



## Parent Handbook

### Our Belief

Every student is able to learn and should have equal opportunities to reach their full potential. Parents and communities should share responsibilities to prepare our children for success in school as well as in their future careers and life.

### Our Mission

To empower students to become critical thinkers, independent learners and promote a growth mindset. We value these qualities as a necessity for academic achievement and social contribution. We commit to nurture children to care for the natural environment and promote peaceful social education for the betterment of humanity.

### Our Commitment

MOLO is dedicated to upholding the standards of Maria Montessori and the American Montessori Society (AMS). As such, we only hire Montessori certified lead teachers at every age level. We strive to find Teacher Assistants who are experienced and dedicated to Montessori philosophy. Our staff members commit to being lifelong learners through continuous professional development to ensure best practice in our daily teaching and care for children. We will set examples in the behavior of courtesy, care for others, and developing a mindset to reduce the amount of waste in our daily living and a habit of recycling.





## School Policies & Expectations

Thank you for choosing **MOLO Bilingual Montessori School**. We are licensed with the Texas Health and Human Services and adhere to all standards set by the state. We also strive to uphold the standards set by the American Montessori Society and follow the teachings of Maria Montessori in order to meet the needs of all our students.

Parental involvement is especially important in the development of your child. You are welcome to volunteer or visit MOLO at any time during operational hours. Please contact us by email or phone to express your interests and any concerns you may have. The school director is available for in-person appointments during regular daily hours of operation or by phone and email. We are partners with you in the development of your child and offer parent education classes on a regular basis.

Prior to your child being admitted, you **must provide all the information and documents required for admission as set by the state of Texas**. These include immunization records and a doctor's statement attesting to a physical exam having been given within the past year and approving of your child's participation in a childcare program. Parents are responsible for notifying the center of any changes to the child's health records. Your child's admission records should be verified and updated each year.

**Hours/Days of Operation:** We are open from 7:00 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. The center will close promptly at 6:30 p.m. Parents who are late picking up their child will be charged \$3.00 for each minute after 6:30 p.m. The late-pick up surcharge payment will be due upon the parent's arrival. If you know that you will be late, please call so we can reassure your child that you will be arriving soon. Families may change their program (example: from school day to extended) once per semester.

MOLO is a 12 month program. We do not close in the summers. All teachers and staff are paid year round and on holidays. Tuition expectations are that you pay every month whether your child is in attendance or not. We will not hold your child's space if you do not pay tuition.

**Open House Policy:** Parents are welcome to visit the center anytime during our hours of operation. No prior notice is required by the school. Parents may also make an appointment to observe their child's engagement in learning activities in the classroom. Finally, parents are welcome to participate in volunteer activities as requested by the school, and to join in school-wide activities as appropriate. Observations and volunteering should not be done within the first 6 weeks of your child starting school in order to allow for normalization into the classroom.

**Payment:** Payment in full is due on the first Monday of each month. Late payments will incur a \$25.00 late charge. **Failure to pay by Friday of the same week will result in the suspension of childcare services for the following week.** On-time payment is required even when a child is sick. Please see the payment schedule on the accompanying "Program



Operations and Rates" sheet for more details. MOLO uses the payment system TUIO and you are signed up when you apply to MOLO. This is the preferred method of payment by the school. Cash and checks are accepted but subject to a \$20 convenience fee.

**Application Fee:** An initial nonrefundable application fee of \$100 is required to hold your child's spot for a future space. This fee does not guarantee enrollment at the time you want, but when a space becomes available. If you put down the fee and you do not take the space that is offered when it becomes available, we will not hold the spot for you. You will be placed back on the waiting list.

**Re-Registration Fee:** Each year, a \$100 nonrefundable re-registration fee will be charged. This is offered in spring of the year before to current families in order to hold their space for the coming school year.

**Deposit:** A deposit of half a month's academic day tuition is required to save a space for your child. This must be paid within 5 working days of your acceptance letter. Leaving the school requires 30 days' notice in order to have your deposit returned to you.

