



## PARENT HANDBOOK

### Mission

The mission of Bryanston Montessori is to provide a carefully planned, stimulating Montessori environment which will help children develop within themselves the foundation for a lifetime of learning, thinking and living. We are a child centred community that honours individuality and encourages respect for one another and oneself. We believe that the deep commitment and dedication of our small community, which is made up of our school's children, parents and staff members, is vital in the fulfilment of this mission.

### Values and Objectives

Our program rests on these core values and objectives:

- Respect Self-respect, respect for others, tolerance, honesty, integrity and responsibility.
- Compassion Concern for one another, for humanity, kindness, peacefulness, understanding, acceptance and warmth.
- Love of Learning Discovery, exploration, working together, curiosity, and ownership.
- Service A lifelong commitment to give something back through service to others who are in need.
- Independence Doing for oneself, understanding one's own capabilities.
- Interdependence Responsibility to and healthy dependence upon one another, a love of community.
- Excellence Quality in all that we do to serve the children, and the cultivation of the pursuit of excellence within our students.
- Universal Understanding A global perspective, and an understanding of being part of something bigger than.

### Pre-Primary Curriculum

The Montessori preschool classroom is a "house" for children. Children choose their work from among the self-correcting materials displayed on open shelves, and 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 to deep concentration. In the

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Montessori preschool, academic competency is a means to an end, and the manipulative materials are viewed as “materials for development.”

In the Montessori preschool, five distinct areas constitute the prepared environment:

- Practical Life area enhances the development of task organization and cognitive order through care of self, care of the environment, exercises of grace and courtesy, 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, colour, pitch, etc.
- Mathematics area makes use of manipulative materials to enable the child to internalize concepts of number, symbol, sequence, operations, and memorization of basic facts.
- Language area includes 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, large and small movable alphabet, various presentations allowing children to link sounds with letter symbols effortlessly and to express their thoughts through writing.
- Cultural area activities expose the child to basics in geography, history, and life sciences. Music, art, and movement education are part of the integrated cultural curriculum.

The Bryanston Montessori pre-school environment unifies the psychosocial, physical, and academic functioning of the child. The primary objective of our environment is to provide students with an early and general foundation that includes a positive attitude toward school, inner security, a sense of order, pride in the physical environment, abiding curiosity, habit of concentration, habits of initiative and persistence, the ability to make decisions, self-discipline, and a sense of responsibility to other members of the class, school, and community. This foundation will enable them to acquire more specialized knowledge and skills throughout their school career.

## SCHOOL POLICIES & PROCEDURES

We undertake to provide a safe and loving environment for your child and cherish him/her as an individual. Please carefully read the school policies & procedures so that the general running of the school is understood by all.

### Admission to Bryanston Montessori School

1. School tour
2. Receive validation from school regarding an available placement.
3. Completion of school application form and submission of related documentation
4. Proof of payment of deposit.

### Each child will need:

Please pack a backpack for your child on a daily basis including the following:

- A change of clothing
- Snack in a labelled lunch box
- Water in a labelled water bottle

## Yearly Supplies

Each child is required to supply at the start of the New Year:

- 4 Carlton/Roller Towel
- 4 Boxes Tissue
- 12 Rolls Toilet Paper
- 1 Bottles Liquid Hand Soap
- 6 Packets Wet Wipes (Pack 64 wipes or more in each packet)

These supplies are used throughout the year by all the children in the environment. Should your child start during the course of the year these supplies will be prorated.

## Tips for “Tear Free Goodbyes”

- Arrival – you will be greeted by the teacher at the door who is on duty. Allow the teacher to show the child where their locker is. He/she will unpack their bag and lunch boxes and then its best to say good-bye.
- When it's time to go, make sure to say good-bye to your child. Never sneak out. As tempting as it may be, leaving without saying good-bye to your child risks his/her trust in you.
- Once you say good-bye, leave promptly. A long farewell scene might only serve to reinforce a child's sense that preschool is a bad place.
- Don't linger. The longer you stay, the harder it is. Let your child know that you'll be there to pick him/her up, and say "See you later!"
- Learn the other kids' names. When you can call your child's classmates by name ("Look, Matthew, there is a space at the train table with Eli and Katie"), it makes school seem much more familiar and safe.
- Communication. You will receive a message by no later than 10am to let you know how your child is doing. This will be for the first week only.

