

New Beginnings Montessori School

2011-2012
Parent Handbook



33 Albert Street
Middletown, NY 10940
845-342-0051
www.newbeginningsschool.com

Nicola Parrotta – Owner

ABOUT NEW BEGINNINGS

New Beginnings Montessori School (Pre-School to Elementary) offers premium education, providing the working parent with safe, secure, extended care while continuing to instill teacher/parent importance.

HISTORY

The New Beginnings Montessori School was originally located on Bennett Street in Middletown, NY. A previous owner originally owned the four classroom school, which was named Stepping Stones. In 1996, Stepping Stones was financially declining resulting in the selling of the building and the school. Nicola Parrotta bought the building and school with only thirty students. The name was changed from Stepping Stones to New Beginnings Montessori School so as to foreshadow the start of a child's education.

In 1998, New Beginnings Montessori School bought the Albert Street School from the City of Middletown. The brand new location opened its doors to the community on January 4, 1999. The change in location allowed convenience and more opportunities for growth. The school is affiliated with the Enlarged City School District of Middletown through its Universal Pre-K program. With dedication to each individual child, the school has been able to flourish and grow its student population to over 180 enrolled students during the academic year and up to 100 children during our Summer Camp program.

INTRODUCTION

This Handbook is designed to familiarize you, as well as to answer any questions you may have about New Beginnings Montessori School, Inc., (a private school). Upon enrolling your child, this handbook will constitute a binding contract between you and the school. Please review all information stated herein to assure a complete understanding of the policies and procedures with New Beginnings Montessori School, Inc. Please keep this handbook for future reference and feel free to ask for clarification of any points.

ARRIVAL TIME

Please sign in on our touch screen system, drop off your child in the main room and bring your child's belongings to their classroom. Children should be present in the main room **no later than 8:45am**. However, you may drop off your child as early as 7:00 am with additional latchkey charges. There is a morning program that runs until 8:40 am. At that time, the teachers begin to take the children up to the classroom. Our regular classroom program begins promptly at 9:00 am. Please do not block the driveways of either the school, neighboring houses, or parking spaces designated for parents to either drop-off, or pick-up their children. Also, please park in the direction of the flow of traffic.

DISMISSAL TIME:

Our instructional program ends at 12:00pm (1/2 day private and 1/2 day school district compatible), 3:00 pm (full day school district compatible), and 4:00 pm (full day private), respectfully. Any child not picked up at the scheduled time will attend our Latchkey program and will be charged the appropriate rate. Charges may not be pro-rated if parents decide to pick up earlier than appropriate contract times.

LATCHKEY:

New Beginnings Montessori School, offers morning latchkey from 7:00 am – 8:00 am for private program students and 7:00 am - 8:30 am for school district compatible students. Also available for the convenience of parents are evening latchkey programs from 4:00 pm – 6:00 pm for private students and 3:00 pm – 6:00 pm for school district compatible students. There is a ten minute grace period at the beginning time and end time of each program offered at New Beginnings Montessori School. The rate is \$7 per hour billed in hourly increments for our morning latchkey and \$3.50 per half hour billed in half hour increments in our afternoon latchkey program. Latchkey will be billed on the 5th and 20th of each month. If the fee is not paid, the school may exercise its discretion to prohibit the parent from utilizing Latchkey until it is paid.

Children in after-school latchkey may be picked up from the latchkey staff by a parent or authorized adult from the end time of their respective program until 6:00 pm. Anyone misusing latchkey privileges by not picking their child up on time will be given one notice. **Children remaining after 6:00 PM will immediately be charged a \$25 late fee as of 6:01 PM and \$1 per minute thereafter.** In addition, staff will contact an authorized adult to pick up your child. If no one can be reached by 6:30 PM, it may be necessary to contact the local police.

Flat rate latchkey programs are available for parents using latchkey routinely. Stop by the office for more information.

CHILD DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP:

Authorization regarding drop-off and pick-up of your child will be kept in your child's file, in our computer system, and a copy given to the classroom teacher. All authorized pick-ups must present picture ID and a copy must be retained in our files. If an unfamiliar person comes to pick-up your child, the teacher will check with the office to see if that person has been designated for a special pick-up. **If we do not have prior written consent, we will not release the child.** If a child is fretful when being picked up by an authorized person other than a parent, the child will not be released until a staff member can contact the parent with legal custody.

TOUCH SCREEN SIGN IN/SIGN OUT SYSTEM

Daily attendance is maintained by our sign in/out touch screen systems located outside the main office. Each authorized pick-up will be assigned a 4 digit ID code. The ID code is normally the last 4 digits of a home, cell or work phone number that was provided on the registration packet.

All authorized pick-ups must be listed in the registration packet or submitted in writing and **in person**, not by telephone, to the main office by a parent or guardian.

Please be aware that if you fail to properly and routinely sign your child in and out of the building daily, the computerized accounting system will automatically charge your account for a full day of latchkey and a charge for failing to sign in/out.

Directions to use the Touch Screen System are as follows (you must be previously registered to continue):

- Press the bottom center button on the touch screen that says: “Start Here...”
- The touch screen will ask you for your finger print scan. When prompted, click “bypass” in the bottom right corner of the screen.
- When prompted, provide your assigned 4 digit ID code and click “Next” or “Enter”.
- When prompted, enter the 4 digit code used to enter the building and click “Next” or “Enter”.
- Wait a moment for the page containing your child’s information to load. Once the child’s information is loaded, please note that their current sign in/out status is displayed in the box. Touch your child (or children’s) box(es) to sign them in or out and verify that the desired sign in/out status is displayed. Press “Finish” when you are done. If you do not press “Finish”, your child’s attendance will not register. Note: you will be prompted to click “Finish” twice.

Any questions or problems with the sign in/out process, please see the office immediately so that we can address the issue. Accurate attendance information is essential as the sign in/out process automatically updates the billing system.

TUITION AND FEES:

Billing: For those who choose the monthly billing option, statements will be issued on the 20th day of the month for the following month, with payment due between the 25th and the 29th of each month. **Accounts unpaid after the 29th will be charged a \$40.00 late payment fee. Unpaid balances, over 30 days, will be assessed a finance charge of 1.5%.** In addition, repeated late payments may jeopardize your child’s placement in our program.

Outstanding balances of one month will jeopardize the enrollment status of the child. The school will only reserve a space for one month and reserves the right to reissue the space to another child.

The tuition is an **annual fee**, which New Beginnings invoices on a monthly basis for the convenience of the parents. Each program will be billed with an option of 10 monthly payments or a single payment which includes a 5% discount if paid by September 1st. New Beginnings reserves the right to collect the entire balance if the child is withdrawn from the school prior to the end of the school year. **See your contract for further details. A bank fee of \$40.00 will be assessed for any returned check. Payment for returned check fees and balance due must be made in cash immediately upon notification.**

We offer a sibling discount for families with more than one child enrolled in our school. The discount is applied to the additional sibling’s monthly tuition. The discount for the 2011-2012 school year is \$50.00 per additional student’s monthly tuition. We also offer referral incentives; please see the office for further details on how you can save.

We also offer the opportunity for our parents to pay the full year’s tuition by September 1, 2010 and receive a discount of 5%. This tuition is not refundable if the child leaves New Beginnings during the school year.

POLICY OF REFUNDING TUITION FOR UNUSED ATTENDANCE

Parents are committed to and responsible for, in any and all cases, the full year's tuition. Parents agree to pay the tuition and fees including latchkey for the full academic year, and that said tuition and fees are unconditional. No reduction, credit, or remission of tuition for any part of the year, application, deposit, latchkey fees, etc., will be made for absences or withdrawal before the end of the school year for any reason. Please refer to your contract for further details. Children will not be admitted without a signed contract.

