



# BAY FARM

## Montessori Academy

— JOY • PURPOSE • COMPASSION —

### PARENT HANDBOOK

2022-2023

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# Parent Handbook | 2022-2023

The policies and procedures set forth in this handbook are not a right or part of the enrollment contract. The procedures herein do not confer any contractual rights on any student, but instead, serve as an aid to the school in its everyday decision making responsibilities.

## **Non-Discrimination Statement:**

Modeled by faculty and administrators, by peers and parents, our school is energized by a fundamental belief in the importance of respect. Bay Farm Montessori Academy does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, creed, color, ethnicity, national origin, citizenship status, disability, physical challenge, age, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, weight, or any other characteristic. Bay Farm is committed to creating an open, diverse community of learners, able to question, value, and appreciate the human experience.

## **Mission/Philosophy**

### **1.1 Mission Statement**

We work together to cultivate a vibrant Montessori learning community where children are inspired to grow with joy, purpose, and compassion.

Through the wonder of direct exploration, the satisfaction of engaged learning, and the integration of visual and performing arts, Bay Farm Montessori Academy students develop the skills and sense of responsibility to be confident learners, eager to understand themselves and their world.

### **1.2 Philosophy Statement**

The work of Bay Farm Montessori Academy is grounded in the firm belief that:

- The Montessori educational model provides a proven and effective foundation for learning.
- All children have an innate capacity to wonder about, delight in, and ultimately develop a constructive understanding of the world around them.
- Every child has the unique potential to learn, communicate, engage, and interact.
- A child-centered approach, based on an understanding of the child's developmental readiness, must be the starting point for all educational experiences.
- Childhood education must develop the whole child across a broad range of academic, physical, creative, social, and emotional dimensions.
- Children learn best when they engage actively in the learning process. A carefully prepared, mixed-age classroom setting allows children to be both learners and leaders, absorbing lessons from teachers and classmates and serving in turn as role models and mentors to their peers.
- Children learn easily in a warm and caring environment where they feel welcome and safe. By spending three consecutive years in each classroom, children develop strong, respectful, long-term relationships with their teachers and fellow students.
- The integration of diverse disciplines with opportunities for creative and artistic expression enriches the learning experience.
- Through training, discussions, activities, and examinations of organizational practices that may unintentionally perpetuate implicit bias and racial inequities, our commitment to anti-racism extends from our work with our youngest child all the way to our Board of Trustees.

These beliefs drive the atmosphere, curriculum, selection of learning materials, and educational experiences offered to students at Bay Farm. Our students gain satisfaction from self-directed, meaningful work, and they reach high levels of personal achievement in an atmosphere of respect and responsibility for themselves and for others.

### **1.3 Montessori at Bay Farm**

Bay Farm Montessori Academy is fully accredited by the Association of Independent Schools of New England (AISNE) and received full accreditations from the American Montessori Society (AMS). Our programs are imbued with the following characteristics of a Montessori school:

1. Mixed-age classrooms, where children learn from one another and learn to respect those more and less experienced than themselves
  - o Toddlers (1-3 years)
  - o Children's House (3 years-Kindergarten)
  - o Elementary I (Grades 1-3)
  - o Elementary II (Grades 4-6)
  - o Middle School (Grades 7-8)
2. Carefully prepared environments, rich in Montessori and other materials
3. Encouragement of independence and fostering healthy social development
4. Hands-on learning
5. Respect for the child
6. Teachers who share a common philosophy and have training in the method and the materials
7. A devotion to a curriculum that fosters peace and respect for diversity
8. The culture and curriculum at Bay Farm spring from a strong Montessori foundation. Classroom teachers are trained in Montessori methods and materials, and assistant teachers and specialists attend workshops to become cognizant of and competent in the philosophy and practices. Staying abreast of educational developments and research, Bay Farm's programs incorporate concepts such as a peace curriculum, Multiple Intelligences, and current research on brain development, all of which are logical extensions of the Montessori curriculum.

## **Statement of Equity and Anti-Racism**

### **2.1 Statement of Equity and Anti-Racism**

We support Dr. Maria Montessori's belief that schools are essential to constructive social reform. We agree that all children are born with natural tendencies toward peace and justice and that children have an innate capacity to change the world. Our responsibility as a school is to fortify this capacity with love, guidance, and by setting a good example. As a school, we commit to examining our blind-spots, whether in our curriculum, our conversations, or our actions. We will amplify the under-represented voices in the stories we tell, and the lessons we learn. As a Montessori school, we commit to our responsibility to model conscious decision making that results in daily, consistent, equitable choices to be anti-racist.

## **Transportation & Schedules**

The majority of our students are transported to and from school by their families and/or by arrangements made by their families using private vehicles.

When families register with the school each year, they fill out a transportation form as part of their Back to School Paperwork, which is kept in the student's file. The form includes information about the family's plan for how their child will be transported to and from school.

### **3.1 Driveway Safety (New procedures September 2020):**

Please note that the center parking lot of campus is closed to allow for more space and options for our outdoor programs. Limited parking is available on the lot adjacent to the pool. Please use the proper safety precautions when transporting your child to and from Bay Farm Montessori Academy.. Drop-off and pick-up times may be longer, especially at the start of the school year.

Student safety is of primary importance and begins with arrivals and dismissals. Please remember that all driving surfaces on campus are shared by cars, bikes, and pedestrians. All drivers on campus should exercise extreme caution and patience.

- Drive slowly on campus at all times and be aware of other cars and pedestrians. The campus speed limit is 10 miles per hour.
- According to Massachusetts state law, all persons riding in or driving a vehicle must be seat-belted at all times. This is true in the driveway as well. Students should remain seated in their car seats while waiting to be dropped off.
- If you have a passenger-side airbag, it is against the law to put a child under twelve in the front seat with or without a car seat.
- Do not park and leave your vehicle unattended or running and unattended in the driveway. If you wish to come into the school buildings, please park in the lot or on the opposite side of Loring Street and enter through the office.
- Do not use cell phones while in the school driveway.
- Please follow all campus signs and be aware that traffic flow might change according to the safety needs of the school.

### **3.2 Drop Off & Pick Up**

Middle School 8:00 – 8:15\*:

Middle School students will be dropped off at the Middle School entrance and will walk themselves straight into the building. If you arrive after 8:15 am, please come to the office and sign your child into school. The office will notify the classroom to unlock the doors and you will need to drive back around to drop your child off at the classroom.

Students will be picked up in the same manner. Parents are asked to remain in their cars until their child has exited the building.

Elementary II 8:15 - 8:30\*:

Elementary II students will be dropped off and picked up directly in front of the Elementary II classrooms at the lower level of the Elementary building. If you arrive after 8:30 am, please come to the office and sign your child into school. The office will notify the classroom to unlock the doors and you will need to drive back around to drop your child off at the classroom.

Students will be picked up in the same manner. Parents are asked to remain in their cars until their child has exited the building.

Elementary I 8:15 - 8:30\*:

Elementary I students will be met by their teachers during the arrival window of 8:15-8:30 am. Parents of students in Elementary I should stay left when they enter the campus. Students are dropped off at the main ELI entrance. If you arrive after 8:30 am, please come to the office and sign your child into school. The office will notify the classroom to unlock the doors and meet the child at the door.

Students will be picked up in the same manner. Parents are asked to remain in their cars until their child has exited the building.

\* There will be a delayed start for Elementary I, Elementary II, and Middle School students every Wednesday. The Drop-Off window will change to 8:45-9:00am on Wednesday mornings.

Children's House 8:30 – 8:45:

There will be three main drop-off points for Children's House. Please drive up to the appropriate spot according to your child's class.

*Heron / Sandpiper*

Students in Heron and Sandpiper will be dropped off by the rear entrance to the playground (there will be signs) next to Artland.

*Egret/ Kingfisher/Osprey*

Egret, Kingfisher, and Osprey students will enter through the various sets of orange doors of Children's House directly after the Great Room entrance.

If you arrive after 8:45 am, please come to the office and sign your child into school. The office will notify the classroom and someone from the office will escort your child to class. It is important to your child and Bay Farm's overall educational program that students arrive on time every morning. Students and teachers are immersed in activity by 8:45, and when a child arrives after the day's flow has been established, it makes it difficult for that child to acclimate. Being late negatively impacts your child, the teachers, and the other students in the class. Please be on time for school. Five tardies in one term will result in a written warning from the Head of School.

During arrivals, we ask that you stay in your car and one of your child's teachers will approach your vehicle and remove your child from the car. Please install any car seats on the driver's side of your vehicle to facilitate this process.

Separation can be difficult for any parent and child, and prolonged good-byes can heighten anxiety. Take time to explain the process to your child in advance. If your child is having a difficult time, you are welcome to spend a few minutes in the office until you receive word that your child has settled in the classroom.

Students will be picked up in the same manner. A teacher will be on the lookout for parents as they arrive and will escort your child out to your car. Parents are asked to remain in their cars until their child has exited the building. Parents are required to buckle in their child.

Toddler House 8:30 – 8:45:

There are two Toddler House drop-off points. Children in Tern and Piping Plover will be dropped off at the top of the Toddler House driveway and escorted to their classrooms. Students in Snowy Owl will drop off at the lower level of the Toddler House and will be escorted to the classroom.

