

Flowers Montessori School PARENT HANDBOOK

Welcome to our school!

FLOWERS MONTESSORI SCHOOL

OUR SCHOOL'S COMMITMENT

Flowers is dedicated to the Montessori philosophy and method which facilitates the growth of inner discipline and later complex reasoning through the free choice and organized use of didactic materials within an atmosphere conducive to meet these needs.

PHILOSOPHY OF FLOWERS MONTESSORI SCHOOL

The Flowers' program is custom tailored to meet the needs of each student. We are constantly evolving and changing our activities to encourage independence in our students.

Our objectives are to help the child develop autonomy as a learner, to have comfortable and productive peer relations, to learn those basic skills and concepts necessary for intellectual development, language and math in order to be aware of and organize his environment in terms of himself, thereby establishing for the child effective learning strategies and kindling an excitement for learning.

We need parent encouragement and cooperation. The school and the home must be extensions of one another.

We feel, as teachers, we grow, change and learn along with our students. Teaching is a full time vocation. To be sensitive to the needs of each child, to prepare materials based on the understanding of these needs, to know the materials and activities available and to approach each child with understanding and love are the basic goals and qualities of our teachers.

Flowers Montessori School is a community of the mind and spirit.

MAY PEACE BE THE JOURNEY

We are dedicated to providing a peaceful and loving environment to all who enter our school. Our peace curriculum incorporates an outdoor and indoor peace table and conflict mediation training using "I" messages. Our peace pole, an enduring beacon of hope is proudly displayed in the playground garden with the message "May peace prevail on earth".

DAILY CLASS SCHEDULE

7:30	Flowers Opens
8:30	Bell Rings for Morning Session to Begin
10:10	Children Clean Up Work / Morning Snack
10:30	Outside Play
11:00	Lunch Bell Rings
12:15	Bell Rings for Afternoon Session to Begin
1:45	Clean Up Time / Children's Outside Play Period
2:15	Snack
2:30	Dismissal

SPECIAL CLASSES OFFERED

- ❖ **YOGA**
- ❖ **SPANISH**
- ❖ **CHINESE**
- ❖ **MUSIC**
- ❖ **DANCE**
- ❖ **SUZUKI RHYTHMS**

ALSO OFFERED (ADDITIONAL FEES APPLY)

- ❖ **FRENCH**
- ❖ **GYMNASTICS**

SCHOOL PROCEDURES

ADMISSIONS

Flowers Montessori has a non-discriminatory admissions policy for children who are approximately 2 ½ years old to 6 years old. The school admits students of any race, color, national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities made available to students at our school.

Each prospective student and parents are required to visit the school for an observation period. Please contact the school office to arrange an interview.

The Montessori primary program is designed for the child from 2 ½ through 6 years of age, which includes kindergarten. Any exceptions will be made only at the discretion of the teacher and the administrator and only following observation during a trial period. There is a six-week trial period for all new enrollees.

ABSENCES

When a child is going to be absent and you have prior knowledge or when he/she is absent unexpectedly due to illness, please notify the school.

CLASS SESSIONS

Montessori classes are ungraded and meet Monday through Friday. Classes will be held 180 days per school year, per state law, for kindergarten students.

School hours are as follows:

Half day sessions:	8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.
Full day session:	8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.

The school is open from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Early morning care from 7:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. is a courtesy extended to all Flowers Montessori School students. After School care from 2:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. is available with an additional fee charged using an hourly rate.

DISPENSING OF NON-PRESCRIPTION MEDICATION

The school will not dispense non-prescription medication, such as aspirin or cough syrup.

SICK CHILDREN

Do not send your child to school if he/she is ill or not feeling well enough to participate in a full day's activities, including outdoor play. A child at school who has a fever or is obviously sick may not stay in school. The parent will be called to arrange for the child to be taken home. Be sure you have emergency numbers on file in the office. Please refer to the Alachua County Communicable Diseases chart on our website for guidance on recognizing symptoms and appropriate resumption of school attendance.

THE HOME ENVIRONMENT

A good daily schedule sets a good example for children, although this does not eliminate flexibility. It is a good idea to have a child's room set up with low closet racks, low drawers and a low bed. Have clothing where your child can reach it easily. Provide low shelves for the child's belongings; toy boxes should be avoided – everything has its place. Have your child take an active part in caring for him/herself and their environment. Let your child assume as much responsibility as he/she can without failing. At no time should undignified and uncontrolled behavior be dismissed as insignificant. Likewise, each achievement, no matter how small, should be acknowledged.

FOOD PREPARATION / SNACKS

Welcome to Food Preparation! Each month or so your child will be scheduled to provide and prepare a snack for their class. Please check the calendar for your child's assigned day.

Involve your child as much as possible in the preparation of the chosen snack. They love to tell their friends how they made it. Children can also help decide what you are going to make but they will need to be guided away from sugary snacks. This is a good time to discuss proper nutrition. All snacks must consist of at least two different food groups. They must be in prepackaged containers or prepared and ready to serve from home. We are not allowed to cut, wash or otherwise prepare any foods on the school premises.

If you have any questions or problems, please let us know.

Suggestions: veggies and dip, fruit, cheese & crackers, granola mix, popcorn, chex mix, roasted nuts and raisins, celery and peanut butter.

NAPPERS

Nap mats are provided for your child. Please supply the following. Ample storage space is provided but remember to bring these items home on the weekend for washing. 1. Cotton fitted crib sheet. 2. Small blanket 3. Soft item for snuggling.

