



Water Lily

Montessori School

A Wildflower School

Family Handbook

Water Lily Montessori School

499 Wacouta Street

Saint Paul, MN 55101

Amanda Jakowich Director/Founding Teacher Leader

651-227-7483

info@waterlilymontessori.org

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VISION

A Montessori classroom where all children are offered opportunities to further augment their inner strength and character, through human interactions, that value acceptance and appreciation of all beings.

MISSION

Water Lily Montessori School is an inclusive, multicultural community committed to serving children and families in compassionate ways. Our Teacher Leaders are committed to providing an authentic Montessori environment, while simultaneously assisting families navigate the journey of parenting and life.

SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Water Lily Montessori School is a Minnesota Wildflower Montessori School, a public charter school; as well as a school within the independent network of national Wildflower schools. Our Montessori Children's House is committed to partnering with families and organizations as we live into our mission by offering children from all backgrounds a welcoming environment of support and guidance. Through this guidance each child develops independence, concentration, appreciation of self and of the community.

THE MONTESSORI APPROACH

The aim, during a child's time in a Montessori Children's House, is for the child to learn how to adapt to their surroundings as future members and change agents of our society. A Montessori Children's House unifies the social, physical, and intellectual functioning of each child. There are four areas of work within the Children's House - Practical Life, Sensorial, Language, and Math. Instruction occurs one-on-one and in small groups conducted at the child's pace. Montessori materials are organized in a logical, sequential nature, providing a structure that guides a child's discovery. A series of presentations, activities, and developmentally appropriate materials are designed to enable the child to master specific skills.

At Water Lily, the Children's House is intentionally constructed to maximize independence, nurture exploration, and foster equitable community engagement with peers and adults. Children will be offered presentations individually or in small groups by a classroom Guide. During the day, children will have uninterrupted work time in the classroom where they are free to choose work they have been presented and repeat that work for as long as they desire during the work period.

As a Montessori school community, Water Lily incorporates the five components of social and emotional learning (SEL); self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision making ([SEL Information](#)).

There is nothing more beautiful and hopeful than seeing children thrive in a supportive community where they engage in meaningful self-selected work. Our classroom environment provides a courageous space for children to develop self-confidence, personality strengths, and pride in their abilities.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Parents are a child's first and most important teachers. When families and schools work together to build upon a foundation of support, children will in turn receive the best education possible. Water Lily Montessori is committed to partnering with families in support of each child's development, growth, and success. Water Lily Montessori School asks and expects families to make the following commitments to their child:

- **Have students at school on time. School begins at 8:30.** Students need to be here on time to start the day with the rest of the class.
- **Have students attend school regularly.** Students who miss school frequently often fall behind their peers academically and have a difficult time integrating socially. Regular attendance is required. If a student misses more than 8 days due to unexcused absences, we must report the student as truant to the MN Department of Education. Excused absences are those due to illness, medical appointments, extreme family emergencies, and vacations approved in advance by the teacher leaders. (See Attendance Policy, page 6)
- **Attend parent-teacher conferences.** Conferences are held twice a year and are mandatory for each family. Conferences are an opportunity to discuss the child's social and academic development, and work together to develop goals and help the child reach her/his potential.
- **Attend parent meetings and seasonal events.** Each meeting will focus on a different topic such as language development, mathematics, nutrition, or the transition to elementary school. Parent meetings provide important information for families to support the child's development and growth. Parent meetings are also an excellent opportunity to get to know Water Lily teachers and other Water Lily families.
- **Make sure children have adequate sleep.** Children ages 3 to 6 need 10-11 hours of sleep each night. Sleep will assure that children retain what they learn and are able to be their best each day.
- **Parents are expected to follow the rules of respect** for self, others, materials, and the environment. Parents should be respectful with staff, students, and other families. Language and actions used in the building should be respectful and appropriate. Please bring conflicts to the attention of the teachers.

- **Parents are expected to read and comply with the policies in the Parent Handbook.** Please contact the school office if you have any questions regarding the handbook or expectations.