Please drive up to the appropriate door. We ask that you stay in your car and your child's teacher will approach your vehicle and remove your child from the car. If you arrive after 8:45 am, please come to the office and sign your child into school. The office will notify the classroom and someone from the office will escort your child to class. It is important to your child and Bay Farm's overall educational program that students arrive on time every morning. Students and teachers are immersed in activity by 8:45, and when a child arrives after the day's flow has been established, it makes it difficult for that child to acclimate. Being late negatively impacts your child, the teachers, and the other students in the class. Please be on time for school. Five tardies in one term will result in a written warning from the Head of School.

Separation can be difficult for any parent and child, and prolonged good-byes can heighten anxiety. Take time to explain the process to your child in advance. If your child is having a difficult time, you are welcome to spend a few minutes in the office until you receive word that your child has settled in the classroom.

Students will be picked up in the same manner. During the dropoff window, a teacher will be on the lookout for parents as they arrive and will escort your toddler out to your car. Parents are asked to remain in their cars until their child has exited the building. Parents are required to buckle in their child.

Midday Dismissal Time Windows: 11:50 – 12:05. Afternoon Dismissal 2:55 – 3:10:

If you are late dropping off or need to take your child out of school off schedule for any reason, please park and come to the office, where you can sign your child in or out. The office will notify your child's teachers. Then, please drive around to the appropriate classroom door to deliver or pick up your child.

Please do not drop off your child unless a staff member is present.

### **3.3 Arrival and Dismissal Times**

#### a. Morning Arrival Time Windows

Middle School: 8:00 – 8:15 (8:45-9:00 on Wednesdays)

Elementary I and Elementary II: 8:15 - 8:30 (8:45-9:00 on Wednesdays)

Children's House and Toddler House: 8:30 – 8:45

#### b. Midday Dismissal Time Windows

Toddler House: 11:50 – 12:05

Children's House: 12:00 – 12:15

#### c. Afternoon Dismissal Time Windows

Toddler House: 2:55 – 3:10

Children's House: 2:55 – 3:10

Elementary I, Elementary II, and Middle School: 3:10 – 3:25

**Please make every effort to arrive at campus for arrival or dismissal within the time window for your child's program as listed above. Queuing in the driveway early, especially for Children's House arrival and for Elementary and Middle School dismissal, can block traffic for others and cause elevated driveway stress. If you arrive early, please park in a space off the driveways and wait for your time window to queue.**

**In addition, classroom teachers aren't able to answer their phones or check voicemails during dismissals. If you have any changes to your child's dismissal, please notify the office at extension 10 prior to 2:45.**

A Montessori classroom functions purposefully to allow and encourage repetition, order, sequence, and independence. Consistency helps all children to feel more secure and in control.

It is important to arrive at school on time because it is disruptive and difficult for children to walk into the classroom environment once work is already underway. We want to include all students in the information and lessons delivered at group time at the beginning of each morning or afternoon class. For security reasons, all doors except the office door will be locked except during pick-up and drop-off window times.

If you are late, you will need to park and bring your child to the office and sign in. The Front Desk will call your child's teacher. After that, Elementary and Middle School students should be driven around to the classroom door.. For the Toddler and Children's House, the Front Desk will escort your child to his/her classroom. Children may not sign themselves in.

### **3.4 Extended Hours**

If you would like to extend your child(ren)'s experience at Bay Farm on a regularly-scheduled basis, we offer an Extended Hours Program. This program offers Before Care in the morning starting at 7:30 am and After Care from 3:00 or 3:15 until 4:00 pm for Toddler House and Children's House and until 5:00 for Elementary I-Middle School. Before Care is a \$15 flat fee per day. After Care is \$15/hour. This hourly fee is prorated for After Care. If you are interested in signing up for After Care as part of your child's regular schedule, you will need to complete the Extended Care form as part of your Enrollment Paperwork. You can contact the front office before the start of the school year with any Extended Care questions. **Due to ratio limitations, same day After Care is generally not available for Toddler and Children's House students. Please call the office at least a week ahead of time if you think you may need after-school care to see if any space is available.**

Please note that although After Care is not an extension of the academic day, school day rules and safety measures are followed at all levels. After Care at the Toddler and Children's House levels is calm and play-based, and often held on the playground, weather permitting. Upper Campus students attending After Care also can expect to go outside to play, weather permitting. When indoors, students will have the opportunity to participate in peaceful activities such as playing board games, drawing, and completing puzzles.

### **3.5 Field Trips:**

Kindergarten and Elementary students take a variety of field trips throughout the year. Buses are often used for distant locations. We sometimes ask for volunteer parent drivers and chaperones. If you are willing to participate in field trips, please call your Room Parent to sign up. You will be asked for proof of insurance and may be asked for a CORI check. By signing the waiver on the Authorization and Consent Form, you have given the school permission to take your child on class field trips. You will be notified in writing about each individual trip. This notification will explain the date, time, mode of transportation, special clothing requirements, and eating plan. If you have any questions, please contact your teacher. If you choose not to have your child accompany the class, you will have to keep him/her home that day.

## **School Attendance**

### **4.1 School Attendance**

As the Montessori philosophy is dedicated to order, sequence, repetition, and consistency, it is important for all children to attend school daily unless they are ill. Children thrive on consistency.

Coming to school every day on time is essential to the development of every student. Our teachers prepare a rich educational environment with daily rituals, activities, and experiences that are crucial to learning. Children who arrive to school late or miss more than a few days each year negatively impact the work of the school and the progress of the students. We track the attendance and arrival time for all students, and this information will be noted on all progress reports. Parents will be notified by the Head of School once a student has accumulated 5 absences. A meeting with the Head of School and the Director of Education and the Head of School will be required after a child has reached 10 absences.

If you suspect your child is ill, please do NOT send them to school. If your child will miss school, please notify the Office that s/he will not be in attendance, and if possible, provide the reason for the absence. We will be tracking the absences and their causes and will be in direct contact with community health organizations to ensure the health and safety of our community.

If your child has any of the following symptoms please do NOT bring them to school. It is vital to our success that every member of the Bay Farm community works to mitigate the spread of illness.

The following symptoms are listed as potential COVID-19 indicators:

- Fever (100.4° Fahrenheit or higher), chills, or shaking chills
- Cough (*not due to other known cause, such as chronic cough*)
- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Headache (*when combined with other symptoms*)
- Muscle aches or body aches
- Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea
- Fatigue (*when combined with other symptoms*)
- Nasal congestion or runny nose (not due to other known causes, such as allergies) *when in combination with other symptoms*

If you have questions about these symptoms, please feel free to reach out to the School Nurse, Alyssa Lusardi at [alysal@bfarm.org](mailto:alysal@bfarm.org).

The school nurse will make daily rounds to account for absences and late arrivals. These will be documented for each student and recorded in our health database. It is important that we commit as a community to avoid having potentially contagious people on campus.

Timelines and regular attendance are important at Bay Farm. Chronic absences, tardiness, and early dismissals are likely to have a negative impact on your child's school experience and on the work of other students and teachers in your child's classroom. However, we understand and appreciate that extra caution needs to be taken by everyone to ensure the health and safety of our community. If your family faces any challenges in delivering your child to the school in a timely manner, please reach out to us. We can help.

Bay Farm families should make every effort to schedule vacations and appointments during times that the school is closed. Requests for extended or repeated optional absences must be requested in writing to the classroom teachers, the Director of Education, and the Head of School. The school will make reasonable efforts to be flexible and supportive of such requests but reserves the right to deny requests for extended absences if the school determines the request to be inconsistent with the child's, the classroom's, the program's, or the school's best interests. Programmatically, the school can not accommodate your child's absence into activities or events.

#### **4.2 Toddler/Preschool Leave of Absence**

Occasionally, a toddler or preschool student may be struggling with a developmental challenge. In such cases, teachers, administrators, and parents meet to discuss strategies, expectations, and goals. Those parties may agree in writing that the student would benefit from a leave of absence of six weeks or less. During the specified period, tuition is not charged.

If parents believe that their child needs a leave of absence, but teachers and administrators disagree and are willing to support the needs of the child, full tuition is due per the Enrollment Contract.

Should the leave of absence extend beyond six weeks, full tuition is due per the Enrollment Contract unless the School has agreed that the child should be withdrawn.

## **Dress Code**

#### **5.1 Elementary and Middle School:**

It is our intention to create and foster a safe, orderly academic setting in which students can concentrate on their educational endeavors. Our goal is to support the most pleasant, positive, and successful experience for our students at Bay Farm. We trust our parents to work with their children to dress appropriately for school. Please empower your child to make good clothing choices for school.

Here are some guidelines:

1. We dress appropriately for the occasion, considering the weather, and our planned activities for the day.
2. We are aware that the way we dress impacts others, so we refrain from wearing clothes that others might find distracting, offensive, insulting, or degrading.
3. We wear safe shoes. This means that our shoes should protect our feet during activities like recess, field trips, and physical education.
4. Students are required to bring two cloth face coverings to school each day in a sealable bag. The masks and their container should be clearly labeled. We ask that these are washed before they are brought back to school. \*\* Masks will only be used this year as a precautionary measure if necessary.

Learning to dress appropriately is part of growing up. We endeavor to work with parents to help our students make wise clothing choices. Above all, we want to work together to maintain a safe, respectful, and constructive learning environment.

#### **5.2 Toddler and Children's House:**

In case of changing guidelines, Children's House students should bring two cloth face coverings to school each day in a sealable bag. The masks and their container should be clearly labeled. We ask that these are washed before they are brought back to school in the event they need to be worn.