**Supply Fee:** An annual nonrefundable supply fee of \$150 will be charged in the Fall and Spring semesters and \$100 for the Summer. This fee is applied towards the purchasing of new nap cots, toys, learning materials and art supplies.

**Vacation:** Summer Camp is in two-week blocks with different themes. This is an excellent time to take a trip without paying tuition for a **two week** time. You may take these **two weeks** together or separately. **This two weeks off is the only time you will not be charged tuition whether your child is in attendance or not. There is no exception to this policy.** If you do not pay tuition in full each month, your child will lose their space at MOLO. Families who unenroll in the summers will not be guaranteed a place in the Fall.

**Holiday Schedule: MOLO** will be closed for the following holidays:

Half day on New Year's Eve

New Year's Day

Martin Luther King Jr. Day

The Thursday & Friday of AMS Conference in March

Good Friday

Memorial Day

Fourth of July

Labor Day



Thursday - Friday of Thanksgiving Week

Christmas Eve & Christmas Day

If any of these holidays fall on a weekend, the center will either close the Friday before or the following Monday. We follow the schedule of most banks and businesses. There is no discount for holidays as we pay our teachers for holidays.

**Child Care Only days** include Thanksgiving week. Child Care only days are for All Day students only. Students who attend just the academic school day of 8:30-3:30 do not qualify for these days.

**Closed:** Occasionally the school will be closed for staff training or parent teacher conferences. These are usually once per semester and two days before the start of a new academic school year. It is important we maintain the standards set forth by the state of Texas which means we must do staff training each year. It also gives teachers the chance to deep clean and prepare their classrooms.

**Enrollment Procedures:** The following documents must be submitted for a child's application to be considered complete:

- \* Completed Enrollment Application form
- \* Completed Statement of Health from Physician
- \* Current Immunization Record (visit [www.immunizetexas.com](http://www.immunizetexas.com))
- \* A Signed General Policy Statement
- \* A Signed Discipline and Guidance Statement
- \* A Non-Refundable Registration Fee of \$100.00
- \* Sign Form-2550 (Infants only)

Parents are responsible for updating any information such as change of address, phone number or email, child's health status and vaccination records.

New students must have a "Playdate" prior to starting school. This is a time for children to meet their teachers and gain comfort in the environment. This will be at 9:30 on the day preceding enrollment. If a child's first day is a Monday, the playdate will be the Friday before.

New students under the age of 3 will have a transition into the classroom by following a gentle integration schedule. The schedule will be:

Day 1- 8:30-9:30

Day 2- 8:30-10:30

Day 3- 8:30-11:30



Day 4- 8:30- 2:45

Day 5- 8:30- 3:30



**Toddler classrooms Requirements:** In the Toddler classrooms children are between 18-36 months. Occasionally a child may not be ready to move up to Primary after turning three years old. No child may exceed the age of 3 years and 3 months. It is dangerous to have children older than this in the same classroom as the youngest children. If your child is three and half they will be moved to a Primary room.

Children who are moving up to a Primary classroom must be potty trained. No diapers or pull ups are allowed in Primary classrooms. A child who has two accidents in a day or accidents 3 consecutive days will need to stay home for a day to work with parents on training. The Primary classrooms focus on independence and large-scale learning. Teachers are there to facilitate this learning and not to change diapers or clothing.

Toddlers will move up to Primary classrooms four times per year: August (first day of school), mid-November, mid-February and June. The Director and a Primary teacher will give an intro to Primary twice each year and it is highly recommended you attend a session if you have a toddler aged two and a half.

**Parent Information Board:** The parent information board is located near the front entrance where you can find the monthly newsletter with upcoming events and other important information. Any notices of illness in the classroom will be posted.

Important documents and lesson plans can be found in the Bulletin Board section of Montessori Compass. Class daily schedules and monthly lesson plans are posted on the bulletin board in the classroom or on the wall by the door. Lunch menus are available on the website. All of the above information is available on the Montessori Compass bulletin boards.





