



# Parent/Student Handbook

Augustus H. Shaw Jr. Montessori

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# **Shaw Montessori is a school of choice and has a philosophy unlike other methods of education.**

## **Mission Statement:**

Our mission is to provide a solid academic foundation employing the philosophy of Maria Montessori within a respectful, loving and supportive community.

To achieve its mission, Shaw Montessori:

- Respects each child for who he/she is
- Encourages individual initiative and personal interests, fostering individual academic excellence
- Offers choices within the Montessori environment allowing children to help shape their own learning
- Promotes the development of independence self respect and respect for each other
- Brings together children of diverse ages, religious, cultural and economic background to develop social skills and ethical standards
- Offers freedom within the classroom while encouraging and requiring the self-discipline students need to use that freedom correctly

To achieve these goals, Shaw Montessori:

- Fosters experimentation, observation and discovery
- Promotes cultural diversity in the meeting of universal needs
- Instills appreciation for historical achievements and a sense of responsibility for the future

Education is a joyful, lifelong process based on a solid academic foundation employing the Philosophy and materials of Maria Montessori. Shaw provides a unique alternative to traditional schools.

## **Vision Statement**

To educate the human potential

## **The Purpose of Montessori Education**

Dr. Montessori believed that no human being is educated by another person. S/he must do it himself. A truly educated individual continues to learn long after the hours and years they spend in the classroom because they are motivated from within by a natural curiosity and love for knowledge. Therefore, that the goal of education should not be to fill the child with facts from preselected studies, but rather cultivate their own natural desire to learn.

In the Montessori classroom this objective is approached in two ways: first by allowing each child to experience the excitement of learning by his own choice rather than being forced and second, by helping him to perfect his natural tools for learning so that his ability will be at a maximum in future learning situations. The Montessori materials have this dual long-range purpose in addition to their immediate purpose of giving specific information to the child.

Dr. Montessori always emphasized that the hand is the chief teacher of the child. In order to learn there must be concentration, and the best way a child can concentrate is by fixing his attention on some task he is performing with his hands. (The adult habit of doodling is a remnant of this practice.) All the equipment in a Montessori classroom allows the child to reinforce his casual impressions by inviting him to use his hands for learning.

## **At What Ages**

A child can enter our classrooms at age 3. He will stay in the primary until age 6 or the completion of kindergarten.

The Preschool Program does not meet the guideline requirements for Standard Diaper Changing. All preschool students must be toilet trained and capable of personal hygiene.

Children from ages 6-9 are enrolled in our junior (lower) elementary classrooms, which contain the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grades.

Senior (upper) elementary has children ages 9-12 or 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grades.

We also offer a combination class of children 1<sup>st</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> grade.

Our Middle school has our adolescents ages 12-14 in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades. Parents should understand that a Montessori school is a unique cycle of learning designed to take advantage of sensitive periods. In contrast to a grade level classroom where the child has one year to cover certain objectives, the Montessori classrooms provide flexibility over three to six years or until the cycle is completed by the child. The areas that do not attract a child's interest this year may hold great fascination next year. By pursuing interests in a Montessori classroom the children gain an enthusiasm for learning, which is the key for becoming a truly educated person.

## **Mixed Age Groups**

Having children of multiple ages permits the younger child a series of models for imitation, and the older ones an opportunity to reinforce their own knowledge by helping the younger ones.

## **Accommodation of Different Abilities**

The use of individual materials permits a varied pace that accommodates many levels of ability in the classroom. A younger child may work for many weeks on the same piece of material. Older children in the same room can move from one piece of material to another very quickly. The children with high level of ability are constantly challenged by the wide variety of materials and their many uses.

## **Non-Competitive Atmosphere**

Because children work individually or in small groups with the materials, there is no competition in the Montessori classroom. Each child relates only to his own previous work, and his progress is not compared to the achievements of others. Dr. Montessori believed that competition in education should be introduced only after the child has gained confidence in the use of the basic skills. "Never let a child risk failure, until he has had a reasonable chance of success."

## **Behavior of the Children**

There is always a busy hum of activity in a Montessori classroom because the use of materials involves many motions, walking, carrying, speaking and particularly the continued use of the hands. All activity, however, is guided by a respect for the teacher, a respect for the work of others, and a respect for the materials themselves. Dr. Montessori never equated goodness with silence and immobility. Self-discipline, she felt, should be acquired gradually through

absorption in meaningful work. When a child becomes vitally interested in a particular classroom activity, his behavior almost always matures.