Your child should be able to get in and out of his/her clothes with minimal assistance. Since the children use the playground daily, we suggest play clothes for school: pants, jeans, sweat suits, warm dresses, and tights. For changing or use of the toilet, please avoid jumpsuits and overalls because they are very difficult for a small child to get in or out of. For the same reason, *please do not dress children in*

“onesies”. Please send your child in sneakers or tennis shoes. Children should bring slippers for the classroom. Please keep jewelry and other accessories at home.

Please label all of your child’s belongings, including clothing, shoes, lunchboxes, backpacks, etc. Misplaced and unidentifiable items are placed in the lost and found.

1. Toddlers need to bring a backpack with a zipper-front pouch for written communication and clothing transfer daily. Any wet or soiled clothing will be bagged and placed in the backpack. Please replace extra clothes as needed. When in the process of potty training, at least five changes of underwear, pants, and socks may be needed daily.
2. We prefer to use disposable diapers and traditional cloth underwear instead of pull-ups. Please bring a small supply of diapers prior to school opening, each individually labeled with your child’s name. If you want wipes and ointment used, please label, supply, and send with a note giving the school permission to apply. You will receive a note from the teacher when it is time to replace items before the supply runs out.
3. Pacifiers and blankets may come to school for nap only. We discourage sharing these items, so please label with initials since many look alike. It is easier to keep a labeled pacifier at school if needed for nap rather than to transport it daily.
4. Toddlers staying for nap will need a crib sheet to cover their individual mats and a small blanket which can be kept at school and sent home for laundering at the end of the week.
5. Please label all belongings clearly with your child’s name. As we go out daily, all toddlers need a complete set of outerwear daily, including a snowsuit (tops and bottoms are easier than one full suit), hat, mittens, and boots. We are not staffed to remain inside with one child. It is, therefore, an all-or-nothing outdoor play day.

### **Safe Sleep Policy**

Supervision of children is as important when they are sleeping as when they are awake in our programs, especially when the child is an infant. All infants are placed on their backs when they take their naps, unless their physician orders otherwise. Such physicians’ orders must be given in writing to the school. A teacher is always present in the room during nap time, and that teacher checks on the children every fifteen minutes to ensure that all children are safe and that infants are on their backs.

### **5.3 Children’s House**

Most parents want their children to remain dressed in the clothing in which they are sent to school. We certainly allow and advise children to take off or add a sweater or sweatshirt based on weather changes. However, children are not forced to remove or add clothing. We do offer assistance, when needed, to help children change clothes when they are soiled, wet, or uncomfortable.

Because of concerns about excessive exposure to the sun, teachers do not assume that a long-sleeve shirt or hat can or should be removed in warm weather without consulting the parent. Please discuss your preferences on this with your child and with his/her teacher as needed. Our students are encouraged to change their own clothes and work on dressing skills and independence at school; we ask that parents encourage the same independence at home.

### **5.4 Extra Clothes: Toddler & Children’s House (Elementary & MS optional):**

All children need to keep a complete set of extra clothes at school in case of a bathroom accident, spill, or abrupt change of weather. A complete set includes underwear, socks, pants, shirt, sweater/sweatshirt, and a change of shoes/slippers (to wear indoors).

### **5.5 Winter Attire**

Please purchase boots and snowsuits that your child can put on and take off easily. Hiking boots and high-tops usually require adult assistance. Please avoid attire that your child has difficulty managing by him/herself. All children need to wear boots to and from school on a daily basis from about November through March. We go outdoors every day, even in snowy weather. In addition, all children need to wear snowsuits/snow jackets and pants, hats, and mittens to school during winter months.

### **5.6 Agriculture and PE Attire**

Dressing appropriately for different activities is an important practical life skill. Please help your child make good shoe and clothing choices for PE days. Students should wear comfortable clothes in layers according to the weather. Footwear should be appropriate for sporting activities. Students will also need to wear appropriate clothing and footwear for Agriculture, including boots and outerwear that can get dirty.

## **What to Bring (and What Not to Bring)**

### **6.1 What to Bring:**

Water Bottles:

Children should bring a full, reusable water bottle to school each day for use at lunch. Children will be using their water bottles throughout the day and will serve themselves water whenever they are thirsty.

Snacks: Please refer to your level "What to Expect" document for updated snack policies.

A snack should be a healthy treat, such as dry cereal, raisins, crackers & cheese, yogurt, pudding, popcorn, trail mix, pineapple, grapes, plums, or other fruits, sliced veggies & dip, rolled cold cuts, cheese. Candy and soda should not be sent to school as part of a lunch or as a snack.

PEANUT ALERT: More and more children are being identified as being allergic to peanut products. This is one reason why *children are not allowed to share or trade food items with each other.*

Lunch: Students should bring an individual, healthy lunch for their own consumption. Food cannot be shared under any circumstances and should be eaten with utensils sent from home.

All children remaining past 12:00 pm should bring a lunch box and a drink. Lunches should be healthy foods that do not require refrigeration or heating.

The students eat with each other in the classroom or outside. Please include all utensils they need.

PEANUT ALERT: More and more children are being identified as being allergic to peanut products. This is one reason why *children are not allowed to share or trade food items with each other.*

Do not send in glass bottles. Refillable water bottles are the best. For independence, please put food in a container that can be easily opened.

We encourage but do not force eating. Please send foods that your child likes and can eat in a reasonable amount of time.

### **6.2 What NOT to Bring:**

Cell Phones and Electronics: While students may bring electronics such as cell phones, iPods, etc. to school, they will need to be turned off and kept in backpacks throughout the school day, which includes Extended Care. Middle Schoolers should bring their school-issued Chromebooks to class every day, as they will be used regularly. All other devices at all levels will be turned off and kept in backpacks during school hours. Bay Farm will provide access to technology, as needed, at all other levels. **All communication between students and parents throughout the school day should be conducted on a school phone.**

Toys and other Equipment: Please check with your child's teacher before allowing your child to bring in any sports equipment. For the safety and well-being of all, we reserve the right to limit or prohibit the use of equipment brought in from home. All play/sports equipment entering school must be clearly labeled with the student's name. The staff cannot be responsible for loss or damage. Toys: Please leave toys at home. Our classrooms are filled with age-appropriate materials and equipment.

Home Sharing (Children's House, Kindergarten, and Elementary I): Your child(ren)'s classroom will provide information regarding the specific Show & Tell schedule and expectations. All Show & Tell items should promote education and peace. Please do not send your child with toys. If you have questions regarding an item for Show & Tell, please check with your child(ren)'s teacher before sending it to school.

## Homework

### **7.1 Homework:**

The teachers at Bay Farm Montessori Academy want to work with you to make homework a valuable learning experience. We want our students to develop the habits, skills, and attitudes to complete and submit assignments that represent their best personal effort. Homework is meant to reinforce the concepts being learned in class, not to teach new material. The goal is to empower our students to take full responsibility for managing their time and their work. If your child experiences difficulty, write a note—or better yet, have him/her write the note—and send it back to school to alert the teachers that more explanation may be necessary. Some of our younger students may need support managing their long-term projects. This is completely understandable though the work should ultimately be completed by the student.

In addition to classroom homework, it is expected that each student reads (or is read to) every day. The general rule of thumb is that in addition to reading and instrument practice, students should expect to spend ten minutes per grade per night on homework. For example, 3rd years should be spending approximately 30 minutes per night on homework, while 7th graders should be spending approximately 70 minutes per night on homework.

Children's House and Kindergarten:

Homework is not assigned, though we do encourage you to take time to read to your child on a regular basis. Kindergartners participate in the Science Fair.

### **Elementary I:**

All students should have a homework folder that travels between home and the classroom in order to keep track of their assignments. Homework will be sent home on Monday and returned on Friday. In addition to reading (or being read to) for at least 15 minutes a night, students can expect spelling, math,

grammar, and occasional long-term projects. Other positive outcomes of homework at this level are building time management and healthy work habits.

### **Elementary II:**

Homework is distributed in homework folders on Monday and is due on Friday. It is our intention that homework is meaningful to each child and is not meant to teach new material. All attempts should be made by students to complete each assignment to the best of their potential. Parents do not have to check to make sure each assignment is 100% correct, but please review it to make sure it is neat, directions are followed, and that the work is of the caliber of which the student would be proud. If a child does not understand something, please attach a note to the work explaining the confusion and teachers will go over the issue with him/her in class. It is best to have the child bring in the confusing component of the work immediately rather than waiting until the due date. Each week, all children will be responsible for daily reading, grammar, spelling, math, and occasional writing, cultural, and science assignments; longer-term projects will be ongoing. Spelling tests will be once a week. Students will also be tested on cultural and science material periodically.

### **Middle School:**

By Middle School, students should begin to take age-appropriate responsibility for their own homework. They will have homework assigned to them every night. Most assignments will be due the next day, though long-term projects will also be assigned throughout the year. Students are encouraged to keep track of their nightly, weekly, and long-term homework assignments in a method that works best for them. Parents are no longer required to check in with their child nightly, but will be contacted should a pattern of incomplete homework develop.

If an issue arises, students are encouraged to ask a teacher for help first thing in the morning, so that the question can be resolved before a new lesson is taught.

## **Birthdays**

### **9.1 Birthdays:**

We believe that your child's birthday is a very important day. These special days help children understand where they are in time and remember the important events that have taken place during their lives. Please send party invitations and birthday presents directly to friends at their homes, not through the classrooms. Email and home addresses can be located on the parent portal.