ATTENDANCE POLICIES

Have students at school on time. School begins at 8:30. Students need to be here on time to start the day with the rest of the class. Water Lily staff will be greeting students at the 10th Street door until 8:40. If you arrive after 8:40, please utilize the secured entrance at 499 Wacouta Street. **Please be patient as we are engaged with students and have already begun our school day. Each doorbell interrupts the work of staff and students as we need to leave the classroom in order to answer each doorbell buzzer.**

Excused Absences

There are times when a child cannot attend school for legitimate reasons. Excused absences are occurrences considered legitimate reasons for non-attendance.

Excused absences include:

- Illness or injury, requires a doctor's note if absent 4 or more days
- Sickness or death in the family
- Impassable road due to weather
- Observance of religious holidays not recognized by public schools
- Quarantine, requires a doctor's note
- Court appearance
- Suspension, Exclusion, or Expulsion from school (This refers to students who have been removed from school following 121A.40 Minnesota Fair Pupil Dismissal Law)
- Emergency medical or dental treatment for the student, requires a doctor's note
- Other agreed absences pre-approved by school staff

Unexcused Absences

Water Lily Montessori does not recognize unexcused absences as legitimate reasons for non-attendance.

Procedures to address unexcused absences:

- First unexcused absence: Staff will call and inform the parent
- Second unexcused absence: Staff will contact the parent in writing explaining the policy for excused and unexcused absences
- After the third unexcused absence, the child is considered a "habitual truant." The school will follow the procedures described under truancy.

- In addition, families receiving free tuition are in jeopardy of having this terminated.

COMMUNICATIONS

The success of each child can only be achieved when all the adults in the child's life—parents and teachers—work together. Communication between parents and teachers is essential in order to provide the most supportive environment for your child. Please inform your child's teacher of any changes at home that may have an effect at school.

Parent teacher conferences are held twice a year- fall and spring. Parents can make an appointment at any time of year to speak with the lead guide/teacher about their child or contact info@waterlilymontessori.org by email with questions or concerns. Parents can expect to hear from the lead guide/teacher in person or by email approximately once a month.

Parents have the responsibility of checking their child's folder daily/weekly. Important news and reminders will be placed in the child's folder. Parents can also expect a monthly newsletter arriving in their inbox prior to the first of each month. Please read all posted signs and notes.

Feel free to call or email the teachers if you have any questions or concerns. The appropriate person will respond at their earliest convenience. If a concern or conflict is not addressed appropriately, please refer to the Grievance Policy.

COMMUNITY CELEBRATIONS

Water Lily Montessori collaborates with families to host celebrations for the school community. Celebrations are a great opportunity to share with and get to know other Water Lily families. Annual community celebrations include a *Harvest Celebration in the fall* and a *Celebration of Learning in the spring*.

Birthday Celebrations

The week prior to your child's birthday celebration you will be provided with a **Circle of Life Celebration** form to be completed for your child. Please provide a summary of their birth years (*i.e. If your child is 3 years old, provide a summary of their first 3 years of life. If your child is 5 years old, provide a summary of their first 5 years of life.*) that include memorable moments to be shared with the classroom community. Family members are welcome to attend the day of the celebration, which will be the child's actual birthday unless their birthdate falls on a weekend, then we will celebrate the Friday before. Water Lily staff will have a small gift for each child.

Calendar

Water Lily Montessori will publish a school year calendar each fall. The [calendar](#) (select the current school year) will include school closings, special events, and parent meetings. If changes are made to the calendar, families will be given advance notice. Reminders will be posted in the monthly newsletter.

CLOTHING AND OTHER ITEMS NEEDED

Each child must have an additional pair of shoes to be kept at school for indoor classroom use. These must be a sturdy sneaker for walking and gross motor activities, while in the building. **No Crocs, slippers, dress shoes, or open toe shoes.** Each child also needs a complete change of clothes- shirt, pants, socks, and underwear- kept at school in case clothing gets soiled. A stainless steel water bottle to remain at school throughout the school year. Families are encouraged not to send their child to school with jewelry, such as bracelets, necklaces, etc. as these can be distracting and may pose safety risks to the child.

VOLUNTEERING

Volunteer opportunities allow parents to contribute to Water Lily Montessori in important ways. Volunteer opportunities include classroom materials making; cleaning and building/garden maintenance; event set-up and/or clean-up; food preparation for parent meetings or community celebrations; and others. Families will receive invitations for volunteer opportunities as they arise throughout the school year.