**Drop off:** The academic school day begins at 8:30 and ends at 3:30. Our gate will be open from 8:00-9:00 each morning. Please plan on arriving during that time. If you park in the Carpool Lane (Fire Lane in front of the building) you may not enter the building but drop your child at the front door. If you would like to walk your child inside, you must park in a parking space. The gate will be closed at 9:00 and students who are not present at that time will be considered tardy. A tardy is considered unexcused when not accompanied by a doctor's note. Three unexcused tardies are considered as one absence.

At 9:00 a student is considered tardy and a \$5 charge will be added to a families bill for each tardy. Our number one priority is safety and each time the gate opens it is a safety issue. Our other obligations are to the child's well being and this requires a routine. Inconsistencies in drop off times hurt this routine. Children entering late also disturbs the rest of the class. Students will not be allowed into the school if arriving after 10:30.

It is very important your child walks into school if capable, versus being carried. Montessori prioritizes independence in children which builds pride and resilience. Your child will be greeted by someone at the front office as well as by a teacher in the classroom. MOLO has an emphasis on grace and courtesy and we work toward children greeting us in return.



Please do not tell your child they are shy as then you are creating that in your child. It takes time to warm up to people but you do not want this to become an identity.

**Attendance:** Attendance is important for the routine and stability of a child. In Primary and up, students who miss school, or are tardy, are losing out on important lessons which are building blocks for subsequent lessons. *Elementary students* must meet the standards of attendance set by the state of Texas. An elementary age student may not miss more than 9 days of school per semester, or they are subject to retention in their current grade. Three unexcused tardies equal one absence. Elementary times are 8:15-3:45. A student is considered tardy after 8:15.

**Release of Children:** Children will only be released to parents and to other authorized persons whose names are listed on the enrollment form. Written authorization from the parent is required for any person picking up a child. As our policy requires a photo ID, parents must inform those whom they have authorized to pick up their child of this requirement. **We will not release children without verification of authorization.** The gate will be open for dismissal from 3:00-3:45. Parents arriving after this time are late picking up and will need to pay the late



fee of \$3 per minute. Parents arriving after 6:30, for extended care students, are subject to the late charge of \$3 per minute.

**Illness and Medication:** For the welfare of all students and staff, we will not admit any child who:

- is vomiting or has diarrhea (If your child has 2 bowel movements with loose stools within a day, he/she will be sent home.)
- has a temperature of 100 F or higher
- has an undiagnosed rash
- has undiagnosed discharge from the eye
- has lice or lice eggs in their hair
- clearly communicable diseases such as Chicken Pox, Hand Foot & Mouth, etc.

As our staff greet children upon their arrival, we may check temperatures, and check for bruises, scratches, and other signs and symptoms of illness or injury. As necessary, we inform the parents of what we have found and may ask parents for further information as to the possible causes of the signs or symptoms.

For children who develop any of the conditions listed above while they are in our care, their parents will be asked to pick them up immediately. Parents will be charged \$25 per hour if their ill child has not been picked up within one hour of notification. This policy is strictly and equally applied to all children for the safety of all students and staff so that everyone is protected from the spread of contagions. Children may return to the school after having been symptom free for 24 hours WITHOUT the aid of medication. Should a child come into contact with either someone who is showing signs or symptoms of a contagious condition or has come into contact with someone who has been exposed to a contagious condition, the child's parent is required to notify the center immediately so that other parents can be alerted to the possibility of their children's exposure.

The Health and Human Services Commission regulations are very strict regarding the use of medicine. We will only give prescription medication, and only if it is labeled with the child's name, dosage, time, and the date prescribed by a state licensed medical practitioner. If it is a prescription that is to be taken 3 times a day, **we will only administer the mid-day dose.** The parent should administer morning and evening doses at home. If it is a prescription that is given twice a day, the parent should give both doses at home. We will not administer medication that is left over from previous illnesses. Parents will have to complete and sign a medication log. **We will not give any over-the-counter medications.** Parents may administer these before their child arrives in the morning. We must have a doctor's note in order to administer medication to children.

**Emergency Evacuation Plan and Severe Weather:** In the event of an emergency such as a fire, we will evacuate the building and relocate to **West Houston Christian Center**, located at



11300 Wilcrest Green Dr. Parents will be notified immediately via the REMIND app that they should pick up their children as soon as possible.

