



Handbook

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Magic Lantern Montessori Preschool
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Table of Contents

Page 2: Program Description

Pages 3-7: Understanding the Montessori Method

Pages 8-10: The Montessori Method at Magic Lantern

Pages 11-12: School Schedule and Closures

Pages 13-17: Magic Lantern Policies

Page 18: Tuition and Fees

Pages 19-20: Preparations for the School Year

Pages 21-22: Magic Lantern Board and Parent Committees

Program Description

Magic Lantern Montessori is a non-profit Montessori preschool emphasizing community and diversity in South Seattle. Magic Lantern strives to be an all-inclusive school that reflects the diversity of our community. Magic Lantern offers a rich diverse curriculum that incorporates many different aspects of life. The school has no religious affiliation, but promotes respect and understanding between all people, irrespective of their beliefs. We also recognize that we live in an era marked by divisions; in a time when people are divided, our mission is to overcome these divisions and create a school that embraces everyone. We believe that doing this enhances our lives and the lives of our children.

Magic Lantern Montessori serves children from ages three through six. Year-round classes focus on practical hands-on learning experiences in the areas of science, math, sensorial, practical life, language and geography. The curriculum also highlights cooking, dramatic expression, music, movement, and arts and crafts, directed by teachers with special expertise in these fields. Our approach to learning is child-centered. The Montessori method encourages initiative and self-sufficiency, by permitting the children to choose the things that interest them within a carefully structured environment. The faculty and staff gently guide students toward discovery of their inherent talents and abilities, building each child's self esteem and nurturing their awareness of themselves and those around them.

Understanding the Montessori Method

Maria Montessori was the first woman to earn a medical degree in Italy. With her background in medicine and her experience working with children in the early twentieth century, she developed a method of education for the very young based on scientific observation of childhood behavior. Many of her ideas that seem old hat today, such as the fact that children learn primarily through sensory experience, or that children should be treated with kindness and respect, were revolutionary at the time.

The Montessori approach to childcare and education is very different from most schools. In fact, it is based on the idea that the world can only change for the better if we change the way children are treated, especially in the very early years when their basic relationship to the world is being formed. We are doing more than babysitting, more than "day care." We are making a fundamental difference in the lives of children, and consequently the world.

The most obvious difference between Montessori and traditional schools is that we shift the focus from the teacher to the child. It is the adult's responsibility to aid the child in his or her development, rather than to teach. Children learn by teaching themselves.

We believe children learn mostly from the environment. They absorb everything from their surroundings, including the classroom materials, the daily routine, the natural environment, and the example set by the adults and the other children. For instance, it is very important for the adults to model behavior they want to see in the children. If we do not want children to sit on the table, then we do not sit on the table. When we see a child acting aggressively, we try to respond with gentleness.

A profound respect for the child's personality offers room to grow in biological independence. The child is allowed a large measure of liberty that forms the basis of real self-discipline. This is a higher discipline that originates within children as they gain practice making their own decisions and exercising their own will. It is not a discipline that is externally imposed or based on rewards and punishments.

The basic goal of any Montessori program is to help the child's independence. This is why we let them choose their own work and do it for as long as they want. It is also why we encourage them to care for themselves, care for their environment and care for others. This is called practical life experience and it is the basis of all childhood learning.

Why Enroll Your Child at an Early Age in a Montessori Program?

The "formative" (or critical) period of profound sensitivity to learning is from birth to six years. Using his "absorbent mind," the young child takes in his world with great ease. The clearest example of this absorbent mind is the child's explosion into speech without any obvious teacher except himself. We build upon this love and ease of learning by providing hundreds of kinds of learning materials for his eyes, hands, and brain to work together as his teacher.

At Magic Lantern Montessori School, our beautiful learning materials and loving teachers surround the children as they fulfill their profound need to learn.

Being exposed at their most sensitive periods to such an enriched environment, the children develop their abilities to a high level, without pressure and through freedom of choice.

Our Goals

We strive to guide the individual child develop fully through his work, according to the teachings of Dr. Montessori, the founder of the “Montessori Method.” The following are areas of development you can expect to see in your child:

1. A joy of learning
2. Learning through discovery
3. Independence
4. Self-confidence
5. Self-discipline
6. Concentration
7. Peace and calmness
8. Love of order
9. Ability to choose
10. Enjoyment of quiet

Montessori Curriculum

Magic Lantern Montessori is a place where children, ages 3 to 6 years, love to learn by doing, experimenting, touching...using all of their senses. We provide a hands-on classroom with learning materials for all of the main areas: practical living, sensory, math, art, music, language as well as geography, history and science. Even the youngest children learn about their world!