TUITION, FEES, AND BILLING

Registration, Supplies, and Materials Fee*

Total registration, supply and material fee is \$175. This is a supply fee for the school year, for either Preschool and/or Kindergarten. It is \$175.00 (annual fee) and should be paid before the child's first day of school. The registration fee is applied to each student in the amount of \$75. This is nonrefundable. The supply and material fee is \$100 each student. This amount off-sets our annual cost of new, updated, and/or replaced materials and supplies.

Preschool Tuition

Preschool tuition is \$1,500 a month for 9 months (\$13,500 a year). June's tuition is prorated at a daily rate of \$83/day. Water Lily Montessori is committed to offering a preschool program that is accessible to a variety of socioeconomic levels.

If you feel that your family meets the income requirements for an Early Learning Scholarship please visit their website at [ThinkSmall Early Learning Scholarships](#) to apply. All families must independently apply for Early Learning Scholarships through

ThinkSmall. Water Lily Montessori is not responsible for submitting ThinkSmall applications for students but are willing to support as needed. Once a confirmation letter from ThinkSmall has been received by your family, you may bring that confirmation letter to Water Lily Montessori.

If your letter states "Waitlisted", we will discuss a reduced tuition rate with you. If your letter states "Awarded", then your tuition is covered for the awarded year based on the start date of your award. If your letter states "Denied", your income does not meet the required income level to be awarded Early Learning Scholarship funding; however, Water Lily Montessori has a limited number of slots that are available for a reduced tuition rate so please reach out to the Director for a potential subsidy.

Breakfast Bunch Option

Morning care hours run from 8:15am-8:30 am, Monday through Friday.

Morning care fees are as follows:

\$25/week Pre-registered for Monday - Friday billed monthly at \$100/month

\$10/day for "Drop-in" before care

Aftercare Option

Aftercare is \$200 per month from 3:30pm - 5:00pm

\$30/day for "Drop-in after school care"

All families who wish to use morning or after school care are required to fill out a "Morning and/or After School Care Registration & Agreement Form" before they can officially partake in morning or after school care. Families are required to pay for the days they sign up even if the student does not end up attending those days.

**If your family receives an Early Learning Scholarship - Pathway I - ThinkSmall, this fee will be deducted from your annual award.*

Summer Program

Entire Summer - Full Day Summer Camp tuition is \$2,905 (billed at \$83/day)

Weekly - Full Day Summer Camp tuition is \$415/week. If your child was a recent Kindergarten graduate, the summer program fee applies. If financial support is needed, reach out to the Director. Financial arrangements are based on need and availability.

Billing

Invoices for preschool tuition will be sent out on the 25th of each month. Tuition received after the 5th of the month is considered late and will be charged a late payment fee of \$20 a day. If tuition is not paid by the 5th of the month, your child

may not come to school the following day. If preschool tuition is still not paid after the 31st of the month, your child's spot will be given up to another student on our waitlist.

Tuition costs are based on family income and the availability of Water Lily funds. In order to receive a Water Lily scholarship, the family must complete a scholarship application form, and provide appropriate proof of income. No tuition will be charged for a child's third year of enrollment in Water Lily Montessori (Kindergarten children, 5 years old as of September 1st).

The following financial policies apply to all families:

- **Families have the responsibility to pay tuition charges monthly on the first day of every month.**
- **If parents are more than 2 weeks behind in payments, the contract will end. The child will not be able to attend school until a payment is made, and could lose her/his/their place in Water Lily. If the contract is canceled, the family must still pay any amount due.**
- Water Lily will charge weekly tuition until a family's contract ends. Parents have an obligation to pay, even if the child is absent.
- If your child will no longer attend Water Lily Montessori, you must notify the teachers with a 30 day advance notice.
- Water Lily will charge a \$35.00 return check fee.
- If parents/guardians or other adults authorized to pick up the child arrive more than 15 minutes after the pick-up time marked in her/his contract, there will be a late pick-up charge.
- Late pick-up fees must be paid the following week along with tuition charges in order to ensure the continued enrollment of the child.
- There will be no school on the days marked as closed in Water Lily Montessori's school calendar.
- Tuition remains the same for holidays, teacher professional development days, or other days that your child does not attend school. No discounts are given.

