

TREASURE VILLAGE MONTESSORI

'21-'22 Family Handbook



Our vision is to empower Montessori students to acquire, demonstrate, articulate and value knowledge and skills that will support them, as lifelong learners, to participate and contribute to the global world.

Welcome

It is our goal to work in partnership with parents, students, educators and community members to provide the best educational environment for our students. It is with that purpose in mind that the family handbook outlines our school's policies and procedures. Please keep this handbook in a convenient place for your reference. It will also be available online. If you need any clarification or if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us. Any policies not directly outlined in this handbook will follow parameters established by Monroe County School District.

Mission Statement and Motto

Our vision is to empower Montessori students to acquire, demonstrate, articulate and value knowledge and skills that will support them, as lifelong learners, to participate and contribute to the global world.

A Tradition of Pride: Be A Good Human, Kindness Matters!

Montessori Philosophy

At Treasure Village Montessori, learning is based on an individualized academic program for each student that emphasizes self-discovery and student responsibility. Here, students learn by doing. The goal is to nurture an enjoyment for learning, develop self-discipline, concentration, and self-motivation.

The focus of the school's method is a hands-on approach using specially designed materials, a rich and varied curriculum, exposure to classical literature, fostering scientific and mathematical aptitudes, and an overall love of learning.

The Montessori Method of teaching is based on the philosophy of Dr. Maria Montessori, a noted Italian educator and physician (1870-1952), who revolutionized early childhood education at the turn of the 20th century. She believed, and demonstrated that when children are allowed freedom—within a carefully structured environment—to explore and develop their own creative potential, they excel academically.

Over 100 years ago, Maria Montessori developed a wealth of self-teaching educational materials which made the most of a student's potential. As a testament to their utility, many are still found in Montessori classrooms today. The equipment includes hands-on mathematics and science materials, phonetic reading systems, as well as a wide variety of materials and experiences to develop the child's sensory perceptions and refine their sense of awareness.

A Tuition-Free Charter School

In Florida, charter schools are public schools and are free of tuition. Treasure Village Montessori (TVM), like most charter schools, was created by local educators, parents and community leaders. The school is funded by the state according to the number of students attending. Unlike traditional district schools, charter schools do not receive funding to cover the cost of securing a facility. As a result, the TVM Board of Directors is responsible for raising additional funding for the facilities and other expenditures.

Charter schools are held accountable for academic growth in a safe and responsible environment. Since TVM is a school of choice, it is held to the highest level of accountability; it's the parents' decision to enroll their children in this program.

Enrollment

Open enrollment is held annually in April, with a lottery held to determine waitlist order. As positions in each grade level become available, students are offered a position in the order in which the waitlist is in order. After being offered a position, parents have a deadline to decline or accept the position. Once enrolled and attending the program, students maintain their enrollment without having to reapply as long as they follow the

contract of commitment. Families will be notified in writing of the consequence for non-fulfillment of requirements of enrollment. Applicants who have not secured a position are required to reapply each year.

Ambitious and Varied Curriculum

At TVM, a well-rounded student is the result of a balanced, yet rigorous approach to learning.

TVM has a dual curriculum. As it is a state-funded school, it must meet student achievement goals established by the state of Florida and Monroe County, while as a Montessori school also adhering to the Montessori Curriculum. Together, TVM's challenging academic program emphasizes math, language and science, as well as art, music, cultural studies, physical education and community service. All these areas are explored by students with the guidance and encouragement of certified and skilled teachers.

In addition to a demanding academic program, TVM works to develop effective communication skills in students, coupled with practical life skills. Exposure to artistic, cultural and scientific matters lay a solid foundation for careers and passions later in life.

Teacher as Guides

Each child is an individual, with his/her own distinct personality and inner developmental time table and potential. The uniqueness of each student is respected by our staff of well trained teachers. The classroom is their community and the teacher's role is not that of an authoritarian but rather a guide. Our teachers are chosen on the basis of educational qualifications, experience and personal qualities that ensure the needs and goals of the program are being provided by the very best. This selectivity has resulted in an outstanding group of professionals who are dedicated to the students, stakeholders and the vision of the school. All lead teachers are Florida certified in their teaching field and have completed or are in the process of obtaining certification from intensive accredited training programs in philosophy and techniques for the Montessori classroom. The support staff includes teaching assistants, and their credentials meet or exceed the requirements for education/training outlined by the Department of Education and Social Services, State of Florida. All of our teachers and staff members are CPR and First Aid certified, and many have Masters Degrees; for specific information refer to the staff biographies.

