

Green River Montessori School



Parent Handbook REVISED 2025



Green River Montessori School is quality-rated for the QRIS-Early Achievers initiative. Early Achievers, Washington's Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) is Washington's voluntary program for helping early learning programs offer high-quality care. We believe our participation in this initiative will give our school, and staff the knowledge and assistance to maintain a quality program for young children.

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Purpose

The purpose of Green River Montessori School is to provide a safe, high-quality, developmentally appropriate program for young children in a warm and nurturing Montessori environment. The Montessori philosophy prepares the child for school success and for life-long learning.

Mission Statement

Our **mission** is to provide a **Montessori** program which considers the whole child by addressing the uniqueness of each in a safe, nurturing, and culturally relevant environment. We are committed to both the child and the adult and will work to foster a relationship that is reflective of the families we serve. Each family will be treated with respect, regardless of their religion, socioeconomic status, family lifestyle, sexual orientation, abilities, race, or culture.

Vision Statement

Our vision is to create a safe learning environment for children where they feel competent, happy, and loved.

Montessori Curriculum & Philosophy

Our school follows the Montessori Method of teaching. Upon registration, families are provided a hand-out on the Purpose of Montessori Education along with a Montessori handbook. Keeping with the Montessori philosophy, we provide children with a prepared environment where they learn through hands-on experiences. Within the prepared environment are developmentally appropriate materials that enable the children to learn math, language, science, and history, while at the same time developing intellectual curiosity, self-respect, and respect for the world around them. All concepts are firmly grounded in child development as their foundation. **The Role of the Educator** in the Montessori classroom is that of guide and path maker, maintaining an atmosphere of compassion, harmony, and social justice. In our multicultural and anti-bias atmosphere, young children can develop a strong sense of pride in themselves and their families. We believe that the way children play, make friends and form attachments to their classmates and their teachers will contribute to the relationships they'll have with others in the future. The following four goals help to guide our practice:

- 1.)** Each child will demonstrate self-awareness, confidence, family pride, and positive social identities.
- 2.)** Each child will express comfort and joy with human diversity; accurate language for human differences; and deep, caring human connections.
- 3.)** Each child will increasingly recognize unfairness, have language to describe unfairness, and understand unfairness hurts.
- 4.)** Each child will demonstrate empowerment and the skills to act, with others or alone, against prejudice and/or discriminatory actions.

Core Components of Montessori Education

In accordance with the standards set by the American Montessori Society (AMS), Green River Montessori School strives to comply with the following:

1.) Trained Montessori Teachers

A credentialed Montessori teacher is present in every classroom. Aides, interns, and assistants are also trained or in the process of completing their training.

2.) Multi-age Classrooms

Classrooms with 3-year spans facilitate mentorship among the students and encourage leadership development. Infant and toddler classrooms hold a different age span based on licensing regulations.

3.) Montessori Materials

Classrooms are fully equipped with a wide range of high-quality Montessori apparatus and furniture.

4.) Child Directed Work

Students can work independently and select learning materials that interests them, leading to intrinsic motivation and sustained attention.

5.) Uninterrupted Work Periods

A daily work span of two hours for toddlers and three hours for the older students is provided to allow the students to work at their own pace, without interruption.

Age Groupings & Adult to Child Ratios

Age groupings at Green River Montessori are as follows:

- Infants: 3 months – 12 months (1:3 Ratio)
- Young Toddlers: 12 – 23 months (1:4-1:5 Ratio)
- Older Toddlers: 24 - 36 months (1:6-1:7 Ratio)
- Preschool: Mixture of 3-year spans beginning at 3-6 (1:7-1:10 Ratio)
- Elementary: Mixture of students ages 6-12 years (1:12-1:15 Ratio)
- Secondary: 12 – 15 years (1:12-1:15 Ratio)

The school frequently adjusts ratios based on the needs of the children. Adult to child ratios on field trips are approximately one-third of the classroom ratio. Children with special needs may require a one-on-one ratio.

Non-Discrimination Statement

All families are welcome. Green River Montessori School is dedicated to a policy of non-discrimination and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, religion, nationality, creed, sexual orientation, marital status, age, or the presence of any mental, physical, or sensory handicap.

Diversity Statement/Holiday Policy

The diversity plan at Green River Montessori School is one that is open and respectful toward all people. The school provides an environment that is anti-racist and multicultural, reflecting the families served, with an acceptance toward differences in skin color, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, physical and learning abilities, family lifestyle, religion, gender, and cultural practices. A proactive approach is used toward biases to help children develop an awareness of stereotyping and prejudice as seen in their everyday lives. The school is committed to providing a culturally relevant and anti-bias environment. In keeping with this commitment, holidays are acknowledged and regarded respectfully as each child shares his or her family traditions; however, holidays are not *celebrated* in our program.

Authorized Escort Policy

Provisions are made for the safe arrival and departure of children, allowing for parent-staff interaction. A system exists for ensuring that children are released only to authorized adults. Any visitors to the school must have a school escort while on the premises. Visitations must be on an appointment basis.

Arrival/Departure Procedures

Children must be escorted in and out of the facility by a responsible adult and a staff member must be informed of the arrival or departure. When the adult is not known to the staff member on duty, he or she will be asked to show picture identification and will be detained until the authorization is verified. If someone different will be picking up the child, it is important that written information be submitted to the school beforehand. All phone authorizations must be verified. Children must be taken by the hand when walking through the parking lot. Upon arrival to the school, children must immediately wash their hands.

School Attendance

School begins promptly at 9:00am unless otherwise noted. The office needs to be notified if children will be arriving to school more than 15 minutes early or later than scheduled. **Children may not arrive after 10:00am unless arrangements have been made in advance with the office.** Children must be picked up from school within 15 minutes of the time scheduled. The school must be notified anytime a child will need to stay more than 15 minutes beyond the time he or she is signed up for. The school is to be notified of all absences by 8:00am.

Changes in Circumstances

Families are required to keep their enrollment information up to date at all times. This includes phone numbers, addresses, emergency contacts, employment, and other relevant changes. It is imperative that the school is always able to contact the child's family. The school needs to have updated information on the child's immunization records and date of last physical exam.

Hours of Operation

Hours of operation are posted and written into the enrollment forms. Children may not be left at school in excess of 9.5 hours a day. Overtime rates will be charged if care goes beyond 9.5 hours and the child's enrollment is subject to termination.

Items from Home

Children may not bring candy, gum, or make-up to school. We also discourage toys from home since much unhappiness results when the items have been lost or broken. "Show and tell" items may be brought following the individual guidelines from the child's classroom. Absolutely no guns, slingshots, knives (even plastic), or other similar paraphernalia are to be brought to school.

Naps

State regulations require that children under the age of six have a scheduled nap/rest period whenever they are in care for more than four hours. Children who do not sleep must rest quietly for 30 minutes. A labeled, child-size blanket is required and must go home weekly for laundering.

School Uniforms/School Attire

We are a private Montessori School, requiring our students to wear uniforms during the school year. Students need to be in school uniform everyday and may not deviate from the prescribed school attire. Uniform specifications may be updated each fall. For updated uniform information, contact the school's office. A sweater is needed for daily classroom wear and a jacket or coat for outdoor play. In addition, expect that your child may get dirty while at school. A change of clothes is needed. Children should dress according to the weather and be prepared for sudden changes in the weather. For safety reasons, proper, closed-toe shoes (not flip-flops) should be worn.

Items Needed:

- Plain classroom slippers (no large animals etc. or lights)
- Spare (labeled) uniform to remain at school, including underwear and socks
- Labeled comb and/or brush
- Fitted helmet if child rides the trikes

Family Engagement & Involvement

Nothing is as important to Montessori schooling as family involvement. We believe a strong relationship between home and school is essential to a solid foundation. We encourage our families to take every opportunity to participate in the education of their children. There are a variety of ways to do this. Information is provided in the monthly newsletter as well as our scheduled Parent/Staff Guild meetings.

