



Parent Handbook

Please read and keep this book while your child attends
New Thought Montessori School.

**Before choosing our program,
please consider the following:**

Our environment is a child-led and nature based program. We are not an institution type of school and our primary focus is not academics. Although academics are taught, we mainly focus on bringing children and families back to what is most important in the young years of life. The goal of our program is to socialize the children and grow their love for community and school type environment. Society has changed what preschool should be. It has molded parents into thinking what standard their child should be meeting. Children do not need this type of pressure at such a young age. They need happiness, support, playtime, and friends. We do not perform any daily reports, parent conferences, or progress reports. Preschool should be a time for children to develop their own personal growth and form an environment belonging to them. Our program leads with the Montessori method, using hands on learning and play. We allow children freedom of choice, movement, and an abundance of outdoor time. Our children get to play in the mud, rain, sun, and water. They get to do yoga under the trees, dance, and sing. We allow them to get dirty, experiment, play, and have fun! If you choose our program, these values and beliefs should be important to you as well.

Our Mission:

New Thought Montessori Preschool

To guide each student on their path of development by providing a carefully prepared environment which nurtures the mind, body, and spirit of each individual.

Goals:

- * To awaken a love a learning, passion for knowledge, and joy of creativity in each student
- * To support the development of independent, self confident learners
- * To foster a strong sense of self, respect for others and an ability to work as part of a group
- * To develop a repertoire of life skills and a strong academic foundation
- * To provide developmentally appropriate physical activity and healthy nutritional snacks
- * To encourage regular practice of self-reflection and nurturing the peace within
- * To provide a reliable source of care and information for families

Core Values:

*Respect	*Compassion	*Kindness
*Responsibility	*Honesty	*Awareness

What is New Thought?

Through the years of working in traditional Montessori classrooms and administrative positions, New Thought Montessori has developed an innovative and exciting idea that will merge traditional Montessori curriculum with a new

and relevant learning environment. New Thought Montessori will help to prepare children for the future, allow more one on one time, encourage positive relationships with all teachers in the school, and meet the needs of today's child.

New Thought teaches with the Montessori philosophy while fostering a more play-based and experimental learning and play environment. We believe most learning objectives are accomplished through play and by doing. We strongly support learning through exploring and spending ample amount of time in nature, culture, gardening, science, art, tinkering, music, and movement. Our outdoor and indoor environment allows us to support a holistic, organic, and nature base program. We have created a calming, nurturing, and comfortable homelike environment. Our staff is trained in Positive/Conscious Discipline methods and Montessori Certification which are used to support our school families. Through the years of working in traditional Montessori classrooms and administrative positions, New Thought Montessori has developed an innovative and exiting idea that will merge traditional Montessori curriculum with a new relevant learning environment. New Thought Montessori helps to prepare children for the future, allows more one on one time, encourages positive relationships with all teachers in the school, and meets the needs of today's child. Most importantly, we encourage and provide plenty of outside time with activities connecting children to nature, which has been lost in the current school systems.

Elements of the Montessori Approach to Teaching:

Montessori is both a philosophy of child development and a method of applying the philosophy in an educational setting to guide a child's growth. The Montessori classrooms at all levels are dynamic communities of learners and guides. Some basic premises of Montessori for all age levels include:

1. A Responsive, Prepared, Child-Centered Environment

Children are to be respected as unique individuals, different from adults, but not less important or valued as members of the community. The child possesses an unusual sensitivity and intellectual ability to learn from her environment. The focus of activity in our Montessori classroom setting is on the child's experience within the environment, and not on the teacher's teaching. Our environment is designed to meet the needs, interests, and abilities of the children within the class. Teachers prepare the environment through modifying the selection of educational materials available, the physical layout and equipment in the classroom, and shifting the tone of the class to fit the ever-changing needs of the children. Generally students work individually or in small self-selected groups. Community meetings or "circle times" are scheduled so as not to interrupt the child's work and are usual held at transitional points during the day. There is a conscious effort to design our classroom as a "children's house", making it as comfortable and inviting as a home.

2. A Focus On The Human Tendencies

Maria Montessori based her philosophy of education on the human tendency within the child to explore, to move, to share with a group, to be independent and make decisions, to create order, to develop self control, to abstract ideas from

experience, to use creative imagination, to work hard, to repeat, concentrate, and perfect one's efforts and creations. Each of these tendencies are considered carefully when designing our environments, preparing materials, and planning activities for the students

3. A Multiage Community of Learners

Our Montessori School is a community of children and adults. The school consists of children from a multiage span of three to four years (2-6 year olds). This creates a "family" like group where older children model and help care for younger children, and younger children look up to and learn from the older children. Varying levels of ability blend easily in a multiage setting, no child feels left behind and everyone learns at their own pace.

