

**Little Hands Montessori
Family Handbook
2021-2022**

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Program Philosophy

Our Mission:

To thrive as a warm bilingual environment that fosters children's natural development; sustains children for three years; prepares them for first grade; forms a love of learning; and lays a foundation for life.

Philosophy:

Montessori is a three year education that cultivates children's independence with self directed, hands- on, and collaborative work. The Montessori philosophy fosters a love of learning because children progress at their own pace and time. The Montessori classroom is set up deliberately to engage each child and meet each child at their level and interest. The Montessori guide (teacher) is highly trained in observation and child development along with the Montessori curriculum. The Montessori guide creates an individual plan that is specific to each child and their abilities.

Schedule of Operation

Little Hands Montessori follows a 10 month school year calendar. We will be open from 8 am- 1 pm Monday through Friday except for major holidays and closures posted on our school calendar. You can find these dates and the calendar on our website. Weather closings will follow Gull Lake's closings and will be posted on Channel 3 or texted to you (sign up here:

<https://wwmt.com/weather/closings>). They will also be posted on our family Facebook page, as with other unscheduled closures due to unforeseen events.

Typical Daily Schedule

8:00 a.m.-8:15 a.m.- arrival

8:20 a.m.-11:20 a.m.-Montessori work cycle

11:15 a.m. -11:30 a.m.-gathering/ Spanish music time (Canta y Baila Conmigo®)

11:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m.- Recess

12:00 p.m.- 12:45 p.m.- Lunch

12:45 p.m.-1:00 p.m.- Pick-up

- Drop off is between 8:00 a.m. -8:15 am and pick-up is between 12:45 p.m- 1:00 p.m. unless prior arrangements are made. Children should not be dropped off after 8:20am or picked up after 1:05pm. Please call the lead guide/director at 269-967-5024 or email at littlehandsrichland@gmail.com if needed.
- At 1:05 p.m. a rate of \$5 per 5 minutes will be charged for late pickup. If late pick up occurs three times or more, the director reserves the right to temporarily suspend the child's attendance.

Admissions and Withdrawal Criteria

Little Hands Montessori accepts children between the ages 2 years 9 months and 3 years 6 months and potty trained. Little Hands Montessori will aim to retain these children for the 3-year cycle until they are ready to enter 1st grade. Little Hands Montessori will offer rolling admission throughout the year as space allows. All children are welcome and Little Hands Montessori does not discriminate based on nationality, race, color, mother tongue, socioeconomic status, religion, gender, or gender identity. We are committed to maintaining a peaceful and educational environment for all students. If we are unable to meet a child's needs, or a child jeopardizes the safety or learning of other children, the lead guide/director reserves the right to request professional assistance or withdraw any child from the school. In such rare cases, a refund of the prorated tuition will be given with no refund on the deposit or months attended. All reasons for withdrawal or removal from Little Hands Montessori will be dealt with on a case by case basis and at the discretion of the director.

Fees and Tuition

Tuition: \$6,400 for a full year tuition, \$6,450 for two installments or \$6,500 monthly. Payment plans and scholarships can be discussed with the administrator or the director upon request and will be based on needs and availability.

Extra Fees: In addition to school fees and tuition, families will be asked to donate school supplies such as glue, paint, pencils etc. A list will be provided to families.

Late Pick-up Fees: Hours of operation are from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Please do not arrive before pick up or after these designated times. At 1:00 p.m. a rate of \$5 per 5 minutes will be applied to your account. If late pick-up occurs three or more times the director will reserve the right to suspend your child's attendance at Little Hands Montessori.

Late Payment Fees: If a payment is late, a late fee of 2% is added to the unpaid balance on the first day of the month, each month after the invoice was due.

Discipline policy

Montessori sets children up for success. The space is designed to give children freedom within limits. In cases where a child is not respecting themselves, peers, teacher or environment, limitations will be set and certain privileges will be lost until the child is able to respect their surroundings. An example would be, a child distracting others or misusing materials will be given lessons on the materials and possibly given a specific space to sit until he or she is able to demonstrate their ability to work in the classroom without distracting others or misusing materials. In more severe cases where a child shows harmful or extreme disrespectful behavior, children will be removed from class or sent home. Documentation will be kept and an incident report will be written along with communication to the parent. If severe behavior continues, the lead guide/director reserves the right to request professional assistance for the child or withdraw the child from the school.

Food service policy

Snacks: Children will have a snack and water available to them throughout the morning. These snacks will be purchased by children's families and will be prepared by staff and supervised children. Any foods that contain a known allergen of a child enrolled in Little Hands Montessori will not be served and returned to the family that purchased it. Snacks will be healthy and part of the major food groups recommended by the American Pediatrics Association.

Lunch: Families will send children with healthy lunches in containers that the children can easily use by themselves. Lunches should have their own ice packs or thermoses because refrigeration is not provided. Lunch containers will be labeled every day with the child's name and date written by the child and his/her family.

- Little Hands Montessori strives to teach children how to be the best they can be in all areas. This includes setting up healthy eating and drinking habits. No sweets, chocolates, or candies will be allowed in lunches at Little Hands Montessori. Children that have unhealthy food in their lunch containers will have these foods returned and will not be allowed to eat them at school.
- Water is offered throughout the day so it is not necessary to send in additional drinks.
- We strive to send home excess lunch food that is not eaten as well, so that you are aware.

Accidents, Injuries, Incidents, Illnesses, and Illness exclusions

Accidents and Incidents: Any accident or incident will be documented on a Little Hands Montessori accident or incident form. Parents will be notified either in person at pick-up, by phone call, or text depending on the severity of the accident or incident. This decision is up to the discretion of the lead guide/director.

Illness: Children who exhibit any signs of a communicable (infectious) illness are required to stay home for 24 hours **after** symptoms have stopped. This includes, but is not limited to a fever of 100 degrees or more (they must be without a fever without the use of medicine), diarrhea, vomiting, exposed open sores, or rash. The director reserves the right to decide on a case by case basis whether a child will be allowed at school, including the possibility of requiring a doctor's note.

- If your child has been diagnosed with a communicable disease please contact the school with the name and symptoms of the illness.

Licensing Notebook

Little Hands Montessori maintains a licensing notebook of all licensing inspection reports, special investigation reports and all related corrective action plans. The notebook will be available upon request to families for review during regular business hours. Licensing inspection and special investigation reports from the past two years are available on the Bureau of Children and Adult Licensing website at www.michigan.gov/michildcare.