Toddler:

Parents are welcome to come in at 10:30 am. Please plan on staying for the rest of the child's day to minimize disruption. You are also welcome to drop off a special healthy birthday snack at arrival time.

Children's House:

Birthday Walk: Your child's classroom has a special custom for celebrating birthdays; please talk to your child's teacher about any special treats that you plan to bring when you visit. Please note, balloons, hats, and/or gift favors are not appropriate for in-school birthday parties. Also, please provide any serving utensils, plates, spoons, napkins, etc., that are necessary for the treat. We do not keep enough in the classroom for everyone.

The best way to schedule a birthday celebration for your child is to talk to or email your child's teacher, as each day's schedule varies.

Elementary I:

Celebrations should be arranged with the classroom teachers and are generally scheduled at the end of the day. You may bring a treat in the morning to store in one of the classroom refrigerators. Cupcakes and individual servings of ice cream are easier for the children to manage than a large cake or dish that requires time to serve. Please send in all paper products and plastic ware that will be needed to serve the treat.

Elementary II & Middle School:

Celebrations should be arranged with the classroom teachers. Each child may bring in a treat to share with classmates on the day of his/her birthday. The birthday child will share the treat at some point during the day depending on the day's schedule. Summer birthdays will be celebrated on an agreed-upon date. Please send in all paper products and plastic ware that will be needed to serve the treat.

Middle School:

Celebrations are emphasized less than they are at the lower levels. Students are welcome to arrange to bring in a treat with their classroom teachers. Please send in all paper products and plastic ware that will be needed to serve the treat.

## Enrichment Programs

**10.1** Bay Farm's Enrichment Programs are thoughtfully designed to offer our students a wide range of structured extracurricular activities. These programs and activities are designed for students from Children's House to Middle School and include opportunities to learn new skills, explore talents and passions, and enhance physical and social well-being. Various programs are offered each season, and we are always interested in developing new activities based on the desires of our students and the talents of our community. Limited spaces are available for some programs. Enrichment information will be available online later this month.

## School-Family Communication

**11.1** Our goal is to maintain constant open communication with our families. As such, for school-family communication, we have put in place the following procedures and resources.

Bay Farm Connections

Every Friday night an email will be sent with information pertaining to the upcoming week. This will include information and reminders for each level, all school announcements, and dates to remember. Be sure to check your inbox for assignment due dates, snack reminders, event updates, and more. This email will come communication@bfarm.org. Be sure to add this email address to your address book so that these emails do not end up in spam.

Mobile App/Text Alerts

The official Bay Farm Mobile App is available in the Apple App Store and on Google Play. The app features a Live Feed which will be updated multiple times per week with what is going on in the classroom and on campus. The mobile app will be your source for access to our school calendar, enrichment updates and schedules, staff contact lists, and important news updates. We also will be enrolling your family in our Text Alert system. In the case of snow days or emergencies, we will contact your provided cell phone numbers with these announcements.

## Teacher Communication

If you would like to communicate directly with your child's teacher, the best way to reach them is via email. Since they are actively teaching throughout the day, please allow 24 hours for a response. For urgent matters during the school day, it is best to call the front office at 781-934-7101 ext. 10 and speak with the front desk who will be able to reach the classroom.

## Bay Farm Beat

Two times each year, we publish the Bay Farm Beat, a school magazine that covers all things Bay Farm. This magazine covers curriculum, academics, specialist programs, enrichment, parent education, alumni news, and more. We will be emailing a link to this magazine and hard copy issues can be found in the main office. If you would like to highlight anything in our Bay Farm Beat, we ask that you submit your stories to [communication@bfarm.org](mailto:communication@bfarm.org).

## Head of School

Bay Farm's Head of School, Conrad Wildsmith, has an open-door policy. If you would like to speak directly to Conrad, he is available at 781-934-7101 ext 12. If you would like to schedule a private meeting, you may do so by emailing him at [conradw@bfarm.org](mailto:conradw@bfarm.org).

If you have any questions or concerns related to communication, please contact Alyssa at [alyssag@bfarm.org](mailto:alyssag@bfarm.org).

## 11.2 Email & Voicemail

Teachers check their voicemail and email at the beginning and the end of the school day. Please do not rely on voicemail or email to communicate transportation changes for your child. Rather, call the front desk and be sure to speak with a person. Please note that it may take 24 hours for a teacher to respond to your email or voicemail message.

## 11.3 Parent Mailbox

For your convenience, a black parent mailbox is located next to the main office door. Please use this mailbox to drop off forms, payments, or other correspondence with the school.

## 11.4 Weather, Snow Days & Emergency Closures

In the event of an emergency or severe weather preventing Bay Farm from opening or requiring an early dismissal, Bay Farm will communicate school closing news via the following methods:

1. An email blast will go out to all family email addresses.
2. A text message will be sent to all mobile phone numbers.
3. We will post the closure on Facebook and on Bay Farm's website.
4. We will contact the local news affiliates, including NBC (WHDH, CH 7), ABC (WCVB, CH 5), CBS (WBZ-TV, CH 4), and FOX (CH 25), who will post the closings on their website and/or list on their TV news stations.

If the weather is bad and the school is open, families are encouraged to use their own best judgment and to travel only at their own discretion.

## Health Care Policy

*Please note that, like most independent schools, Bay Farm Montessori Academy does not conduct or require the health examinations that the state of Massachusetts requires for all public school students.*

*However, Bay Farm does require certain medical examinations as a condition of admission and enrollment, as required by the Massachusetts Department of Early Education and Care (DEEC) – see section 12.10. We recommend that you consult with your health care provider, your local school committee, or your local board of health for information about these examinations and that you ensure these exams are carried out for your children.*

## **12.1 Emergency Phone Numbers**

- Health Care Consultant—Dr. Janine Stanwood, 20 Tremont Pl # 27, Duxbury, MA 02332
- Fire Department—(781) 934-5693 (business) or 911 (fire/ambulance)
- Police—(781) 934-5656 or 911 (emergency)
- Emergency Health Care—Beth Israel Deaconess Plymouth Hospital – (508) 746-2000

Designated Adults:

- Conrad Wildsmith, Head of School - 314-681-6350 or 781-934-7101 ext. 12
- Kelley Collins, Director of Education - 781-934-7101 ext 20
- Britta Moran, Director of Enrollment - 781-934-7101 ext. 38
- Craig Sander, Director of Finance and Operations - 781-934-7101 ext. 22
- Hauke Kite-Powell, Board of Trustees President
- Alyssa Lusardi, School Nurse - 781-934-7101 ext. 37

## **12.2 Procedure for Emergency & Illness**

The School Nurse will be monitoring and evaluating all students for possible symptoms of COVID-19, injuries, ailments, and other illnesses. Parents/emergency contact person will be called to pick up the child from school if that is necessary due to illness or other incidents. An ambulance will be called in an emergency. Parents will be notified as illness or emergency dictates for consultation, pick up, or to alert that the child has been transported to the hospital due to emergency. If parents cannot be reached, we will alert the emergency contact person(s).

# **Emergency & Illness**

## **Illness:**

If a child is determined to be ill, the child will be sent to the School Nurse and monitored until an emergency contact is reached so that the child can be picked up by an authorized adult.

In the case of a visible injury or occurrence, the School Nurse will provide appropriate medical care. In cases of serious injury, and depending on severity, an authorized emergency contact is contacted and the child is released into the authorized person's care. In the most serious cases, emergency response systems are activated. In the event the school needs to call 911 and an ambulance, by law, we are required to transport an injured/sick child to the nearest hospital, which in our case is Beth Israel Deaconess Plymouth. We cannot honor any wishes to utilize another hospital in an emergency.

In all cases, accident reports are completed and sent electronically to parents by the School Nurse. In compliance with DEEC regulations, accident reports are logged, and the accident log is analyzed for patterns and trends.

## **Medical Emergencies and First Aid:**

All staff at Bay Farm are certified in CPR, AED, and First Aid. In the case of a physically-injured child or a medical emergency, all staff have been instructed to follow procedures as instructed in training. Depending on the severity of the injury or medical emergency, this may involve applying bandages, ice packs, or activating emergency response systems.

### **Accident and Incident Notifications:**

While your child is in the school's care we will notify you of any of the following circumstances:

- An injury to your child that requires first aid treatment beyond a minor scrape or bump.
- If your child hurts another child.
- Allegations of abuse or neglect regarding your child.
- The administration of first aid to your child.
- Whenever a communicable disease is identified in your child's classroom.
- Whenever special problems or significant developments arise.

Incidents and injuries will be reported immediately by phone, in person at pick up, or via email depending on the severity.

### **12.3 Emergency procedures for field trips:**

Local field trips: Part of the online enrollment forms includes an Authorization & Consent Form which must be on file before a child leaves school grounds for Field Experiences. Accompanying teachers will carry any medication that may be needed by students on the field trip as well as a first-aid kit. In the event of an accident, the staff member in charge will contact the School Nurse, who then alerts the parent, emergency contact, physician, etc. One of the administrators will meet the children/parents at the designated hospital or location to facilitate emergency procedures with the child's health files.

### **12.4 First-Aid Kits**

First-aid kits are located in the School Nurse's office and in each classroom near the kitchen/sink area. They are clearly labeled, filled on an annual basis in August, and refilled as needed. First-aid equipment is used at the school as needed. Though the School Nurse will be primarily responsible for treating minor injuries, each staff member is trained in First Aid and CPR and has been trained to address them as well. Away from the school, we maintain a first-aid kit and medication as needed by specific children.