4. Cooperation and Collaboration

Children learn at their own pace. When the child demonstrates readiness, the child is guided gently by the teachers in the classroom to explore increasingly challenging activities. In a Montessori setting, teachers refrain from comparing students to one another and base evaluations on the progress of the individual. Children are encouraged to work together as well as independently. Often a more experienced child will be asked to assist a less experienced child with an activity or lesson, developing leadership skills. Group discussion and problem solving are strongly encouraged. Teachers work to create a sense of community within the classroom. Children feel a sense of belonging and responsibility toward their classroom and toward each other.

The Process of Learning:

Montessori materials teach through hands on learning, spontaneous engagement, active involvement, and self-directed activity. Montessori materials have a control of error inherent in their design. This allows children to work independently, unafraid to make mistakes and to become comfortable with the fact errors are essential to the process of learning. While making independent choices and exploring concepts largely on their own, Montessori students construct their own sense of individual identity. They become independent and confident individuals. The child is intrinsically motivated to learn. In a Montessori classroom, children do not work for grades, paperwork, or external rewards, nor do they complete assignments for their parents or teachers. Children learn because they are interested in things and in gaining an understanding of the world around them. As adults we are wired to work for the product. The children are always working and learning from the process, not the product.

In the classroom there are three stages of learning a new concept or lesson:

1. Introduction to a concept. This usually occurs by means of exploration within the classroom, observing another child at work, a conversation, reading something in a book, etc.
2. Processing the concept. The child develops an understanding of the concept through working/playing with materials that illustrate the ideas, provide opportunity for exploration and experimentation, and provide opportunity for repetition of an activity.

3. Mastering the concept. The child is confidently able to explain the concept and teach the concept to another person.

Admission Policies and Procedures:

The admission policy of New Thought Montessori is based on the educational concepts of Dr. Marla Montessori. We strive to serve a broad range of socioeconomic, religious, cultural, racial, and ability groups. Admissions policies, procedures, curriculum and faculty at New Thought Montessori have been approved by CCLD.

Children (Ages 2.5-6)

- 1 Children must be at least two and a half years old by their start date.
- 2 Children should be toilet trained. If a child is still in the process of toilet training, the director will make the ultimate decision if our school can meet the needs of the child.
- 3 If a child has previous school experience, prior school information will be required and if available a copy of school records.

Kindergarten Program

- * children must be 5 by September 1st
 - * children must have attend a minimum of one year in our preschool program
- 1 Kindergarten children will continue to work in their classroom with children of all ages, in order to allow them to complete their Montessori cycle.
 - 2 Kindergarten children will be separated from the younger children after lunch and have an additional 2 hour core kindergarten work time. This work time will include group lessons, individual lessons and advanced language and math.

Additional Admission Requirements

- 1 Specific trial periods and evaluation procedures may be established as needed.

Children with Special Needs

Children with mild physical, mental, or educational differences are considered for admission. Reasonable accommodations will be made provided that no significant changes to the program are required and that the child does not pose a risk to himself or others. A recent diagnostic assessment by qualified professionals which identifies the child's needs within a mainstream environment can be requested. Periodic assessment may also be required during the school year and prior to re-enrollment. An educational assessment made during this time will determine:

- 1 The child's progress.
- 2 That our environment supports the developmental needs of the child.

- 3 New Thought Montessori has a right to decide if the environment can accommodate the child, without outside opinions.

Application Procedures

- 1 Prospective parents are asked to visit the school website and campus for a tour.
- 2 There is a \$160 non-refundable application fee.

Enrollment

- 1 New Thought Montessori is a year round program.
- 2 Enrollment is available all year long.
- 3 New Thought Montessori requires a 45 day notice in writing for families that wish to leave the school. If you un-enroll your child early, no refunds will be given, no exceptions.

First Day of School

- 1 All forms completed, including copy of an immunization record.
- 2 Tuition
- 3 Filled reusable water bottle, lunch, bedding, and bagged and labeled full set of extra clothes.

Nondiscrimination Statement:

New Thought Montessori welcomes all students and families, and does not discriminate in it's hiring, admissions practices, or any other form of access on the basis of race, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity/ expression, sex or disability.