All families automatically belong to our "Parent/Staff Guild" and are encouraged to attend meetings. School goals are based on family input, created yearly into a **Family Engagement action plan**. Progress toward these goals is recorded and shared at our Parent/Staff Zoom meeting and in the monthly newsletter. The school sponsors a variety of family events during the year. We encourage our families to learn more about the Montessori philosophy and recommend the following websites and readings:

- American Montessori Society – www.amshq.org
- *Maria Montessori: Her Life and Work* by E.M. Standing
- *The Absorbent Mind* by Maria Montessori
- *The Secret of Childhood* by Maria Montessori

Special workshops and parenting classes are also available at the school by request and are sometimes offered for college credit.

Immunizations and Health Records

Upon entrance to the program, all children must provide evidence of immunity to measles, diphtheria, tetanus, polio, and rubella. Within 30 days of admission, it is asked that each child has a physical examination by his or her own doctor, who will provide the

school with documentation of the exam.

First-Aid and CPR

Green River Montessori requires that every staff member has certified training in Basic, Child, & Infant CPR and First Aid Training so that there are always ample trained individuals on staff.

Medications

Medications must be in the original labeled bottle accompanied by a completed medication request form (supplied by the school). The request form must be dated and have the exact times, dates, and dosage amounts.

Sick Children

Children who show symptoms of contagious illness may not attend. Although it is difficult for parents to miss work, bringing a sick child to the school exposes other children and staff, often starting a chain reaction. Children who become ill while at school will be separated from the group and their parents will be contacted. Families need to have an emergency plan in place if this occurs. The school needs to be notified of all illnesses so that the school has a record for the health department to review and other families can be informed.

Outdoor Policy

Children are expected to go outdoors daily for fresh air and exercise. During cold winter months, there is an increase of cold viruses since children spend so much time in warm classrooms where infections tend to breed. A child who is too sick to go outdoors for short periods is too sick to be at school. If there are children who are not feeling up to participating in outdoor play, they will be allowed to sit on the bench in order to benefit from the fresh air. Children are required to have appropriate clothing such as a coat that zips or snaps shut, mittens, rubber boots, and a raincoat with a hood. During the summer months, children must be provided with sunscreen from home. This should be applied prior to coming to school. A supply must be available for re-application during the day. A windbreaker and a summer hat are recommended. All items must be clearly labeled with the child's last name.

Children with Special Needs

Special needs include intellectual, language, physical, emotional, and behavioral conditions that may be considered not typical for the child's age or stage of development. Green River Montessori School will make reasonable accommodations for children with special needs. Before a child with special needs can be accepted into our program, a conference must take place with the family, the director, and the child's potential teacher and/or caregivers. If it is determined that the needs of the child can successfully be met, the child will be accepted into the program. If Green River Montessori School suspects a possible undiagnosed need of a child, the school will make referrals for outside resources for screening. If it is determined that the child's needs cannot be met at Green River Montessori School, the family will be referred to other appropriate programs, which may be better equipped to meet the child's needs.

Food

A mid-morning snack and an afternoon snack are provided daily. A well-balanced hot lunch is provided to children on-site at scheduled lunch times. Food selection follows USDA guidelines. Sack lunches from home are required on Fridays and on special field trip outings. Food brought from home must follow the same nutritional guidelines of the school as set forth by the Department of Early Learning. These guidelines are:

At a minimum, the child's breakfast must contain:

- 1.) Fluid Milk
- 2.) Bread, bread alternate, dry or cooked cereal
- 3.) Fruit or Vegetable

At a minimum, the child's lunch must contain:

- 1.) Fluid Milk
- 2.) A protein food including lean meat, fish, poultry, egg, legumes, nut butters, or cheese.
- 3.) Bread or bread alternate, whole grain or enriched.
- 4.) Fruit or vegetable, two total servings

The child's food must contain:

- 1.) A minimum of one Vitamin C fruit, vegetable, or juice provided daily.
- 2.) Servings of food high in Vitamin A, provided three or more times weekly.

When food is brought from home, the school will monitor the consumption by the child, and will ensure safe preparation, storage, and nutritional adequacy. The school will supplement the snack or lunch as necessary, with a potential fee when this requires specialized food replacement or is on a scheduled sack lunch day.

Reporting Suspected Child Abuse

Per WAC 388-150-480 of the licensing requirements, staff must report immediately any instance when the staff member has reason to suspect the occurrence of physical, sexual, or emotional child abuse, child neglect, or child exploitation as required under chapter 26.44 RCW.

Additional Reporting Requirements

Per the same WAC code, staff must also report immediately

- 1) a death, serious injury, requiring medical treatment, or illness requiring hospitalization of a child in care, by telephone and in writing to the parent, licensor, and child's social worker, if any;
- 2) an occurrence of food poisoning or communicable disease, as required by the state board of health to the local health department.

Unscheduled School Closure

If the school is forced to close due to inclement weather, a message will be sent out to families on Procure. Families should refer to the school's monthly newsletter for up-to-date information on the plan of action.

Emergency Procedures

In the event of an emergency, every effort will be made to contact the child's family. If unable to reach the family, the school will contact the child's physician. In appropriate circumstances, 911 will be called, CPR/first aid will be administered, and the child will be transported to the nearest hospital. The school must always have accurate and up-to-date enrollment information. The child's enrollment file will accompany the child to the hospital.

Earthquake Preparedness

Each child should have an earthquake kit at school. If an earthquake occurs, the following procedures will be followed:

- 1) If indoors, everyone will move away from windows and glass areas.
Children will be instructed to get under a table and cover their heads.
- 2) If outdoors, we will stay outdoors, moving to an area clear of trees, buildings, and power lines.
- 3) Children will be moved to safety if there are signs of gas, fire, exposed wiring, etc.
- 4) Staff will take attendance and have their emergency book with them.
- 5) If it is not possible to re-enter the buildings, children may be taken to a nearby business.

Storms, Blizzards, and Power Outages

Each classroom has battery-operated flashlights. Staff will ensure that children are kept warm and safe. If prolonged, families will be contacted to pick up their children.

Floods, Lahars, and Other Natural Disasters

Staff will listen to radio broadcasts for civil defense instructions. If instructed to go to higher ground, children may be transported to the appropriate assigned location as determined by the City of Auburn.

Transportation and Field Trip Arrangements

Green River Montessori School shall insure that motor vehicles are maintained in safe operating condition, equipped with appropriate safety devices and seat belts for each child while the vehicle is in motion. The school will abide by all rules and regulations concerning transportation as outlined by state licensing requirements. Parents and guardians will be informed of field trips in advance. A signed authorization form must be on file before a child is transported by the school. Parents who assist with field trip transportation must conform to the legal safety regulations of the school and must show proof of insurance. Written permission must be given whenever a child is transported by parent volunteers.

Behavior & Guidance Policy

The purpose of behavior guidance is to help children learn basic human values, problem-solving skills, and the ability to take responsibility for their own choices. Green River Montessori School will strive to make your child's first school experience a positive and successful one so that he or she will feel safe and secure. Corporal punishment is never used at our school under any circumstances.

Our definition of "discipline" involves inner training of one's actions. It involves re-direction and positive guidance. Discipline does not mean "punishment." It is based on the individual child's age or stage of development. It is never harsh, abusive, or humiliating to the child. Children are treated with respect. Appropriate behavior is modeled for them and discussed in ways that encourage them to think. Logical and natural consequences will result when children do not follow the expectations of the program. The most extreme consequence exercised will be that the child will no longer be able to attend.

When a child experiences difficulty in our program, a note will be sent home for the parent or guardian to read and discuss with their child. If the behavior continues, a conference will be scheduled to discuss the difficulties and to develop an action plan. If the plan proves unsuccessful, the program will assist the family in exploring other school options more suitable for their child.

Because the child is now part of a larger group, it is important that the child abide by the policies of the school. This sometimes takes time and patience since "school" rules may differ from "home" rules. It also requires the support of the family. It is important that all members of the family acquaint themselves with the "school" rules and possibly even adopt some of the strategies used in the program.

School Guidance Strategies

--Using the affirmative: "We use walking feet indoors," rather than "Don't run in the classroom." "Use your words to tell us you're angry," rather than "Don't hit!"

--We get the child's attention by hunkering down to his/her level, making eye contact, speaking quietly and asking the child to repeat the directions.

--We try very hard to be fair. We examine our expectations to make sure they are age appropriate.

--We avoid arguments by following through with solutions that address the problem, but also offer the child a way to exit gracefully from the problem: "You can choose a quiet place to calm down or I can choose one for you."

The staff at Green River Montessori School is trained in child guidance and social/emotional learning. The school has resource materials available such as books, articles, and video tapes to loan to parents on request. In addition, special parent meetings or seminars can be scheduled on guidance and discipline techniques.

Children vary a lot as they grow and develop. They do not develop at the same pace in all areas. Because of this, we practice a variety of strategies. Rules of conduct for the school-age child for example, are quite different from what may be expected of a preschooler. A child with a handicapping condition may require a different strategy as well. The result is equitable treatment for all children. Our role is to help guide, educate, and model appropriate behavior at based on both individual and group needs.

Expulsion/Suspension Policy

Staff work with families to create and enact a behavior support plan for children with persistent, challenging behaviors. Annual and ongoing staff training is provided to help guide children in Social and Emotional Learning (SEL). Staff receive initial instruction and participate in annual professional development focused on supporting positive social and emotional development, trauma-informed care and strategies to reduce challenging behaviors. To avoid expulsion, staff and families are given information to consult with mental health professionals, Early Learning Coaches, and referrals to outside agencies such as ChildFind and Kindering. If it becomes necessary to expel or suspend a child from our program due to behavioral or developmental concerns, the school will:

- 1.) Schedule a parent meeting to discuss the concern,
- 2.) Provide written documentation of the concerns,
- 3.) Seek expert consultation from an appropriate source or agency,
- 4.) Provide resources and referrals.
- 5.) Referrals to other childcares and preschool programs to better fit their needs.

Child Guidance - Terms and Techniques

- **Redirection:** Children are redirected to an alternate activity in order to switch their interest toward a more acceptable situation.
- **Ignoring:** Sometimes when a child is throwing a tantrum for the sake of getting attention, it may be appropriate to ignore it.
- **Natural and Logical Consequences:** This method allows the child to see the results of his or her actions. For example: If the child is using classroom materials inappropriately and the item breaks, the child no longer is able to play with the item. In some cases, the child may be asked to replace the damaged item.
- **Reflective Listening:** Repeating back and paraphrasing what the child says. For example: A child says, "I hate you, and I don't want to come here!" The adult might say, "You're really upset because you don't want to be here today. You want to stay home with your mom and dad."
- **Explaining:** This method helps the child to develop pro social skills and empathy for others. For example: "When you say bad words, it makes me feel sad," or "When you hit others, it hurts and I can't allow you to hurt anyone."
- **Modeling:** Adults model the type of behavior that they want to see the child repeat. Adults treat others with respect and acknowledge when they see children do the same. For example, "I like the way you are sharing the play dough," or "I like how you gave Emily a turn on the swing. It was nice of you."
- **Positive Reinforcement:** "Wow, you worked really hard on controlling your temper even after Michael called you a name. I'm going to write your mom and dad a note and tell them how proud I am of you!"
- **Time-out:** This is our least-used strategy because often it is not effective in "teaching" the child what is expected. Time-out may be necessary when the child is demonstrating anger and/or violence and needs to take a break away from the situation. For example; "I need you to walk away from this right now and think about another way of handling your anger. I'll come and talk with you after you calm down."

Health and Safety

To ensure the health and safety of the children and staff, the following criteria will be followed:

- Children are always under adult supervision.
- Children are dressed appropriately for active play indoors and out.
- As children use the facility, staff and children keep areas clean.
- Restrooms are kept sanitary and are disinfected at least twice daily.
- Staff members who handle food have a food handler's permit.
- Surfaces are appropriately cleaned and disinfected before serving food.
- Staff and children wash their hands with soap and water upon arrival to the classroom, before meals, before preparing food, after using the restroom, after outdoor play, and before and after wiping a nose
- Medication administered by staff is recorded in writing and kept on file.
- Fresh drinking water is readily available.
- Bedding is only used by one child and is sent home weekly for laundering.
- Areas used by children are well-lit, ventilated and kept at a comfortable temperature.
- Electrical outlets for children under the age of six have safety devices or covers.
- The temperature of hot water used by the children does not exceed 110 degrees.
- The building, playground, and all equipment are maintained in safe, clean, condition and are in good repair.
- Climbing equipment swings, and large pieces of equipment are securely anchored.
- Classroom materials and equipment are safe and age appropriate.
- Floor coverings are attached to the floor with non-slip materials.
- All chemicals and potentially dangerous products such as medicines and cleaning supplies are stored in original, labeled containers in locked cabinets inaccessible to children.
- Staff health records include results of a T.B. test, HIV/AIDS training, first-aid training, and a valid first-aid card.
- Appropriate first-aid supplies are available indoors, outdoors, and while on field trips.
- Staff are alerted to the health of each child and individual medical problems.
- Families are notified in writing of all accidents occurring at school and a record is kept in the child's file.
- The state licenser is informed each time an accident occurs at school that results in a doctor's or hospital visit.
- Staff are aware of how to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect.

School Responsibilities

Green River Montessori School is responsible for maintaining continuous compliance with state licensing, accreditation, and Early Achiever requirements. The school is committed to meeting and exceeding all city, state, and federal requirements and regulations. The school will follow all policies and procedures outlined in this Parent Handbook to the best of their ability.

Parent Responsibilities

Parents are required to:

- Provide and update accurate registration, health, and immunization records and forms as required by state law
- Consistently follow the schedule that is on record for hours of attendance, making sure that it does not exceed closing time.
- Notify the school in advance of any anticipated schedule changes.
- Apprise the school in writing of any health restrictions, custody disputes, or situations which would limit or exclude a child from full participation in the regular program.
- Acquaint themselves with their child's teachers and caregivers, knowing each by name.
- Communicate with staff and/or director any concerns regarding the school.
- Immediately communicate with the director anytime you notice that the school is out of compliance.
- Arrange alternate care for a sick child and provide for prompt pick-up if their child takes ill while at school.
- Appropriately dress their child for school and provide a complete change of clothes to remain at school at all times.
- Treat the staff with kindness and respect, never criticizing them in the presence of the children.
- Pay tuition on time to ensure a quality program.
- Acquaint themselves with the Montessori philosophy and support the school's Montessori practices.

To learn more about the Montessori method and philosophy, please visit the AMS website at amshq.org. The site has parent information and video clips. Also, families are encouraged to attend our Parent/Staff Guild meetings. Check the school's monthly newsletter for dates and times.

Developmental Screenings and Assessment

Lead teachers in each classroom will conduct developmental screenings within 45 days of enrollment to make families aware of each child's developmental milestones using the CDC Developmental Milestones Checklist. This information will be shared with families within 30 days after the screening has been conducted. Rescreening will occur annually. We want our families to stay informed and we encourage them to ask questions or request conferences. The staff will communicate through email, phone, or in person. The school has access to translation assistance and will screen and share with families in the child's home language if needed. For more information about this developmental screening process, please visit

www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/milestones/

Frequency and Types of Assessment

Children are assessed three times per year—Both Formal and Informal Assessments.

Assessments are aligned with the Washington State Early Learning Guidelines and include:

- **Formal Assessments:** Progress Monitoring Reports
- **Informal Assessments:** Portfolios, teacher observations, and lesson records

Timeline

- Both Formal and Informal are completed within the first 90 calendar days of enrollment
- Ongoing assessments occur three times per year thereafter

Family Communication

Assessment results are shared with families through one or more of the following methods:

- In-person conferences
- Phone calls
- Email
- Zoom meetings

Goal Setting

Written goals for each child are developed three times per year. These goals are based on:

- Family input (questionnaires and/or meetings)
- Results from formal and informal assessments

Staff Responsibilities

All staff are trained to use assessment tools and are responsible for maintaining

accurate, up-to-date records for each child in their classroom.

Family Communication of Assessment Results Policy

Our program is committed to partnering with families to support each child's growth and development. To ensure transparency and collaboration, children's formal assessment results and informal observation records are shared with families **at least three times per year**.

Methods of Sharing Assessment Results:

- **Formal Assessments** (e.g., Progress Monitoring Reports) and **Informal Observations** (e.g., portfolios, anecdotal records, and lesson documentation) are reviewed with families during scheduled conferences and through ongoing communication.
- Families will receive updates through a variety of communication methods, including:
 - o In-person conferences
 - o Phone conversations
 - o Email
 - o Virtual meetings (Zoom or similar platforms)

Timing and Frequency:

- Assessments are conducted and shared three times annually—fall, winter, and spring.
- Informal updates may also be provided between conferences to maintain continuous communication.

Open Communication Policy:

Families are encouraged to request a conference at any time during the year to discuss their child's progress. Teachers and the program director are available to answer questions and support family concerns. To ensure effective follow-up, we recommend submitting concerns in writing via note or email.

Classroom Transitions

Our early learning program is committed to supporting children and their families during all key transitions—into the program, within the program, and as they prepare to enter kindergarten or another school setting. Smooth transitions foster a sense of security and continuity, which supports healthy development and learning.

1. Transition Into the Early Learning Program

To support a successful start, we follow a welcoming and gradual transition process for all newly enrolled children:

- Prior to the first day, families must complete all required enrollment paperwork, including the “**All About Me**” form, to help staff understand each child’s individual needs and preferences.
- Children are invited to visit their classroom and meet their teacher before their first full day.
- We highly recommend a “**slow start**” approach, where children attend for shorter periods initially to become familiar with their new environment at a comfortable pace.
- During the first few days, families (or designated caregivers) should be available to return if the child is inconsolable. Staff will work with each family to develop a plan that supports a smooth and comforting transition.

2. Transitions Within the Program (Between Classrooms)

Children may transition to a new classroom during the summer or fall, based on age and developmental readiness.

- Families will be notified in advance and included in the transition planning process.
- Opportunities for classroom visits and teacher introductions will be provided to ease the move.
- We encourage family input before and after the transition to ensure the process meets each child’s needs.
- Teachers will share information about the child’s learning style, interests, and progress with the receiving teacher to maintain continuity of care and education.

3. Transition to Kindergarten or a New Program

We are committed to helping children and families prepare for the move to kindergarten or another educational program.

- Teachers will provide a **summary of each child's developing skills** in the following areas:
 - o Social-emotional development
 - o Physical development
 - o Cognitive development
 - o Language
 - o Literacy
 - o Mathematics
- Families will be informed about local kindergarten registration and orientation activities.
- Our staff will offer support through conversations, resources, and guidance to help families understand the expectations and processes for kindergarten entry or a new school environment.

4. Family Support

Throughout all transitions, staff and the director remain available to answer questions and offer guidance. Open communication with families is encouraged, and we welcome input in planning each transition. Families may request a meeting to discuss any concerns or specific needs during these times of change.

Curriculum Goals

All teaching staff have been formally trained in the Montessori Method of Education as well as in Early Childhood Education. Their curriculum aligns with the six domains of the Washington State Early Learning and Development Guidelines: **About me and my family culture, Building relationships, Touching, seeing, hearing, and moving around, growing up healthy, Communicating, and Learning about my world.** The goal of Green River Montessori School is to introduce children to experiences which:

- Provide a warm and loving environment in which each child feels safe, secure, respected, and loved.
- Support and encourage the growth and development of the whole child.
- Develop social skills, emotional growth, physical coordination, as well as cognitive preparation.
- Help build self-confidence, self-esteem, and motivation.
- Foster the natural desire to learn.
- Develop freedom within limits.
- Develop and refine each child's sensory motor skills.
- Lengthen each child's attention span.
- Enable each child to move smoothly and purposefully.
- Encourage the development of creativity in each child.
- Provide a framework of discipline through which each child can develop self-discipline and personal strength.
- Provide an environment with safe limits in which each child can become an active explorer and learner.
- Provide opportunities for each child to develop social grace and courtesy.
- Develop skills in observation, questioning and listening.
- Prompt order, coordination, concentration, and independence.
- Refine and develop each child's physical and mental capabilities and interests as they expand.
- Help develop respect for themselves, for others, and for their environment.

“Our aim is not only to make the child understand, and still less to force him to memorize, but so to touch his imagination as to enthuse him to his innermost core. We do not want complacent pupils, but eager ones.”

Maria Montessori