Board of Directors

The TVM Board Members (the Board) support the mission statement for the school and is dedicated to the implementation of the mission and goals outlined by the various school committees. The Board is also charged with stewarding and strengthening school programs and services, enhancing the school's public standing, ensuring legal and ethical integrity and accountability, recruiting and orienting new board members. Other responsibilities include selecting and collaborating with the Principal to provide adequate and competent resources.. The Board meets monthly and a calendar of meetings is established at the first meeting of the school year. Board members are elected by the current Board of Directors and provide strength to our current program. As a part of the philosophy, Board Members are available as needed. Parents are encouraged to familiarize themselves with Board Members by reviewing the website and reading their biographies.

High Standards, Higher Expectations Lead to Achievement

TVM sets high standards for our students, and supplies them with the educational setting, guidance, instruction and resources to meet and exceed those standards. Likewise, the bar is set high for our teachers and staff. Parents are also held to high expectations in order to support their children and the school by attending school activities and fulfilling volunteer requirements. TVM believes that high standards and higher expectations for our students, teachers and parents lead directly to academic excellence, achievement and success.

Parent Involvement Essential & Expected

TVM is a village of families and students who are enthusiastic about learning and willing to actively participate in the school.

TVM encourages parent involvement in all aspects of their child's education, including the reinforcement of Montessori principles at home. An outstanding education requires commitment not only from the school, but from the family and community as well.

Parents (and that can include extended families and friends) are expected to volunteer 15 hours per family per year. Activities include chaperoning field trips, preparing classroom materials, room parent, reading with students, assisting in the library, fundraising, and serving on various school committees, as well as many other opportunities.

Ultimately, it is the partnership of the student, the family, and Treasure Village Montessori that will offer the most effective route to a great education.

Enforceability

Consistent with Florida Statute, the parent volunteer contract (TVM Contract of Commitment) is enforceable under Florida law, and failure of a family to uphold or fulfill their responsibilities under said contract would be sufficient grounds for denial of admission to the school the following year. As a public school of choice, Treasure Village Montessori relies on a strong home-to-school connection for the success of its program. Failure on the part of the family to uphold the contract of commitment jeopardizes not only the school's overall performance, but may affect the child's educational potential as well. Families will be notified in writing of the consequence for non-fulfillment of the Contract of Commitment, which is placement of his/her children in the lottery drawing, to determine enrollment for the coming school year. A family may request benevolence in writing from the TVM Board of Directors, who will address cases of hardship on a case-by-case basis.

Non-discriminatory Policy

Treasure Village Montessori is a Florida Charter School that admits students of any race, color, nationality or ethnic origin and honors 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, national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, athletic and other school administered programs.

Student Information – Eligibility

Any child is eligible for admission into Voluntary Preschool (VPK) if he/she is four (4) years of age on or before September 1 of the school year. A child who transfers from another state shall be admitted under the same age requirements as established in the state where he/she was previously enrolled, as long as curriculum requirements have been met and extensive proof of this can be provided. Any admissions decision made will be at the discretion of the Principal.

Students entering kindergarten must be five (5) years old on or before September 1 of the school year. Before admitting a child into the program, administration shall require:

1. Evidence of the child's date of birth in the manner provided by Section 232.03, Florida Statutes to confirm grade assignment; transferring student's birth certificate must correspond and confirm grade assignment;
2. Evidence of a health examination (completed within twelve months prior to the school entry or evidence of an appointment to have such exam within 30 days) in accordance with state board of education rule 6a-6.024;
3. An up-to-date immunization record;

4. Documentation of residence including lease agreement, mortgage acceptance letter, electric or water bill verifying current residence in Monroe County.

Florida Statute requires each child who is entitled admittance to kindergarten or any other initial entrance into Florida public school to present a certificate of immunization for the prevention of those communicable diseases for which immunization is required; a school-entry health examination performed within one year prior to enrollment is also required by the Department of Health and Rehabilitation Services.

The statute further requires these documents prior to enrollment and prohibits a school from admitting a student, regardless of grade level, who does not comply with the law. State statutes hold parents or guardians of school-aged children responsible for compliance with the law.

The law does provide a temporary 30-day exemption for a student transferring from another state, or country in order to allow time for the transfer of records.