DAYCARE DAYS:

On Daycare days, the school is opened from 7:00 AM to 5:00 PM and care is available for all students. There is a fee for Daycare Days for the school district compatible program which must be paid at signing. Children must be signed up in advance or they will not be allowed to attend on the Daycare Day. Daycare days are provided for the following holidays: Columbus Day and Martin Luther King's Birthday. The program on these days will be more informal than on regular school days. The children may be placed in appropriately mixed age groups often supervised by someone other than their regular classroom teacher. This may also happen during Christmas and Spring break. However, children must be signed up in advance or they will not be allowed to attend.

UNIFORMS:

Uniforms are optional for all students.

Anyone that would like a uniform can purchase them from French Toast by phone, mail, fax or online. Information packets are available in the office. They contain the approved uniforms for boys and girls, a fit guide and an order form. Our school has been assigned a source code of QS4ESE. This code is to be referenced whenever making a purchase. This will ensure that the PTO receives 5% of the proceeds from uniform sales (excluding tax and shipping). This added benefit will provide the PTO with additional funds to do wonderful things for our children!

The school's preferred dress code will be as follows:

Boys

- Long or short sleeve light blue polo shirt embroidered with the school name/logo (must be purchased from French Toast)
- Navy Blue Sweater (when necessary due to cold weather), style of your own choice, embroidered with the school name/logo (must be purchased from French Toast)
- Navy Blue pants (can be purchased from French Toast or any other source)
- Black belt, black socks, solid black rubber soled shoes/sneakers (can be purchased from French Toast or any other source)

Girls

- Long or short sleeve light blue polo shirt embroidered with the school name/logo (must be purchased from French Toast)
- Navy Blue Sweater (when necessary due to cold weather), style of your own choice embroidered with the school name/logo (must be purchased from French Toast)

- Navy Blue skirt, skorts or pants (can be purchased from French Toast or any other source)
- White tights or knee high socks must be worn with skirts or, black socks, solid black shoes/sneakers (can be purchased from French Toast or any other source)

Sneakers or soft-soled shoes are the **only footwear permitted for all students.**

Please bring a fresh set of clothes on the first day of school, including undergarments, socks, and an extra pair of sneakers. Be sure to keep the change of clothes appropriate for the season. Please remember to replenish if extra clothes are used.

All clothing should be labeled with the child's name. Please check the lost and found, located in the All-Purpose room, for any lost or misplaced items.

All children may be outdoors at sometime during the day, weather permitting (if it is above 32 degrees). It is important that you send in appropriate outside clothing clearly marked with your child's name.

LUNCH

Children need to bring their lunch to school in a **lunch box clearly marked with their own name.** Unfortunately, we do not have the facilities to refrigerate or heat food. Therefore, use Thermos containers to keep such foods warm or cold. Pizza and juice is offered every Friday for \$3; payments must be made no later than the Thursday before.

Birthdays are special days for children. Please advise the school ahead of time if you will be bringing cookies, muffins, or cupcakes to help celebrate your child's birthday. Also, please refrain from providing anything containing nuts, peanuts, and peanut butter as we have many children with allergies.

COMMUNICATIONS:

Please keep in mind that the policies and procedures of this school are for the protection of your child(ren), as well as keeping New Beginnings Montessori School, Inc., a quality private school.

Messages: Special instructions for your child(ren) should be written and given to the administration and the teacher.

Backpack Express: Please **check your child's communication folder in their backpack daily.** Information from the administration, notices from the teachers and your monthly statements are sent to you via these folders.

REPORT CARDS:

Report cards will be issued two times a year for Pre-k. Kindergarten, First and Second Grade report cards are issued three times a year. Parent conferences will be scheduled for the first and final report cards, but additional conferences are encouraged at any time during the school year.

UPDATED RECORDS AND FORMS:

It is very important that all records be updated whenever there is a change in information. Please contact the office whenever this is necessary. A medical form is required each year. Also please keep your emergency contact information up to date.