\*\*More information is available in our parent library located in the school library. Please feel free to stop by and check out a book, video or slides to take home. Parent education evenings will also be offered throughout the school year.

## Registration Information

### *Registration requirements*

- **Preschool:**
  - Your child must be 3
  
- **Kindergarten:**
  - Your child must be 5 by September 1
  
- **1<sup>st</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grade:**
  - Previous Montessori experience is preferred for this age group.

## Admission Information

Shaw Montessori admits students of any economic and social class, racial and ethnic heritage, religious belief and family structure. In order to be considered for the Primary Program, a child must be between 3 and 6 years of age. Children who are between 6 and 9 will be considered for our Junior (lower) Elementary Program. Students between 9 and 12 will be considered for our Senior (upper) Elementary Program. The Middle School Program serves students who are 12-14 year olds. The following is a list of specific steps in our admission process:

1. When the decision to apply is made, complete the application and bring it to school.
  - A brief orientation session will be given to parents.

- If you applied for the Junior or Senior Elementary and Middle School Programs and there is space, the student (6-12) may be invited to spend a day shadowing in the elementary classroom, the parent is not expected to attend the shadow.

**\*\*Administration and teaching staff make admissions/placement decisions. Please trust that we will make the best decision possible based on our knowledge of your child and the balanced composition of each classroom such as gender, age and special needs ratios.**

2. If a place is not immediately available, you have the option to be placed on our wait list.
3. Children on our wait list for the current year will need to reapply for acceptance the following year.

#### Placement Decisions

The optimal dynamic in a Montessori class calls for a careful balance of age, gender and the diverse needs and contributions of the children. Teachers are actively involved in placement decisions because they have intimate knowledge of their own classroom communities.

#### Wait List

Because there is some attrition between enrollment time and the start of school, a certain number of vacancies are anticipated. Students are prioritized in the group according to **date of application** within their specific age level.

*Documentation required for registration is as follows:*

Birth Certificate	Montessori Application
Updated Immunizations	Completed Enrollment Form
Parent Volunteer Card	Parent Contract
Internet Agreement	Student Release Form
Language Survey	Photo approval card

#### *Child /Family Records*

A number of additional forms and records are gathered during enrollment before the start of school

- Family profiles (applications) and parent questionnaire
- Medical information forms required by state and district
- Emergency contact forms
- Permission forms: Transportation, field trips, photographs, etc.
- Internet agreement forms
- Proof of Address

### ***Opportunities to give***

A parent/teacher association (PTA) coordinates parent efforts in support of the school. You are automatically a member when your child is enrolled. There is an \$8.00 fee to vote. The organization elects officers who coordinate activities and provide accountability.

The activities of the parent association are usually concentrated in three areas: coordination of parent volunteers, fundraising, and organization of school wide social events.

Shaw Montessori expects parents to volunteer and organizes clear mechanisms to solicit and direct your efforts through [Signup.com](http://Signup.com) and through your presence at PTA and Site Council monthly meetings as well as other school sponsored events.

## **Parent Commitment**

**Ten hours of service are expected each year per family. You may fill out volunteer information at Back to School Night. Opportunities for service are listed on the school website under Volunteer. Parents may record completed volunteer hours on a personal computer or on Signup.com**

### ***Become Active in the Parent Teacher Association and Site Council***

When you enroll your child in Montessori school, and pay \$8.00, you become a member of the PTA. Meetings are held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the month. You will find a more complete listing of the year's meetings on the school calendar on our website.

## *Parent Education*

As parents, you are key participants in your child's learning process. In order for your child to benefit fully from the Montessori education you have decided upon, you must learn as much as possible about the goals and methods of Montessori education.

Here are some guidelines that should be beneficial:

- **Attend Orientations-Information Night, Back to School Night:**

Orientation acquaints you with the policies of the school and informs you of how your child can receive maximum benefits from the Montessori Method of learning. All interested parents should contact the school to schedule a tour, classroom visitation and meeting with our resource teacher. We truly believe that, as a school of choice, it is our responsibility to educate prospective parents so that they can make the best choice for their child's education.

- **Attend Parent Teacher Conferences:**

There are three regularly scheduled conferences each year. In addition, a parent or teacher may request conferences at any time. The teacher may schedule an appointment at a time convenient to both parent and teacher. The conferences are only for parents and teachers, unless otherwise noted.