Freedom of Movement: Absorbing a broad understanding of the world through hands-on materials, the children move about freely, choosing their “work” with responsibility and freedom. Their independence and self-confidence grow as they learn through projects that allow them to learn as individuals, at their own pace and to reach toward their full potential.

Guidelines to Learning: Our school is based upon the fundamental need of each child for freedom within limits. Children are longing “to do” with their hands: to touch, to smell, to taste, to see, to hear so that they may learn. They choose their “work” and concentrate for surprisingly long periods of time without interruption.

Socializing as they learn, the children use their newly-acquired speech skills, expressing themselves as individuals as well as chatting about their life values, interests, and family members.

Learning Outcomes: When children begin school, they show enthusiasm for learning, love of work, concern for others, concentration, a drive toward excellence, orderliness and a joy of learning. It is inspiring to see most of the 4 and 5-year olds casually reading to each other, confident in the knowledge that they taught themselves to read!

Adapting to a Traditional Classroom: Because of their self-discipline and independence, children who have been in the Montessori classroom for the full 3-year span adjust readily to traditional elementary classrooms. Since the majority of the children have been reading since they were 4 ½ or 5 years of age, they love to learn, wherever they are.

Comparison of Montessori and Traditional Education

Montessori Education

1. Active Individualized Learning through stimulating, multi-sensory teaching materials.
2. Mixed-age class is a “natural” social environment that includes a wide range of ages and fosters self-motivation. Students enjoy working for their own sense of accomplishment.
3. Freedom of Choice involves decision-making. Students select their work according to individual interests.
4. Working at One’s Own Pace enables students to work for long periods without interruption. Each individual works at his potential independent of the class.
5. Integral Education balances academic work with freedom of movement and harmony is created between physical, social and mental activities. There is an inter-relationship between subjects.
6. Independence is fostered by a classroom that is specifically designed to encourage maximum development.
7. Self-Evaluation occurs as students learn to evaluate their work objectively through the use of self-correcting teaching materials and individual work with the teacher.
8. Reality-Oriented Education maintains concrete, first-hand experience as the basis for abstraction.
9. Close Student-Teacher Interaction enables complete and precise evaluation of student’s progress, both academically and psychologically.

Traditional Education

1. Passive Class Learning through teacher-centered class lessons, paper work.
2. Chronological Grouping necessitates external rewards such as grades, competition and social conformity.
3. Class Curriculum demands that students cover the same work at the same time with no regard to individual interests.
4. Group Learning involves each academic subject being scheduled for a limited period. Each student is directly affected by the progress of the whole class.
5. Fragmented Education provides academic subjects that are not interrelated. Periods of intense mental effort are alternated with periods of vigorous physical activity to release tension.
6. Dependency is promoted since the activities are initiated by the teacher.

7. Class Comparison occurs as work is evaluated and graded by the teacher. Students evaluate themselves against the group as “best” and “worst” in the class.
8. Abstract Education has students learning through mechanical memorization.
9. Class-Oriented Teaching prevents close interaction between individual students and teacher. Standardized tests are necessary to determine student’s progress.

The Montessori Environment

Practical Life Activities: Children are offered real life experiences to care for themselves in pouring their drinks, developing healthy eating habits, dressing and undressing themselves, etc. They take care of their environment by maintaining the beauty of their class, watering plants, dusting, etc. The children also learn the healthy habit of taking turns, waiting for the “work” that they want, taking constructive criticism and approval in a positive way, and listening to another person’s feelings and needs.

Sensorial Activities: This area of learning is scientifically designed to develop, refine, classify and grade the stimulation that children receive through their senses. These activities have five areas:

- Visual..... color tablets, geometric shapes, etc
- Hearingsound cylinders, bells, etc.
- Tastingtasting tray, etc.
- Smelling smelling bottles, etc.
- Tactilemystery bag, fabrics, etc.

Mathematics: All of the math activities are designed to develop the child’s mathematical mind. Learning begins with the child’s use of concrete materials such as numerical rods, sandpaper numerals, counting objects, fraction puzzles and many hands-on math games for number relationship, sorting, matching, the four mathematical “operations,” and place value.