### **12.5 Evacuation Plan**

We have established a calling plan for all the parents and emergency numbers for quick communication in the event of an evacuation. Parents will be contacted in the event of an emergency. The school has registered all parent cell phone numbers for our Text Message Alert System. You will receive a text message in the event of an emergency.

### **12.6 Injury Prevention Plan**

All staff members are trained and instructed to remove any hazards from the indoor or outdoor environments and/or to task maintenance for outstanding issues.

A central injury log is maintained by the School Nurse. The data will come from the accident reports submitted by teachers and maintained by the School Nurse.

- The method of informing parents of injuries requiring the administration of First Aid is accomplished through the accident form, which is kept with the School Nurse with the central injury log.

## **12.7 General Sickness Policy**

Children who come to school must be well enough to participate in all aspects of the school day. Bay Farm reserves the right to make decisions concerning your child's health, based on observation and knowing the child's normal behavior. If the School Nurse believes that your child is too ill to be at school, we respectfully request that you trust her judgment and pick him/her up as soon as possible. This cooperation will facilitate the health of all of the children and staff. **If a child is absent from school, he/she may not attend after school activities.**

## **12.8 Plan for Managing Infectious Diseases Other Than COVID-19**

The wellness of the school community depends on staff observations and reactions to children's health issues. Any child suspected of having conjunctivitis, lice, chickenpox, or a suspicious rash will be sent home. Children with a fever, green mucus from the nose or mouth, and/or a hacking cough will also be sent home. There is no tuition reimbursement for days missed due to illness or injury.

Children who have been ill should not return to school unless symptom-free and ready for full participation in our active program. They must be free of fever for 24 hours before they return to school. A note from a physician may be required in the case of injury or communicable disease. The school reserves the right to refuse re-admittance to any child who does not appear well enough to return.

Please keep your child home if he/she has any of the following:

1. An elevated temperature
2. A suspicious rash
3. Sore eyes or earache with discharge
4. Upset stomach, vomiting, diarrhea, or fever within the past 24 hours
5. Contagious disease (strep throat, conjunctivitis, bronchitis, etc.)

In the event of an outbreak of communicable disease, parents will be notified by the School Nurse via email or via phone depending on the severity of the outbreak and our health care consultant's advice.

## **12.9 Medication Administration**

Bay Farm Montessori Academy has a School Nurse who is responsible for Medication Management and Administration. In addition, all of our teachers have undergone training in the administration of medication.

Prescription Medication:

- Prescription medication must be brought to the school in its original container and must be labeled with the child's name, the name of the medication, the dosage, the number of times per day, and the number of days the medication is to be administered. This prescription label will be accepted as the written authorization of the physician.
- The School Nurse will not administer any medication contrary to the directions on the label unless so authorized by written order of the child's physician.
- The parent must fill out the Authorization for Medication Form before the medication can be administered.

Non-Prescription Medication:

- The school needs written parental authorization to administer oral non-prescription medication (e.g. acetaminophen, ibuprofen) by the School Nurse. The parent must fill out the Authorization for Medication Form on an annual basis, and a second form when a short-term medication must be administered.
- The School Nurse will make every attempt to contact the parent prior to administering non-prescription medication unless the child needs the medication urgently, or when contacting the parent first may unreasonably delay the appropriate care.

#### Topical Ointments and Sprays:

- Topical ointments and sprays such as petroleum jelly, sunscreen, diaper rash ointment, and insect repellent will be administered to the child with written parental permission and instruction. The signed statement from the parent will be valid for one year and must include a complete list of any topical non-prescription medications to be administered.

#### All Medications:

- Due to concern over possible allergic reactions, the first dose of any new medication must be administered by the parent at home. The School Nurse will not administer the first dose of any medication.
- All medication must be given to the School Nurse directly by the parent.
- All medication will be stored with the School Nurse and will be kept out of the reach of children. All medications that are considered controlled substances must be locked and kept out of reach of children.
- The School Nurse will be responsible for the administration of medication. In her absence, the level coordinator will be responsible.
- The school maintains written records of the administration of any medication (excluding topical ointments and sprays applied to unbroken skin). These records will include the child's name, the time and date of each administration, the dose, and the name of the person administering the medication. This completed record becomes part of the child's student file.
- All unused medication is returned to the parent if possible, or disposed of in accordance with Department of Health Guidelines.
- Student's individual health care plans must be followed as outlined in the plan. All plans must be complete before any treatment may be administered by the School Nurse or any school employee.
- Students with individual health care plans will have separate bags as needed for their medication. Each bag will contain the medication, an individual health care plan, and medication administration list. The classroom teacher is responsible for making sure this bag travels with the student to all activities while at Bay Farm including, but not limited to: specials, recess, extended care, and enrichment.
- The School Nurse will work with the classroom teachers to ensure accurate record-keeping in regards to Individual Health Care plans, other medications, and allergies as needed.

#### Plan for Meeting Specific Health Care Needs

- All known allergies are posted in the kitchen area of each classroom, as well as on each child's record in the office. The source of this information is the Health Record and the Authorization and Consent Form, which initially lists all allergies known at the time of admission. Over the

course of the year, we take note of any new allergies identified and contact parents with observations.

- As allergies are posted, all staff are informed of which children have what diet limitations.

### **12.10 Health Forms**

Please upload a current photo of your child, which will be added to their file in our Student Information System. Required Medical Examinations as per the Department of Early Education and Care (DEEC):

1. The School may only admit a child if provided with a written statement from a physician that indicates that the child has had a complete physical examination within one year prior to admission, or the school obtains such a statement within one month of admission, or the school obtains a written verification from the child's parent(s) stating that they object to such an examination on the grounds that it conflicts with their religious beliefs.
2. The physical examination required upon enrollment is valid for one year from the date the child was examined and must be repeated annually. Along with evidence of the child's annual physical examination, the school must receive updated immunization and lead screening documentation.
3. Pursuant to Department of Public Health regulations, all children, regardless of risk, shall be screened for lead poisoning at least once between the ages of nine and 12 months, and annually thereafter until the age of 48 months. The school must obtain within one month of admission of the child, a statement signed by a physician or an employee of a health care agency stating that the child has been screened for lead poisoning, or a written verification from the child's parent(s) that they object to such an examination on the grounds that it conflicts with their religious beliefs.
4. For all children admitted to care prior to 12 months of age, the school must obtain, before the child turns 13 months old, a statement signed by a physician or an employee of a health care agency stating that the child has been screened for lead poisoning, or a written verification from the child's parent(s) that they object to such an examination on the grounds that it conflicts with their religious beliefs.
5. The school requires, at admission, a physician's certificate that each child has been successfully immunized in accordance with the current Department of Public Health's recommended schedules against diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (whooping-cough), poliomyelitis, measles, and such other communicable diseases as may be specified from time to time by the DEEC. No child shall be required to have any such immunization if his parent(s) object(s) thereto, in writing, on the grounds that it conflicts with their religious beliefs or if the child's physician submits documentation that such a procedure is contraindicated. (The foregoing are requirements of the Department of Early Education and Care.)

Children who are not current with signed and dated forms and immunizations will not be allowed to enter in the fall and/or may be suspended from school until the form is provided or all inoculations are current unless there is a health reason or religious objection.

### **12.11 Toileting and Diapering Procedure**

1. Child is invited to find his/her diaper and take it from the cubby. Child carries diaper into the bathroom. (Adult may say "It is time to change your diaper, let's go get your clean/dry diaper.")
2. Adult removes mat from wall and places it on the floor. Adult places a piece of changing paper on the mat. Adult puts on latex gloves while encouraging the child to pull down his/her pants.

3. Adult may assist child with pulling down his/her pants if necessary. Child may then be asked to lie down on mat or asked to help pull tabs of diaper open. Child may also stand for diapering when possible. Once diaper is removed, the child should be encouraged to sit on the toilet.
4. After sitting on the toilet, the child may use toilet paper to wipe himself then flush the toilet. Adult then uses the child's individually marked wipes to clean the child. The soiled wipe and diaper are placed in a plastic bag.
5. A clean diaper is then placed on the child. The child is encouraged to pull up his/her pants. The adult will then remove the changing paper from the mat and put it in the plastic bag. The adult then removes her gloves and places them in the plastic bag. The bag is then sealed with a knot. The child is asked to throw bag into the trash.
6. Adult then uses disinfecting spray on the mat, letting it air dry. Adult and child both wash their hands at the bathroom sink with liquid soap and running water. Hands are dried with individual or disposable towels.
7. Adult checks off child's name on the diaper chart. Adult and child leave the bathroom. Any soiled clothing is removed and replaced with a clean item. The soiled clothing is placed in a plastic bag which is sealed with a knot by the adult. The bag is then placed in the child's backpack to be taken home.
8. Any center-owned clothing is laundered and replaced.

### **12.12 Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect**

All staff are required to take First Aid as specified by the Department of Early Education and Care (DEEC). This course covers how to recognize the signs of abuse or neglect (bruises, language, behavior, etc.), how and where to document observations (in child's file and verbal contact with administrator), and the procedure for filing reports, including time frame.