- **Observe the Montessori Classroom:**

Guidelines for observations are: schedule an observation appointment with your child's teacher, locate the observation chair, sit quietly and refrain from interacting with the students. Please do not engage the teacher in conversation. Guidelines for observations are posted next to the observation chair. Be sure to schedule a time for the teacher to phone you if you would like a follow-up after your observation or speak to the resource teacher. To allow the children time to begin the normalization process, classroom observation appointments in your child's classroom will not be set **until after October break**.

There are suggested websites included on this site with valuable Montessori parent information.

## Suggested Reading

*Montessori, A Modern Approach*, by Paula Lillard

*Montessori Today*, by Paula Lillard

*The Secret of Childhood*, by Maria Montessori

*The Discovery of the Child*, by Maria Montessori

*To Educate the Human Potential*, by Maria Montessori

*The Montessori Method*, by Maria Montessori

*Cosmic Education*, by Michael and D'Neil Duffy

## Homework Policy

Shaw Montessori encourages a school-student-parent partnership to help teach student responsibility and raise student achievement. The development of study skills and self-discipline are integral and indispensable elements of a quality educational process.

Homework is an important part of the student's experience as it helps reinforce content that is covered in the classroom. Due to the important nature of homework, ensuring that your child completes his/her homework and providing an appropriate place for him/her to complete homework is an important role for the parent/guardian. In addition to any homework assigned by your child's teacher, please ensure your child reads 20 to 30 minutes each evening.

Homework should be assigned consistent with the maturity, special needs, potential, and achievement level of the **individual student**. It should not carry the stigma of punishment. Its assignment should be specifically addressed to the objectives of the instructional program, and, in addition, students should develop responsibility for actively pursuing knowledge without immediate supervision outside as well as within the classroom.

The following are suggested time frames for homework by grade level:

**Grades 1-3:** 20-30 minutes per night

**Grade 4-6:** 30-60 minutes per night

**Grades 7 & 8:** 60-80 minutes per night

Each student should leave our school with a firm foundation for pursuing knowledge and developing skills on an independent basis.

*Please contact your child's teacher should you have questions or concerns regarding homework expectations.*

## School Hours

8:35-12:35 Preschoolers

8:35-3:35 Kinder through 8<sup>th</sup> grade

## Attendance

### *Absences*

In case of absence these procedures should be followed:

1. A call to the school office to inform the school of the child's illness/absence should be made as soon as possible. A message may be left (602) 257-3914.
2. When a child returns to school after being absent, a written excuse **must** be brought to the teacher.
3. When a child needs to leave early, please send a note to the teacher.
4. Frequent patterns of absences will result in a meeting with the teacher and administrator. Penalties for excessive absenteeism include failure to pass a grade, suspension from school or removal from the school program. Truancy laws will be enforced. Please refer to the district CUTS letter available in the school office for more information. These rules apply to all children enrolled in the Montessori Program.

## Tardiness

The school day starts at 8:35 a.m. at Shaw Montessori. A student is considered late if they are not here by the start of the day.

**A student will be marked absent if they are not in the classroom by 8:35 a.m.**

Frequent tardiness will result in a meeting with the teacher and administrator and may result in the revocation of open enrollment privileges.

## Dismissal

Identification is required from any adult who is not known to school personnel and who comes to pick up a child. We reserve the right not to release the child to anyone other than the parent/guardian or an authorized person as listed on the student release form. If someone else is going to pick up the child, we ask that the parent write a note and bring it to the school office. In case of doubt, we will phone the custodial parent to confirm that someone else has been authorized to pick up the child.

Children must be picked up promptly on early release days, 1:40 at Shaw and at the end of the school day.

We ask that parents call the school office if they will be late for any reason.

## Student Health

In case of illness during school hours, the student will be brought to the school office. Parents will be notified by phone to pick up a sick or injured child. If a parent cannot be reached, the office will call the alternate pick up names on the enrollment form. **PLEASE KEEP ALL EMERGENCY INFORMATION CURRENT BY GOING TO THE OFFICE TO MAKE ANY CHANGES IN ADDRESSES, TELEPHONE NUMBERS OR EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION ON THE FORMS PROVIDED IN THE OFFICE.** Please keep in mind that if your child was to have an accident and the information on your form is not accurate, we would have no way to contact you.