SCHOOL CLOSINGS:

Check the school calendar for scheduled closings. In the event of inclement weather, forcing the school to be closed or delayed, an announcement will be made on the following radio stations:

94.1, 95.7, 96.7, 103.1, 1220AM (Newburgh), 1490AM (Port Jervis)

Please note with a one-hour delay, the school opens at 8:00 AM and with a two-hour delay, the school opens at 9:00 AM.

HEALTH:

Illness: Parents must keep children home from school if they have a communicable illness, such as colds, active cough, skin rash, fever, strep, measles, mumps, conjunctivitis, etc. On any day your child is absent, **please call the school** and report the cause for absence.

Upon return to school, your child must present either a doctor's note or a signed letter from the parent or guardian indicating the reason for the absence.

If the school finds that there is an outbreak of a specific communicable illness, your child may be asked to stay home for the entire period until the medication is finished, even if the doctor states that your child is no longer contagious and may return to school. Please understand that we must take into consideration all the children enrolled at the school and their health when making a decision such as this. In the case of conjunctivitis, if the school suspects your child may have this illness, we will ask that your child remain at home until his/her eyes are completely clear. If a child becomes ill at school, he/she will be isolated from the class. The parents will then be called to come immediately to pick up the child. For the well being of all the children, and for the comfort of your own sick child, prompt pick up would be greatly appreciated. Please note that if a child has a fever that proves to be above a temperature of 99 plus, our policy is to send them home. We must also ask that children be fever-free for 24 hours, before returning to school. If your child is well enough to return to school, she/he will resume normal activities including outdoor play.

Food Allergies: Food allergies are quite common. It is the parent's responsibility to notify the school **in writing** of any food allergies.

Medicine: The staff of New Beginnings Montessori School is not permitted to administer medicine to a child. If your child must take medication during the school day, you must make arrangements to come in at the designated time to administer the medication yourself. In addition, if you are administering medication at home,

prescription or non-prescription, please let the staff know. If a child should develop a reaction, or behavior change due to this medication, our staff will be able to respond appropriately.

Accidents and Accident Procedures: Every effort will be made to ensure the safety of your child, but accidents happen. Parents will be notified after first aid has been administered. Should the child need medical attention, a parent will be called. If parents cannot be reached, the emergency numbers you have provided will be called. The child's doctor is the next call if we are still unable to reach anyone. Upon advice of physician, or if the need warrants, the child will be taken by ambulance to the emergency room of Orange Regional Medical Center, accompanied by a staff member and the child's health records. Parents will be asked to meet the child at the hospital as soon as possible.

In the event that the parent or emergency contact person is not available, parental permission is understood to be automatically given to the school to provide first aid treatment for the child and to take the appropriate measures including contacting the emergency medical services system and arranging for transportation to Orange Regional Medical Center if necessary. The parent signature on the New Beginnings Registration Contract serves as consent for medical treatment as well.

FIELD TRIPS:

A variety of optional class trips will be scheduled during the year. There will be an additional cost for transportation and the actual trip. Permission slips must always be signed as well. Children younger than 4 years old as of the date of the field trip must be accompanied by an adult chaperone and bring their own approved safety seat if traveling with us by school bus. Please note that the field trips are optional and students who cannot attend the field trip are always welcome to attend school.

PLAYGROUND:

The staff and the children enrolled at the New Beginnings Montessori School are the only people permitted in the playground area. This is a necessary precaution for the safety of all the children. If we take the time to speak to adults in the playground area, it means we have taken our eyes off your child(ren). Please help us by showing your cooperation in this matter.

TOYS MUST REMAIN HOME: Books are always welcome, as this is an experience in which all enjoy and can equally participate. No toys of any kind may be brought to school. New Beginnings reserves the right to hold any unacceptable items for parent pick-up and accepts no responsibility for the loss of any item.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

- Ballet (extra tuition)
- Karate (extra tuition)

*** New Beginnings Montessori School reserves the right to amend the policies of the school if deemed necessary. Appropriate and prompt notification to all parents will always be given. ***