## School Hours

Bryanston Montessori offers 2 options:

- Half day:                      07:00 – 13:00
- Full day:                        07:00 – 17:00

Both half and full day attendance, include a hot lunch and a snack is included in the afternoon for full day children.

Our school runs on the three-term independent school calendar. Holiday program's operate for all three holidays and are available to all children; however, an extra fee is charged.

## Holiday Fee:

- All fees include the Holiday Program as per our school calendar.

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### Drop Off/Pick Up Times

- Children are to be dropped off by no later than 08:30.
- A late arrival causes a child to miss part of the work cycle and is also extremely disruptive for the class, not to mention a security risk to all inside the school.
- Our school gate is LOCKED at 08:30 sharp.
- Should you be late, please know you will be required to return the next day. Your assistance with this would be appreciated and I ask that you please do not ring the school bell and put my staff in an awkward predicament of turning you away.
- Should your child/ren be in any form of therapy and require arriving late on certain days, please communicate this to a teacher.
- If somebody else is collecting your child, please notify us in advance as we will not release your child until we have made contact with a parent.

### Late Pick Up

Pick up times: 13:00 Half Day

17:00 Full Day (or throughout the afternoon)

- A fee of R50 will be charged for every 5 minutes you are late(after 1pm & 5pm)
- You will be required to sign acknowledgement of lateness and an invoice will be emailed to you, which is required to be settled immediately.
- All late fees will be paid directly by management to the relevant staff member that was asked to care for your child outside of required school times.

### Fee Conditions and Payments

School fees are compulsory and payable in advance.

- Fees are payable on or before the 1<sup>st</sup> of each month for monthly and termly payment options.
- If paying annually, fees are due to be paid in full by the 7<sup>th</sup> January of the New School Year.
- Late payments will attract interest at the end of each month.

### Withdrawal Notice:

- A full calendar month's written notice is required if you intend to remove your child from the school.
- In cases of absence from school owing to illness or holiday, the monthly fee is still payable.
- Fees will be deemed unpaid until proof of payment is received.
- In the event of late payment of the school fees, interest will be charged at a maximum rate permissible in law.
- The parents and/or legal guardian authorize Bryanston Montessori Pre-Primary School to carry out any checks and/or traces that may deem fit with any registered credit bureau or credit reference and also to list them with any credit bureau in the event of this account not being paid within the period for payment.

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- The parents and/or guardian confirm that any notice that is required to be delivered to them as required in law may be delivered to them at the address as set out in the Application Form.
- The parents and/or legal guardian hereby confirm that they are jointly liable as co-principle debtors for the payment of any fees not withstanding any other indication and/or nomination of any other person in the “Person Responsible for Payment of School Fees”
- A 10% discount will apply for a second sibling who attends school during the same period.
- We reserve the right to deny admittance to any child whose tuition is not paid by the due date.

### Attendance and Tardiness

- Regular and punctual attendance is critical to ensuring a positive experience for your child. Consistency and routine are essential elements in a child’s Montessori experience.
- Erratic attendance can lead to missed lessons and interruptions in the child’s natural learning process, a sense of alienation from the classroom activities and routine as well as a feeling of social isolation.
- Please notify the school of your child’s absence of your child (anything more than 2 days).
- Punctual attendance is also expected of all children, for reasons other than illness.
- Consistent tardiness disrupts the classroom and shows disrespect for the teacher and other students. It is not uncommon for children who regularly arrive late to school or miss school frequently to exhibit negative behaviour.
- If a parent and child are consistently arriving late, the parent will be asked to come in for a conference with the office to discuss rectifying the situation.
- If the behaviour continues, we may ask that the child be taken home upon late arrival to school.
- Should it become apparent that a family cannot be supportive of the school’s missions or goals, it may be necessary for the administrator to consider whether it is in the best interest of the school to keep the child enrolled at Bryanston Montessori.

### Medical

#### Emergency Care

- In the event of an accident or sudden onset of illness, the school will not hesitate to seek proper care for a child.
- The child’s individual emergency instructions are on file, the school will contact the parents immediately.
- If necessary the child will be transported to the hospital by ambulance or emergency vehicle.
- Your child’s medical details on file, will determine whether a private or government/state ambulance/medical vehicle is called.
- The consent statement, signed by parents, will accompany the child so that treatment can be given immediately in the absence of the parent.

### Injuries

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- In the event of a minor injury, first aid will be administered by a qualified staff member and the child will be made as comfortable as possible.
- A written accident report will be filled out for any injury requiring first aid and the report will be given to the parent at the end of the school day.
- On occasion, parents will be called regarding accidents or injuries that do not require emergency care, but may require a parent's further attention, or for which a parent may want to seek non-emergency medical care.

\* Please note that while every effort is made to give parents an accident report in a timely manner, there may be situations when an accident is communicated verbally before the report is completed (e.g. a minor injury occurring on the playground just before pickup time).

### **Vital Information**

It is imperative that you please keep us informed of any change of address, telephone numbers, medical conditions, change of medical scheme's as well as change of legal guardianship. It is the parents responsibility to keep the school notified of any changes.

### **Sick Procedure**

- Please notify the school before 8:30 if your child is unable to attend school.
- A sick child or a child showing signs of illness may not be brought to school until he/she has fully recovered.
- Should your child be on any medication such as antibiotics, please keep him/ her at home.
- No staff member is allowed to administer any kind of medicine at school.
- Should your child be absent due to a contagious or infectious illness, please notify the school immediately.

### **Symptoms requiring removal of child from school:**

- **Fever:** Fever is defined as having a temperature of 37,8 degrees Celsius or higher taken under the arm (a child needs to be fever free for a minimum of 24 hours before returning to school, that means the child is fever free without the aid of fever reducing substance- e.g. Panado.)
- Fever AND sore throat, rash, vomiting, diarrhoea, earache, irritability, or confusion.
- **Diarrhoea:** runny, watery, bloody stools, or 2 or more loose stools within last 4 hours.
- **Vomiting:** 2 or more times in a 24-hour period. Note: please do not bring your child if they have vomited in the night.
- Breathing trouble, sore throat, swollen glands, loss of voice, hacking or continuous coughing.
- Runny nose (other than clear), draining eyes or ears.
- Frequent scratching of body or scalp, lice, rash, or any other spots that resemble childhood diseases, including ringworm.
- Child is irritable, continuously crying, or requires more attention than we can provide without hurting the health, safety or well-being of the other children in our care

**Note:** If you are not sure whether or not it is okay to bring your child, please call ahead to ask us. We may require a doctor's decision as to whether or not the child is contagious.

### **Snack Time**

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- Please provide your child with a healthy snack and label his/her lunch box and water bottle.
- No sweets, chocolates or fizzy drinks allowed.
- WE ARE A **NUT FREE SCHOOL**, NO PRODUCTS CONTAINING NUTS OR NUT TRACE MAY BE PACKED IN SCHOOL LUNCH BOXES!  
(Nutella and peanut butter included)
- The school takes no responsibility for lost water bottles and lunch boxes that do not have your child's name clearly marked.

### Reports/ Communication

We believe that communication is essential and encourage every family to speak with their child's teachers whenever a problem arises, or something occurs in the child's life that may be significant.

Bryanston Montessori have a strong focus on maintaining regular communication with our parents:

- Weekly feedback in Friday diaries/opportunity for parents to comment too
- Monthly newsletters
- Information via email throughout the year

### Termly feedback is as follows:

- First term                      Written report for the term
- Second term                    Written report for the term
- Third term                      Written report on your child's progress for the year

We have a record keeping file which keeps an up to date record of all activities your child is working within the classroom as well as what your child's activities are in the outside area. If you would like to discuss your child's progress or any concerns you are most welcome to set an appointment to discuss the matter.

### Cell Phone Communication:

In keeping with the times of today, we make use of the Whatsapp facility to communicate, however I would kindly request that all parents respect the school times, 07:00am to 17:00pm when communicating with any staff member. This is out of courtesy for their private time. Please do not message before or after school hours.

### Non-Discrimination Policy

- Bryanston Montessori admits students of any race, colour, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school.
- It does not discriminate on the basis of race, colour, national and ethnic origin in the administration of its educational policies and admissions policies.
- We pledge to represent our school truthfully and accurately to the general public and internally to our parent community.

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## Extra Mural Activities

Bryanston Montessori pre-school has an extensive extra-mural program which is made available to children. We offer the following extra-murals:

### Build em Bricks

Build em Bricks is an amazing program that meets the growing need for mental stimulation and early development in maths and science, what better way than to introduce them to Build em Brix! An exciting, fun interactive program.

### Soccer Starz

The real goal of Soccer Starz, is to use football as a fun forum to instil our growing squad with a little extra confidence, co-ordination, control and sense of camaraderie; which we feel will stand them in very good stead for the future.

### Little Actors

Little Actors is a speech, drama and etiquette academy whose purpose is to fulfil the emotional and confidence-building needs of children. Each lesson has a magical theme, such as "going sailing on a ship at sea" and includes fun-filled drama, etiquette and speech exercises to match.

### Kindermusik

Kindermusik is a gently structured, flexible curriculum that allows children from birth to 7 years to learn and develop at their own pace. Research shows music nurtures a child's cognitive, emotional, social, lingual and physical development. Leading professionals and specialists from various related disciplines have helped produce this remarkable international program.

### Pottery

Pottery class provides your family with more than just new artwork for the home. It can enrich your children's lives in ways ranging from boosting their self-esteem to improving their motor skills. Throughout the year the children work on beautiful projects.

### Parking

- When collecting your child/ren from school, it is necessary for you to park and exit your vehicle.
- Please pull into one of the parking spaces of the driveway. In this way, we can more easily control traffic during arrival and departure.
- It is important to move traffic through the parking area smoothly in order to avoid lines or traffic in the parking lot.
- Please follow the general rules of the road when entering and exiting the parking lot.
- Do not leave unattended cars parked in the driveway while running.
- Never leave children unattended in cars. It is not the responsibility of the security of the school to watch them.

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- Children must be supervised in the parking lot at all times.
- Once the children leave the school through the gate into the parking area, the person picking them up is responsible for their care and safety.

## Discipline

- Bryanston Montessori uses positive discipline, which is implemented in a developmentally or age-appropriate fashion to meet the needs of the individual child.
- Our focus is on how to help children resolve problems and empower them to have a successful experience in the classroom and school community.
- The goal of our discipline policy is to provide an environment that promotes respect and safety for each person as well as the space we share.
- The need for discipline within a Montessori classroom is greatly reduced by the prepared environment.
- The teachers make a point of keeping engaging activities available for the children so there is never a lack of something interesting for each student to do.
- The teacher may also redesign the work areas, jobs available, number of children allowed in a work area, etc., in response to classroom behaviour.
- For younger children, the primary method in a Montessori classroom is redirection – moving the child from a disruptive activity and engaging him or her in something more productive. Emphasis is put on directing a child to what they may do (making appropriate choices) rather than telling them what they may not do.
- For older children, the primary method used in a Montessori classroom is involving the child in making respectful and constructive choices. This may be done using mini-conferences, reflective listening and questioning, giving limited choices, making agreements, helping to resolve conflict, etc.
- On occasion, in the event of unsafe physical or verbal behaviour, or a persistent problem, a child may be removed from the classroom for a period of time to collect him or herself and to give the staff an opportunity to help resolve the situation.
- Parents will be notified of significant or persistent disciplinary problems at school in a timely manner. If it is necessary to involve parents in the resolution of a problem at school, it will be done with a spirit of cooperation and with the aim of helping the child.
- Parental support during that time is very much appreciated. Through conferences, goals will be mutually agreed upon. If the goals are not able to be met within an allotted time, further professional help or other school placement will be considered for the child.
- Parents or faculty may call upon the administrator to act as facilitator at any time. Should it become apparent that a family cannot be supportive of the school's missions or goals, it may be necessary for the administrator to consider whether it is in the best interest of the school to keep the child enrolled at Bryanston Montessori.
- In order to provide an environment that is physically and emotionally safe for all children, suspension or expulsion procedures may be executed in the event of serious and/or persistent behaviour problems. Such behaviour includes, but is not limited to: defacing or damaging property (school or other), profanity (verbal or written), and violence, threats of violence, blatant disrespect, disorderly conduct, and endangering safety of self or others. This kind of disciplinary action will be determined by the principle upon consultation with the faculty.

## Language

Bryanston Montessori is an English medium school. Children will be addressed in class and material presented to them in the English language.

### Clothing

- Children should be dressed in clothing that they can put on and remove easily. This encourages independence and minimizes toilet accidents.
- The school will not be held responsible for clothes that become torn, misplaced or soiled, and encourage parents to dress your child in clothes that allow for them to paint, play and take full advantage of their school environment.
- Please mark all clothing items and shoes clearly.
- A school sun hat will be supplied for your child that will be kept at school.
- A spare set of clothing for emergencies must be kept in your child's school bag at all times. The school does not have spare clothing therefore should your child require a change of clothes and there are none in their bag, we will contact you in order to drop clothing off for your child.
- If your child is not toilet trained, please ensure you supply sufficient nappies and baby wipes in your child's bag daily.

### Sun Protection Policy

- Sun protection is applied at school daily, before the child is allowed on the playground.
- All children are required to wear their school hat while outside.
- We have a strict rule: "No hat, no play!"

### Playground And Activities Policy

- Children are free to play on the playground, and invent their own games and entertainment.
- However, the staff of the school has the right to terminate any activity (or game) detrimental to any child/ren involved.
- The staff of the school also have the right to terminate any activity (or game) if children are being excluded from the activity. This will be assessed on a daily basis and will be dealt with in daily circles as a "Grace and Courtesy".
- If the continuation of this activity (or game) develops into a positive outcome it will be allowed to continue.
- Continuous negative effects of the activity will result in a permanent termination of the game.

### Anti-Bullying Policy

Physical:

- Inflicting physical pain of any form.
  - Taking, using or damaging any article belonging to another without permission.
  - Making/forcing another to do something against his/her will.
  - Any other physical action which may diminish the dignity of another.
  - Saying or writing anything hurtful or damaging about another person.
  - Verbally attacking, threatening, teasing, mocking, racial slurs, hate-speech, foul language and name-calling, thereby diminishing the dignity of another.
- Bullying will be dealt with by:

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- As far as possible, bullying behaviour should be identified and addressed proactively.
- If a bullying incident is reported, all parties involved will be interviewed and investigated and documented.
- A Peace Corner meeting will be held in order to stop any further bullying incidents. Should the Directress deem it necessary, parents of both parties will be contacted.
- Close observation of both parties will be done for a period of two weeks. If bullying behaviour occurs again, a follow-up investigation and report will be done, a parental interview arranged, and behaviour modification will be outlined.
- This could include professional counselling with regular report backs.
- A positive improvement in behaviour will be required if the child is to remain in the school.
- If the behaviour does not improve, the child will be suspended and possible dismissal may occur.

### **Equal Opportunities And Inclusive Practice Policy**

- As part of the Montessori Cosmic education, religious festivals and traditions from across the globe are explored and discussed from a cultural point of view.
- We welcome children and families from all different cultural, socio-economical and racial backgrounds.
- Our resources and practices include non-sexist materials which value the achievements of woman as well as men.
- Children with different needs and abilities are welcomed to our school, if we are able to cater for their needs, and subject to our Admissions Policy.
- We aim to create a happy, safe and rich environment in which all children can prosper and thrive.

### **Immunisation Policy**

The school requires a copy of every child's immunisation card, to be handed in with their enrolment form.

### **Child Protection Policy**

Keeping our children safe and from harm is our highest priority. If any form of abuse or neglect is suspected, the school will take action immediately.

### **Emergency Plans And Evacuation Procedures**

- Emergency plans will be adhered to in terms of the instructions posted in each environment.
- These plans include fire emergency.
- All staff members are familiar with the school's fire drill procedure.
- These fire drills are held regularly to ensure that the children have a good understanding of the procedure.
- Each environment is fitted with a hand-held fire extinguisher and staff members are trained in using them should the need arise.

### **Birthday Rings**

- These are celebration days and we would like to make it extra special for your child.

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- On the day of your child's birthday, we have a special birthday ring for your child that we would love you to attend.
- You are asked to bring ONE of the following: a cake or some cupcakes, popcorn or ice cream & cones (normally in summer) it will begin at 11:30am.
- Please liaise with one of the teachers to book a suitable date for your child's birthday ring.
- Please could you bring photographs of your child from each year of his/her life for the birthday ring.

### Toys

No toys are allowed at school, this is a distraction to the children and causes strife amongst them. All toys are to please be left at home or in the car.

### School Equipment

If bits of our school materials come home in suitcases or pockets, please return them. The Montessori materials are very costly and it is important that the materials are complete.

### HIV/Aids

We teach all the children never to touch someone else's blood and we always use gloves to treat any wounds. All cuts must be covered with plasters. Staff are first aid trained.

### Sexual Curiosity

It is not uncommon for children at various ages to become sexually curious. Our policy is to distract the child and watch for further episodes. We will inform the parents of the offenders and we will explain that parts of your body covered by your swimming costume are private and no-one may touch or look at them (except Mom, Dad, Doctor, Nanny).

We explain to the children that if someone tries to touch you in a private place, shout NO, NO, NO and tell an adult that looks after you. We advise parents never to over-react.

### The children's general ground rules

- Respect for others – you may not hurt (this includes hitting/kicking/biting/pinching/bullying) another child or disturb another child's work.
- Respect for self – you may not do things that may endanger your safety.
- Respect for equipment – you must use the equipment with care and return it to its place ready for someone else to use.
- You must be shown how to work with the equipment before it becomes available for choice.
- We have daily “grace and courtesy” presentations. These groups demonstrate positive social behaviour which help the children adapt to life in a group and learn socially acceptable behaviour. (For example: how to say please and thank you.)

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## 2019 SCHOOL CALENDAR

### TERM 1

School Commences: Wednesday 16 January  
School Ends: Thursday 18 April  
Half Term: Friday 22 February to Monday 25 February  
School will be closed on **Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> and Monday 25<sup>th</sup> February**  
School Holiday: School will be closed on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> March  
  
Public Holidays: Thursday 21 March (Human Rights Day)  
Friday 19 April (Good Friday)  
Monday 22 April (Family Day)

### TERM 2

Staff Development Day: Monday 06 May (school closed)  
School Commences: Tuesday 07 May  
School Ends: Thursday 08 August  
Half Term: Monday 01 July to Friday 05 July  
There will be a holiday program for the above half term.  
  
Public Holidays: Sunday 16 June (Youth Day)  
Monday 17 June

### TERM 3

Staff Development Day: Monday 09 and Tuesday 10 September  
School Commences: Wednesday 11 September  
School Ends: Friday 06 December  
Half Term: Friday 25 October to Monday 28 October  
Please note that school will be closed on **Friday 25<sup>th</sup> and Monday 28<sup>th</sup> October**  
  
School Holiday: Monday 23 September  
  
Public Holiday: Tuesday 24 September (Heritage Day)