Through a letter signed and dated by the previous school's principal, a child can be granted a temporary 30-day exemption as provided by law. However, thirty-one (31) days from the date of entry into school, your child will be excused from further attendance after the date indicated, if the proper records of certification are not on file at school.

Admissions Procedures

Application week is scheduled for a full two weeks in April for the upcoming year. The number of available spaces for every grade level is based on the number of students who are returning/graduating. Applications are accepted during this week, Monday through Friday, 8:00 AM to 4:00PM.

If more applications are received than spaces available, a lottery will be held to determine which applicants will be admitted immediately and which applicants will be placed on the wait list and in what order. The lottery will be held the Monday following the last Friday of application week at 4:00 pm. Applicants will be notified of a student's status in writing (whether admitted or in what position on the wait list as determined by the lottery) within two weeks following the lottery. Parents must notify the school within one (1) week of notification on their decision to accept or reject the position; immediate acceptance or the wait list position.

Admission preference is given to siblings of students currently enrolled in the program at the time of registration. Preference is also given to children of the school's full-time employees, children of current board members, and to siblings of students drawn by lottery. No preference is given to students who reside under the same roof as students currently enrolled and are not siblings. Students continuously enrolled in the program will not be subject to the application process year after year. However, paperwork pertaining to student services and consent forms are required each year; school physicals must be submitted every two years and families must not have any outstanding balances.

Upon notification of enrollment and acceptance of a position, every family must submit all required paperwork, which includes, but is not limited to, an original immunization certification and school physical, proof of current residency, consent forms, birth certificate if not on file, etc. Students who have been accepted, but do not register and provide proper documentation by the deadline (set by Administration) shall forfeit their position in the charter school.

Families are responsible for providing working and current contact information should a space become available. Families are also welcome to contact the school at any time regarding waitlist status. In addition, the waitlist is valid for the upcoming year only. All wait-listed students, if not admitted by the following April, will be subject to open enrollment.

Exceptional Student Education

ESE/ESOL/GIFTED

Exceptional students assigned an Individual Education Plan will be provided with programs implemented in accordance with federal, state and local policies and procedures. This includes, but is not limited to:

A non-discriminatory policy regarding identification, location, evaluation, and selection, Free and appropriate public education (FAPE), Individual Education Plans (IEPs) to include IEP meetings with the student's family, the district and the school staff.

Exceptional students shall be provided with programs implemented in accordance with federal and state policies and procedures. Specifically, the school will comply with the Individuals Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Sections 228.2001 and 230.023 (4)(m) of the Florida Statutes, HB, and Chapter 6A-6 of the Florida Administrative Code.

Students with disabilities will be educated in the least restrictive environment. For those students whose special needs are so severe that the needs cannot be adequately addressed at the school, the child will be appropriately referred to another educational setting.

The school believes that the philosophies adhered to include, but are not limited to, attention to learning styles and behavior management which reflects an inclusive educational environment. Students, whose disabilities require accommodations at a level that alters the philosophy of the school, classroom structure, policies and procedure, and safety guidelines, shall be referred to an appropriate program. Parents of students with disabilities will receive procedural guidelines and guidance in their native language.

Limited English Proficient students will be under the supervision of a certified instructor and will follow or exceed the curriculum guidelines and accommodations outlined by the district. The school will adopt and abide by the District Plan in effect in the county and state.

The school currently contracts with several agencies to ensure that federal, state and county guidelines for exceptional student education are followed. In addition to providing services for these students, services for teachers and families are also incorporated into the program on a regular basis. Other services such as speech therapy, physical therapy and occupational therapy are also offered through the school on a contractual basis or if these services are required by law.

Goals of the ESE (Exceptional Student Education) Program

The ESE programs sets high expectations and high standards for students that need remediation as with all students. These programs prepare them to enter life as confident, productive, responsible individuals and citizens while moving them through the system. The program thoroughly addresses a variety of learning styles and levels of development in meeting the needs of pupils, as stated in individualized education plans. The classes offer an effective, as well as an inclusive and comprehensive academic, social, and functional curriculum, while meeting state requirements specified in the core curriculum content standards and special education mandates.

The ESE program has been created to provide classified children including those with disabilities a developmentally appropriate education in the least restrictive environment. We have incorporated an integrated approach to the curriculum, which recognizes that development and learning are interrelated. Through the use of an individualized program, the curriculum is tailored to meet the needs of any particular student. The flexibility of our programming enables students to access the curriculum at their level. Meeting individual student's needs combined with high expectations and excellence in teaching and learning result in positive student outcomes at all school levels.