BEHAVIOR GUIDANCE, POLICIES AND PROCEDURE

Young children are working toward independence and self-discipline. They learn by experimenting, testing limits, manipulating circumstances, and experiencing the consequences of their behavior. Behavior guidance must be geared towards each individual child's needs and developmentally appropriate, providing immediate and directly related consequences to inappropriate behavior.

While it is important for children to learn the rules for getting along in a group setting, it is equally important for children to know that there are expectations placed on them, and that they must in turn have expectations of others. This is the basis for

understanding that everyone deserves to be treated equally. If a behavior is considered inappropriate for a child in the child care setting, it usually must be considered inappropriate for an adult as well.

As an aid to life, we guide behavior of young children to assist them in:

- Developing their self-discipline.
- Problem solving with confidence.
- Feeling good about themselves and their ethnic heritage.
- Considering the rights of others and to appreciate human differences.
- Learning safe and appropriate ways to interact with people, the community, and the classroom environment.

Water Lily staff will use the positive guidance approach, which enables the child to develop self-discipline and assume responsibility for his/her/their own behavior. We will foster and guide a child's choices so his/her/their behavior will reflect peaceful human relationships with other children and adults. We will provide an age appropriate environment, which is stimulating and conducive to the development of the self-esteem of each child. We stress the importance of establishing and fostering positive relationships between staff and children. The following are some acceptable techniques used to encourage children's cooperation at Water Lily Montessori.

Teachers will:

- Know each child's needs, characteristics, and interests according to age and developmental stage.
- Will set reasonable limits and standards for the safety of each child while ensuring the rights of other children.
- Help each child to understand and adjust to the established routine.
- Foster each child's involvement to feel secure as a group member.
- Use simple positive statements for guiding a child toward what they can do instead of what they cannot do.
- Listen to the child, try to find the cause for unacceptable behavior, and provide guidance toward acceptable healthy expressions of feelings.
- Use positive guidance techniques for the child and the situation such as: distraction or redirection toward an appropriate activity; allowing a choice when possible; advance notice of activity changes; and provide activities, materials and learning experiences which encourage self-help skills and foster independence and mature self-confidence in each child.

When the need for guidance or discipline does arise, the teachers/staff will use the following techniques:

- Teachers will anticipate conflict and will take steps to prevent it;

- Teachers will state expectations for behavior;
- Teachers will give a warning for changes in behavior;
- When a warning has no effect, teachers will instruct the child to stop the unacceptable behavior and/or provide an immediate and directly related consequence for the child's unacceptable behavior (i.e., the child will need to leave the area or activity in which the problem behavior is occurring); and
- When absolutely necessary, staff will use closeness and gentle touch to guide behavior.

Children may be separated from the group temporarily if other less intrusive methods for guiding behavior have been ineffective, and the child's behavior threatens the well-being of other children or staff. If separation is called for, the child will remain in an open area, where the child can still see and hear the other children and staff. The duration of the separation will be appropriate to the child's age and maturity level, and will not exceed ten minutes. The separation time will be shortened if the child has stopped or brought under control the behavior that precipitated the separation. Because this separation is intended to give the child time to regain his/her composure, a staff member will remain with the child, if possible, offering encouragement and assistance as the child requests it.

Separation Report

All separations from the group must be noted on a separation log. The log will include the child's name, the staff person's name, time, date, and information indicating what less intrusive methods were used to guide the child's behavior, and how the child's behavior continues to threaten the well-being of the child or other children in the group. If needed and/or requested a family will sign a Conflict Resolution form upon enrolling their child.

The following steps will be taken to handle persistent, unacceptable behavior:

- 1) Teachers will continue observing and noting the child's behavior and the staff member's reaction toward the child's behavior. The teachers will make a written, individual behavior plan.
- 2) If the unacceptable behavior continues, we will give the option of making an appointment with the help of the mental health department to guide and give suggestions to the family. Redirection and close observation will continue.
- 3) If the behavior continues without changes the plan consists of: one whole day of suspension, required appointment with the mental health department, close observation, and redirection.

- 4) If suspension, appointment with the mental health department, close observation, and redirection does not work, the child may not continue participating in Water Lily Montessori for the security of all participants.