In the event of the threat of a natural disaster, such as a tornado, caregivers will keep children in a designated safe zone until everything is all clear.

In the event of a human-caused emergency, such as the threat of an intruder entering the building, we will undergo a lock-down. In such an event, parents will be notified by the REMIND app regarding when the lock-down starts and ends. We will keep all doors locked at all times to ensure that no intruders may enter the building.

We will follow the **Alief ISD** weather schedule. **If Alief ISD is closed due to inclement weather, MOLO will also close.** In the event of a power outage during the night, and if power is not restored by 6:30 a.m., parents will be notified via Remind by 7:00 a.m. that the school will be closed for the day. In the event of a power outage during hours of operation, if power is not restored within 2 hours, per the state of Texas, the center will notify parents that they must come pick up their children. If water service is disrupted, per the state of Texas, we will notify parents to pick up their children.

If rainy weather conditions become increasingly severe and are officially declared to be a tropical storm or a hurricane, the center will notify parents that the school is closing, and that children should be picked up immediately.

**Medical Emergencies:** Accidents and injuries can happen anywhere at any time. Rest assured that MOLO staff is trained in applying first aid and CPR. If a child is seriously injured, staff will attempt to notify the parent(s) by phone, and to inform them of the nature of the injury and how it was treated. Staff may wash cuts and scrapes with water only unless the parent gives written permission for staff to use a cleanser. Center staff may not remove any foreign objects from the body. Please keep in mind that children sometimes fall, bump, or scrape themselves without crying or reporting the injury to a staff member. Parents who discover an injury or a wound, which they do not recall seeing before, should report this to the center so that we may attempt to determine the cause. If a serious injury occurs at the center, 911 will be called.

**Animals:** We have a fish tank in the front desk area of the school. Some classrooms have pets such as birds, reptiles and amphibians. Children do not have access that would allow them to come into physical contact with any animals.

**Field Trip:** Elementary students take Field Trips at least once per month. Kindergarten students have field trips on occasion. Permission slips are always sent ahead of time and must be signed by a guardian to allow the student to participate.





Family Field Trips are a chance for families to travel to a location and the entire school gathers to enjoy an activity. These are encouraged but not mandatory. **Parents are responsible for their own children on these trips.**



**Transportation:** We do not provide any transportation.

**Meals:** Breakfast, morning snack, lunch (provided by a third party) and afternoon snack will be served daily. It is the parents' responsibility to check the weekly calendar to make sure that the scheduled lunch and snacks are appropriate for and acceptable to their children. Parents are welcome to send meals and snacks with their children. Parents acknowledge and understand that the center is not responsible for the nutritional value of meals and snacks supplied by parents for their children. If the meals and snacks provided by the center do not meet parents' expectations or a child's needs, then parents will be required to provide them.

Breakfast will be served at 7:15 a.m. **Parents who would like their children to have breakfast at the center must make sure that they arrive before 7:45.** Morning snacks will be served at 9:30 a.m., lunch will be served 11:45 a.m. or noon, and afternoon snacks will be served at 3:00 p.m. If your child has any food allergies, it is important that you let us know by asking the child's doctor to fill out the Allergy Emergency Plan. The center's meal and snack selections are guided by the Nutrition and Food Service chart.

**Clothing:** We encourage children to dress comfortably and appropriately for the weather. We go outside in the morning and afternoon as the weather permits. To encourage development of independent bathroom skills, children's clothing should be easy for them to manipulate with minimal assistance. Items such as overalls and clothing with a lot of snaps make it difficult for children to independently use the restroom. All children should always have a clean change of clothes available in their cubbies. **Please make sure that your child wears closed toe shoes every day.**

**Toilet Training:** With cooperation from parents, we will help potty train children in toddler classes. When parents and staff agree that the child is ready for potty training, we will discuss



the methods that should be consistently implemented both at home and at the center. Children being potty-trained must have 2 consecutive weeks with no accidents in order to make the change from pull-ups or diapers to regular underwear. Communication between the teacher and parent is very important during this time.