Allegations of abuse or neglect by a staff member will be handled in the same fashion. All staff members are encouraged to share any concerns about the welfare of a child with the Head of School. The collaborative nature of our classrooms promotes a shared responsibility for the safety of the children. With education, support, and experience, our staff is well-prepared for both the joy and the stress of working with children. Through observation and evaluation, suspicions of abuse will be investigated, and the proper steps taken to resolve the suspicion or report the abuse.

Safe pick-ups of children are imperative for the safety of our students, so all staff and parents need to be aware of individuals who may be under the influence of alcohol or other impairment when picking up a child. In the event that a teacher suspects that a parent who has been drinking has arrived to pick up a child, the teacher must follow these steps:

- The teacher talks to the parent and asks to work with the parent to make alternative transportation arrangements.
- If the parent does not cooperate with making alternative transportation arrangements, the teacher must call the Duxbury Police Department and report the situation.

### **12.13 Mandated Reporting**

As licensed teachers in Massachusetts, all of our teaching staff members are mandated reporters. This means that they are required to make a report to the Department of Children and Families (DCF) whenever they have reasonable cause to believe that a child in the program is suffering from a serious physical or emotional injury resulting from abuse inflicted upon the child, or from neglect, no matter where the abuse or neglect may have occurred or by whom it was caused.

# Progress Reports & Transitions

## 13.1 Progress Reports and Conferences

In addition to the full Montessori curriculum appropriate to their developmental level, all of the children enrolled in our Children's House and Toddler programs engage in a range of self-selected and teacher-led activities, physical activity, outdoor play, self-help skills, problem solving, decision making, and lessons on safety, health, and hygiene. Our classrooms also provide access and exposure to curricula on social, cultural, and individual diversity. Our progress reports address not only your child's academic progress but also these other areas of development.

You will receive your child's/children's progress reports by email. Toddler House through Elementary II will receive progress reports twice a year if your child is typically developing, or three times per year if your child has documented special needs. Middle School parents will receive four progress reports each year. In addition to narratives, averages will be provided for each academic subject area. Progress reports provide a picture of a student's strengths, efforts, and skill level in the many facets of curriculum and personal development. If you have any questions regarding progress reports, please contact your child(ren)'s teacher(s) for more details.

### Progress Report Dates 2022-2023

MS Quarter 1 (grade percentages and social/emotional comments only): November 4, 2022

Entire School: January 20, 2023

MS Quarter 3 (grade percentages only): March 31, 2023

Entire School: June 7, 2023

Parent/teacher conferences are held twice a year and at these meetings, the teachers will discuss your child's progress reports with you. Please refer to the school calendar for exact dates for your child's level. Designed to enhance communications between home and school, conferences are also scheduled on an as-needed basis, when staff and/or parents have concerns or questions that are best addressed in a conference. Whenever possible, both parents/guardians should attend conferences.

Conferences to include the Head of School can be arranged through your child's classroom teacher or by contacting the Head of School.

Each head teacher has a communication plan and informs the parents of this plan at the beginning of the school year. In this way, parents know how (by telephone, email, etc.) and when (before school, after school, lunch time) communication with their child's teacher will be most effective.

## 13.2 Observing in the Classroom

We encourage all parents to observe their child's classroom. Parents may visit and/or observe their children at the child's classroom at any time. We ask, however, that you please call to schedule your visit so that the school may manage the number of adults in the classroom at any given time. Stopping by to say "hi" for a few minutes can be a distraction for your child and others, so we strongly encourage parents to visit for at least a half hour in order to experience a meaningful observation. During observations, please take a "fly-on-the-wall" approach. Sit in an observer chair where you have a good view without interacting with the children more than necessary.

Toddler & Children's House: Although we have an "open door" policy, we encourage scheduled observations. It is our preference that you call the Front Desk (x10) and make an appointment to observe so that we may manage the number of parents in the classroom at any one time. Where

possible, we ask you to follow certain guidelines. During the first four weeks of your child's immersion into the school classroom, or the beginning of the school year, we suggest you refrain from visiting your child's classroom to facilitate the separation process.

Elementary and Middle School: New and returning students' parents are encouraged to schedule a classroom observation time. Please reach out to the classroom teacher to schedule a time or please call the Front Desk (x10). Observing a working classroom will help parents understand and appreciate how Montessori education works in practice and facilitate insight into our educational goals and strategies. Follow-up questions for the teachers should be sent via email, or shared at conference time, rather than during the observation.

#### Guidelines for Parent Observations

Montessori teachers base much of their work with students on careful observation, much the way Dr. Maria Montessori developed the educational principles and materials we use at Bay Farm. The following guidelines are intended to help you get the most from your classroom observation with as little disruption of the class as possible. The purpose of your visit includes several objectives:

- to see how your own child functions in the classroom, and how s/he relates to peers and teachers
- to learn about how the children make use of materials in the Montessori classroom environment
- to understand how the teachers relate to and support the children

In order for your visit to be as unobtrusive as possible, for the sake of your child and his/her classmates, and to see the children going about their day in the most typical manner, please observe the following guidelines:

- Sit quietly in the chair offered by the teacher.
- Speak to the children or the teachers only if they speak to you. This is their work time, and we value their ability to concentrate. If a child approaches you, you may explain that you are watching and learning about the class.
- If you have any questions, please arrange to meet the teacher outside of classroom hours.

Here are some suggestions of what to be looking for:

- Children are process oriented, not product oriented. It is important to appreciate what they are doing, not the finished product.
- Take note, in particular, of the degree to which the following traits are demonstrated by the children:
  - Independence
  - Concentration
  - Ability to initiate work, make choices, solve problems
  - Control of movements, coordination
  - Self-direction, motivation
  - Order in work
  - The nature and amount of interaction with other children (younger, same age, older) and teachers
  - Ability to put work away when finished with the task.

As difficult as it may be, try to maintain your objectivity. Encourage your child to work as though you were not present, since this is the best way to experience what Montessori is all about. After your observation, be sure to share positive feelings with your child. If you do have negative impressions, please discuss them with the teachers (and not your child) so that the teacher may help explain what you saw and/or work out a good solution. If you are concerned that your presence might be distracting to your child, consider observing in another classroom at the same level. You will not get to see your child at work, but you will get a good idea of how the class works.

### **13.3 Transitions at Bay Farm Montessori Academy**

A child's developmental relationship to toilet training is not considered when enrolling or placing the child at the School or in a program. When admitting and placing children, Bay Farm takes into consideration the personality of the child, the demographics of each classroom, the input of the child's present and prospective teachers, and the Bay Farm Admissions Committee. While families may state their preferences and make requests, Bay Farm reserves the right to place children into programs and classrooms according to its own processes and criteria. Bay Farm neither makes explicit nor implies that families may choose the classroom into which their children may be placed nor the teacher or teaching team with whom the child may work. Families' enrollment contracts guarantee the family placement at the school, not in a particular classroom or with a particular teacher.

### **13.4 Recommendations/Exmissions**

Periods of transition can be difficult. The teachers and administrators at Bay Farm are committed to helping our students succeed at Bay Farm and beyond. Families of eighth-grade students are invited to meet with the Exmissions Team in the fall to discuss the independent school admissions and public high school enrollment processes. Information regarding area schools, contacts, and testing information will be available. Individual meetings may be scheduled to discuss a student's (or family's) interests, questions, and concerns.

Please submit all recommendation forms and written requests for information to the main office, as far in advance as possible, but no less than two weeks before the mailing deadline. Recommendations to other schools are considered school-to-school documents and are not shared with parents. This paperwork is processed as quickly as possible, but the school cannot guarantee anything less than a two-week turnaround.

## **Intervention & Referral/Special Needs**

**14.1** The teachers and Learning Support Team members work to meet the individual needs of all students at Bay Farm. Below is an outline of how we work to meet the social, emotional, and learning needs of our students.

The Learning Support Team (LST) is comprised of:

- School Counselor/Learning Support Team Leader
- Learning Supporter for Toddler House & Children's House (Julie Hurley and Kelley Collins)
- Learning Supporter for EL I, EL II, & Middle School (Kelley Collins and Kristen Boonisar)
- Lead Teacher

Determining if a student needs support:

If a teacher feels a student needs social, emotional, behavioral, and/or academic support, classroom teachers observe and fill out an "Individual Child Observation Form." If the teacher is concerned, the School Counselor will be brought in for Social/Emotional Observations and the Director of Education will be brought in for academic issues. The EEC Site Director will also observe on the Lower Campus for social, emotional, and academic concerns. After all parties observe, a meeting of the Learning Support Team ensues, a plan is developed, communicated, and then implemented.

Services provided by the School Counselor:

Direct Intervention in the Classroom (TH, CH, & EL I): The Counselor supports the social, emotional, and/or behavioral needs of the student in the classroom *as the needs occur in real time*. This allows the Counselor to facilitate teachable moments directly after a need has presented itself. This helps with skill rehearsal & retention.

Individual Student Meetings (EL I, EL II, & MS): The Counselor meets with a student in her office on a weekly, biweekly, or monthly basis. During these meetings, the Counselor teaches the student social, emotional, and/or behavioral skills. The Counselor focuses on teaching the skills the child has identified they would like to improve, as well as the skills the child's teacher has requested the child work on.

It's common for students to request temporary (1-3) meetings with the Counselor. Students typically request temporary meetings when they need guidance managing issues such as peer conflict or distressing situations. A student must receive approval from his or her teacher to have these meetings, and parent email consent is not necessary.