If a child is continually unable to modify his/her/their behavior, in spite of staff efforts and previously stated strategies, Water Lily staff, in conjunction with parents, may conclude that Water Lily Montessori is unable to meet the needs of the child or the family. In this case, we will assist the family in seeking programming that is better able to meet the child's needs.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS: Preventing the Spread of Illness

Our school is committed to maintaining a healthy, safe, and welcoming environment for all children and staff. We follow recommended health and hygiene practices to help reduce the spread of common illnesses.

We support a healthy school community by:

- **Promoting clean air:** Using appropriate ventilation, air filtration, and outdoor activities when possible.
- **Cleaning and disinfecting:** Regularly cleaning frequently touched surfaces, classroom materials, and shared spaces.
- **Practicing hand hygiene:** Encouraging children and adults to wash their hands regularly with soap and water, especially before eating and after coughing, sneezing, or using the restroom.
- **Teaching respiratory etiquette:** Encouraging children to cover coughs and sneezes with a tissue or their elbow and to wash their hands afterward.
- **Encouraging recommended vaccinations:** Families are encouraged to keep children current with vaccinations recommended by their healthcare provider and required by applicable state regulations.

Families play an important role in keeping our community healthy. Please keep your child home when they are ill and notify the school of contagious illnesses when appropriate. Together, we can help create a healthy environment where children can learn, grow, and participate fully in our school community. We follow state (MDH and MDE) and federal guidelines (CDC and WHO) as it relates to the health and well-being of all concerned.

Care of an Ill or Injured Child

If your child becomes ill or injured while in care, he/she/they will be isolated away from other children under the supervision of a staff person. You or your designated alternate will be contacted to pick up your child immediately. You or the person

specified on the Emergency Contact List must pick up your child within one hour after we call. Until you arrive, your child will be monitored according to program procedures. If staff think it necessary, the child's health care provider will be contacted.

Exclusion of an Ill Child

The Department of Human Services requires that we exclude a child with an illness or condition that the Commissioner of Health determines to be contagious and a physician determines has not had sufficient treatment to reduce the health risk to others. We will follow the exclusion guidelines listed below which are taken from [INFECTIOUS DISEASES IN CHILD CARE SETTINGS: INFORMATION FOR DIRECTORS, CAREGIVERS, AND PARENTS OR GUARDIANS](#) prepared by Hennepin County Community Health Department, Epidemiology Program.

We must by law exclude a child with any of the following conditions:

- **Chicken pox.** Until all the blisters have dried into scabs; usually about 6 days after rash onset.
- **Diarrhea (Infectious).** Until diarrhea has stopped. For some infections, the person must also be treated with antibiotics before returning to child care.
- **Diarrhea (Uncontrolled).** Until uncontrolled diarrhea stops, or until a medical exam indicates that it is not a communicable disease (uncontrolled diarrhea is an increased number of stools, compared with a person's normal pattern, along with watery stools, and/or decreased stool form that cannot be contained by the diaper or use of the toilet).
- **Fever.** Until a medical exam indicates the child may return. Axillary armpit temperature: 100.4 F. or higher, before fever reducing medication is given, when accompanied by behavior changes, or other signs or symptoms of illness. Measure temperature before giving medications to reduce fever.
- **Impetigo.** Until the child has been treated with antibiotics for at least a full 24 hours.
- **Lice (head).** Until after the first treatment then when no live lice are seen and all "nits" (eggs) are removed.
- **Rash.** With or Without Fever or Behavior Change until a medical exam indicates these symptoms are not that of a communicable disease (i.e., chickenpox, fifth disease, measles, roseola, rubella, shingles, strep throat).
- **Respiratory Infections (Viral).** Until the child is without fever for 24 hours and is well enough to participate in normal activities. No exclusion for other mild respiratory infections without fever as long as the child can participate comfortably.
- **Ringworm (skin & scalp).** Until 24 hours after treatment has been started.
- **Scabies.** Until 24 hours after treatment has been started.

- **Signs/Symptoms of Possible Severe Illness.** Until a medical exam indicates the child may return (unusually tired, uncontrolled coughing, irritability, persistent crying, difficulty breathing, wheezing).
- **Streptococcal Sore Throat (Strep Throat).** Until at least a full 24 hours after treatment begins and the child is without fever for 24 hours.
- **Vomiting.** Until vomiting stops (vomiting is defined as two or more episodes in the previous 24 hours).

A child who is not able to participate in child care program activities with reasonable comfort, including outdoor play; or who requires more care than staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of other children in care will also be excluded.

When a child in our care has been medically diagnosed with a communicable disease, we will notify the appropriate health authorities and follow their recommendations to provide information to parents of all exposed children. The child care program will notify the parents of exposed children on the same day or within 24 hours by a written notice that will be sent home for parents to read.

Parents are required by Minnesota state laws and our center policies to inform the center within 24 hours, exclusive of weekends/ holidays, if their child is diagnosed with a communicable disease.

Health Consultation Services

Water Lily Montessori receives health consultation services from Navigate Care. All Health Consultants are Registered Nurses with certification in Public Health. Water Lily utilizes their expertise and knowledge when needed, or requested, as well as following MDE requirements as a public charter school.

Health Records

Parents/guardians must provide the following forms:

1. **Immunization Record:** This record must give dates (month, day, and year) of immunizations your child has received. It must be current and is due on admission. Immunization records must be updated whenever your child receives additional immunizations.
2. **Health Record/Well-Child Check-up Summary:** This information must include the date of the child's most recent physical exam (within six months), and be signed by the child's health care provider. This form is due on admission.
3. **Re-examination:** A new health record/summary is required for children already admitted to the program. As a minimum, an updated report of the

physical examination signed by your child's source of health care is required upon enrollment in the preschool program (3- and 4-year-olds) and again when the child reaches 5 years of age.

These files are kept in a secure location in the office. Only administration, teaching staff, the child's parents/guardians, and regulatory authorities have permission to review the files.

Parents have the responsibility to inform the school when their child has any special medical condition, needs, or allergies so that we can provide appropriate care and support based on the child's individual needs.

Dietary modification because of special dietary needs shall be made under the direction of a trained health care provider. Written permission from the child's parent/legal guardian and the child's health care provider is required.

Dietary modifications for religious reasons require only written parent/guardian permission.

First Aid

In the event of any injury or illness, appropriate first aid will be administered by trained teacher(s)/staff. If the teacher(s)/staff decide this is an emergency situation, 911 will be contacted to provide emergency first aid. If necessary, the emergency medical service/ambulance will transport your child at your expense to a medical facility as designated by emergency services and/or the hospital you specified on the Emergency Contact List. A parent or alternate listed on the Emergency Contact list will be contacted as soon as possible. An attempt to contact your child's source of health care may also be made. Staff will not transport children.

Medication(s)

Prescription medications will only be given with written parental consent and written physician approval. Please complete the medication form if your child needs medication while in our care. Medications must be in their original container and may be given only to the child for whom they are prescribed. Please ask the pharmacy to split the medication into 2 containers — one for home and one for the school. Outdated/expired medications will not be given.

The administration of non-prescription or over-the-counter medications shall be limited to those with written permission from both the physician/nurse practitioner and the parent/guardian for a specific child for each specific episode of illness. Use of the Medication Authorization/Administration Record form or written instructions

from the physician/nurse practitioner is required. Containers must be labeled with the child's name and date. Outdated medications will not be given.

- Nebulizer medications that are in single dose containers must be brought to the center in the original container with a current, clearly written prescription label on the container. The prescription label must indicate the child's name, prescribing licensed health care provider's name, name of medication, medication strength, amount to be given, how often to give and what it is to be mixed with if applicable.
- For medications which are to be given long term we will need an **Individual Child Care Plan** signed by you and the child's licensed health care provider. This includes as needed (prn) over the counter medications such as Ibuprofen used for a child with a history of febrile seizures.
- Over the counter medication will be given only with written permission from a licensed healthcare provider. It will be given according to the doctor's and the manufacturer's instructions.
- Diaper rash products, insect repellents and sunscreens are an exception, and need documented parental approval only. Powders and/or cornstarch preparations will not be used because they may promote or hide infections, and can be inhaled.

All medications must have a legible label on the container. Your medication container will be returned to you when it is completed. All medications will be out of reach of children and/or stored in a locked cabinet or kept in the refrigerator, which is located in the school office where children are not allowed.

ITEMS FROM HOME

Items such as candy, toys, and stuffed animals are not allowed at school and should be left at home. If a child brings any of these item(s), the child will be asked to place the item into their backpack or in the hands of the teacher leaders and will be returned to a parent/guardian at the end of the day. Occasionally a child may bring an item of cultural significance to school to share with her/his/their classmates. Please arrange this with a teacher prior to 8:30 am to make sure your child is offered an appropriate amount of time to share her/his/their object. Water Lily Montessori cannot be responsible for lost or damaged items.

MEALS AND SNACKS

Breakfast, lunch, and a snack are served daily. All meals and snacks meet the USDA's National School Lunch Program and the Minnesota Department of Education regulations and policies. Breakfast and Lunch is catered by an approved dining services food provider. Food Work/Snack is available throughout the day as it

remains in stock for the day. Families are asked to sign-up for two separate weeks throughout the school year to provide fresh ingredients for our Food Work in Practical Life area.

Special dietary needs must be documented with written instructions from you or your child's physician. In the case of some special dietary requirements, the center may ask that parents send food from home.

If food is brought from home to share with other children (i.e., for special occasions such as birthdays) it must be commercially prepared and packaged.

NAP TIME

For children 3 and 4 years of age, nap time is from 1:30pm to 2:45 pm. (Kindergarten/5-year-old children do not nap at school; they continue learning during this time.)

NON-DISCRIMINATION

In accordance with federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Adjudication, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call toll free (866) 632-9992 (Voice).

Individuals who are hearing impaired or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339; or (800) 845-6136 (Spanish). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

PETS

For the 2026-2027 school year we will be caring for Paisley, a Holland Lop/Lionhead rabbit. Water Lily staff will care for pets following proper sanitation procedures and when and if available, children may assist with the care of the pet(s). If and when needed, pets will be licensed and vaccinated following local health department requirements.

If a parent would like to bring a pet to show to the children, prior authorization will be required. The pet must be able to get along with children, have all vaccines up-to-date, and documents from the veterinarian stating that the animal is in good health and will not demonstrate an immediate danger to the children or staff.

GRIEVANCE POLICY

Water Lily Montessori believes that problems are best addressed and resolved by frank and open discussion of differences. We ask that parents speak directly to the

identified staff person about any concerns or complaints they may have about performance. If, after speaking with the staff person, the parent does not feel that the problem has been resolved, the parent should schedule a meeting with a member of the Minnesota Wildflower Montessori School administration and/or a representative from the school's authorizer. After assessing the nature of the complaint, a plan of action will be determined and all involved parties will be notified. A written record shall be kept of the action taken at each level of the grievance procedure and it shall be filed with the teacher leaders.

HOURS OF OPERATION, SAFETY AND SECURITY POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Teachers On-Site

Water Lily teachers are typically on-site during the hours of 7:30 am - 5:30 pm.

Authorized Pick Up

For the safety of all Water Lily children, only authorized persons will be allowed to pick-up your child. Authorized persons are the adults listed on the child's emergency contact form. If for any reason you need another person to pick up your child. Please call Water Lily at 651-227-7483 beforehand to notify the staff and give the full name of the person picking up your child. If Water Lily staff does not recognize any person picking up a child, that person will have to show a valid picture ID before being allowed to take the child home. (Acceptable ID can be a MN State ID or driver's license, Mexican Consulate ID, or a passport from another country.)

Snow/Weather Emergencies

Water Lily will close for weather and/or snow emergencies only when the Saint Paul Public Schools close. Look for "School Closings" on TV Channel 4 or online at minnesota.cbslocal.com. If "Saint Paul Public Schools" appear as closed, Water Lily Montessori will also be closed.

If an unusual and/or unexpected event occurs that may impact a student's learning and safety, Water Lily will inform families/guardians within a reasonable timeframe, especially if a closure needs to occur. Families will receive communication by phone, email, text or other communication application. Water Lily follows all necessary emergency procedures as required.

Emergency Drills

Water Lily staff carries out monthly emergency drills with the children to practice procedures in case of fire, tornado, and other emergencies. If you have questions about these drills or emergency preparedness, please contact the teachers.

ASSESSMENTS

Our general approach to assessment is to recognize the value of assessment tools to inform parents, teachers, and children about skill levels and rates of progress. At the same time, we want to recognize the limitations of each tool, and to use a combination of tools to provide a comprehensive and accurate assessment. We also want to integrate assessment tools into routine work, defining a rightful place for them in each child's educational experience.

Water Lily Montessori is required to administer the following assessments:

1. **WIDA** Assessments for kindergarten children determining English Learner qualifications. Completed in September each year.
2. **FASTbridge** for both preschool and kindergarten, administered twice per year, determining math and reading skills.
3. **Minnesota Executive Function Scale (MEFS)** for both preschool and kindergarten children. Administered twice per year.
4. **Preschool Early Literacy Indicators** for preschool children.
5. **Montessori Observation and Recordkeeping** will be used for daily assessment of all children; this same technique is applied to our Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten (VPK) students and will be entered twice per year with COR Advantage.

Parents have the right to not have their child participate in state required standardized assessments by completing the Minnesota Department of Education Parent/Guardian Guide and Refusal for Student Participation in Statewide Testing form.

MINNESOTA ACADEMIC STANDARDS

Water Lily Montessori is required to meet the academic standards of the state of Minnesota. Parents can access the standards by going to the website for the Minnesota Department of Education.

SPECIAL NEEDS

Water Lily Montessori complies with the American with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). The facility is handicapped accessible. We will make reasonable accommodations for staff and enrolled children with disabilities. Each child will be assessed on a case by case basis. The director is responsible for ensuring program compliance with the ADA. Policies and procedures relating to ADA are reviewed annually and documented. We have a non-discrimination policy as stated above in the

handbook. Training on the ADA and working with disabled individuals is provided to staff as needed through local resources.

Parents/guardians have the responsibility to inform Water Lily staff if their child has any special medical condition, allergies, or needs or allergies so that we can provide appropriate care and support. Please inform us if your child has a special need and is (one or more of the following):

- Eligible for case management through the state and has an Individual Service Plan (ISP)
- Receiving services through the local school district and has an Individual Educational Plan (IEP)
- Determined by a licensed physician, psychiatrist, psychologist or consulting psychologist to have a condition related to physical, social or emotional development.

Parents/guardians will be asked to share any existing ISP and/or IEP with us. In addition, state licensing regulations require us to develop an Individualized Child Care Plan (ICCP) with you that will assist us in meeting your child's needs.

CHILD ABUSE REPORTING

Under Minnesota law, the reporting of suspected physical abuse, sexual abuse and neglect are required of educational and health care professionals. All Water Lily Montessori staff are mandated reporters and will comply with these reporting laws. Neglect may include failure to provide necessary food, clothing, shelter, medical care, or school attendance. Reports are made to the Ramsey County Child Protection Program or to the police. The 24-hour Ramsey County Child Protection line is (651) 266-4500. All suspected cases of abuse or neglect at Water Lily Montessori are immediately reported.

BULLYING POLICY

Bullying and teasing are not tolerated at Water Lily Montessori. We define bullying as any intentionally hurtful act that involves an imbalance of power or strength. Usually bullying appears to be aggressive, but it can be expressed in a subtle secretive manner, also. Bullying can take the form of teasing, name calling, hitting, threatening, excluding from a group, or unkind talking or writing or emailing about another person. Teasing can start out playful, but it is hurtful in nature. Teasing involves pestering or making fun of someone for any aspect of their person which includes discrimination based on gender, race, ethnic origin, family structure, sexual preference, or ability. We empower children to confront teasing and bullying, as well as to advocate for others who may be victims of this behavior. We

acknowledge that teasing and bullying may also take place outside of school or through the internet. Water Lily Montessori addresses all incidents that affect students.

ACCREDITATION & LICENSURE

Water Lily Montessori is a public charter school authorized by Osprey Wilds (formerly Audubon Center of the North Woods). In addition, we are part of the Wildflower School Network. Staff hold appropriate state licenses for their area of expertise. All staff under the charter school meet the general state licensing requirements for teaching.

Staff Background Check

Water Lily Montessori School's policy requires a criminal background check on employees and other individuals who provide services to the school; our hiring authority's discretion in requiring a background check is in accordance with MN §123B.03 Subd. 1(e).

SOCIAL MEDIA

Water Lily Montessori maintains a website, a Facebook account, and Instagram page. These platforms allow us to share information about the school and connect with the community. We encourage parents to visit all Water Lily Montessori's social media networks, click to follow, and help us spread the word about our amazing school.

<http://www.waterlilymontessori.org>

www.facebook.com/waterlilymontessori

<https://www.instagram.com/waterlilymontessorischool/>