**Water Activities:** During the summer, children 18 months and up are allowed to participate in water activities. There will be no standing pools of water - only sprinkler play and slip and slides. On “water days” (as indicated on the weekly schedule during the summer from June to August), children should come dressed in swimwear and with sunscreen already applied and a bag of dry clothing.

Children under 18 months will have a water day where they can splash with a water table, spray bottles, shaving cream and other sensory experiences. A swimsuit is recommended.

**Sunscreen and Insect Repellent:** Parents/Guardians must sign a permission slip for their children to have sunscreen and/or insect repellent applied at school. The sunscreen and insect repellent must be safe for the age of the child, still be in its original container, be within the expiration date noted on the product container and in the form of a spray or stick. Both must be able to be applied without the staff’s hand touching the child. Prior to use at school, sunscreen and repellent should be applied to the child at least once at home to test for any allergic reaction. Sunscreen should be applied at home before coming to school in the mornings as it will only be applied before afternoon recess. This permission slip must be signed annually.

Sunscreen will not be used on infants under 6 months of age unless accompanied by a doctor’s note. Sunscreen should be applied only to exposed areas of skin and applied at least 20 to 30 minutes before going outdoors so that it will be absorbed into the skin for increased effectiveness. Sunscreen should be reapplied every two hours while outdoors, or more often if the child is involved in water play, or if the child is perspiring significantly.

Insect repellent should be used only if it is safe for the age of the child and when recommended by public health authorities, or when requested by a parent/guardian. The repellent should contain a concentration of not more than 30% DEET. Oil of lemon and eucalyptus products may not be used on children under the age of 3 years. Insect repellent should be applied to a child’s skin only once per day but may be sprayed on clothing when going outside the second time. Sprayed clothing will be returned home at the end of the day for laundering. Exposed skin should be washed off with soap and water after a child returns indoors.

**Infant Care Requirements:** According to HHSC requirements, a daily feeding schedule must be provided to the center by the parents. This must be updated by the parents every 30 days until the child is eating table food. All daily information will be recorded throughout the day through the app. The daily report will include all feedings (time and amount), naps, and diaper changes. Parents should place name labels on all of the child’s personal items (e.g. formula,



bottles, blankets and baby food). Infants should be given their morning bottle before they arrive at the center. As the center follows a Safe Sleep Policy, parents are required to read, sign and return the attached Form 2550.

Mothers who are breastfeeding may visit at any time to feed their children. An adult size chair is available in an upstairs room for breastfeeding. Labeled, bottled breast milk may be brought to the center and a staff member will offer it to the infant.

**Immunizations:** Children enrolled in the school must meet and continue to meet applicable immunization requirements specified by the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS). Children's immunization record is required upon enrollment. Children's immunization records must be updated each time they receive shots. Parents should ask their doctor for two copies so that the school may keep one on file. Parents whose children's immunizations are not current are required to either obtain a temporary waiver from the state or make sure that the children get their immunizations immediately. Failure to do so will result in suspension of services for any child whose immunizations and record are not current. The recommended vaccine schedule is available at [www.ImmunizeTexas.com](http://www.ImmunizeTexas.com). Staff members are not required to have immunizations. However, if a communicable disease poses a threat, then we will request teachers to get, for example, their flu shots. Tuberculin (TB) testing is not required for either children or teachers, but it is recommended.

**Hearing and Vision Screening:** The Special Senses and Communications Disorders Act requires that all children over age 4 enrolled in HHSC licensed daycare, and those that are not yet in a public school, have a vision and hearing screening report. Parents should provide the center with a copy of their children's report following their annual check-up. MOLO brings in professionals for vision and hearing screenings as well as spinal screenings. This is at an extra cost to the parents if you want it done here at school. If these were done at your child's pediatrician you will need to give a copy to the front office.

**Discipline:** Discipline will be:

- 1) individual and consistent for each child;
- 2) appropriate to the child's level of understanding
- 3) directed toward teaching the child acceptable behavior and self-regulation.