NOURISHMENT

Please do not send candy or gum to school with your child. Please send natural and sugarless snacks and lunches with fruits and vegetables. Children must bring a drink with their lunch. All lunch boxes must be labeled. We will send home in your child's lunch box all the food that was not eaten so you will know what your child ate. Please send appropriate utensils with your child's lunch and remember to recycle when possible.

BIRTHDAYS

We enjoy celebrating your child's birthday with a very simple party and candle lighting ceremony. If you wish to do so, kindly send a snack for the number of children in the class.

CONSISTENCY REGARDING DISCIPLINE PROCEDURES BETWEEN HOME AND SCHOOL

The basic ground rules of the school are: No child may hurt another in any way or disturb the work of another child. The purpose of ground rules is to aid in the development of respect for self and others. The school and home environment must be consistent.

ACCIDENTS

In case of an accident at school, you will be called immediately after first aid is administered. If you cannot be reached, the emergency number you indicated will be called. If that person is not available, your child's doctor will be called.

SPECIAL INFORMATION FROM HOME

In the event that a significant change occurs in your home, please consider informing the school as soon as possible. All information will be regarded as confidential. Some common causes of distress include: one or both parents being away from home for any reason, a new person living in the home, illness of family member, hospitalization, accident or death in the family, new caregiver or any new employee, moving, death of a pet or change in schedule. The teachers will keep you informed of any significant changes in the school environment, which may affect your child as well.

TRANSPORTATION

Transportation is the responsibility of the parents. Those desiring carpools will be provided with a class list including parent names and addresses. The school is not responsible for carpools. It is mandatory that you notify the office in writing all persons authorized to pick up your child. The office must receive written notice regarding any changes. **CHILDREN WILL NOT BE RELEASED TO AN UNAUTHORIZED PERSON.**

PARKING

Enter the parking lot using the east entrance and exit to the west. As a courtesy to all parents, please leave the driving circle clear at all times. Due to the limited availability of parking spaces in front of the school, we ask that you use the parking lot for quick pick-ups and drop-offs only. If you intend to spend some time at the school please use the street parking on 31st Terrace directly adjacent to the playground. Make sure to park south of the *No Parking* Signs. To help alleviate congestion during the morning, we will observe the following drop-off times:

5-6 years old 7:50-8:00 A.M.
4-5 years old 8:00-8:10 A.M.
3-4 years old 8:10-8:20 A.M.

THE SAFETY OF THE CHILDREN IS ALWAYS OUR FIRST CONCERN.

CLASSROOM OBSERVATION AND CONFERENCES

Parents are always welcome to observe the classrooms. When observing, please respect the teachers who are supervising the children. Their full attention must remain on the children. Teachers also spend time immediately before and after class preparing lessons and activities. It is absolutely essential that they have this time free. Formal conferences are scheduled once per year. They are typically held on a Saturday so as not to interfere with school time activities. A sign up sheet will be posted near the communication board at the rear entrance. Please feel free to contact Bridget for additional conferences. She will be happy to meet with you or even hold a telephone conference. Her office hours are from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. daily. All conferences are strictly confidential. You may also post any general information you wish to share with the staff on the communication board.

SCHOOL CLOTHING

In addition to being neat, comfortable and appropriate for the weather, school clothing should be easy for the child to manage by him/herself, completely washable and every item should be labeled. Children should have a complete change of clothes at school in case of accidents. Please put these in a plastic zip lock bag and label with your child's name. Please have your child wear closed toe, velcro shoes. Flip-flops and open toe sandals can be hazardous on the playground.

CALENDARS

Current calendars are posted on our website at www.flowersmontessori.com and are updated on a monthly basis. Follow the link on the top of our home page to the Monthly Calendar page. There you will see the activity calendar and also the snack calendar to find out which date your child is responsible for providing and serving snack. There is also an Important Dates page to keep up with the school calendar for the year

TUITION

When you enroll your child in Flowers Montessori School you are entering a contract for the entire school year. If you withdraw your child before the end of the school year, you are still responsible for the balance of your tuition. Tuition may be paid in ten equal installments beginning August 1st and due the first of every month thereafter until May 1st. A late payment fee of twenty-five dollars will be assessed for any payment received after the 10th of any month. If payment is still not received by the 15th of the month, attendance will be suspended until payment is made. Tuition assessments will continue to accrue in accordance with your signed contract.

MONTESSORI PARENTS ARE SPECIAL PEOPLE!

We'd like to invite you to share your profession, talent or hobby with our classes. You can share a musical talent, storytelling, a special craft, a pet, a cultural holiday tradition or food, show and tell about your job and at least a thousand other wonderful things!!! We look forward to hearing from you!

DON'T THROW THAT AWAY! WE CAN USE IT!

Now that you're a Montessori parent, you shouldn't throw anything away.

An important part of the Montessori philosophy is to provide a beautiful, interesting and stimulating environment for your child. We can use almost anything for storing materials, decorating or for use in art projects. We appreciate your support and contributions to your child's education. Some items not to throw away:

Greeting cards	Lightweight cardboard	Picture frames
Wooden spoons	Old calendars	Cookie tins
Beads	Fabric	Hatboxes
Costume jewelry	Yarn	Pitchers & bowls
Scarves	Children's books	Bells
Paper	Flower vases	Musical instruments
Trays	Posters	Felt
Baskets	Ribbon and lace	Paint or dye
Photo albums	Stickers	Wooden crates
Gift wrap	Feathers	Indoor plants