Language: These activities are organized in a sequential manner to follow the natural language development of the child. Throughout the day books are read together, stories told, songs are sung, and children learn to listen to others speak and share at circle time. The sounds of the alphabet are presented through the phonetic method in a natural way. Parents soon notice that their child is forming letters and words and beginning to sound out short words. Vocabulary development is emphasized in all areas by using specific words for objects in the classroom. At approximately 4 ½ years, the children begin to put phonetic sounds together to read short words, and by five years of age they amaze their parents with their love of writing and reading.

Science: Through our hands-on materials the children learn to match and sort objects and pictures of living/non-living and plant/animal. They love to make booklets of the “parts” of animals, i.e. head, tail, back, etc. from the insect to the mammal. Exploration of their world through dissection of a flower, apple, or orange brings excitement into the classroom! Our hands-on science materials are the joy of the children.

Geography: The children are introduced to the earth’s globe, the world “they live on,” and learn about land and water forms through floating miniature boats on a miniature lake, gulf, etc. They use the world and U.S. maps as puzzles, soon tracing and coloring their own maps. Children love to sing the “continent

song” to their parents!

Art: Our children gain the skills to express themselves with crayons, watercolors, tempera paint, clay modeling, collage gluing and many other kinds of materials. Our teachers are experienced in “feeding back” the feelings of excitement in their work so that the children do not become dependent upon praise. Art is such a defining part of us as humans, and we explore it in various forms, from dance to music. We include art history by featuring fine artists and learning their work and life story.

Music: Music is a natural part of the daily classroom routine in the form of rhythm, instruments, dancing, singing, and finger plays. A variety of music is also played. Children may use headphones and a CD player to hear their favorite composer’s work during nap /rest time.

Physical Education/recess: Since young children are meant to “move” and to practice bodily control with their very active minds, they soon learn to control their large and small muscles. Children carry tables and chairs and gain the confidence that they “can do it!” We go outside twice daily for at least thirty minutes unless the weather precludes it: *Pouring:* We do not go outside. *Raining:* We go outside under a roof. *Sprinkling:* We do go outside with our waterproof hooded jacket and boots!

Recommended Reading:

Hainstock, Elizabeth: Montessori in the Home

Lillard, Paula Polk: Montessori, A Modern Approach

Montessori, Maria: The Absorbent Mind, The Montessori Method, The Child in the Family, Discovery of the Child, Secret of Childhood, and Montessori’s Own Handbook.

The Montessori Method at Magic Lantern

Our Daily Routine

The program runs from 8:00 a.m. – 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. Doors open each morning at 8:00. Morning Circle begins each day at 9:00. There is a 1.5 hour rest period after lunch. Morning is dedicated to Montessori work time. Afternoon is dedicated to the creative arts. Parents are expected to be as unobtrusive as possible during drop off and pick up. Please lead your child in or out quietly since the teachers may still be working with the children.

Children need regularity in their daily lives in order to make sense out of what may at first seem like chaos. We provide order in our environment in a number of ways. We have very clear ground rules and expectations that we consistently adhere to. The Montessori materials are also designed with built in order of arrangement: from least to most difficult and from concrete to abstract concepts. We carry out the activities and functions of the day in the same way and in the same sequence every day. Our belief is that when children know what to expect, they feel comfortable and capable. The following is a general schedule for each day, but our goal is to follow the children's rhythm, rather than to watch the clock. Content and curriculum are varied to optimize interest and learning.

8:00-9:00 am	Arrivals
9:00-9:20 am	Circle time
9:20-10:45 am	Montessori work time
9:30-10:30 am	Snack
10:45-11:00 am	Bathroom/circle
11:00-11:45 am	Outdoor or creative indoor play
11:45-12:00 pm	Lunch circle/wash hands
12:00-12:30 pm	Lunch
12:30-1:00 pm	Story time
1:00-2:30 pm	Nap/quiet time
2:30-3:00 pm	Play time
3:00-4:30 pm	Circle and Art Project time
3:30-3:50 pm	Afternoon snack
4:30-5:30 pm	Play/recess and pick up

Food

We provide a healthy and vegetarian diet centered on whole, organic foods. Ample protein is offered in the form of beans, legumes, whole grains, and dairy products. We avoid refined sugar. Although we encourage the children to eat and to try new foods, we do not force them to eat something they do not want. Control issues with food can lead to long-term eating problems, and we feel it is better to teach the child to be self-regulating.