Group Lessons (EL I, EL II, & MS): The Counselor gives several types of group lessons over the course of the school year. The groups are as follows:

- Friendship Group (EL I-by grade)
- Leadership Group (EL I, EL II, & MS)
- Self Advocacy & Bullying Prevention Group (EL I, EL II, & MS)
- Parent Support & Psychoeducation (All Levels): The Counselor provides parents with the social, emotional, and/or behavioral education they may need

Referrals to Outside Providers (All Levels): The Counselor helps parents connect with outside providers (specifically neuropsychologists, individual therapists, and family therapists).

Care coordination with outside providers: The Counselor coordinates care with outside providers (typically neuropsychologists, individual therapists, and family therapists) to keep student support methods consistent in school.

Services provided by the Learning Supporters:

Direct Intervention in the Classroom: The Learning Supporters provide the following support while in the classroom (this is not an exhaustive list):

- Assist students with completing academic works (TH, CH, EL I, EL II, & MS).
- Teach students executive functioning skills (CH, EL I, EL II, & MS).
- Help develop abbreviated or compacted homework assignments for students (EL I, EL II, & MS).
- Help facilitate test taking in separate settings (EL I, EL II, & MS).
- Teach students fine/gross motor skills (TH & CH).
- Help address language deficits/sensory concerns (TH & CH).
- Student Learning Plans (SLP): SLPs are created for students who need consistent support from the Learning Supporter in the classroom. SLPs are Bay Farm's version of an Individualized Education Program (IEP). SLPs are internal documents which are only distributed to parents per parent request. Teachers are responsible for informing parents an SLP has been created for

their child. Students who receive outside speech or occupational services are *required* to have an SLP. This allows the Learning Supporter to coordinate care with outside providers so as to keep student support methods consistent in school. Students who do not receive outside support but who work consistently with a Learning Supporter are given SLPs per the determination of the teacher.

Referrals to Outside Providers (All Levels): The Learning Supporters help parents connect with outside providers (specifically tutors, speech pathologists, & occupational therapists).

## Discipline

**15.1** Bay Farm does not tolerate verbal or physical abuse. This policy is consistent with the Department of Early Education and Care's guidelines for discipline including, but not limited to, the following:

- Corporal punishment shall not be used. This includes spanking.
- No child shall be subjected to cruel or severe punishment, humiliation, or verbal abuse.
- No child shall be denied food as a form of punishment.
- No child shall be punished for soiling, wetting, or not using the toilet.

Cause-and-effect measures help to provide the child with the beginnings of self-control and the development of a conscience. Knowing right from wrong is very different from doing right and wrong, as the latter ability is developmental and usually requires adult (staff and parent) support and time to develop fully. Teachers take the role of facilitators, helping to guide the child in all areas of learning and exploration. This includes giving fair, clear, concise messages or warnings about inappropriate behavior or interactions with other children/staff. Basic methods include:

### Toddler & Children's House

- Eye contact and body language can frequently provide the external reinforcement to stop or redirect unwanted behavior.
- Distraction—"Come look at the bunny. Let's play with playdough."
- Having both children "lose" the toy or item they are fighting over. This gives the message positively, without assigning blame, that fighting will not be allowed and that both children do not get what they want when they fight.
- Warnings—"If you continue to do \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ will happen." ("If you continue to throw water on the floor, you will need to mop up the spill, then put your apron away and leave the water table.") This response verbally models the positive response action the child is to take and a clear and fair outcome if the action is not taken. Consistency and carry-through are very important and make the situation and person credible and trustworthy. Our staff is trained to think of the result/effect so as not to threaten something negative or impossible to carry through. One method of doing this is to say, "You sit there for a moment while I decide what we'll do about this situation," then calmly react.
- Redirection to a more positive place in the room or with a different child or material.
- Temporary removal from the immediate environment.

Elementary I, II, and Middle School

Consistency is also important for older students. Teachers are adept at offering clear expectations, reassurance, and direction to foster positive behavior both in and out of the classroom. On occasion, a student may make a poor choice. The consequences for negative behavior vary and may include but are not limited to: having to produce a verbal or written apology to a person offended, cleaning an area neglected or abused by the student, and/or writing a letter home to explain the behavior. For those situations that are more complex, serious, and/or reoccurring, a child may be removed from the classroom, and brought to the office to meet with the Head of School or another administrator. Parents may be called to pick up the child, or the student may be asked to remain at home for a day if the behavior was aggressive and poses a threat to him/herself or others, as stated in the following section. If an Elementary or Middle School student is sent home, s/he will meet with the Head of School and his/her parents before returning to class the next school day to bring healthy closure to the situation and agree on techniques for ongoing positive behavior. Bay Farm treats all students with respect and holds all students to a high standard of respect for themselves and for others. In that spirit, Bay Farm will hold students accountable for any actions involving lying, cheating, vandalism, or stealing. Consequences will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the faculty and administration.

### **15.2 Aggressive Behavior**

If a child hurts another child deliberately, the parents of both children are notified by phone. The parents of the child who injured another may be asked to pick up their child if their child's behavior continues to cause or threaten physical or emotional harm. Leaving the classroom abruptly after biting, as the cause-and-effect reaction, has proven to be effective even with toddlers to enable them to understand that biting/hurting is never OK and cannot continue. Most children love school and want to be here with their friends. The following day, the child is welcome to return. If the biting or aggressive behavior continues, the child may again be sent home, and a conference will be scheduled for the parents and teachers with the Director of Education . If a child is violent with others, or physically abusive to the classroom environment, then that child needs to leave the environment, regardless of where the physical violence occurs. The child should immediately be removed from the situation, which means there is a likelihood of being sent home. Lesser offenses will be handled at school in a developmentally appropriate manner. Bay Farm believes that instances of aggression are valuable learning experiences and should be handled immediately. Ongoing, unaddressed, aggressive behavior may result in the child's dismissal from the School.

### **15.3 Bullying**

Bay Farm Montessori Academy takes bullying very seriously. Any community member who has concerns about incidents of bullying should review the school's policies and forms related to this topic. If you wish to submit a formal complaint, The *Bullying Prevention and Intervention Incident Reporting Form* is available on the School's website. You may also contact the School Counselor or Director of Education to express any concerns about possible bullying.

#### BFMA Bullying Response Plan 2022-2023

If you become aware of an incident of bullying, the following 8 steps should occur:

1. Immediately respond to the incident by managing it as best you can.
2. Complete part I of the *Bullying Prevention and Intervention Incident Reporting Form*. Then call or email the School Counselor to inform her you've completed the form and request she come and retrieve it.
3. After the School Counselor receives and reviews part I of the *Bullying Prevention and Intervention Incident Reporting Form*, she will notify the Head of School.

4. Before investigating the allegations, the School Counselor and the Head of School will assist the teacher(s) in determining how to restore a sense of safety to the victim to protect the victim from possible further incidents. This might look like:
  - Modifying the victim's school schedule.
  - Identifying a safe person for the victim to confide in at any point during the school day.
  - Creating a safety plan for the victim.
1. The investigation process will then occur, and individual interviews will be conducted by the School Counselor in safe spaces (*not* in the classroom and *not* in front of other students). The victim, alleged bully, and all witnesses (staff & students) will be separately interviewed by the School Counselor.
2. The School Counselor will document pertinent information from the interviews and complete parts II & III of the *Bullying Prevention and Intervention Incident Reporting Form*.
3. If it's determined bullying has occurred, disciplinary action will be taken based on the age of the bully, nature of the conduct, etc.
4. The School Counselor will check in with the victim to determine if the bullying has stopped each week for 1 month after the incident.

## Records & Contracts

### 16.1 Tuition, Enrollment Contracts, Right-Fit Tuition

Please contact the Business Office (x40) if you have any questions regarding tuition, enrollment contracts, and/or Right-Fit Tuition..

The goal of Right-Fit Tuition is to enable all families who believe in Bay Farm Montessori's mission and approach to make enrolling their child a reality. We take into account a wide range of factors that can affect the financial situation of each family. To begin the process requires those requesting assistance to file an application for financial aid through FAST and provide a complete copy of their most recent tax return. Please call the Business Office (x40) or Admissions (x38) for more information and forms.

Right Fit is determined every year and requires a new application every year. Returning families who do not turn in their re-enrollment contract according to the admissions timeline risk losing their Right Fit adjustment. Children of families whose tuition goes over thirty days unpaid may be withdrawn from the school. Withdrawal from the school does not alleviate a family's contracted financial obligation.

### 16.2 School Records

Information contained in a child's record is privileged and confidential. Persons not involved with your child's education will be not allowed access to this record unless you, as the parent, give your written consent. The only exceptions are authorized employees of the Department of Early Education and Care for Toddler and Children's House students. We will notify you if the records are subpoenaed for any reason. As a parent, you have the right to see your child's record at any time. In certain limited situations, the records may be in the head teacher's possession and not immediately available, but will be made available to you within two (2) school days.

There is a central log kept near students' records that tracks who has examined each child's record and when. If your child's name is not on the log, no one has examined the records. The school will make

copies of your child's record free of charge. Parents may make written requests to add information, comments, data, or any relevant evaluations and testing to their child's record.

In addition, you have the right to request deletion or amendment of any information contained in your child's record. Such a request must be made in writing in accordance with the procedures described below.

1. If the parent believes that adding information is not sufficient to explain, clarify, or correct objectionable material in the child's record, s/he will have the right to have a conference with the teacher/administrator to make his/her objections and request for deletion/amendment known.
2. The teacher/administrator will, within one week, render to the parent, a decision in writing stating the reasons for the decision. The school will immediately take the steps necessary to put the decision into effect.