## Medication

1. Prescriptions will be administered only at the written request of the child's physician and with a permission slip signed by the parent.

Medication must be in original prescription bottle.

Send only tablets or liquid needing to be taken at school.

2. It is possible for a student to be given non-prescription medications only when they are brought into the office and the proper paper work has been completed.

3. Any and all medication to be given during school hours must be labeled with the child's name.
4. Medication is to be brought directly to the office by an adult. **It is not acceptable to send it in a child's backpack, lunchbox, etc.**
5. If a child takes medication daily, it is the responsibility of the parent to make sure that there is enough medication.

## Immunizations

The state immunization law requires all students to have an immunization record on file for school attendance. If your child is exempt from immunizations, he/she must have a signed exemption on file. **All needed and updated immunization records must be on file prior to the child attending school.**

To help protect each child, the state requires immunizations against the following:

MMR	=	Mumps, Measles, Rubella
POV	=	Oral Polio Vaccine
DYPTD	=	Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis (Whooping Cough)
HEPA	=	Hepatitis A
HEPB	=	Hepatitis B
HIB	=	Haemophilus Influenza B
VARICELLA	=	Chicken Pox

## Allergies

Make sure that you note any and all allergies on your child's enrollment form. Also make sure that your child's teacher is aware of all allergies.

## Sick Children

Sick children should be picked up promptly.

Please notify the school immediately if your child is diagnosed with a contagious disease.

Children who are sent home from school with a fever should not return to school until they have been **fever free** for 24 hours.

## Child Abuse Reporting

Per state law, school employees must report suspected cases of neglect, non-accidental injury, or sexual offenses against children to Arizona Department of Child Safety (DCS) and or local law enforcement agencies. Where parents are the alleged abusers, school personnel may not notify parents. DCS and law enforcement agencies are responsible for notification. Should the alleged perpetrator be other than a member of the child's family, school personnel shall follow reasonable notification procedures.

Any child who is a suspected victim will be made available to either DCS or the Police Department for questioning. The investigating agency will determine whether school personnel should be with the child during questioning. The DCS worker and or the police may interview the student and all other children residing in the home on school grounds outside of the presence of school personnel. They may conduct interviews of the child without permission or notice to the parents where the suspected perpetrator is a family member. DCS has the authority to obtain school records upon written request. Individuals required to report suspected abuse are protected by state law from criminal liability.

## Communication

**Our campus is green! All notices and reminders will be communicated by e-mail or posted to the school website. Please make certain that you are on your child's classroom email list. It is very important that you read all reminders—both parents.**

## Dress Code

Children should not wear clothing, shoes, jewelry, or other accessories that present a safety hazard or distraction that impacts the learning environment for the student or others. Excessive marketing through clothing (such as t-shirts/backpacks with commercial characters) should be limited.

Appropriate student dress and grooming are important factors in the safe and orderly operation of the school. Each student's appearance should reflect a positive image of the school and contribute to a distraction-free learning environment.

The student and his/her parent(s) may determine the student's personal dress and grooming standards provided that the student's dress and grooming:

- **Not lead school officials to reasonably believe that such dress or grooming will disrupt, interfere with, disturb, or detract from school activities; and**
- **Not create a health problem or safety hazard for the student or others.**

### **Specific Guidelines**

Students should wear garments, jewelry and accessories that

- Reflect a positive image of the school and contribute to a distraction-free learning environment and;
- Lead teachers and/or staff to reasonably believe that the issue does not interfere with, disturb, or distract from the classroom and/or learning environment and;
- Are appropriate and modest in length and coverage;
  - Appropriate length is defined as long enough to cover the stomach when arms are raised.
  - No underclothing as main attire ie; muscle shirts.

Students are not to wear clothing that is tight, loose, sagging, revealing, spaghetti-strap (two-finger rule), backless, low cut, short or "ripped effect."

Hats and sunglasses shall be at teacher's discretion.

Students who come to school in violation of the dress code may be sent to nurse's office for a change of clothes or long t-shirt.

## **Student Records & Personal Information**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) provides for parents' right to inspect, review and seek correction of a child's education records.

1. Student records may be released to authorized school personnel or another school the student wishes to attend. Student records may be released to others ONLY with the signed, written and dated request from the person legally responsible for the student.
2. Directory information will be gathered and issued for each student. This information will include the student's name, address, and phone number. If for some reason the

family does not want this information published, please submit a request in writing to the office.