Children will be actively involved in the preparation of snacks (served in the morning and afternoon) and lunch. Lunch is served family style so the children can learn to set the table and pass food to each other. We will serve cow's milk each day, but we are willing to accommodate children with a dairy allergy or lactose intolerance. Simply obtain the appropriate form from us and have your doctor fill it out. We ask

that children not bring food from home into the classroom, unless they have special dietary requirements that we can't accommodate.

Naps

Many of our children still nap daily, and we will encourage all children to rest after lunch, even if they do not sleep. All children will be invited to lie down on a sleeping mat with their blankets and a cuddle toy and rest while listening to soft music. Children who choose not to sleep will be engaged in quiet play.

Please bring a blanket and a small pillow (and a cuddle toy, if they need one) for your child that you can leave in the classroom. The blankets should be taken home and washed weekly.

Field trips

MLM organizes three field trips per year. Each field trip will be announced a few weeks ahead, so parents can plan chaperoning. The school will provide a specific field trip form for each event, describing the destination, form of transportation, cost and number of chaperones needed.

The driving chaperones need to provide a reliable safe transportation, and present proof of driver's license and car insurance. The chaperone will be notified of allergies and provided with emergency phone numbers.

Classroom Expectations

The Vision of interaction in our School:

The Magic Lantern Montessori community is based on a unique blend of cooperative interaction and traditional school. Magic Lantern Preschool is a Montessori school, led by certified Montessori teachers. The preschool age is a sensitive time for children who are being introduced to a world of learning, for parents who are introducing other educators into their children's lives, and for teachers who attempt to ease that transition and guide the child in her/his individual growth, using the Montessori method. Varying parenting styles can lead to questions or, at times, even conflict. Our goal is to achieve a team-driven and productive atmosphere, and foster a relationship of trust between parents and teachers. It is important for parents and teachers to communicate as much as possible. Teachers welcome questions about the teaching method or daily routines and can share their experiences, philosophies, and observations. Please note that teachers and director are entirely responsible for setting the school curriculum and changing routines if they deem it necessary to benefit the children and program. Please arrange for a time outside of the classroom that is convenient for both parties to discuss curriculum. This allows for more in-depth discussion and ensures that teachers do not take time away from teaching.

If a parent is volunteering in classroom...

Many thanks to all parent volunteers! If you are interested in volunteering please schedule this with a teacher. It is important to remember that the day *will* be different when there is a volunteer, even though the routine will be adhered to as much as possible. Teachers will relay information and rules and any

helpful hints for those not used to the classroom experience. Parents should feel free to ask other staff members for guidance. Some helpful reminders:

- The calmer the energy (even when plans are still being worked out), the calmer the children and the smoother the day will be.
- Children may test and question a substitute's authority. Be aware of the "dual authority" and follow the lead of the teacher. Making your expectations clear to the children and standing by your decisions are important.
- If you are a parent volunteering on a day your child attends, please set behavior goals with your child and encourage typically appropriate classroom behavior. The collision of two worlds, which naturally have different kinds of rules, can sometimes confuse children.
- If a situation arises with which you are uncomfortable, always feel free to bring the other staff in for relief.

School Schedule and Closures

Vacations/Holidays

Magic Lantern Montessori operates year-round. Our school year begins the first week of September and ends in August, with three one-week breaks during the year.

Magic Lantern Montessori Calendar, 2009-2010 School Year

9/23/09	First Parent Meeting
10/9/09	Teacher in-service day (no students present)
11/11/09	Veteran's Day (school closed)
11/16-11/21/09	Parent/Teacher Conferences
11/26 and 11/27/09	Thanksgiving break (school closed)
12/18/09	School closes at 1:00pm for Winter break
12/21/09-12/25/09	Winter break (school closed)
1/1/10	New Year's Day (school closed)
1/4/10	Teacher in-service day (no students present)
1/18/10	MLK Jr. Day (school closed)
2/15/10	President's Day (school closed)
3/19/10	Teacher in-service day (no students present)
3/29-4/2/10	Spring break (school closed)
5/17-5/21/10	Parent/Teacher Conferences
5/31/10	Memorial Day (school closed)
6/25/10	Graduation Day
7/5/10	Independence Day observed (school closed)
8/30-9/3/10	Summer break (school closed)
9/6/10	Labor Day (school closed)
9/7/10	Teacher in-service day (no students present)
9/8/10	First day of 2010-2011 school year

Emergencies or Unscheduled Closures

Magic Lantern Montessori School follows the Seattle Public Schools Weather/Snow closure schedule, available at www.seattleschools.org and on local news stations. If the Seattle Public Schools close schools due to snow or inclement weather, Magic Lantern will close as well. We will also try to call you in case of school closure.