### **16.3 Transfer of Records**

Once a child is registered at another school, we will send the record to the new school, as soon as we receive the parent's written permission to do so. It may take up to two weeks to complete this process and send the records.

## **Governance**

### **17.1 Board of Trustees**

The Board of Trustees of Bay Farm Montessori Academy is responsible for the long-term health and viability of the school. In this capacity, the Board sets goals and policies, hires and evaluates the Head of School, and works closely with the school's administration on such things as long-term planning, finances, fund-raising, and facilities.

Most of the Board's work is done in committees; and many of these committees are open to interested members of the school community. Participation in board-level committee work is a standard route for members of the community to become familiar with school governance issues and to be considered for trustee-ship. Bay Farm trustees serve three-year terms (usually more than one). At present, most trustees are current or former Bay Farm parents; but this is not a requirement. A Trusteeship Committee identifies prospective new board members when vacancies arise, and the Board as a whole vote to appoint new members.

The essence of Bay Farm Montessori Academy is embodied in the shared ideals and goals of the many individuals who work and volunteer at the school. The Board of Trustees encourages all interested members of the community to join in the work of maintaining and improving our school. To find out more, please contact the Head of School, Conrad Wildsmith, at [conradw@bfarm.org](mailto:conradw@bfarm.org) or Board President, Hauke Kite-Powell, at [hauke@bfarm.org](mailto:hauke@bfarm.org).

## **Privacy Policy**

**18.1** With the increasing deployment of digital learning systems, digital records, and other computer- and network-based systems, it is important for you to understand how we protect private information.

Bay Farm Montessori Academy does not sell any private family or student information. When choosing vendors, we carefully evaluate the vendor's own privacy practices to ensure a similar level of privacy concern.

Any information stored by Bay Farm Montessori Academy is deemed necessary to maintain an effective and efficient operation for the sake of your family and our students.

Although private educational institutions are not legally bound, Bay Farm Montessori Academy strives to adhere to the established legal privacy frameworks related to educational records and private and confidential information, including, but not limited to: the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA), the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), and the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA).

## Healthcare Privacy

### 19.1 Data Breach Notification Law (DBNL)

Bay Farm Montessori Academy adheres to the Massachusetts Data Breach Notification Law, which instructs Massachusetts businesses and non-profit organizations in the manner of handling data breaches. The law defines personal information as a resident's first name and last name or first initial and last name in combination with any 1 or more of the following data elements that relate to such resident:

- (a) Social Security number;
- (b) driver's license number or state-issued identification card number; or
- (c) financial account number, or credit or debit card number, with or without any required security code, access code, personal identification number or password, that would permit access to a resident's financial account.

Personal information does not include information that can be legally obtained from publicly available sources, such as addresses or birthdays, tuition amounts, etc. In the event Bay Farm has reasonable reason to believe that any of the above pieces of information has been received by an unauthorized party, it will notify all required parties as defined by the DBNL.

## Parent Resources

There are many opportunities to learn about what happens in your child/ren's classrooms and around campus this year, but the venue will likely be different than in years past.

### 20.1 Parent Education

Choosing a Montessori education for your child is the first step in what should be an ongoing process of education for both parents and children. Learning more about Montessori philosophy and child development is an excellent way to grow with your child and to better understand the inner workings of his/her classroom. Participation in Back-to-School Nights, Moving-Up Night, and Parent Education presentations is helpful and important. Our teachers are eager to share information about the best books, websites, and courses on both Montessori education and child development. You may find your local library is the best place to start.

Many parents of our alumni are happy to talk about the Montessori education and experience their children had at Bay Farm and beyond. Call the Office (x10) if you wish to connect with an alumni family.

Below is a list of books that you may find helpful in understanding Montessori:

[The Absorbent Mind](#) by Maria Montessori

Perhaps the must-read book on the Montessori Method, *The Absorbent Mind* by Maria Montessori explores her philosophy and method.

[How to Raise an Amazing Child the Montessori Way](#) by Tim Seldin

For a new parent's guide to Montessori learning, *How To Raise an Amazing Child the Montessori Way* by Tim Seldin is a great guide.

[Teach Me To Do It Myself: Montessori Activities for You and Your Child](#) by Maja Pitamic

As the title suggests, this book is all about helping your child become a self-reliant learner and person.

[Montessori Madness! A Parent's Argument for Montessori Education](#) by Trevor Eissler

This book offers a parent's insight to the Montessori Method. It delves into how education systems can be improved and how politicians and administrators can look at education differently.

[Montessori: A Modern Approach](#) by Paula Lillard

For parents, educators, childcare professionals, and others interested in the Montessori way, this book explores the basics of our philosophy to look at the relevance of these ideas in modern times.

[Montessori Learning in the 21st Century: A Guide for Parents and Teachers](#) by Shannon Helfrich

This book helps parents and teachers examine how the Montessori approach pertains to modern education.

[Montessori Play and Learn: A Parent's Guide to Purposeful Play from 2 to 6](#) by Lesley Britton

The Montessori Philosophy is built around child-centric learning. This book is an in-depth guide for parents of young children to explore the Montessori Method at home through a wide variety of activities and games.

[How to Talk so Kids Can Learn](#) by Adele Faber

This book is centered around creating conversations with your children that inspire an excitement to learn.

[Conscious Eating](#) by Gabriel Cousens, M.D.

Organic gardening, healthy cooking, and smart eating are a big part of the Montessori curriculum. This book explores information about nutrition, enzymes, and how food fuels your body.

[Montessori: The Science Behind the Genius](#) by Angeline Stoll Lillard

In this book, Angeline Stoll Lillard shows that science has finally caught up with Maria Montessori. Lillard presents the research behind eight insights that are foundations of Montessori education, describing how each of these insights is applied in the Montessori classroom.

## **20.2 The Montessori Parents' Association (MPA)**

Bay Farm Montessori Academy's MPA is committed to supporting the teachers, staff, families, and children at Bay Farm to achieve the school's overall mission and philosophy. The MPA is made up of volunteers who believe in positively helping build a strong, connected, inclusive, and just community of

all families, past, present, and future in support of educating our children in a vibrant Montessori community.

We accomplish this in 5 distinct ways:

**Engagement:** With the overall goal of creating a school that welcomes all people, we engage the school community through conversations, outreach, and events. We work to make sure all members of the Bay Farm community feel welcomed and supported.

**Outreach:** We believe it is essential for children and families in our Bay Farm community to recognize the needs of those in our greater community. The MPA supports philanthropic projects to further Montessori's peace and justice philosophy.

**Teacher Support:** The MPA coordinates and manages room parents who, in turn, support classroom needs and facilitate communication between teachers and parents. The MPA also coordinates annual appreciation events to demonstrate gratitude for the work of our Bay Farm staff.

**Fundraising:** We build relationships and garner support from local businesses and school-wide creative fundraisers to support school-wide events and projects.

**Parent Education:** The MPA sponsors parent education events that help families develop a better understanding of the Montessori philosophy and how it comes to life at Bay Farm. The MPA connects with families who are new to Bay Farm to foster safe, positive, and knowledgeable engagement with the school community.

#### Get involved!

Parents may also get involved at the school through many activities, such as:

Participating in the classroom:

- reading to children
- giving a cultural presentation
- cooking
- demonstrating a skill
- speaking about a profession

Participating out of the classroom:

- chaperoning a field trip
- offering an enrichment activity
- helping out with the arts program
- assisting on Campus Beautification Day
- attending Montessori Parent Association meetings and events

Serving on School Board or Board Committees:

- Financial planning (Board Finance Committee)
- Campus and facilities planning (Board Facilities Committee)
- Fundraising and Development (Board Development Committee)

Please contact the front desk if you are interested in getting involved.

Records of when volunteers are active on campus are kept at the Front Desk. Volunteers who may have unsupervised contact with children must submit to and clear a Criminal History Systems Board (CHSB/CORI) check before engaging in their volunteer activities.

Each program level has different volunteer needs. To find out more about how you can volunteer in your child's classroom, please contact your child's lead teacher.

## **Acknowledgement Form**

Please review the Parent Handbook carefully, then read and sign the online Acknowledgment statement in your Back to School Paperwork by September 7.

This is to acknowledge that I/we have received a copy of the Bay Farm Montessori Academy Parent Handbook. I/we understand that compliance with the policies and procedures in this Handbook is a condition of my/our child's enrollment and that I/we should consult the Head of School regarding any questions not answered in the Handbook. Since provisions spelled out in the Handbook are subject to change, I/we further understand that revisions to the Handbook may supersede or eliminate one or more existing policies and that all such changes will be communicated in writing. I/we will be responsible for updating my Handbook upon receipt of revisions or inserts.

I understand that there is an ongoing global pandemic and that Bay Farm Montessori Academy will take appropriate precautions according to our licensing authorities to prevent the spread of COVID-19. However, I also understand that there is a chance that my child may contract COVID-19 by attending school.

We are currently monitoring the guidance and awaiting potential updates to regulatory requirements for preventative measures, which may include a requirement to wear masks, conduct health screenings, and re-establish physical distancing requirements.

If you have any questions about this please email [communication@bfarm.org](mailto:communication@bfarm.org).

PARENT 1	PARENT 2 (if applicable)
Name of Parent (PRINT)	Name of Parent (PRINT)
Signature	Signature
Date:	Date: