

SCHOOL HANDBOOK

2025 / 2026



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School Handbook Updates & Revisions

To ensure our policies and procedures remain current and reflect the needs of our school community, the following updates have been made to the Brackendale Montessori School Handbook:

Effective Date: September 2025

Summary of Changes

- Arrival Procedure – Page 16
- Dismissal and Late policy – Page 17
- Montessori at home expectation – Page - 20
- Uniform Guidelines – Page 37
- Withdrawal and Refund policy – Page 39
- Volunteer guidelines and expectation – Page 40
- Alumni Network – Page 41
- Terms and Conditions for enrollment – Page 46

These changes replace any previous versions of the same sections. Please review this information carefully, as it forms part of our official policies.

Accessing the Revised Sections

- The updated sections are highlighted in Green throughout the handbook.
- A full copy of the revised handbook is available in the School Office

Acknowledgement

All families are asked to sign the updated parent agreement form to confirm they have reviewed and understood these changes.

Welcome

Welcome to Brackendale Montessori Private School. We are a CCMA applicant School. In true Montessori form, we strive to create an environment that is nurturing, warm and welcoming. This handbook forms an important part of your child's enrollment with Brackendale Montessori School. It contains all the information you need to know while your child is in our care. We look forward to getting to know you and your child.

Brackendale Montessori Program Statement

Brackendale Montessori School offers a learning program that is consistent with both Maria Montessori's ideas and the Ministry of Education policies, pedagogy, and curriculum.

Brackendale Montessori emphasizes active learning as children learn best by pursuing their personal interests and goals, children make their own choices about materials and activities during the program time. As they pursue their choices and plans, children explore, ask and answer questions, solve problems, and interact with peers, program staff, volunteers, and students on placement. Children are **competent, capable, curious, and rich in potential**. Brackendale Montessori recognizes each child as a unique individual who brings their own abilities to the program and deserves the encouragement and space to try new things, explore new ideas and develop their own unique creativity. We provide an environment that fosters curiosity, one that allows children to explore in a safe and caring environment. An environment in which to grow and develop to their maximum potential. We understand the importance of taking children's stages of development and their unique family, community, and life experiences into consideration. In each case, we aim to integrate all areas of the child's development into our program in a holistic way.

Our program strives to:

- Create a sense of belonging where a child is connected to others and contributes to their world.
- Develop a sense of self and well-being.
- Have every child be an active and engaged learner who explores the world with body, mind, and senses.
- Have every child be a capable communicator who expresses himself or herself in many ways.

Our program is designed to:

1. Encourage children to interact and communicate in a positive way and support their ability to self-regulate
2. Foster the children's exploration, play and inquiry
3. Provide child-initiated and adult-supported experiences
4. Offer opportunities to create authentic lasting relationships with others in the program
Health, safety, nutrition, and well-being of children We know that the early years set the foundation for children's health and well-being.
5. Early brain development is stimulated through experiences and interactions with responsive adults.

Family, School, and Community Partnerships

Relationships among children, families, staff, and community partners is a core value at Brackendale Montessori, fostering collaborative and co-operative relationships among all our partners. Brackendale strives to promote a sense of belonging for children and their families in our programs by creating positive interactions and collaboration of families. We understand that relationships of trust are the basis for learning and co-operation. Every child is given the opportunity to develop personal responsibility and social skills, to learn to problem-solve and to learn about diversity and inclusion. The skills of conflict resolution are important to lifelong learning. As competent individuals, children are active participants in resolving conflicts. We encouraged them to come up with ideas and solutions to problems that arise. Brackendale Montessori is committed to working collaboratively with all our community partners as we work together on the mutual goal of providing the best possible School service to families. Positive self-expression, communication and self-regulation leads to children's sense of belonging. Positive learning environments and experiences, focused on active learning, encourages children's communication, self-expression, and self-regulation. We seek to be aware of, foster, support, encourage, respond to, and document the many ways in which children express themselves, the many "voices" with which they articulate their ideas, the variety of "languages" they use to communicate. We also seek to honor and reflect children's home language and culture in our programs. In our inclusive learning environments, we welcome children of all abilities. Respect for diversity, equity and inclusion is vital for optimal development and learning.

We know that our partnerships with our families help our program to best meet the needs of the children:

- Families form the foundation for a child's early development. Families know their children best and are the first and most powerful influence on learning and development.
- The needs of each child are considered in the context of their family composition, values, culture, and language. This approach enriches relationships between early childhood settings, families, and their communities.
- We involve parents and other important adults in various events and activities at our programs. This connects them to their children's early development and enhances the child's learning. In addition to the daily interaction with program staff, we offer many opportunities for parent feedback and involvement. We use parent input to improve our programs and services.

While our range of community partners is broad Brackendale Montessori works with local community agencies and partners in order to support the children and families in our programs. We view the community as a valuable resource and our educators plan learning opportunities to engage the community in our programs. We seek out opportunities to share our knowledge and to learn from others in the community.

Our Program

Brackendale Montessori focuses on learning the way that children naturally learn and respond to the environment around them. When children are manipulating Montessori materials, objects, acting out roles, or experimenting with different materials, they are engaged in learning. The Montessori Material allows children to actively construct, challenge, and expand their own understandings, making connections, thereby opening the door to new learning.

Cultural materials enable children to investigate, ask questions, solve problems, and engage in critical thinking. The manipulation of Montessori material is responsive to each child's unique learning style and capitalizes on their innate curiosity and creativity. Our program also supports children's self-regulation, their ability to deal with stress and remain calm, alert, and ready to learn. When children are calmly focused and alert, they are best able to modulate their emotions, pay attention, ignore distractions, inhibit their impulses, and understand the consequences of their actions. We believe that families are experts on their children and sharing knowledge is integral to the success of your child. Brackendale aims to ensure that families have the support, safe, reliable, high quality licensed Montessori School for their children, which ensures parents peace of mind while their children are in our program. Respect, care, empathy, trust, and integrity are core values in all our interactions with families.

The Environment

Children learn and explore their environment and experience the world through exploration, investigation, and self-regulation inside the classroom. Learning is extended to the outdoors from the indoor classroom through recess, nature walks or field trips. The learning environment provides extended opportunities for all elements of learning, from gross motor development, nature exploration, independent and cooperative learning.

Our Teachers

At Brackendale Montessori our Teachers view a positive, supportive relationship between child and educator as fundamental. Teachers connect with children by being available, responsive, and caring. This is the way they build trust, making children feel safe and secure. From this platform, relationships are made so that children discover, take risks, grow, and learn.

Our teachers provide a safe environment for your child by preparing spaces that are more conducive to learning. Actively participating in your child's play experiences through observing and documenting the milestones in your child's life to ensure age-appropriate development.

Our teachers also provide learning opportunities and practical work experience, in the areas of programming and administration, to members of the community through the recruitment, placement, training and recognition of volunteers and students on placement. Brackendale Montessori is committed to supporting their teachers in continuous professional learning. Our teachers have a positive and a sensitive attitude towards children. Teacher's plan on a daily basis, based on the observations that they make on children's interests. In this way, learning is extended, leading to deeper investigation with materials and the environment. Teacher's plan for and create positive learning environments and experiences in which each child's learning and development will be supported. Through positive adult-child interactions, our teachers extend their learning by encouraging children to build upon their existing knowledge.

At Brackendale we believe that knowledgeable and responsive Teachers:

- Establish a social environment that supports autonomy and self-esteem
- Establish positive relationships, friendships, and conflict resolution
- Provide responsive care to all children in program while meeting their individual needs
- Design a supportive physical environment
- Provide new learning possibilities through interest Schools
- Foster, observe and document significant behavior/developmental milestones
- Incorporates the community
- Recognize that responding to the unique abilities, needs, and characteristics of each child, family, and community is central to supporting learning and development.
- Engage with children as co-learners as they explore their environments.
- Provoke children's thinking, create meaningful programs, and guide interactions.
- Use a warm and positive approach to support children's developing ability to express emotions and take other perspectives.
- Know when to stand back and observe and when to enter to stimulate thinking.
- Make a commitment to build self-awareness, regularly reflect on practices and engage in new learning experiences, both individually and with colleagues.
- Formal professional learning is vital, but we also know that the most central professional growth happens day-to-day, as our staff co-learn with children and each other as self-reflective professionals.

All Brackendale Montessori teachers attend mandatory professional development meetings and receive training on an ongoing basis. They make daily observations of children in the program and use this information in their future planning. Our intention is to move beyond reporting of children's behavior, in order to find meaning in what children do and experience.

Program Assessment and Reflective Practices

Teachers reflect and assess their program and environment weekly to ensure that the program is meeting the individual needs of the children and the group and that their environment is set up according to the interests of the group. The Site Director reviews weekly program plans and documentations to ensure that they meet our *Program Statement Requirements*. The Site Director demonstrates leadership by observing each classroom and engages in conversation with the educators and children regarding how the children are learning, what they need to learn and what is the best means for this learning to happen.

Child Guidance, Protection & Prohibited Practices

All Teachers, volunteers and placement students will follow our core values of caring, honesty, inclusiveness, respect, and responsibility. Teachers support children in developing strategies to remain calm and to regulate their emotions while recognizing the effects of their actions on others.

Any practice based on a negative control technique is not part of Brackendale Montessori practices and core values.

Prohibited practices include:

- Corporal punishment of a child
- Harsh or belittling discipline including verbally belittling or threatening
- Depriving basic needs including food, shelter, clothing, or bedding

- Locking the exits of the School for the purposes of confining a child or using a locked or lockable room or structure to confine the child if he or she has been separated from other children
- Confinement or restraint for the purpose of limiting a child's movement.
- Inflicting any bodily harm on children which includes forcing children to eat and drink against their will.

Contravention to the prohibited practices:

Any Brackendale Montessori staff member observed using disciplinary measures that contravene the Brackendale Montessori Policy shall be reported immediately to the Administration/ Director. The Director will immediately contact appropriate agencies

In the event of a contravention of Policy, the operator, in its sole discretion, can take any of the following disciplinary action:

- Verbal reprimand
- Place signed letter of reprimand in the staff's file
- Suspension without pay
- Dismissal or Termination

Goals and Approaches for our Program Statement

• Health, Safety, Nutrition and Well-being

All our Lead teachers have successfully completed their Montessori training that is recognized by Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education (MACTE) and/or Association of Montessori International (AMI) or an Early Childhood Education (ECE) and/or Early Childhood Assistant (ECA) Program. All Staff have their standard first aid and CPR level C training including infant CPR and have been trained in all health and safety protocol which include: administering of an Epi Pen.

We understand that the first step in establishing and nurturing **health, safety, and wellbeing** for children in our programs is by providing a clean and safe environment, including nutritious meals which is provided by a licensed caterer and follows Canada's food guide, and the children have unlimited access to drinking water.

Toys are cleaned and sanitized daily any time they have been mouthed. Beds and linen are washed and sanitized weekly as well as when illness or bed wetting incidents occur. All furniture is kept clean and in good order (broken furniture is fixed or removed immediately upon discovery). The school uses a professional cleaning company on a nightly basis.

The health of each child is documented on a daily basis and children with any of the following symptoms are not able to remain in care for the day and can only return once they are symptom free for 48 hours or have the appropriate treatment as laid out by a Health care professional.

- Fever (axillary temp) – 37.8 C or higher
- Cough – constant or barking
- Diarrhea or vomiting – 2 occurrences or 1 of each
- Any form of eye discharge or conjunctivitis (pink eye)

- Open or oozing sores/rashes
- Not able to participate in the daily program

Children with any of the above symptoms will be separated from the group and cared for in the office. Parents or guardians will be contacted for immediate pick up.

We promote children's health and safety by ensuring teachers, volunteers and students are familiar with individual medical needs/conditions, allergies, food restrictions and special requests towards each child.

We provide both nutritious and appealing snacks and hot lunches for children catered by **Wholesome Kids Catering**. Menus follow Canada's Food Guide and are culturally sensitive. You can view the menu on the boards in each classroom. We accommodate dietary and/or religious food requirements for our children.

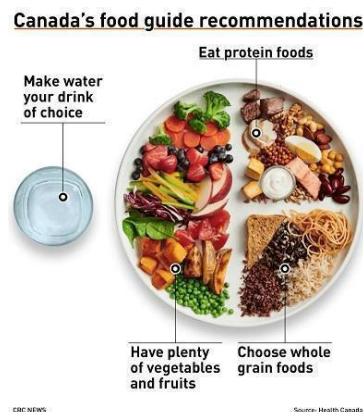
Meals from Home

For children not on our catering program, two snacks and a lunch are to be provided in accordance with the Canada Food Guide.

Brackendale Montessori is an allergen safe environment; therefore, no nut or nut products are to be brought into School.

Bagged lunches should include plenty of vegetables and fruit, whole grains, and protein to meet the Canada Food Guide Requirements (attached). Limit processed, food high in sugar and salt as they provide little to no nutritional value.

In the event any child forgets their lunch, or if the administration does not find the packed lunch suitable, then a phone call will be made either to replace the lunch or to notify parents that the school will be providing lunch and parents will be responsible for cost incurred which is \$7.00 / day.



Positive and Responsive interactions between staff, children, and families

At Brackendale Montessori we have an open communication policy between our teachers and families. We provide multiple opportunities for teacher – parent communications to take place.

- **Touch Base phone calls:** Calls made to parents at various times during the year to provide updates on behavior, academics or for parent to ask any questions.
- **Parent – teacher interviews:** 3 interviews per year are set up to discuss reports cards and academic standing or concerns.
- **Newsletters** – Newsletters are sent out to parent highlighting Curriculum goals & important events / dates.
- **Daily reports/logs** – Daily written logs are given to parents regarding toileting, naps, food, and activities.
- **Documentation boards** – Each class displays work for parents to see what is happening during their child's time at school.

Teachers encourage **positive and responsive relationships** with children by creating an environment that is inclusive and welcoming to all. They foster an atmosphere of cooperation, sharing and openness.

- **Encourage children to interact and communicate in a positive way and support their ability to self-regulate**

Positive language and guidance are used all times when communicating with children, parents or co teachers as a role modelling technique. Teachers are always working together to help children develop communication skills, foster independence, and problem-solving techniques.

To help support and encourage **self-regulation** – we create an environment that is welcoming, safe and child friendly.

- **Children's exploration, play and inquiry**

All staff will foster **children's exploration, play and inquiry** by providing a variety of activities and an environment rich in content, that encourages choices, and active play, supported by qualified, attentive, and interactive teachers.

- **Child initiated and adult supported experiences**

All Staff will **provide child-initiated and adult supported experiences**. The teachers will observe the children, documents and use that information to plan and create a positive learning environment and experiences that is based on the interests of the child and supported by all the adults in the School environment. All teachers will be responsible for introducing new ideas, interests, facts, concepts, skills, and experiences to widen the child's knowledge and life experiences.

- **Create positive learning environments which are inclusive of all children, including children with individualized plans**

All teachers use observations to plan and **create a positive learning environment** that is based on the interest of the children. We as educators reflect and understand that children are unique individuals by:

- Recognizing each child as having equal rights to participate in program activities, trips, and events.
- Recognizing and respecting the unique qualities of each child and family, including ancestry, culture, ethnicity, race, language, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, socio-economic status, family environment, and developmental abilities and needs.
- Creating strategies that value the culture and languages of all children.
- Establishing programming strategies to foster an inclusive learning environment in which every child can participate, including children with **individualized support plans**.
- Collaborating with outside agencies and resources to help support individualized needs of the children based on support plans.

- Viewing the diversity of children and families as an asset and planning programs to reflect differences and enrich the environment.

- **Incorporate indoor and outdoor play, as well as active play, rest, and quiet time, into the day, and give consideration to the individual needs of the children receiving School**

Every Full-time child will experience **indoor, and two hours of outdoor recess** (weather permitting) daily, as well as a time **to rest and sleep if required, quiet and active times**, always being mindful of each child's needs and parental direction.

- **Foster the engagement of regular and ongoing communication with parents about the program and their children**

Regular and ongoing communication with parents is an important component. Communication may be in person, by phone, e-mail or through written and posted communication tools. Communication needs to come from all members of Brackendale Montessori.

- **Involve local community partners and allow those partners to support the children, their families, and staff**

Parents will be directed to resources outside of the School if necessary, and **local community partners** such as early year's services, speech therapists, support services, occupational therapists, counsellors, etc., this will be an important part of the Schools support to all children and their families.

- **Continuous professional learning** for the staff at Brackendale Montessori is done by using the community as a valuable resource and having our teachers plan learning opportunities to engage the community in our programs. We seek out opportunities to share our knowledge and to learn from others in the community. Brackendale Montessori provides ongoing opportunities for educators to engage in critical reflection and discussion with others about pedagogy and practice, to support continuous professional learning. These learning experiences are shared with one another in our Monthly staff meetings and professional development day.

Annual Program Statement Review

All Teachers, volunteers and placement students must adhere to a number of policies and procedures, the Program Statement as well as Ministry, Fire and Health Regulations. All teachers, volunteers and placement students will review the Program Statement prior to working in program with the children and annually thereafter or upon any changes or modifications to the Statement. Annual review of the Program Statement and these policies and procedures ensure our educators and volunteers are knowledgeable and prepared to handle any situation.

Working Together

Brackendale Montessori's goal is to ensure the overall, health, safety, and well-being of each child while in our care. We look forward to working together with you the family in the best interest of your child(ren) to provide them with an individual and positive journey for a seamless entry into their community school or, a continued positive journey for those children already

enrolled in their community school. Thank you for choosing to place your child with Brackendale Montessori; we have an open-door policy and are always available for feedback to ensure we are providing the best possible care.

Hours of Operation

Infant Program

Drop Off Times – Pickup Times:

Full Day	7:00 AM – 6:00 PM
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Aspen (Formerly Toddler)

Drop Off Times – Pickup Times:

Full Day	7:00 AM – 6:00 PM
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Juniper to Elementary

Drop Off Times – Pickup Times:

AM	7:00 AM – 8:30 PM
Core Day	8:30 AM – 4:30 PM
PM	4:30 PM – 6:00 PM

The school doors open at 7:00 am and close at 6:00pm daily. Children are not permitted to be on site prior to 7 am or after 6 pm. Staff members use this time to prepare the school for the day or clean for the next day.

When bringing a child to school, parents are expected to bring their child into the building and ensure that the child is under the supervision of a caregiver before leaving. Equally, parents are expected to come into the building when picking up their child. If a third party, not listed on your child's emergency contact list, is to pick up your child, please send us an email prior to the pick-up with the full name of the party picking up. At any time that parents are present, whether at school and/or any special school events, such as concerts, school trips, etc. The sole responsibility of the child is with the parent.

Contacting Brackendale Montessori

For general inquiries, please call during our office hours of operation, between 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM. If you are calling to notify us of your child's absence or your call is urgent, you may call during our extended hours. Our message School is reviewed frequently throughout the day; we will attempt to return your message within 24 hours, during our hours of operation. If you wish to speak to a teacher or spend time in a class to observe, please call to schedule an appointment.

Communication (refer to classroom guidebook for more detailed information)

Email will serve as our primary tool for communicating important school and classroom information to our parents. Through email we will be sending classroom and school newsletters, conference reports, excursion waivers and other important information. Parent feedback is important to our school and our parents are always welcome to meet with either administration or teachers. Should you require a meeting, please contact our office to schedule an appointment. In order to ensure that all meetings are productive, parents, teachers and/or

administration must be prepared. Impromptu meetings and doorway conversations are not conducive to productive communication.

If you are not receiving emails, please confirm your contact information with us. As with all contact information, it is the responsibility of the parent/guardian to notify the school of any change to email address(es). It is also the responsibility of the parent/guardian to print and submit any information or forms that are pertinent to their child(ren).

Safe Arrival and Dismissal Policy

Date Established: Dec 2023

Purpose

This policy and the procedures within help support the safe arrival and dismissal of children receiving care.

This policy will provide staff, students, and volunteers with a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities for ensuring the safe arrival and dismissal of children receiving care, including what steps are to be taken when a child does not arrive at school as expected, as well as steps to follow to ensure the safe dismissal of children.

This policy is intended to fulfill the obligations set out under Ontario Regulation 137/15 for policies and procedures regarding the safe arrival and dismissal of children in care.

Additional Policy Statements

- **Unauthorized Person**

If a person arrives at the school to pick up a child who is not listed on the emergency contact, staff will notify the office immediately. The Site Director or designate will ask the person to wait, while gaining verbal permission from the parent or guardian. The conversation will be documented in the office communication book.

- **Court Order**

This applies if a person arrives to pick up a child but has a court order on file that states that they are not allowed to pick up. The Site Director or designate will explain the above procedure and that they are not listed as authorized to pick up. The Site Director or designate will designate a staff to call the parent/guardian to let them know that the person with a court order is on the premises. If the person in question leaves peacefully, the situation will be documented in the office communication book. If the situation escalates to where the person with the court order attempts to forcibly remove the child, the Site Director or designate will call the police. The Site Director or designate will then follow instructions provided by the police.

- **Incapable of Providing Safe Care**

We never release children to a person who appears incapable of providing safe care to a child. If a parent/guardian or authorized person arrives to pick up a child but appears incapable of providing safe care, the Site Director or designate will speak to the person; suggest that they may need assistance. The Site Director or designate will call or designate a staff member to call an alternate authorized person to come to the school and pick up the child.

Arrival & Dismissal Procedures

Accepting a child into care

1. When accepting a child into care at the time of drop-off, program staff in the room must:
 - o greet the parent/guardian and child.
 - o Do a preliminary health check and ask if there are any changes to the child's pick-up procedure (i.e., someone other than the parent/guardian picking up). Where the parent/guardian has indicated that someone other than the child's parent/guardians will be picking up, the staff must confirm that the person is listed Emergency contact form or where the individual is not listed, ask the parent/guardian to provide authorization for pick-up in writing (e.g., note or email).
 - o document the change in pick-up procedure in daily communication log & sign the child in on the classroom attendance record.

Where a child has not arrived in care as expected

1. Guardians are to communicate a child's absence through an absent form provided via email. Where a child does not arrive at the School and the parent/guardian has not communicated a change in drop-off (e.g., left a voice message, email or advised the closing staff at pick-up), the staff in the classroom must:
 - o Inform the office administration by 10:00 am and the office must commence contacting the child's parent/guardian no later than 10:30 am.
 - **1st attempt by 10:30 am:** Office administration will send out written communication via email.
 - **2nd attempt at 12:00 pm if no response:** Office administration will call parent/guardian and/or emergency contact and leave a message.
2. Once the child's absence has been confirmed, program staff shall document the child's absence on the attendance record and any additional information about the child's absence in the daily written record.

Releasing a child from care

1. The staff who is supervising the child at the time of pick-up shall only release the child to the child's parent/guardian or individual that the parent/guardian has provided written or verbal authorization that the School may release the child too. Where the staff does not know the individual picking up the child (i.e., parent/guardian or authorized individual),
 - o confirm with another staff member that the individual picking up is the child's parent/guardian/authorized individual.
 - o where the above is not possible, ask the parent/guardian/authorized individual for photo identification and confirm the individual's information against the

parent/guardian/authorized individual's name on the child's file or written authorization.

Where a child has not been picked up as expected (before school closes)

1. Where a parent/guardian has previously communicated with the staff a specific time or timeframe that their child is to be picked up from care and the child has not been picked up by 6:00 pm, the Site Director or administrative staff shall contact the parent/guardian via phone call and advise that the child is still in care and has not been picked up.
 - o Where the staff is unable to reach the parent/guardian, administration will call again and leave a message. Where the individual picking up the child is an authorized individual and their contact information is available, the staff shall proceed with contacting the individual to confirm pick-up as per the parent/guardian's instructions or leave a voice message to contact the School.
 - o Where the staff has not heard back from the parent/guardian or authorized individual who was to pick up the child the staff shall contact emergency contacts on file, wait until program closes and then refer to procedures under "where a child has not been picked up and program is closed"

Where a child has not been picked up and the School is closed

1. Where a parent/guardian or authorized individual who was supposed to pick up a child from care and has not arrived by 6:00 pm , staff shall ensure that the child is given a snack and activity, while they await their pick-up.
2. One staff shall stay with the child, while an administrative staff proceeds with calling the parent/guardian to advise that the child is still in care and inquire about their pick-up time. In the case where the person picking up the child is an authorized individual, the staff shall contact the parent/guardian first and then proceed to contact the authorized individual responsible for pick-up if unable to reach the parent/guardian.
3. If the staff is unable to reach the parent/guardian or authorized individual who was responsible for picking up the child, the administrative staff will contact the emergency contacts on file.
4. Where the staff is unable to reach the parent/guardian or any other authorized individual listed on the child's file (e.g., the emergency contacts) by 6:30 pm the staff shall proceed with contacting the local Children's Aid Society (CAS) at **905-433-1551** Staff shall follow the CAS's direction with respect to next steps.

Dismissing a child from care without supervision procedures

Staff will only release children from care to the parent/guardian or other authorized adult. Under no circumstances will children be released from care to unsupervised.

Promptness

It is our intention to instill in the children a sense of order and punctuality. It is important that from a young age, they learn to recognize and appreciate the importance of attending school every day on time. So please ensure your child is brought to school promptly. A child arriving late is disruptive to the learning process of their peers, and they will miss out on the core work cycle. Teachers are expected to remain in full focus of the classroom.

Arrival Procedure: Classrooms - Juniper & Oak:

To ensure a positive start to the day, students should arrive between **8:30 AM and 8:45 AM**. Parents/guardians are asked to escort their child to the playground, where teachers will be available to receive children and communicate any important updates or health information.

Drop Off after 9:00 AM parents/guardians must check in at the office and their child will be escorted to their classroom. Consistent, on-time arrival supports your child's daily routine and sets the tone for a successful day of learning.

Arrival Procedure: Casa Pine and Spruce:

To support a smooth and independent start to the day, students should arrive between 8:15 AM and 8:30 AM. Parents/guardians are asked to drop off their child at the designated classroom entrance, where staff will be present to welcome children and assist as needed.

Please note that **teachers are engaged in the morning work cycle and are not available for conversation at drop-off**. Any important messages or updates should be communicated through the office.

To minimize disruptions, **parents are kindly asked not to enter the classroom after 8:30 AM**. We encourage a brief and positive goodbye to help children transition smoothly into their day.

Children arriving after 9:00 AM must check in at the office and will be escorted to their classroom.

Regular, on-time arrival helps your child settle in confidently and supports the classroom routine.

Arrival Procedure: Elementary

To support a smooth and independent start to the day, students should arrive between 8:15 AM and 8:30 AM. Parents/guardians are asked to drop off their child at the designated classroom entrance, where staff will be present to welcome children and assist as needed.

Please note that **teachers are engaged in the morning work cycle and are not available for conversation at drop-off**. Any important messages or updates should be communicated through the office.

To minimize disruptions, **parents are kindly asked not to enter the classroom after 8:30 AM**. We encourage a brief and positive goodbye to help children transition smoothly into their day.

Children arriving after 9:00 AM must check in at the resource room (near the elementary building) and will be escorted to their classroom.

Regular, on-time arrival helps your child settle in confidently and supports the classroom routine.

Dismissal and Late policy

Programming and curriculum end at 4:00 pm. Dismissal is between 4:00 pm and 4:30 pm. There will be a late charge of late pickups.

Extended charges are \$10.00 for the first 5 mins and then \$1.00 for each minute following per child. This fee will be attached to your next month's school fees.

Preparing for and making time for acclimate weather is something we all must account for when planning our day and responsibilities.

Take into consideration our teachers have families to go home to and personal responsibilities to tend to.

School Closures Due to Inclement Weather Conditions

The Principal or Director may authorize a school closure or a delay in opening (late start) should severe weather conditions or inclement weather, including a snow/ice storm develop during the evening/overnight/early morning, thus having an impact on the safety of children, parents and staff when traveling and arriving to school. In addition, should extreme weather conditions develop during the day, the Principal or Director may decide to close the school earlier, thus an earlier dismissal time. In these conditions, parents are required to make alternative arrangements to have their child picked up from the school by the stated time. As weather conditions vary from area to area, please assess your own safety conditions before traveling.

In such cases, parents are required to find or make the necessary alternate care arrangements for their child. Such alternate care arrangements or plans may include having a parent be prepared to leave work early, having relatives or friends your child, having another parent pick up your child (must authorize in writing)

In the event that school is canceled, or there is a late start or an early dismissal, events scheduled to take place at school, or any location will also be canceled. Please note that no refunds or reduction of fees will be provided under any of the above circumstances; this will include all predetermined closure dates as posted in our holiday schedule at the start of each school year.

We will make every attempt to inform parents promptly of school closures, late school starts, and/or early dismissals, but it is parents' responsibility to contact the school in inclement weather conditions and be prepared for such events. Since the school schedule begins by 7:00 a.m. all cancellation decisions will be made by 6:30 a.m. These will be emailed to all families.

Early Dismissals

The Principal or Director may authorize an early school dismissal time at his/her discretion. Early dismissal typically may be deemed necessary to accommodate the preparation of concerts or other such special events. Other circumstances may arise throughout the school year that may warrant an early dismissal. In the event of an early dismissal parents will be notified with as much notice as possible to the time and day of the dismissal.

Admission

Students entering our Elementary Program will be academically assessed, interviewed and upon acceptance, then placed into an appropriate Grade level at the sole discretion of the school. For Casa Level (2.5 years to 6 years), teachers will perform a one-week assessment which will be shared with the parents. Placement will be determined after the completion of this one-week assessment. **By the age of 3.5 years any child enrolled at Brackendale Montessori must be completely toilet trained.** A child that is not toilet trained by this age can be held back in their program.

Program Groups

Infant Program

(9 – 18 months) – Ratio: 1 staff: 3 Students

Pre casa Program

(18 months – 3 years) – Ratio: 1 staff: 5 Students

Casa Program

- **(3 years – 6 years) – Ratio: 1 staff: 8 Students**
- **(3.8 years to 6 years) – Ratio: 1 staff: 13 Students**

Elementary Program – Grades 1 and up

(6 years and older) – Ratio: 1 staff: 20 Students

Canada-Wide Early Learning & Child Care

Brackendale Montessori has **not enrolled** in the CWELCC System.

Monthly Fees

INFANT – FULL TIME	\$ 1585.00
TODDLER - FULL TIME	\$ 1540.00
CASA (2.5 – 6 years) – FULL TIME	\$ 1510.00
CASA (3.8 – 6 years) – FULL TIME	\$ 1375.00
LOWER ELEMENTARY – FULL TIME	\$ 1395.00
ONE TIME – REGISTRATION FEE	\$ 300.00

Fees are subject to change based on the needs of the school

Placements & Transition

All children, from Infants to Elementary, will be placed into a program, classroom, and level at the sole discretion of the school. This includes the scheduling and nature of the transition from one program/level to another. The school does not require parental consent for a child's placement, promotion, or transition into another program/level. The school reserves the final right at its sole discretion to determine each child's placement, promotion, and transition in the best interest of the child(ren), the class, and the school. Teachers may be transferred, relocated, rescheduled, re-assigned to other classrooms, at the sole discretion of the school at any time.

Supervision Policy for Volunteers and Placement Student

Brackendale Montessori is committed to providing a high quality, safe and secure environment for all children enrolled in our programs. The safety and well-being of children is Brackendale Montessori's highest priority.

Brackendale Montessori may have volunteers and/or Early Childhood Education students working within the organization along with staff throughout the year. At all times, volunteers and placement students must be under the direction and supervision of Brackendale Montessori staff.

No child or children will be supervised by any person less than 18 years of age

No child or children will be supervised by someone who is not an employee of Brackendale Montessori

Only employees of Brackendale Montessori will have direct unsupervised access to children.

Montessori At Home Expectations (Please review classroom guidebook for specific details)

At our school, we believe that homework should support classroom learning, build responsibility, and foster independence.

Guidelines for Homework:

- Once a week - Something fun or interesting to do at home
- **Weekly homework is optional** and offered as a way for children to:
 - Practice familiar concepts at home with ease
 - Prepare for upcoming assessments in a gentle, stress-free way
 - Build responsibility and independence through consistent routines

Families may **opt in to receive weekly homework**. Once enrolled, we encourage children to complete the work **independently and joyfully**, as a continuation of their classroom experience — not as a forced task.

Homework will include a **blend of simple and slightly challenging work**, allowing your child to reinforce what they know and review new material recently presented in class. We will **never assign homework on concepts not yet taught** or on materials the teacher is not confident your child is ready to explore at home.

We value your feedback. If the work feels too difficult or too easy, feel free to let us know — we will be happy to **adjust the content to meet your child's needs**.

Our goal is to keep homework light, meaningful, and respectful of the Montessori principles of self-direction and purposeful learning.

Report Cards and Parent Teacher Conferences (Refer to classroom specific guidebook for detailed information)

Reports are sent home in December, March and June for all students. We feel that we will best serve your child if open communication is kept between the teacher and parents. Besides the

Parent-Teacher interviews, conferences can be scheduled to discuss your child's development if and when required and can be arranged with the office. Any concerns that develop at any time should be resolved at once. Should we note changes in your child academically, emotionally or in their behavior, we shall contact you, and hope that you will also keep us informed of similar changes in your child, if and when necessary.

Parent Issues and Concerns:

Parents/guardians are encouraged to take an active role in our school and regularly discuss what their child(ren) are experiencing within our program. As supported by our program statement, we support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents/guardians, School providers, and staff, and foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents/guardians about the program and their children. Our staff are available to engage parents/guardians in conversations and support a positive experience during every interaction.

All issues and concerns raised by parents/guardians are taken seriously by Brackendale Montessori and will be addressed. Every effort will be made to address and resolve issues and concerns to the satisfaction of all parties and as quickly as possible.

Issues/concerns may be brought forward verbally or in writing. Responses and outcomes will be provided verbally, or in writing upon request. The level of detail provided to the parent/guardian will respect and maintain the confidentiality of all parties involved.

An initial response to an issue or concern will be provided to parents/guardians within one business day(s). The person who raised the issue/concern will be kept informed throughout the resolution process.

Investigations of issues and concerns will be fair, impartial, and respectful to the parties involved.

Feedback Process:

Brackendale Montessori shall provide customers with the opportunity to provide feedback on the service provided to customers with disabilities. Information about the feedback process will be readily available to all customers. Feedback forms along with alternate methods of providing feedback such as verbally (in person or by telephone) or written (handwritten, delivered or email), will be available upon request.

Submitting Feedback

Customers can submit feedback to:

info@brackendalemontessori.com

905 686 9977

Customers who wish to provide feedback by completing an onsite customer feedback form or verbally can do so to the Brackendale Montessori Site Director.

Customers that provide formal feedback will receive acknowledgement of their feedback, along with any resulting actions based on concerns or complaints that were submitted.

Accessibility Feedback Form

Date: _____ Name: _____

Telephone/email: _____

Comment/suggestion: _____

Action required:

Feedback gathered by: _____

Notice of Availability and Format of Documents

Brackendale Montessori shall notify customers that the documents related to the Accessibility Standard for Customer Service are available upon request and in a format that takes into account the customer's disability. There is no additional cost for documents that are free of charge to other persons and they will be provided in a timely manner. We shall consult with the person making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support.

Confidentiality

Every issue and concern will be treated confidentially, and every effort will be made to protect the privacy of parents/guardians, children, staff, students, and volunteers, except when information must be disclosed for legal reasons (e.g., to the Ministry of Education, College of Early Childhood Educators, law enforcement authorities or a Children's Aid Society).

Conduct

Our School maintains high standards for positive interaction, communication, and role-modeling for children. Harassment and discrimination will therefore not be tolerated by any party.

If at any point a parent/guardian, provider or staff feels uncomfortable, threatened, abused, or belittled, they may immediately end the conversation and report the situation to the Site Director and/or licensee.

Concerns about the Suspected Abuse or Neglect of a child

Everyone, including members of the public and professionals who work closely with children, is required by law to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect.

If a parent/guardian expresses concerns that a child is being abused or neglected, the parent will be advised to contact Durham Children's Aid Society ([\(905\) 433-1551](tel:9054331551)).

Persons who become aware of such concerns are also responsible for reporting this information to CAS as per the “Duty to Report” requirement under the *Child and Family Services Act*.

For more information, visit
<http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/childrensaidthereportingabuse/index.aspx>

Procedures

Nature of Issue or Concern	Steps for Parent and/or Guardian to Report Issue/Concern:	Steps for Staff and/or Licensee in responding to issue/concern:
Program Room-Related E.g.: schedule, sleep arrangements, toilet training, indoor/outdoor program activities, feeding arrangements, etc.	Raise the issue or concern to - the classroom staff directly or - Administration (Site Director and/or Program Director)	- Address the issue/concern at the time it is raised or - Arrange for a meeting with the parent/guardian within 1 business days. Document the issues/concerns in detail. Documentation should include: - the date and time the issue/concern was received. - the name of the person who received the issue/concern. - the name of the person reporting the issue/concern. - the details of the issue/concern; and - any steps taken to resolve the issue/concern and/or information given to the parent/guardian regarding next steps or referral.
General, Centre-or Operations-Related E.g.: School fees, hours of operation, staffing, waiting lists, menus, etc.	Raise the issue or concern to Administration (Site Director and/or Program Director)	Provide contact information for the appropriate person if the person being notified is unable to address the matter.
Staff-, Duty parent-, Site Director-, and/or Licensee-Related	Raise the issue or concern to - the individual directly or - Administration (Site Director and/or Program Director) All issues or concerns about the conduct of staff, duty parents, etc. that puts a child's health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the Site Director as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.	Ensure the investigation of the issue/concern is initiated by the appropriate party within 2 business days or as soon as reasonably possible thereafter. Document reasons for delays in writing. Provide a resolution or outcome to the parent(s)/guardian(s) who raised the issue/concern.
Student- / Volunteer-Related	Raise the issue or concern to - the staff responsible for supervising the volunteer or student or - Administration (Site Director and/or Program Director) All issues or concerns about the conduct of students and/or volunteers that puts a child's	

Nature of Issue or Concern	Steps for Parent and/or Guardian to Report Issue/Concern:	Steps for Staff and/or Licensee in responding to issue/concern:
	health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the Site Director as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.	

Escalation of Issues or Concerns: Where parents/guardians are not satisfied with the response or outcome of an issue or concern, they may escalate the issue or concern verbally or in writing to the Site Director.

Issues/concerns related to compliance with requirements set out in the *Child Care and Early Years Act., 2014* and Ontario Regulation 137/15 should be reported to the Ministry of Education's Child Care Quality Assurance and Licensing Branch.

Issues/concerns may also be reported to other relevant regulatory bodies (e.g., local public health department, police department, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Labor, fire department, College of Early Childhood Educators, Ontario College of Teachers, College of Social Workers etc.) where appropriate.

Contacts:

Ministry of Education, Licensed Child Care Help Desk: 1-877-510-5333 or
School_ontario@ontario.ca

Health and Safety – Parental Guidelines

The health and safety of every child is our top priority. We ask families to partner with us in creating a safe and healthy environment for all.

Parental guidelines:

- Any relevant health or illness information is appropriately communicated to the teachers at drop off.
- All children coming to Brackendale Montessori must go out for recess, weather permitting. If your child is too ill to participate in recess, then your child is too ill or fatigued to be attending school.
- Staff members are trained in First Aid and can handle minor injuries but, should an emergency arise, the parents will be notified immediately.
- Medications must be clearly labeled, and a medical form is signed. The school is not able to administer non-prescription drugs.
- Fire drills are held every month. Children are carefully instructed on what to do in case of fire or emergency. Evacuation plans are posted in the school for staff and everyone concerned.
- Brackendale's sunscreen policy requires that children must be appropriately dressed for the season; a wide-brimmed hat that protects the child's face, neck and ears is encouraged. Protective light clothing should be worn. The sunscreen provided must be labeled and the first application of sunscreen must be applied by parents before arriving at school (as mandated by Durham Health Department). Staff will ensure that children have sunscreen applied to exposed skin throughout the day. ***Sunscreen that may contain traces of peanut/nuts oil ingredients are not acceptable due to student allergies, please check ingredients and expiry date before bringing it to school.***

Brackendale Montessori will follow the advice provided by the Durham health department when establishing health and safety protocols, including how to implement any provincial or local public health direction on health and safety guidance.

Immunization

We are required to collect and retain up-to-date immunization for children in our care.

If your child has not been immunized, please provide The Statement of Medical Exemption Form completed by your health practitioner. You may also complete the Statement of Conscience or Religious Belief which requires a notarized affidavit. If you cannot provide either of these documents, we are unable to admit your child into our program.

If an outbreak occurs, the classroom in which the outbreak occurred will be closed and the rest of the facility will remain open. Any child who is not adequately immunized, regardless of legal exemption, will not be able to attend care unless the child receives the required vaccine or until the outbreak is over.

Daily cleaning and sanitization procedure

Policy

Brackendale Montessori is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for children, families, and employees. We will take every reasonable precaution to prevent the risk of communicable diseases. This is a mitigation of risk not an elimination of risk.

Purpose

To ensure that all employees are aware of, and adhere to, the directive established by our local health departments and Children's Services regarding cleaning and disinfecting. This policy applies to all employees, students, community members, and any other persons engaged in business with us.

Definitions

Cleaning: refers to the physical removal of foreign material (i.e., dust, soil) and organic material (i.e., blood, secretions, microorganisms). Cleaning removes, rather than kills microorganisms. Warm water, detergent, and mechanical action (i.e., wiping) is required to clean surfaces. Rinsing with clean water is required to complete the cleaning process to ensure the detergent film is removed.

Sanitize: is defined as the reduction of microorganisms to levels considered safe by public health standards. Sanitizing takes place after the cleaning step because it is most effective on a minimally soiled surface.

Disinfecting: describes a process completed after cleaning in which a sanitizer, is used to kill most disease-causing microorganisms. In order to be effective disinfectants must be left on a surface for a period of time ("contact time"). Contact times are generally prescribed by the product manufacturer. Any items children may come into contact with, may require a final rinse after the required contact time is observed.

Procedures

All products, including cleaning agents and disinfectants, must be kept in a secured location that is out of reach of children.

I. Cleaning and Disinfecting surfaces and items

- **High contact surfaces**

- Surfaces that are frequently in contact with hands such as light switches, shelves, doorknobs, toilet seat and sinks will be cleaned and disinfected at least 2 times in the day or after each use.
- Office equipment (photocopier, phones, desks etc.) will be sanitized after each use.

- **Low contact surfaces**

- Surfaces such as windows, doors, ledges etc. will be cleaned and disinfected daily

- **Diaper tables and toilets**

- Regular diapering and toileting procedures will be followed ensuring proper cleaning and disinfecting between diaper changes and toilet process is

conducted. We will also increase the frequency of our cleaning schedule for toilets and toilet seats.

- **Materials & Toys**

- Toys & Montessori Materials should be cleaned and disinfected between users or at least 2 times per day.

II. Shared Space & Equipment

The risk associated with transmission with shared objects is low. Instead of regular cleaning of shared objects and spaces, the focus should be on regular hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette to reduce the risk of infection related to shared equipment.

- **Hand Hygiene and Respiratory Etiquette**

- Appropriate hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette are among the most important protective strategies.
- School staff and students on educational placement should be trained and able to assist children on appropriate hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette, including the use of alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR), and reinforcing its use.
- **Hand hygiene** should be conducted by anyone entering the School setting and incorporated into the daily schedule at regular intervals during the day, above and beyond what is usually recommended (for example, before eating food, after using the washroom).
- School staff and students on educational placement and children will be provided with targeted, age-appropriate education in proper hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette.
- Age-appropriate posters or signage will be placed around the child care setting.
- Soap and water are preferred as the most effective method and least likely to cause harm if accidentally ingested.
- Safe placement of the ABHR to avoid consumption is important, especially for young children.
- Support or modifications should be provided to allow children with special needs to regularly perform hand hygiene as independently as possible.
- Tissues and lined, no-touch waste baskets (for example, foot pedal-operated, hand sensor, open basket) are to be provided, where possible.
- ABHR with a minimum 60% alcohol concentration must be available (60-90% recommended, including ideally at the entry point to each School room) and/or plain liquid soap in dispensers, sinks and paper towels in dispensers.

- **Where an individual is suspected of having COVID-19 in the School setting:**

- High touch surfaces and areas of contamination (washroom, cubbies, tables, cabinets etc. will be cleaned and disinfected.
- Shared materials and personal belongings will be removed from the space and sealed for a period of 2 weeks and will be cleaned and disinfected prior to returning to use.
- All cleaning and disinfection will be conducted with soap/water and then Bleach/water mixtures.

- o Staff performing cleaning and disinfection must wear full PPE (Gowns, gloves, mask, safety goggles)
- o All waste must be in sealed and disposed off properly to avoid any form of transmission.

III. Toy & Montessori Material Disinfection

The disinfection of toys and Montessori material is vital to ensuring the health and safety of children, as it reduces the potential spread of germs and viruses among children and those who may encounter them.

All toys that are plush will be removed and not used in play, these include stuffed animals, hand puppets, cloth toys, dramatic materials etc. All porous toys and material that cannot be effectively cleaned and disinfected must be removed and not used in play.

Toy & Montessori Material Washing Procedures – Manual Cleaning and Disinfection

Step 1: Inspect all toys and Montessori material to ensure there are no broken parts or jagged edges

Step 2: Wash with soap and water, rinse with clean water & air dry.

Step 3: Disinfect by either immersing in a mix of bleach and water or spray the bleach and water solution on the toy/Montessori material and let sit for 10 minutes, then air dry

Handling used Toys & Montessori Materials

Items that have become visibly dirty or that have come into contact with body fluids (e.g., toys that have been mouthed) should be taken out of circulation, cleaned, and disinfected immediately. Toys that cannot be cleaned and disinfected immediately should be placed in a designated dirty/mouthed toy bin. The bin should be clearly labeled and inaccessible to children.

Documentation of record of cleaning

Licensees are recommended to keep a cleaning and disinfecting log to track and demonstrate cleaning schedules.

Review and monitor procedure

Licensee will review existing practices to determine if changes or enhancements may be required, this includes:

- a. Frequency of cleaning and disinfecting
- b. Areas to clean and disinfect.
- c. Choice of cleaning products
- d. Signage

Expectations for adults in School:

- *All staff, parents and visitors* are encouraged to wear masks while inside the School premises. Masking is now optional as per Durham public Health.
- Masking is encouraged while on premises during pick up and drop off.

Expectations for children:

All children are encouraged to wear masks while inside the School premises. Masking is now optional as per Durham public Health.

Monitoring and responding to reports of COVID 19 symptoms in School

Individuals experiencing symptoms should not attend School. Individuals who have tested positive on a [COVID-19 test](#) (PCR, rapid molecular, or rapid antigen) should self-isolate immediately and follow isolation guidance as outlined in provincial [COVID-19 screening tool](#), the [COVID-19 integrated testing & case, contact and outbreak management interim guidance: Omicron surge](#) document, and the [Interim guidance for schools and child care: Omicron surge](#), and any additional guidance from their local public health unit for isolation and returning to a child care setting.

Note that individuals do not need to provide a medical note or proof of negative result to return to the program.

Protocols for Children or staff that become ill while in care

Policy Statement

Brackendale Montessori is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for children, families, and employees. We will take every reasonable precaution to prevent and mitigate the risk of communicable diseases,

If a child begins to experience any illness while at school:

- The ill child will be immediately separated from others, Parents/guardians will be contacted for pick-up of children.
- Hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette should be practiced while the ill child is waiting to be picked up.
- Regular School operation can continue unless directed otherwise by the local public health unit.
- An ill individual who has a known alternative diagnosis provided by a health care professional may return to school if they do not have a fever and their symptoms have been improving for at least 24 hours, or 48 hours if vomiting or experiencing diarrhea. (Gastro)

If a staff member becomes ill while at the School they should, if possible, isolate themselves immediately until they are able to leave the premises.

A staff person who presents with symptoms of ill health must notify their Site Director and follow isolation protocols.

Protocols for Children or Staff that become ill at home

If your child is showing ill symptoms at home (e.g., sore throat, stomach-ache, headache, cough, lethargy, change in appetite) your child should not attend care and remain home and seek medical advice from your physician.

If you or your child are/have been managed by Public Health, (e.g., confirmed cases of COVID-19, household contacts of cases) follow instructions from the health department to determine when to return to the facility.

Staff can use the following [online self-assessment tool](#) to ensure awareness of possible symptoms of COVID 19. Any staff who suspects that they have an infectious disease should not attend the School program, particularly if their symptoms include any outlined in the COVID-19 screening.

Isolation Guidelines

All staff, parents and visitors should follow the screening tool protocol for isolation guidelines.

Outbreak Management

In response to the evolving situation related to the COVID-19 Omicron (B.1.1.529) variant of concern, the Ministry of Health has provided interim public health guidance on case, contact, and outbreak management for schools and School settings.

The [COVID-19: interim guidance for schools and child care: Omicron surge guidance](#), which can be found on [the Ministry of Health's website](#), provides the direction for local public health units on the management of COVID-19 cases, contacts and outbreaks in child care settings.

Public health directed cohort-based dismissals are no longer likely to occur in School settings. Unless specific direction is provided by the local public health unit, closures are at the discretion of the licensee. Licensees are encouraged to communicate clearly with families and staff so that they are aware of any closures and how they may be impacted.

Communication of COVID 19 outbreak with parents, families, and staff

In the event of a confirmed case or an outbreak of COVID 19 – Parents, Families and staff will be informed via email. It will include information about next steps, school closure and sanitizing procedures if needed.

No personal information will be shared with families unless we are directed to do so by Durham public health for the purpose of contact tracing.

Staff Training

- I. Brackendale Montessori will ensure that training is provided to all School staff/providers on the health, safety and other operational measures outlined in this document plus any additional local requirements in place. Staff training will be on going as updates are made to this document.
- II. Training will include instruction on how to; thoroughly clean the space and equipment, proper use of PPE, safely conduct daily screening, keep daily attendance records, and

proceed in case someone becomes sick or symptomatic of COVID-19.

Operational Guidelines during COVID 19

Pick up and drop off procedure

Parents are welcome to pick up and drop off children directly to the classrooms.

We encourage all families/ visitors entering the premises to wear a mask. If you are experiencing symptoms – follow the guidelines as per the screening tool.

Ventilation

Licensees are encouraged to implement best practices and measures to optimize ventilation (see Public Health Ontario's guidance: Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning (HVAC) Systems in Buildings and COVID-19). Adequate ventilation should be provided by opening windows, moving activities outdoors when possible, and through mechanical ventilation including HVAC systems.

Heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems (HVACs) and their filters are designed to reduce airborne pollutants, including virus particles, when they circulate through the system.

- Ensure HVAC systems are in good working condition.
- Keep areas near HVAC inlets and outlets clear.
- Arrange furniture away from air vents and high airflow areas.
- Avoid re-circulating air.

While ventilation is important, it must be used along with other public health measures. There is not one public health measure that can guarantee protection from COVID-19; multiple strategies are needed.

Staff & School Accreditation

Brackendale Montessori School is a CCMA applicant school that adheres to the traditions first introduced by Dr. Montessori. We are dedicated to providing an authentic Montessori based experience that will be enjoyable, educational, and last a lifetime. All our teachers have successfully completed an Early Childhood Education (ECE) and/or Early Childhood Assistant (ECA) Program or Montessori training that is recognized by Montessori Accreditation Council for Teacher Education (MACTE) and/or Association of Montessori International (AMI). MACTE and AMI are the leading international governing bodies that assure your child's instructors meet the exact standards of Dr. Montessori. All staff members are trained in First Aid and CPR including infant CPR.

Emergency Management Policy

Emergency at Brackendale Montessori School means an urgent or pressing situation in which immediate action is required to ensure the safety of children and adults in the School. Parents/families of children will be notified by office administration via email of the emergency and where children can be picked up. The information given to families will be clear and families are to ensure immediate pick up of children.

Emergency Evacuation Location:

1501 Harwood Ave. North (neighbor directly north of us)

Responsibilities of Staff in Case of an Emergency

- Quickly scan the space around you looking for any potential hazards. Report any findings to the Site Director.
- Account for all children. Conduct a head count and ensure accurate attendance records. Attendance records must be kept with staff. Take the attendance/ emergency contact Information book.
- Gather all medications and any other essential needs of children or adults – if accessible.
- Any extra staff (Cleaner, French Teacher, Volunteer.) not in program with the children should report to the site director, they will be re-directed to assist in younger classrooms such as Infant and Toddler or classrooms located on the second floor.
- Once outside the building, take children to the designated area and conduct a head count matched to the attendance records to ensure all children are outside. Wait for the Site Director to provide further directions.
- Provide activities to reduce stress on children (i.e., circle, songs, games) and maintain appropriate levels of supervision.
- Document children being picked up and by whom.

Responsibilities of Site Director in Case of an Emergency

- The Site Director will contact local emergency response agency.
- Do a final check - ensure all children have been removed from the School (check all washrooms, closets/storage areas, cloak rooms, kitchen/laundry rooms and playgrounds/play structures etc.).
- Coordinate all actions with emergency authorities, giving them as much information as possible.
- Designate one staff member to wait outside and direct emergency vehicles such as fire trucks and ambulances to your location (if applicable).
- Take directions from Police/Emergency Authorities once they arrive. If requested, stay at the School with Police or another Emergency Authority.
- Notify families of the situation and evacuation location for immediate pick up of children. (Site Director may designate a staff responsible for calling families etc. if requested to stay with emergency authorities).
- The Site Director will debrief staff, children, and parents/guardians after the emergency.
- The Site Director will ensure access to additional support, including consideration of special medical needs, be provided in respect of any child or adult who may have experienced distress during the emergency.
- When the emergency has been eliminated, normal activities should resume as soon as possible in order to provide an environment that can help ensure the health, safety, and normalcy for the children. Providing a familiar and safe environment and a regular routine gives a sense of security.

Surveillance Cameras

The purpose of the surveillance cameras installed at Brackendale Montessori is to provide a form of security and general control over the operations at the school.

The images from the security cameras are routinely monitored and are stored for the purpose of review in the event that a concern is brought to our attention. Only those individuals responsible for the system administration of the security system will have full access to the stored images. Maintenance and use of the security cameras and related equipment will be monitored and enforced solely at the discretion of Brackendale Montessori.

Access will be provided whenever required by law or a court order. No other use will be made of the images without appropriate advance approval from Brackendale Montessori's administration. Such decisions are at the sole discretion of Brackendale Montessori administration.

Child and Family Services Act

"Every person who, in the course of his/her professional duties, has reason to believe that a child is being abused, or suspects that a child may have suffered abuse, shall immediately report the suspicion and the information on which it is based to a Children's Aid Society." (Ontario Child and Family Services Act, Section 68, Paragraph 3) Under new definitions in the Act, child abuse includes physical, verbal, emotional and sexual abuse, as well as lack of reasonable care.

As Educators, we strive to promote the protection and wellbeing of our students. If we believe that a child is, or may be, in need of protection, **we are obligated by law** to report the suspicion to Children's Aid Society.

The Child and Family Service Amendment Act require a person to report to a child welfare agency if he or she has reasonable grounds to suspect that a child may be in need of protection. The Principal/Director of a school, or teacher, who fails to report suspected abuse, is guilty of an offense and is contravening internal policies. Brackendale Montessori and its employees will respect our policies and the legislation and be governed by it.

Serious Occurrence Policy

Serious occurrence reports are completed fully and in a timely manner and documented on the Child Care Licensing System (CCLS) for the Ministry of Education. Parents/guardians are immediately informed when their children are involved in a serious occurrence. Brackendale Montessori will always post a Serious Occurrence Notification Form near our license when/if a serious occurrence happens for a period of 10 business days.

Sleep Supervision Policy and Procedures

Children's sleep and rest play an integral part in a child's well-being and development. The purpose of this policy and procedures described within is to provide staff, students, volunteers and parents with rules and procedures we follow to safeguard children from harm, injury or death while sleeping.

- Children will be provided with the opportunity to sleep or engage in quiet activities based on their needs.
- Children under 12 months of age will be placed on their backs for sleep to align with the recommendations set out in Health Canada's document entitled "[Joint Statement on Safe Sleep: Preventing Sudden Infant Deaths in Canada](#)".
- Children under 18 months of age will be provided time to sleep based on their individual schedules and will be assigned to a crib.
- Brackendale staff will avoid the use of loose bedding or soft objects in your baby's crib. Things like comforters, quilts, blankets, infant pillows, adult pillows, foam padding, stuffed toys, bumper pads, and sleep positioners should not be in your baby's sleeping area as they pose an entanglement, entrapment, strangulation, and suffocation hazard to infants.
- All children from infants to preschool will be monitored during sleep times to look for and identify signs of distress and implement immediate responses to protect the health and safety of children.
- All children 18 months and older will be provided time to sleep for a period of no more than two hours each day and will be assigned to a cot.
- Children 18 months and older (Toddler/Preschool) can use light breathable blankets while on a cot – Sleep sacks and wearable blankets are not allowed on a cot as it can be a hazard in the event of an emergency.

Smoke Free Environment

No person shall smoke or hold a lit or electronic cigarette at Brackendale Montessori including in the playground area. This will apply at all times, even when children are not present. Any person refusing to comply is contravening the Smoke-Free Ontario Act.

Administering Medication

Brackendale Montessori staff cannot administer any prescription medication without proper authorization under any circumstance. Only designated Brackendale Montessori office staff members will administer **prescribed medication** with written notice from your child's doctor. Parents must present the medication to the office, in the original container with the child's name and clearly labeled indicating the dosage and time required. Parents must complete and sign a medical consent form from Brackendale Montessori. **We uphold a zero tolerance, as held by the Ministry of Children Services, for any medication left in a child's knapsack, where any child may have access.** If any such drugs or medications are discovered by staff, it will result in an automatic one-day suspension. A second such offense will result in an automatic withdrawal from Brackendale.

Administering Over the Counter Skin Products

Brackendale Montessori is permitted to administer over the counter skin products to children provided the following measures are in place:

- must have a blanket authorization from a parent on the enrolment form
- All over the counter/non-prescription medication are labelled with the child's name
- It should be stored in accordance with the instructions for storage on the label
- Administered in accordance with instructions on the label as well as authorization from the parents.

Equal Opportunity (Inclusion Policy)

Brackendale Montessori is committed to equal opportunity for all children, students, employees, and candidates for positions, regardless of physical disability, race, ethnic origin, color, religion, ancestry, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, place of origin, citizenship, or any other factor unrelated to job/daily routine performance.

We will reasonably accommodate the needs of persons with disabilities in a manner that respects their dignity and helps maximize their potential as a student or their contribution to the school as an employee.

Anti-Bias Policy

In keeping with the official policy of the Province of Ontario that inappropriate attitudes and behavior based on race will not be tolerated, we are committed to providing an environment where parents and children of diverse backgrounds, cultures and ethnic origins may feel welcome. Our aim in doing so is to promote an understanding of unity in diversity. Staff will ensure that:

- Every effort be made to positively reinforce a child's identity and self-worth.
- Each child is treated equally regardless of age, race, sex and/or physical disability.
- Programming reflects and integrates cultural differences.

Uniform Guidelines

School uniforms promote a sense of belonging, equality, and school identity. They also help prepare children for the professionalism expected in both learning environments and future workplaces. All children are to comply with the following standards. Any contravention to our uniform policy could result in behavioural monitoring. Quarterly report cards will also reflect uniform infractions.

Color Code Guidelines – Juniper and Aspen (Formally Toddler)

SHOES	Velcro / slip on shoes – no shoelaces as this deters independence.
SHIRTS	Any White or Blue shirts, T-shirts, Polos or long sleeves
PANT/SKIRT/DRESSES	Any Navy Blue track pants, pants, or skirts or Dresses
TIGHTS	Navy blue or White

Uniform Guidelines – Casa Oak/Spruce/Pine/Cedar/ Lower Elementary

*Each day, a shirt, cardigan, or vest must have a crested logo

SHOES	Indoor shoes - Prefer Velcro / slip on shoes, shoelaces may deter independence.
SHIRTS	White or Blue school crested collared shirts, white school crested blouses, or white or blue school crested golf shirts/long sleeve shirts (Purchased from the Uniform Stores)
PANT/SKIRT	Navy Blue dress or Cargo pants, or skirt Track pants (excursions/gym days) (May be purchased from the Uniform store)
TUNIC	School Tartan (Purchased from the Uniform Store)
CARDIGAN & VEST	Navy Blue school crested cardigans & vests (Purchased from the Uniform Store)
TIGHTS / HOISERY	Navy blue, white, or black

Uniforms must be purchased from McCarthy Uniforms AJAX STORE - 700 Finley Avenue Unit 14 , Ajax , ON , L1S 3Z2

<https://www.mccarthyuniforms.ca/shop/school/761#allProducts>

Uniforms are to be worn at all times during school. Casual wear is acceptable on Fridays and during weeks designated as camp.