In addition, the school may close on days when the Director deems it necessary due to weather, natural disasters, or when travel to and from school would otherwise pose a safety issue.

If there is an emergency during the school day, parents will be called. Please make sure that the school is notified immediately, in writing, if there is any change to your emergency daytime contact information. In the event of fire or other disaster at the school which may force evacuation, children may be taken to an alternate safe location nearby, which is designated by the Director.

Magic Lantern Policies

Parent Involvement

Our commitment to our children goes hand in hand with our commitment to the Magic Lantern community. Because Magic Lantern is a co-operative school, parent involvement is crucial to its success. Parents facilitate the administration and management of the school through participation in committees, or by taking responsibility for specific tasks. Magic Lantern continues to evolve and change as an organization. As a result, families will find multiple opportunities to become involved in both its current operation and in developing and implementing the vision of its future.

Families are expected to contribute a minimum of 15-20 volunteer hours each quarter. Each family is asked to attend parent meetings and teacher conferences, contribute to work parties, and attend fundraising events. In addition, at least one member of each family is required to take on a specific job and/or actively participate on one of our 5 committees, or on the Board of Directors. Please see the list of current committees on pages 27-29. Active participation by families in the life of the school is a founding principle of Magic Lantern. It not only enriches the educational experience of our children, it is what permits Magic Lantern to offer a high quality preschool education at affordable rates.

Interaction with Staff and the MLM Community

Just as we seek to provide a nurturing environment for our children, our goals are to interact with one another with respect, acceptance, empathy and the recognition that we each have a valuable contribution.

Non-Discrimination Policy

1. Magic Lantern Montessori does not discriminate against anyone for employment or childcare service on the basis of sex, race, color, national origin, sexual orientation, cultural factors or disabilities of the child or family members.
2. Magic Lantern Montessori admits students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sexual orientation, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, athletic or other school administrated programs. We will not discriminate or tend to discriminate against children with disabilities. Magic Lantern will make reasonable accommodations to address the physical or mental limitations of disabled children in care or seeking care.
3. Our door is always open to parents of enrolled children and designated authorities. However, no unauthorized persons may have contact with the children while they are in our care. Parents must sign children in and out of the school each day.
4. No one on the premises may use physical punishment of any kind, nor use frightening or humiliating discipline. We are required to and will report to Child Protective Services any suspected child abuse or neglect.

5. Discrimination in employment is prohibited. Applicants receive notice that this program does not discriminate. Job applicants are not required to answer questions about their race, color, national origin, religion, marital status, age, sex, disability or Vietnam-era or disabled veteran status.
6. Magic Lantern has a policy to make reasonable accommodations for qualified, disabled job applicants or employee.
7. Magic Lantern has a policy prohibiting sexual harassment and providing means for making and resolving sexual harassment complaints.

Our Discipline Policy

Magic Lantern's discipline policy is an extension of our goal to teach children appropriate, satisfying, and productive ways to manage their own behaviors and relationships with others. We strive to present positive ideas about every child and encourage confidence and self respect for every child's needs. Accordingly, we find non-judgmental ways to talk about feelings and encourage children to talk to one another about their conflicts, often using our "peace table" as a diplomatic setting. We use redirection and positive reinforcement, instilling in all children pride for their behaviors and successes.

Communication with parents

1. When do we call parents? If your child is not functioning, or is disrupting class beyond what can be reasonably handled, and is consistently taking energy away from the classroom, requiring one-on-one supervision, you may be notified by the MLM staff. We note when it is in a child's best interest (as well as the class's) for parents to pick their child up early and encourage them to do so when possible.
2. If your child has been hurt by another child, we will always let you know the circumstances of that altercation to the best of our ability. Due to licensing restrictions, we may not disclose the identity of the other child involved.
3. Finally, we would like to stress the important link your child experiences between home and school. We hope that parents will be forthcoming with any information about changes in your child's life that may affect her/his behavior. Please do not be offended if, occasionally, we ask questions in order to better serve your child.

In the rare event that our team has exhausted all means of resolving a behavioral issue, including meeting with parents and supervisors, we may strongly suggest either of the following:

1. Observation by an outside professional who may be able to offer an additional perspective and solutions to the child's challenging behavior
2. Looking into alternative childcare such as schools with a smaller ratio, schools for children with special needs

We will try to provide parents with a variety of options for the benefit of the individual child, family, and the school at large.