Discipline Policy:

Discipline in a Montessori environment practices redirection and positive communication. The child will not experience a "time out" or be "in trouble". Our goal is to listen, understand, and redirect. New Thought Montessori offers an educational program with freedom of movement for children, and freedom within limits for work choices. Some children are more successful in an environment with a more direct instructional method of teaching. Parents of children who experience impulsive or aggressive behavior, may be advised to seek a school that specializes in direct instruction. If the ground rules are consistently followed and positively reinforced, the necessity of external discipline will be diminished. When such external discipline is deemed necessary, the following guidelines will be observed:

- Rules and boundaries are stated and shown on the child's first day of school. Daily reminders are given, if necessary, to the group as a whole.
- Inappropriate behavior is stopped by the teacher and child is redirected

- If possible, the work/activity is offered in a quiet area when the child appears to be 'in control' and is. Not disturbing the other children. However, if the child needs to regain control, he is isolated from work/classroom activities for a short time to re-thinks; the child is then asked if he/she is ready to return to the class.
- Problem solving skills are reinforced as well as suggested for alternative behavior choices.
- Multiple disruptions will result in the school calling the parent to discuss the child's continued behavior.
- If the behavior continues, the school will work with the parents in determining if our environment is the right fit for their child.
- New Thought Montessori encourages and practices positive discipline and wants all children to feel accomplished, proud and happy.
- New Thought Montessori has a right to determine if a child can stay in the environment if behavioral issues do not stop. This is for the well being of other children, teachers, and school as a whole.

Daily Schedule: Monday - Friday

7:30-8:45	school opens for early morning care
8:45 9:15	drop off time
9:25	drop off cut off
9:30	welcome circle
9:30-12:00	classroom learning with a 1hr outdoor play
12:00-12:25	lunch
12:25-12:30	half day pick up
12:30-1:00	reading time
1:00- 3:00	rest time
3:15	full day pick up
3:30	afternoon snack for extended care children
3:30-5:00	extended care
5:00	school is closed

Regular school day hours are from 9:00 am - 3:15pm

Drop off and pick up procedure:

Drop offs and pick ups should be done in a timely and quiet manner. Parents are encouraged to respect the school and understand that lingering parents disrupt the flow of the environment. School materials are not to be touched at this

time. Please use this time to create strong and independent children who are confident in their drop off and pick up with you.

Parents are to enter through playground gate, sign in their child, and walk them to their classroom. For the consistency of the school, no child will be admitted after 9:30 am. If you have an appointment or an emergency, please call the school and let them know what time your child will be arriving.

When picking up your child, please enter through the gate, pick up your child, sign him/her out, collect their belongings and leave through gate. Always enter and exit through playground gate. Half Day pick up is promptly 12:25-12:30, Full day pick up is at 3:15, Extended day pickup is between 3:30-5:00.

Any pick up after 12:30, 3:30, or 5:00 is considered late and will result in a charge.

The school building closes at 5:00 pm. All parents and children should be out of the building promptly at 5:00 pm. Parents will be charged a \$15 dollar per 15 minute interval if they are late, no matter what the circumstance. Please do not be late picking up your children. If you will be late due to an emergency, please call the school to let the teacher know. Late fees are to be brought in cash the next day and paid directly to the teacher who stayed late.

Rest time:

Rest time is from 1:00 - 3:00 pm. All preschool children will participate in rest time. Whether or not your child sleeps, they are required to have a quiet rest time to rest, reflect, and be calm. Although parents think their child won't sleep, we can almost guarantee that they will. Children are so busy and stimulated when they attend school that they are tired by 1:00 pm. If your child does not sleep, we will offer them back rubs and nice books to enjoy during this time. Calming music and aromas are also incorporated during this time.

Water bottle:

Please bring a reusable water bottle cleaned and filled every morning for your child. Water bottles should be labeled and your child should be able to independently drink out of it. Water bottles must be re-usable and no other liquids except for water is permitted at school. Water bottles should be full when arriving to school but will be refilled with our filtered water, when they become empty.

Lunch:

Every Monday the school provides a pizza lunch for the children. This is a fun, picnic-style lunch for the children to do all together. We provide quality pizza from Brizio Pizza with fresh cut fruit or vegetable. This is \$20 extra a month. (\$5 a day). If you would like your child to participate in this, please email the school. Tuesday-Friday. Lunches must be packed in a one-time, easy open container such as a bento box. Children should be able to eat their food independently. Lunch boxes must be reusable and contain no wrappers or trash.

Lunches will not be warmed up or stored in a refrigerator. If you wish to send a hot lunch, you may purchase a thermos container. Please do your research on lunch ideas for your child. Parents should provide a well balanced lunch. If your child needs a fork or spoon, parents are to provide that for their lunch.

Lunches may NOT contain:

- candy
- items with food coloring
- liquid based food such as yogurt, applesauce, etc
- food wrapped in packages
- drinks, juices, or milk



Animals:

Parents understand and agree that an environment containing animals that are available to the children, expose their child to being bit or scratched. Children are learning how to handle and be gentle with animals, so the animal has normal reactions to the learning process. This most likely won't happen, but it could. If your child is allergic to an animal in the school, we will do our best to keep the child away, but the animal will stay at the school.

Ouchies:

Parents understand and agree that children will expose themselves to getting hurt while playing at school. Scraped skin, falling, bumped head, splinters, etc can happen at school, as it can happen anywhere else. Teachers will do their best to catch every incident if a child is hurt, but sometimes, if the child doesn't cry or come up to a teacher, not all incidents can be seen at all times. Teachers are aware of most incidents and will tell you at pick up time or leave a note in child's cubby. If there are any injuries to the head or face, or any sort of emergency, we will call you right away. We strongly encourage parents to not over analyze any situation and simply ask your child if they remember what happened. At New Thought, we teach children to always get right back up after they have fallen, just like we get back up when we fall in real life too. Falling is a part of learning and growing!

Messy & Play policy:

If you are joining our program, you too believe that what children need the most is play. New Thought strongly encourages children to play, explore, and learn through the use of all their senses. Parents agree and understand that clothes, shoes, and body may get covered in dirt, mud, water, paint, food, and a variety of other age appropriate products while learning and playing. Children will not be changed into new clothes throughout the day unless completely necessary. Children should be dressed in clothing and shoes that allow



them to play and explore freely and comfortably. Children also have a choice to remove their shoes outdoors at any point in the day. This allows the child to feel the earth and have a sense of freedom in their environment.

Rain/Weather:

Our school plan outside rain or shine. Please check the weather every morning to dress your child appropriately for the particular weather. If it says rain, you will need to bring a rain suit or raincoat and boots. Please make sure your child can play in these and that they are not too big to avoid injuries. Please also bring a sweater or jacket that will keep them warm once they are out of the rain, as their rain coats will be wet. On rainy days, their socks and clothing will most likely be wet and muddy when they come home. Our heater will run and they are also welcome to take their socks off inside. If your child stays all day, send an extra pair of pants and socks in their tote bag so we can change them before nap time, if needed.

Vaccines:

If you take your child to receive a vaccine, we ask that you make these appointments after school or a non-school day. If you are only able to get a morning appointment, we ask that you keep your child home for the day. Vaccines have many side effects, including fever and pain, and the children are usually very emotional and uncomfortable after these.

Birthdays:

To celebrate your child's birthday, you may bring in a morning snack for the class. This will be served during the morning work time and we will have a birthday circle outside for them as well. You may provide something fun like bagels and cream cheese, fruit cups (washed and cut), home made muffins, etc. Anything parents make will be special to the children because it is different than what we serve at school. The snack you provide should preferably be homemade or organic but must be nut free and dye free and something that the children can eat independently without the teacher's assistance. We will not accommodate cupcakes, cake, cookies, candy, goodie bags, or balloons.

Below is how many individuals snacks to bring by class, on your child's birthday:

Room 1: 26

Room 2: 22

Room 3: 14

Parent/Teacher communication:

We encourage relationships between our teachers and families and implement a transparent communication line. Small talk and positive conversations here and there with your child's teacher can be possible with respect for the school

environment. Drop off and pick up times can be hectic and busy, which does not allow for everyday questions and inspections from parents. On the day to day, parents should drop off and pick up quickly and quietly. If you have any serious concerns or questions relating to your child from time to time, email is the best form of communication. The director will chat with the teacher and get back to you. For the majority, all of the children great days and are just enjoying this part of their lives where they are learning to have an environment of their own. If you would like to hear more details of your child's day, think of relatable/concrete questions your child to answer.

Examples: What was in the snack bowls this morning? What work did you choose on the shelf today? Did you sing any songs at circle? Who made you laugh today? Did anything silly happen? Did you use the toilet today? What was your favorite thing I packed you in your lunch? What friend made you smile today?

Sick/Medicine Policy:

Parents should perform wellness checks on their child each morning.

If the school contacts you to pick your child up due to being ill, we ask that you pick them up within one hour of speaking to us. If we are unable to get ahold of the parent, we will begin calling the emergency contacts on your registration form. If your child has any of the following you will be called to pick them up.

Fever

Children will be sent home if their temperature is 100.0 or higher and must stay home the next day for observation. Children must be free of fever (any temperature above 98.6 degrees) for at least 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication. The same policy applies if your child develops a fever at home. They must be fever free (any temperature above 98.6 degrees) for at least 24 hours without the use of fever reducing medication. If they have a non contagious illness (ear infection) they may return to school with a doctors note.

Rash

Any rash other than a common diaper rash or skin irritation will require that child to be sent home for an evaluation and diagnosis from their doctor in writing of exactly what it is. They may return to school based on that written doctor's evaluation, and clearance that it is not contagious.

Conjunctivitis (pink eye)

Children will be sent home if there appears to be an unusual amount of discharge from or irritation to their eye(s) and must stay home the next day for observation. Before returning to school they will need an evaluation and diagnosis from their doctor in writing of exactly what it is.

*If the diagnosis is BACTERIAL CONJUNCTIVITIS children must have received at least 24 hours of treatment.

*If the diagnosis is VIRAL CONJUNCTIVITIS your child may return AS LONG AS THERE IS NO DISCHARGE.

*If in fact they do not have "pink eye" we need a doctor's note with a diagnosis and a clearance that it is not contagious.

Thick White, Green or Yellow Discharge

Children will be sent home if they appear to have any thick white, green or yellow discharge. This is often a sign of an infection and they must stay home the next day for observation. Before returning to school they will need an evaluation and diagnosis from their doctor in writing and at least 24 hours of treatment. If in fact they do not have an infection we need a doctor's note with a diagnosis of exactly what it is with a clearance that it is nothing contagious. The Department of Health and most doctors are of the opinion that once on antibiotics for 24 hours, the discharge is no longer contagious even though it may persist for up to two weeks.

Diarrhea

Children will be sent home if they have two or more loose bowel movements in one day and must stay home the next day for observation. Before returning to school (after the day of observation) children must be free from diarrhea for 24 hours with at least 1 regular bowel movement. If your child has one or more loose bowel movements on their first day back they will again be sent home.

Vomiting

Children will be sent home if they vomit and must stay home the next day for observation. Before returning to school (after the day of observation) children must symptom free with no vomiting for at least 24 hours.

Persistent Hacking Cough

Children will be sent home if they have a persistent hacking cough and must stay home the next day for observation. Before returning to school they will need an evaluation and diagnosis from their doctor in writing and at least 24 hours of treatment. If in fact they do not require any treatment we need a doctor's note with a diagnosis of exactly what it is with a clearance that it is not contagious.

Lice

Children will not be readmitted until 24 hours after treatment and must be nit free. The Director or a Teacher will make an evaluation and determine if the child can be readmitted.

Covid-19

Enrolling your child in school puts your child or family at risk of contracting any illness, including Covid-19. If your child is experiencing any symptoms of Covid-19, your child needs to stay home. Parents take full responsibility for well checking your child and family every morning.

Common Cold Policy

Children suffering from a common cold will be assessed on an individual basis.

Factors of consideration include the developmental level of your child in congruence with our ability to limit the spread of germs. The younger your child, the more difficult it is to keep the spread of germs down. For example: hand to face contact, mouthing of toys, uncontrolled nasal discharge, uncovered sneezing and coughing etc.

Please understand that we are in charge of many children and it is our responsibility to keep them healthy. We ask all parents to take into consideration other children and the teachers health and well being when deciding if their child is "well enough" to be at school. We understand it may be difficult to take time off work, however when children stay at school sick, it continues to get passed around and the odds of your child ending up sick again are very high. If a teacher at our school feels your child is ill and unable to function at school, you will be called to pick them up.

Medications:

Medications will not be administered at school.

By signing this document, you are acknowledging the entire Parent Handbook and agreeing to uphold New Thought Montessori's values, philosophy, and policies.

I, _____ the parent/guardian of

_____ have read and agree to school policies noted in the Parent Handbook.

Signature _____

Date _____

Welcome to the
New Thought family !