## Parent Education

Our school views parent education as part of the larger goal of parent development through involvement. We have designed a variety of opportunities and experiences in order to respond to the needs of parents at different stages. A number of education evenings are planned each year to provide parents with specific information about child development, Montessori principles and educational methods.

Community Celebrations: Celebrations involving parents are integral to the life of the school. Many of these celebrations revolve around the activities of individual classes: holidays, simple plays, birthdays, and farewells. Others bring the larger community together: a student drama production, teacher appreciation day, garden digging, and graduation. Whether small and informal or organized for the whole school, celebrations and rituals highlight and affirm the values and vision of the school.

A lending library is located in the school library. Here parents are welcome to sample and check a full array of Montessori literature. Additional information can be gathered at [www.montessori-ami.org](http://www.montessori-ami.org), [www.montessori-namta.org](http://www.montessori-namta.org) and [www.amshq.org](http://www.amshq.org).

## The Teachers

Before school begins and during class hour's teachers are very busy people. **Please do not hinder their work with questions during this time.** You are welcome to call or email after hours or make an appointment for a parent teacher conference.

## Parent/Teacher Conferences

We feel that our school will best serve your child if open communication is kept between staff and parents. Parent/teacher conferences are held three times a year. If you have a concern or question at any other time, please do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher. Any problems that develop at any time will be worked on at once. Should we note changes in your child, we will contact you and hope that you keep us informed of changes you might see. Although time during classroom hours is limited for discussion of this type, the staff will answer a call or e-mail promptly.

## **Toys**

**No toys should be brought to school.** If a child has a toy at school, it will be taken and returned to parents at the end of the day or you may be asked to pick up items in the school office.

## **Special Education**

See District Policy manual regarding information on special education and services.

## **Birthdays**

Your child's teacher celebrates each child's life in a special way. Check with your teacher as to how you can help create the Montessori Celebration of Life on your child's birthday.

## **Field Trips/Going Out**

Because no classroom can contain the answers to all of the child's questions, field trips and "going out" are a response to the need to explore beyond the classroom. These experiences of learning from new resources and meeting different people present a glimpse of the wealth of resources all around us. Parents will be notified of all field trips and going out activities. A signed permission slip may be kept on file for children in kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grades. Preschool children are required by law to have a signed permission trip before each trip.

## **Cell Phones and all electronic devices**

The use of electronic devices and cell phone by students is prohibited during school hours. These items must be turned off and stowed or they will be subject to confiscation. Should a child have an electronic device confiscated, the parent/guardian will be responsible for pick up in the school office.

# Discipline

## *Code of Conduct*

The Montessori program nurtures self-discipline, which develops over a period of many years. The basis of discipline is respect: respect for oneself, for others, and for the environment. The adults and children in the prepared environment set limits for behavior based on the need for a safe, mutually respectful community.

If a student has difficulty following the rules of the community, the response will be age appropriate. Personal attention, distraction, substitution and/or removal from the situation are typical approaches. Many instances resolve themselves as the student, within the bounds of safety and common sense, experiences the logical consequences of his/her own actions.

If the student disregards the rules of the classroom community, the teacher seeks the underlying causes in order to let the student understand the inappropriateness of his/her actions, and to find a constructive alternative. If such behavior occurs repeatedly, the teacher may request the administrator or other teacher observe and offer consultation before the parents are contacted for their support and cooperation.

The following are some general guidelines of Montessori discipline that parents should seek to apply at home as well as school:

- Hold the student to standard. He/she will rise to expectation.
- Behavior: Think satisfaction and motivation versus gratification and manipulation.
- Make rewards internal not external.
- To maintain strong effective discipline, seek consistency and clarity.
- Catch children “doing something right.”
- Engage, interest the student.
- Involve, stimulate the student.
- Redirect the child from destructive negative behavior.
- Be respectful. Maintain unconditional love. Love is not the bargaining chip.

- Use humor to support and defuse, not to deflate. Sarcasm bites and hurts.
- Let natural consequences flow from inappropriate behavior.

## **Discipline Policies**

Discipline rules and guidelines for dealing with violations of the rules have been established at the school level. A level 1 violation is a violation that can usually be addressed at the classroom level. Parents may be notified. If these behaviors continue, the matter moves to a level 2 concern. The administrator or his/her designee will usually handle level 2 matters. Parents will be notified that their child was disciplined for a level 2 violation. A level 3 violation is a more serious violation, which will be referred to administration immediately. Parents will be contacted and receive a notice if the child has been disciplined for a level 3 violation.

Examples of Level 1 violation include, but are not limited to, the following types of concerns:

- Not completing required assignments
- Chewing gum
- Excessive talking in class
- Improper manners in the classroom
- Littering
- Not following teacher direction
- Teasing or bullying
- Pushing/Shoving
- Biting
- Play fighting

Possible consequences for level 1 violation may be:

- Verbal warning
- Community service
- Denial of privileges
- Parents may be called

- Behavior plan may be developed
- In-School Suspension

Examples of Level 2 violations include, but are not limited to, the following types of concerns:

- Inappropriate language
- Inappropriate physical contact
- Dishonesty
- Disrespect
- Disobeying playground rules on a repeated basis or misusing playground equipment
- Repeated classroom and playground disturbances
- Teasing, bullying or taunting
- Possession and /or use of any object, hazardous material that may be harmful or threatening
- Throwing objects

Possible consequences for Level 2 violations may be, but are not limited to:

- Incident report
- Parents will be called
- Child may be removed to the office and need to be picked up
- Parent may be asked to stay with child in class
- Behavior plan may be developed
- In or Out of School Suspension

Examples of Level 3 violations include, but are not limited to, the following types of concerns:

- Abuse of staff
- Assault
- Dangerous/inappropriate behavior
- Disruptive behavior

- Fighting
- Gang activity
- Habitual classroom/playground disturbances
- Sexual/Racial/ethnic/disability/religious harassment
- Stealing
- Teasing, bullying or taunting
- Smoking/drug/alcohol violations
- Inappropriate touching
- Profanity/verbal abuse
- Defiance
- Threats
- Possession of weapons or dangerous objects
- Unauthorized entering or leaving the campus
- Vandalism/Arson
- Misuse of Technology

Possible consequences for Level 3 violations will/may include:

- Suspension
- Expulsion
- Call to authorities

## **Definition of Consequences**

**Verbal Warning**-A reminder is given to the student of the rules and desired response.

**Denial of Privileges**-Privileges must be earned. They will be withdrawn for inappropriate behavior. The length of such denial is dependent on the nature of the infraction and frequency of violation(s).

**Lunch/Recess Detention**-Lunch/recess detention will be arranged as needed. The student is to report to his/her teacher for instructions.

**Out of School Suspension**-This form of suspension as determined by administration, will result in temporary exclusion from classes and school. Parents will be notified if this is warranted, for a serious violation. Students assigned to out-of-school suspension must complete all work assigned by the teachers and must return completed work to the teacher on the day they return. Students who are suspended are not to be on school property for the duration of suspension.

**Expulsion**-Expulsion is permanent removal from school. Only administration has the authority to expel students.

**\*\*Suspension and expulsions become part of a child's permanent record.**

**Behavior Plans**-When appropriate and deemed necessary, a Behavior Plan may be developed to outline behavioral expectations and steps for improvement.

**Hazardous Materials**-Any substance or item that is potentially hazardous, harmful, or disruptive is prohibited.

Consequences: If a student has such materials on campus, the school will confiscate the materials, notify the parents, and arrange for disciplinary action.

**Investigations and Searches**-The school has legal custody of students during the school day and during extracurricular activities. It is the administrator's responsibility to act on behalf of the parent/guardian during lawful investigations of a student, if the parent is not available or cannot be contacted.

The school may search and seize property if there is reason to believe that the material or situation poses a danger to student health, safety or is illegal. This includes searching student property.

**Policies Relating to serious Violations**-Offenses that violate state law, such as weapons, bomb violations, alcohol offenses, arson, drug offenses, vandalism, theft, threat to do harm, etc, will result in police involvement in addition to school disciplinary involvement. School discipline for such serious violations will be in accord school and district policy as described in the Discipline Guidelines.

**School Property/Student Property**-Students are given responsibility for taking good care of books, equipment and facilities. If a student loses or damages their items beyond normal wear, the parent or guardian may be held responsible for repair or replacement.

### **Student Due Process Rights**

In disciplinary cases, students have limited due process rights, as set forth below:

1. Students will be informed of the accusations against them.
2. Students will have the opportunity to accept or deny accusations.
3. Students will have the factual basis for accusations explained to them.
4. Students will have the opportunity to present an alternative factual position if the accusation is denied.
5. Students will not be allowed to question another student, witness or learn the identity of other student witnesses.
6. His/her parents or legal counsel, at the parents' expense, may represent the student.

## **The Montessori Preschool Program (ages 3-6)**

The Montessori preschool classroom, or Children's House, is a "living room" for children. Children choose their work from among self-correcting materials displayed on open shelves; they work in specific work areas. Over a period of time, the children develop into a "normalized

community,” working with high concentration and few interruptions. *Normalization* is the process whereby a child moves from being undisciplined to self-disciplined, from disordered to ordered, from distracted to focused, through work in the environment. The process occurs through repeated work with materials that captivate the child’s attention. For some children this inner change may take place quite suddenly, leading into deep concentration. In the Montessori preschool, academic competency is a means to an end, and the manipulatives are viewed as “materials for development.”

The primary classrooms are divided into five distinct areas:

- Practical life enhances the development of hand-eye coordination, gross motor control, and cognitive order through care of self, care of the environment, development of social relations, and coordination of physical movement.
- The sensorial area enables the child to order, classify, and describe sensory impressions in relation to length, width, temperature, mass, color, pitch, etc.
- Mathematics makes use of manipulative materials to enable the child to internalize concepts of number, symbol, sequence, operations and memorization of basic facts.
- Language arts include oral language development, written expression, reading, and the study of grammar, creative dramatics, and children’s literature. Basic skills in writing and reading are developed through the use of sandpaper letters, alphabet cutouts and various presentations, allowing children to link sounds and letter symbols effortlessly and to express their thoughts through writing.
- Cultural activities expose the child to basics in geography, history, life sciences, and earth sciences. Music, art, and movement education are part of the integrated cultural curriculum.

The preschool environment unifies the social, physical and intellectual functioning of the child. Its important function is to provide children with an early and general foundation that includes a positive attitude toward school, inner security and sense of order, pride in the physical environment, abiding curiosity, a habit of concentration, habits initiative and persistence, the ability to make decisions, self-discipline, and sense of responsibility to other members in the

class, school and community. This foundation will enable them to acquire more specialized knowledge and skill throughout their school career.

## **The Montessori Elementary Program (ages 6-9 and 9-12)**

The elementary program offers a continuum built on the preschool experience. As in the preschool, the Montessori materials are a means to an end. They are intended to evoke the imagination, to aid abstraction, to generate a world of view about the human task and purpose. The child works within a philosophical system, asking questions about the origins of the universe, the nature of life, people and their differences, and so on. On the factual basis, interdisciplinary studies combine geological, biological, and anthropological science in the study of natural history and world ecology. The environment reflects a new stage of development and offers the following:

- Integration of the arts, sciences, geography, history, and language that evokes the natural imagination and abstraction of the elementary child.
- Presentation of knowledge as part of a large-scale narrative that reveals the origins of the earth, life, human communities, and modern history, always in the context of the wholeness of life. Presentation of the formal scientific language of zoology, botany, anthropology, geography, geology, etc., exposing the child to accurate, organized information and respecting the child's intelligence and interests.
- Connective narratives that provide an inspiring overview of the organizing, integrating "Great Lessons." Great Lessons span the history of the universe from the big bang theory of the solar system, earth, and life forms to emergence of human cultures and the rise of civilization. Aided by impressionable charts and timelines, the child's study of the universe in reference to the Great Lessons leads to awe and respect for the totality of knowledge.
- The use of timelines, pictures, charts, and other visual aids to provide a linguistic and visual overview of the first principles of each discipline.
- A mathematics curriculum presented with concrete materials that simultaneously reveal arithmetic, geometric and algebraic correlations. This curriculum recognizes the child's need for experience, for repetition, for various levels of concreteness, for going from concrete to symbol to abstraction. The emphasis is on making formulae and rules a point of arrival and discovery, not a point of departure.
- An emphasis on creative writing, expository writing, interpretive reading of literature, research with primary resources, grammar and sentence analysis, spelling based on

cultural studies and usage, and oral expression for both sharing research and dramatic productions.

- Montessori-trained adults who are “enlightened generalists”-teachers who are able to integrate the teaching of all subjects, not as isolated disciplines, but as part of a whole intellectual tradition.
- Emphasis on open-ended research that is student-generated and teacher-guided. Students are encouraged to wonder, to carry out research, to experiment, to develop knowledge, to make observations, to demonstrate skills. This in-depth study uses primary and secondary sources as well as other materials. Textbooks and worksheets, if present at all, are used by the children as reference materials, not as a basis for assigned or ongoing work.
- “Going out” to make the community a resource beyond the four walls of the classroom.

Studies are integrated not only in terms of subject matter but also in terms of moral learning as well, resulting in appreciation and respect for life, moral empathy, and fundamental belief in progress, the contribution of the individual, the universality of the human condition, and meaning of true justice.

## **The Montessori Middle School (ages 12-14)**

Middle school ushers in a new level of independence that must be provided for in the Montessori environment by increasing activity from the point of view of work level, choices and planning. In the middle school, the Great Lessons, timelines, and charts are replaced with overviews of general sequences of learning for which the student becomes responsible in the context of an integrated whole. Within the overview, the student has open time to collaborate on both self-initiated and instruct-initiated projects. Open time allows for individualized instruction, a natural pace for absorption of material presented for both mastery and emotional understanding, unlimited depth of pursuit-based student interest, and ample time to study art, science, music, business, and other topics students choose.

The general premise for the adolescent program is that it must bring into consciousness the moral and worldview of the elementary years. Philosophical ideas related to natural and cultural history now come to play. Great Lessons evolve into great ideas derived from a serious approach to humanities. For example, “life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness” may be tied to a specific area of American history, but this ideal also has a life in the history of philosophy and literature.

Consistent with the moral relationships stressed in the elementary program, the adolescent can make great cognitive leaps while integrating ideas and values in connection with current events, home life, or community activities.

Service programs such as working in soup kitchens, gardening as a community venture, and apprenticeships or mentorships in the workplace are part of an advancing “going out” that gives the adolescent a combined vocational and liberal arts curriculum with a particular emphasis on economic enterprise.

The following curriculum areas are offered in a school-based Montessori middle school:

- Social sciences, science, and geography: The student integrates history, utilizing themes from earlier studies in natural and cultural history, including interdependency, evolution, life cycles, matter and energy, behavior and culture, mental health, physical health, agriculture, government, manufacturing, communication, world systems, earth preservation, and so on, in the context of social responsibility and governance. Primary readings from each historical period are emphasized.
- Language arts: The student develops confidence in self-expression utilizing the seminar, oral presentation, debates, drama, video, photography, essays, play-writing, poetry, and short stories, and explores related accounts of historical philosophical material through literature, utilizing components of style, genre, characterization, interpretation, and art of discussion.
- Grammar: The study of grammar prompts a review of complex sentence structure in English.
- Mathematics: The student used higher order thinking skills to solve problems in relation to a variety of challenges, from practical money transaction to algebraic relationships and explores numbers, properties, simple equations, higher measurements, computer calculation and graphics, geometric proofs, and algebraic equations.
- Practical managements: The student manages reality-based operations in economic and social enterprises, including yearbook, school newspaper, student social events, agriculture, fundraising, travel, volunteerism and service, apprenticeship.

- Fine arts: The student utilizes a discipline-based arts education plan that presents individual artistic areas of painting, acting, singing, composing, photography, dance, and sculpture, and includes a general education of aesthetic literacy, integrating the arts with other academic endeavors.

## Licensure

Shaw Montessori's Primary Program and PEER Club is regulated by:

The Arizona Department of Health Services

Child Care Licensure

1501 North 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Suite 400

Phoenix, AZ 85007

Phone: 602-364-2539

Fax: 602-364-1768

Inspection reports pertaining to this facility are available upon your request.

Liability insurance as required by R9-5-308 is carried by this facility.

Is this document complete? No, this is a living document and is subject to change as policies and procedures are modified and or added by the school or district.



Dear Students, Parents and Guardians,

It is very important to read and understand the Parent/Student Handbook as well as the Student Code of Conduct and in particular, the behavioral expectations and discipline policies. Revisions are made annually. You will find them on line at our website: <http://phxschools.org/shaw-montessori/for-parents/student-code-of-conduct/>

Please sign the Parent/Student Agreement below and return this form to your teacher. This form will be on file in your student's classroom.

-----Cut here

Please return Parent/Student Agreement to your child's teacher

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

I have read a copy of the Parent/Student Handbook. I have previewed the Student Code of Conduct on the district website. I understand and agree to abide by the terms and conditions stated within each of these documents.

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_