Withdrawal

A 30-day written notice is required prior to the date of a child's withdrawal. Without such written notice, parents or guardians are responsible for one month's tuition charges. To avoid the discontent that might lead to a parent withdrawing a child from the school, we request that parents inform the enrollment committee or teachers of any special needs of the child, and that they work in partnership with the school to provide the child with the best environment possible.

Drop Off and Pick Up

The State of Washington requires that all children be walked into the school by an adult, and be signed in and out of the school daily. Signature sheets are located on the podium at the front door. These sheets are for documentation purposes and should be signed with a **full signature** by adults only.

Please be respectful of the classroom schedule... we ask that families arrive on time so as not to disrupt Circle which begins each day at 9:00am. Please respect our late pick-up time. Families picking up between 4:00 and 5:30pm are asked to minimize your presence in the classroom. Before leaving, please help your child clean up their work/play space. The school closes promptly at 5:30 when the Teacher's shifts end, please arrive on time.

Please be diligent about firmly closing school doors. Both the main school door and the hallway door must be closed and locked for security purposes, even when there are no children in the classroom.

Authorized Pick Up of Children

Children will be released only to those persons who have been authorized in writing by parents. Unfamiliar adults will be asked for identification before the child will be allowed to leave the facility with them. It helps for you to notify the person picking up your child that they will be asked for ID. Please be sure all authorized people are listed on the Child Care Register Form, or fill out and authorize a new form in the office in the morning to notify the staff.

Illness Policy

Please notify the school by phone (**206-722-2803**) if you are keeping your child home due to illness.

Below is a list of symptoms and conditions that require your child to leave school and/or stay at home. It is very important that you respect these rules – they are state requirements and we cannot legally make exceptions to them. They are crucial to the prevention of the spread of disease.

If we notice that your child is not feeling well, we will attempt to notify you as soon as possible. Children that become sick during school hours will rest on a nap mat, away from the group of children, until the parents arrive to pick up.

Children with any of the following symptoms will not be permitted to remain in care at Magic Lantern. **Fever** of at least 100 degrees F under arm (auxiliary) **and** who will also have one or more of the following:

- Diarrhea/vomiting
- Earache
- Headache
- Signs of Irritability or confusion
- Sore throat
- Rash
- Fatigue that limits participation in daily activities

No rectal or ear temperatures will be taken. Digital thermometers are recommended due to concerns about mercury exposure if the glass thermometers break. Temperature strips are frequently inaccurate and will not be used. Temperatures may be taken if single use covers are used over the thermometer.

- Vomiting on 2 or more occasions within the past 24 hours.
- Diarrhea: 3 or more watery stools within a 24-hour period or any bloody stool.
- Rash, especially with fever or itching
- Eye discharge or conjunctivitis (pinkeye) until clear or until 24 hours of antibiotic treatment.
- Sick appearance, not feeling well and/or not be able to keep up with program activities.
- Open or oozing sores, unless properly covered and 24 hours has passed since starting antibiotic treatment, if treatment is necessary.
- Lice or scabies: For head lice, children and staff may return to school after treatment and no nits. For scabies, return after treatment

When the symptoms have been gone for 24 hours, then your child may return. For example, if your child's fever (vomiting, diarrhea, untreated conjunctivitis, etc...) is gone at 4:00pm, then they may return after 4:00pm the following day. The teachers especially ask that parents respect this 24-hour rule.

Ways We Prevent Illness

- Adults and children will wash hands when they enter the classroom, after toileting, after using tissues, before eating and before preparing food
- Teach the children to cough and sneeze on their arms on the inside of the elbow (not their hands)
- Provide for plenty of outdoor exercise
- Offer nutritious, healthful meals and snacks

Medication Policy

Magic Lantern staff must have a parent's written permission to give any over the counter medication to a child. The school also needs the doctor's signature for all medication (prescription/herbal/over the counter). This is the State law. All medications must be in their original containers. When it is necessary for a "well" child to continue to take a prescription medicine while attending school, please complete an Instructions for Medication form for each day the medicine is to be taken remember this must be signed by a doctor. Chapstick or other lip gloss, breath mints, etc are technically medication. We will require parents to complete a Medication Authorization form (signed by a doctor) if you choose for your child to have Chapstick at school. Ask the teachers for the form if you need one.

Communication Policies and Procedure

Parent Communication

The families in our program rely heavily on email to share business-related information about the school – committee updates, classroom needs, school newsletters, meeting minutes and even shopping lists. We encourage all families to join our group email list as the most efficient way to stay current on school news.

To join our email group list, please send a request to Susanne Crawford at mlmsusanne@yahoo.com, and you will begin receiving all mail sent to the school. To send messages to the group, simply address them to mlm@lists.magiclanternpreschool.org. Each family will be assigned a mailbox in the school for memos, committee updates, or notes from teachers. This will be the top section of your child's cubby, please check your mailbox often.

There are two bulletin boards in the stairway outside the classroom door. One includes general messages relevant to all families and teachers. The other contains the all-school calendar of meetings and events, and houses the sign-up sheet for unique volunteer opportunities. Curriculum details will be posted on the whiteboard in the classroom each week. And daily notes about each student's activities will be written in the sign-in/sign-out sheets as time allows.

Teachers

Any general classroom issues or concerns should be discretely funneled through the Director. Please do not discuss general classroom issues with the teachers. The job of the Director is to manage this process to streamline communications with teachers. However, please feel free to discuss your own child with his or her teacher. Teachers are included on the email list. You may also leave notes in teachers' mailboxes or schedule a conference if you need to speak with them at length about your child. We expect parents to have respectful and civil interactions with the staff, children, and other families at Magic Lantern. There is a small white board on the mantle specifically for scheduling notes (planned absences, early departures, etc.) that you may need to leave for teachers. If you have an **emergency** and cannot reach a person on the school line, please call Susanne Crawford at 206-235-4270.

Potty Training

The expectation is that children are potty trained at the time of enrollment. The staff is willing to work with families to support this transition prior to enrollment and any concerns about meeting this expectation should be discussed with the director. Pulls ups at nap time are permitted with approval of director. Parents must agree to support potty training at home to assist the student in making progress in the event of a relapse. The school is not equipped or staffed to conduct potty training.

Policy Violations

The director has the authority to suspend families for violation of any Magic Lantern policy or if the director has any reason to believe that the presence of a family in the school presents a hardship or danger to themselves, the staff, or the children. The Board, by majority vote, has the authority to withdraw families from the school, upon written notice, for violations of any Magic Lantern policy.

Tuition and Fees

Fee Schedule for 2009-2010

Tuition is due on the 1st of each month. Tuition is subject to change at the discretion of the Board. Tuition fees are as follows:

- 5 full days: \$1085
- 4 full days: \$ 870
- 3 full days: \$ 665

On the 5th, a \$10 fine will be assessed for late tuition, plus \$2/day thereafter. Tuition will be reviewed annually.

The deposit is due as soon as enrollment is offered. The deposit is the equivalent of a month's tuition. The deposit will cover tuition for your child's last month, given you provide the school with a minimum of 30 days notice when canceling enrollment. The deposit will be reimbursed if you provide the school with the 30 days departure notice.

- There is an annual \$25 material fee due in September.
- There are no refunds on any tuition or fees.
- There will be a fee for early drop-off or late pick-up. For every early or late minute, a \$1/minute fee will billed.

Requesting Extra Preschool Days

In cases of family medical or personal emergencies, a family may occasionally request extra preschool days at Magic Lantern. Requests should be made to the school Director with as much advance notice as possible so that he/she may evaluate the teacher/child ratios on requested days. If the Director deems that there is space for that child on the requested day(s), he/she will:

- a) Notify the teaching staff
- b) Notify the family that their request is possible.

In the event of needing to inquire about same-day availability, please contact the Director or lead teacher directly at school.

Extra preschool days will be charged at \$50 a day. The school does not exchange/swap days. Any day requested besides the scheduled attendance days is considered an "extra day".

Preparations for the School Year

Personal Items

Please bring these items to leave at school for your child. *All items* should be labeled clearly with the child's name.

- a plastic cup for water
- a blanket, small pillow (12 inX12in the most) , (and cuddle toy if your child needs one) for afternoon quiet time
- extra clothes (shirts, pants, socks and underwear) packaged in labeled plastic bins to be kept in the bathroom cabinet.

In addition, we would like you to prepare an **individual emergency supply bag** for your child, to be used in case of earthquake or other extreme emergency that could prevent families from reaching children for an extended period of time. Please compile the following list of personal items for your child. Please bring the following items in a large, gallon-size Ziploc bag:

- 3-day supply of prescribed medication and a signed medical permission slip (if necessary)
- short note to your child (see sample below)
- family photograph
- 2 or 3 comfort foods that are non-perishable and easily opened. For example, your child's favorite granola bar, or raisins, juice box (in aseptic packaging).
- small teddy bear or other small stuffed animal -- if this will comfort your child
- extra underwear, socks, shirt – if they fit into the bag. (Some extra clothing should be in the bathroom storage cabinet for each child now.)
- optional: toothbrush and toothpaste

Sample note

Dear _____,

I love you. I will come to see you as soon as I can. Your teachers will take care of you until mommy or daddy (or....) can get there.

Love, Mommy/Daddy/other

Please do not bring other personal items to school. This includes toys or jewelry. We have optional sharing as part of our curriculum; please bring items related to our unit of study. The topic is posted on the curriculum whiteboard at the beginning of each week.

Clothing Notes

- Please send your child in clothes that can get dirty. Our children make “messes” as part of learning.
- We recommend at least two sets of extra clothes (this includes socks, shirts, pants and underwear), more for potty-trainers. Wet or soiled clothes will be put in a plastic bag for you to

take home and wash. Check your child's cubby every day for bags and to see if they need additional extra clothes.

- Label ALL clothes, especially socks.
- Send your child in clothes they can put on and remove with minimal help. Examples are Velcro shoes instead of laces or buckles, and coats that zip up instead of coats that must be pulled over the head.
- Please send your child in clothing appropriate to the weather. We'll go outside nearly every day, even when it's raining, because of our large covered area. Hats or coats with hoods are needed, along with rain gear such as boots and raincoats

Magic Lantern Board and Parent Committees

Parents manage many of the administrative details of the school through parent committees. All-parent meetings will be posted ahead of time and will be held at the school, unless otherwise notified. Each family is expected to send a representative to each meeting. These meetings may also include presentations from our teaching team. Meeting reminders will be posted via email and on the entrance door. The school is run by our Board of Directors. You may contact any board member at any time with general school issues or concerns.

There are five standing committees with board representation. The committees are made up of parent volunteers. The committees provide support and guidance to the Director in the administration of the school. The board representative is the point person for communication between the board and the committee, and is generally the person who reports on committee activity at the monthly board meeting. Membership on a committee can foster a greater sense of participation in the school's life, but brings the added responsibility of monthly committee meetings.

Building Committee

The building committee oversees the physical plant of the school. Members handle tasks ranging from building the playground structures to fixing broken items at school, and everything in between. Large-scale projects, such as the playground construction, are often done as a work party with many families participating. Knowledge of plumbing, carpentry, electricity and such are not necessary, though it is certainly helpful to have some members with do-it-yourself experience. Nor is it necessary to have a full complement of tools. The interest and willingness to help maintain the school is all that is needed. The church liaison, work party coordinator and carpet cleaning coordinator are all part of the building committee.

Enrollment Committee

The enrollment committee manages many aspects of recruiting and admitting new students and their families to Magic Lantern. This includes advertising the school, coordinating informational open house events, scheduling and coordinating all prospective family visits, projecting re-enrollment from current families, and balancing availability so as to stay within licensed student/ teacher ratios on each individual school day. The committee also maintains rosters, schedules and the Magic Lantern handbook.

Community/Outreach Committee

The outreach committee focuses on fostering community within Magic Lantern, and forging connections between the school and the larger community of South Seattle. The committee hosts internal events, coordinates MLM participation in neighborhood activities, generates media attention through PR or online efforts, and maximizes goodwill opportunities in our area. The outreach committee manages the efforts of seeking parent volunteers to join committees or fill specific job roles.

Fundraising Committee

The fundraising committee raises money for the school through coordinated school-wide fundraising activities, an annual auction, and seeking grants.

Fundraising

Magic Lantern families are expected to participate in fundraising activities throughout the year that will help us raise money for items such as playground equipment or unforeseen maintenance costs.

Fundraising activities may include bulb sales, yard sales, silent auctions or other unique events. The fundraising committee actively seeks contributions from local businesses and individuals to support our school. Ongoing fundraising opportunities are available through our relationship with PCC:

PCC Scrip

Scrip cards are special gift certificates used like cash cards at any PCC Natural Market. They work like a rechargeable debit card. Through the PCC Scrip program, Magic Lantern buys scrip cards at a 5% discounted rate Magic Lantern keeps the 5% difference as fundraising profits. Please send an email to the Director if you are interested in PCC cards!