Caregivers will only use positive methods of discipline and guidance that encourages self-esteem, self-regulation, and self-direction. There will be no harsh, cruel, or degrading treatment of any child. Natural consequences are a part of the Montessori Method.

Age appropriate discipline is employed to ensure the social and emotional growth of students. Students may be asked to use words or hand motions to stop others instead of hitting. Gentle hands demonstrations are employed with the youngest students. Students may be asked to hold a teacher's hand or sit beside the teacher if they consistently hurt others. The peace



flower is used with older students to help hear each other's point of view and come to agreeable conclusions.

Bullying is frequent targeting of a certain student by another in physical, verbal or emotional forms. Teaching students about inclusion and diversity helps curb bullying and teachers make every effort to educate about, as well as stop any form of bullying.

**Toys:** Please leave all toys at home. We will not be responsible for lost or broken toys. Electronics are not permitted at school.

**Jewelry:** Jewelry should be small and not dangle, if worn at all. MOLO will not be responsible for lost or stolen items.

**Suspension & Expulsion:** We work hard with parents to come up with solutions to behaviors that might arise with a student. When the teacher or director comes to you with a behavioral issue it is expected that they work together to help the child overcome the challenges they are facing. Children who engage in violent or aggressive behavior which might endanger other children or staff members, or which disrupts the class to the point that prevents other children from learning, or for any other reason that the center deems extremely serious, may be suspended, or even expelled from the school.

**Parent Conferences:** Conferences are available upon request of the parent. You may call to schedule an appointment to learn about your child's progress, problems/concerns, or for any other reasons. You may be asked to come in for a conference if we feel one is needed. It is our goal to hold parent conferences once a semester for all students to discuss their academic and developmental progress. **Parents are required to attend conferences once per semester.**

**Parent Workshops:** Educational workshops for parents will be offered every 4-8 weeks. Attendance is highly recommended as we want to be partners with you in your child's success. In enrolling your child at MOLO you are committing to a Montessori lifestyle. This wide range of topics help parents better understand a child's developmental stages and how to work with their children and school. These workshops are offered free of charge to MOLO families. Outside families may attend for a small fee.

**Student Files:** Any parent wishing for a copy of student records for use at a new school may do so by emailing or calling the school. The school will comply with this request within 48 hours or two working days.

Student files will be kept for five years after leaving the school. If, for any reason, the school closes permanently, files will be stored off site and can be retrieved by contacting [westchase@moloedu.com](mailto:westchase@moloedu.com).



**Gang-Free Zone:** Gang related criminal activity and engaging in organized criminal activity within 1000 feet of a childcare center is in violation of the law and is therefore subject to increased penalties under state law.

**Policy update:** Policies are subject to change. If there is a change in policy, you will be notified in writing.

**Abuse and Neglect:** Our Staff is trained yearly to recognize and respond to the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect. Warning signs may include unexplained bruising, young children reporting that they are left alone, poor hygiene, showing aggression, acting out sexually or showing interest in sex that is not appropriate for their age. If any of our staff members suspects that a child has been abused or is being neglected, we are required by law to report what we have seen, heard, or observed. This is for the safety and well-being of all the children in our care. Parents may learn more, and may receive free training, through the Department of Family and Protective Services website. DFPS child abuse hotline information is located on a poster in the entry way. The DFPS phone number is **1-800-252-5400**. Or you may visit DFPS online at: **[www.txabusehotline.org](http://www.txabusehotline.org)**

You can view the policies and standards of Texas Health and Human Services by visiting [hhs.texas.gov](http://hhs.texas.gov). Our facility is inspected on a regular basis and reports may be accessed through the website. If you would like to contact Texas Childcare Licensing, you may do so by calling (713) 287-3239. The address is 1330 E 40<sup>th</sup> St, Houston, TX 77022

I fully understand MOLO policies as outlined in this handbook and agree to follow the school policies. If I have any issues I agree to schedule a meeting with the school Director in order to resolve any issues.

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Parent Name

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Parent Name

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Parent Signature

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Parent Signature



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date