."

Lunch: Pack it in a soft sided insulated lunch bag with an ice pack and a cloth napkin. Make lunch with your child. Focus on proteins, whole grains, fresh veggies and fruits. Include one item per year of age of child. No beverages, desserts, chips or high sugar items, including yogurt. Avoid messy foods that are eaten with a fork or spoon. Due to time restraints please don't ask us to heat anything up.

3 year olds make lunch with a parent.

4 year olds make lunch with some help.

5+ year olds make lunch with a parent checking for healthy choices and sufficient quantities.

Medication Policy:

- ~If at all possible, administer medications at home.
- ~Only medication prescribed by a doctor may be given.
- ~Meds must be in original container with the child's full name on the prescription label.
- ~A medication form must be completed and delivered by the parent/guardian to the director.

Minimum Required Days Per Week of Attendance:

Age 2.5: Two or more half days.

Age 3: Three or more half days.

Age 3.5 Three or more full days.

Age 4 Three or more full days

Pre Kindergardeners: We recommend 4 - 5 full, 9:00 - 2:30, days per week to get the lessons necessary to succeed in kindergarden. Minimum required: four days per week.

New Students: You will receive a visitation schedule to ease the transition into Oakhaven. The sooner you are confident in your child's placement the sooner your child will adapt.

New Studen Visits: Children are required to complete student visits before final enrollment. This gives us both time to be sure we are a match and acclimate your child to daily life here at Oakhaven. Visits are scheduled on the same day once per week for a month. Parents/Care givers stay less and less until your child is ready to be here on their own. You can find a pdf of the visit guidelines on the parent page of our website:

NONCOMPLIANCE WITH ANY POLICY WILL RESULT IN AN END IN THE RELATIONSHIP WITH OAKHAVEN MONTESSORI SCHOOL. NOTICE WILL BE DETERMINED BY THE DIRECTOR.

Notify School: **Make a note in the log book whenever there are any changes at home or in your child's schedule.** Significant visits, pregnancies, illnesses, job changes, business trips, vacations, new siblings, affect your child and their demeanor at school. Be sure to call if your child is going to be absent.

Observations: Every parent is required to make at least one observation of the class in action per year for at least one hour or preferably an entire morning or school day. A sign up sheet will be posted in spring. You are always welcome to come and watch how great your children are doing!

Openings: Opening are filled with preference given to continuing year round students and siblings followed by school year students. The remainder are filled on a first come first served basis in conjunction with the openings available and the schedule needs of the incoming child. Preferred days cannot be guaranteed. A Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday combo is not available.

Parent Conferences: Feel free to schedule a phone date or make an appointment at any time. AVOID talking about your child in front of them as if they were not there! If you must relay information include them in the conversation. Regularly scheduled conferences occur in the fall, winter and spring.

Payments: Tuition payments are due and paid in advance on the 1st and by the 5th (for year round camp) and on the 15th and by the 20th (for the school year) of each month. Make arrangements if you need a different schedule. You pay a yearly tuition divided into a prorated monthly amount each month from either July or August through June. Late fees will accrue for each day your payment is late at the rate of \$5 per calendar day, including weekends. Nonpayment by the end of a month will terminate enrollment.

Parking: Enter through the western loop of the driveway and park in a gravel space to the left of the driveway so others can get by. **Hold your child's hand while in the driveway.** Do not allow your child to run out to the front meadow.

Personal Belongings: Each regular student has a cubby for their gear. Visiting students and summer campers need to bring their gear in a back pack. Any toys, candy or other miscellaneous items need to stay at home or in the car. If an item finds its way into the classroom it will be put away until dismissal time.

Recommended Reading:

Scheduling For Success Tulum Dothee

Positive Discipline For Preschoolers Jane Nelson

Montessori: A Modern Approach Paula Polk Lillard

The Absorbent Mind and other works by Maria Montessori

The Family John Bradshaw

Responsibilities of Oakhaven Montessori School:

- Provide an environment that is safe, clean and attractive.
- Maintain standards required by licensing, county and state agencies.
- Provide a program that is stimulating, diverse, developmentally appropriate and our best effort.
- Provide well trained and qualified parent staff who are exceptional in their capacity for guiding and caring

- Remain committed to professional growth and excellence.

Responsibilities of the Parents:

- Know the contents of this handbook and agree to its policies and procedures.
- Daily review of the notices and email log, both reading entries and making notations about your child and home life that will affect them.
- Participate in school activities. Yearly Requirements per child enrolled:
Attend one Back to school Night: one parent/caretaker per family
Family of the month: Sign up for a topic per child:
 - *Bring 6 - 12 factual books on the subject.
 - *Provide seasonal, relevant items to decorate the classroom.
 - *Do a presentation on your topic with a follow up activity, or
Organize a relevant field trip including coordinating drivers.
- One Five week course in Mindful Parenting or Personal Growth.
- Ten Hours helping in the classroom, office or on school grounds.
- Three pool duty afternoons during swim season.
- Remember your snack day. It is important for your child and the school as a whole that snack is not forgotten! If you do forget, please send in a nonperishable snack for the snack bin.
- One hour observation of the class is required each year.
- Bring and pick up your child on time.
- Promptly fulfill your financial obligation to the school
- Promote the school in the community.

School Materials: Return any item from school that makes its way into your home. It is probably part of a set and we need it back.

School Statement: We are licensed and regulated by the Department of Social Services:

Community Care Licensing (916) 263-5744
8745 Folsom Blvd. Suite 200
Sacramento, CA 95826

Sharing: Your child's snack day is also their share day and special day to be the decider, helper, server, etc. Your child may share a book, something from nature, a homemade item, a photo, a family story, a science experiment, a cultural activity or food.

Snack: Usually your child will be assigned at least one special/snack day per month. During months when we have breaks your child may not get a special day. Send healthy, simple, non processed foods from 3 food groups; a protein,

vegetable or fruit and a grain. Avoid sugars and preservatives. We drink only water at all meals and during the day. Include your child in choosing and preparing the snack, let them decide what item to bring to share, if any. PLEASE DO NOT FORGET YOUR SNACK DAY! IT IS IMPORTANT TO ALL OF THE CHILDREN, ESPECIALLY YOURS! If you miss a snack day, please send in a packaged, nonperishable snack for the snack bin.

Special Children: All children are special and have their own unique characteristics, needs, strengths and skills. We accept any child whose needs we can meet without taking away from the needs of the other children, the community and the parent volunteers.

Sun Screen: Apply before school during sunny weather. We will reapply.

Telephone Messages: During program hours we will try to answer. If the machine picks up, messages are checked every hour or so. If you need to get through, use the code: ring twice, hang up and ring again; we will make every effort to pick up. The best time to get through directly is 8:00- 8:45 am. We do not answer the phone or return calls in the evening or on weekends. If you want to chat after hours, please set up a phone date.

Things to bring:

- 1.slippers
- 2.several changes of clothes
- 3.diapers and wipes
- 4.warm weather: swim suit, swim diapers, beach towel,crocs/flip flops, sun hat, floatation suit/vest for the pool
- 5.cold weather: warm coat with hood or hat, mittens, rubber boots, warm socks, rain gear
- 6.lunch in soft sided insulated bag with an ice pack
- 7.cloth napkin
- 8.Extended day children will need a small pillow and blanket, labeled.
- 9.emergency pack (see emergency policy)

Total Disclosure Policy We have a total disclosure policy in regards to ANY and ALL child, parent, and staff behavior. Our policy includes sharing all school business and interactions with all involved. So, for example, if your child injures or is disrespectful to any person, animal or plant, full details are released to the parties concerned and to the group as a whole to ensure accountability and follow through.

In the case of a parent expressing concerns about any child, parent, staff, or policy it is required that the other parent or staff member remind the sharing parent of our policy, encourage them to contact Tulum, and remind them that the listener will notify Tulum within 24 hours and to expect a follow up call.

Transportation: All children must have a signed transportation release in case of evacuation or any emergency. We also go on field trips and will be requesting your help.

Withdrawals: A one month written notice at the first of the month with your final payment is required to withdraw your child.

Welcome to the Oakhaven Community!