Gifted

The school district will provide testing for gifted students once initial paperwork is received. TVM does not have a pull out program for gifted students. The school curriculum naturally adheres to the needs of gifted children by providing an environment that is individualized and progressive for the more assertive learners.

Screening

The school and the State of Florida want to ensure your child is prepared for entry into Kindergarten. All kindergarteners will be screened by school faculty, using the approved district assessment, within the first 60 days of school. Upon completion, these results will be turned into the state for further evaluation. Parents will only be notified should the need arise. Should you have any specific questions about this process you may contact your child's teacher.

VPK students also will be screened by school faculty within the first 60 days of school, using the approved state assessment. Upon completion, these results will be turned into the state for further evaluation. Parents will be notified should the need arise.

Student Code of Conduct-Disciplinary Procedures

The school will incorporate the Discipline Policies and Code of Conduct designed by the administration and supported by Monroe County Board of Education. Each class, guided by the teacher, will develop a classroom code of conduct focusing on developing and demonstrating respect for others, the materials, the environment, and the individual. The code includes the basic rules of behavior and consequences for infractions of those rules. Disciplinary actions will be documented through incident reports that will be sent home to the parents and a copy will be kept in the student's file as part of the student record. Every student attending the school is expected to abide by the following student rules and routines which are based on the rules governing student conduct and discipline adopted by the school and can be found in Appendix A.

Right to Learn

All students have the right to a meaningful education that will be of value to them for the rest of their lives. This includes the opportunity to master the necessary skills in reading, writing and mathematics, which are essential to function successfully in today's society. Students have the right to pursue an education without interference from other students, or from other factors which create distractions to the student or other students, while engaged in the learning process.

Students have the responsibility to apply themselves and take advantage of all the educational and recreational activities provided so that their school experience prepares them for the future. Students should actively engage in the daily work assigned, uncompleted work needs to be done at some other time of the day, including but not limited to home. Students will not engage in disruptive or distracting behavior which interferes with other student's right to learn.

Students whose behavior in the classroom or other learning environment is disruptive, disrespectful or uncooperative shall be subject to disciplinary and corrective action by the classroom teacher or school administration. Repeated and serious disruptive behavior may result in a warning, in-school, or out-of-school suspension for the day, or in extreme situations, suspension for up to one week.

Participation in School Programs and Activities

Students have the right and are encouraged to participate in the programs and activities at their school in accordance with the guidelines established by each school for student participation.

If students elect to take part in a club or group at school, they have the responsibility to be an active participant and to abide by the applicable requirements and rules. Students should conduct themselves on field trips,

assemblies and other school-related functions in a manner which brings credit to themselves, their families and their school.

Students who do not abide by the applicable requirements and rules in regards to these functions will be in jeopardy of losing the privilege to participate and may also be subject to disciplinary actions if this conduct continues to violate school rules and guidelines for behavior.

Attendance

Every student has the right to attend school and pursue education as long as the student is properly enrolled and has not had attendance privileges suspended by disciplinary action.

Please see the detailed Monroe County Attendance Policy that can be found on our website as well as the keysschools.com site.

Observation of School Rules

It is necessary in any school where large numbers of students congregate to develop and learn appropriate rules of behavior to facilitate the orderly conduct of the educational purpose of the school. Each class will establish, write and abide by the rules throughout the school year. When appropriate, students will have some involvement in determining these rules. It is the student's responsibility to know and abide by these rules of conduct.

Students will conduct themselves in accordance with the rules established in the classrooms and in the school. Failure to do so may result in disciplinary action including but not limited to, removal from class, other school functions, possible suspension from school or in-school suspension for the day, or in extreme cases suspension for up to one week. Any physical acts of violence will be reported to the proper authorities and become a part of the student's permanent academic school record. The school has a no tolerance policy for violence.

Respect for Persons and Property

Students have the right to physical safety and the protection of their personal property while attending school.

Students must conduct themselves in a manner which will not endanger the safety of their fellow students and should refrain from any horseplay, physical contact, or deliberate acts of assault or battery which would inflict harm onto others. Any physical acts of violence will be reported to the proper authorities and become a part of the student's permanent academic school record.

Students will show respect for the authority of teachers, administrators, support staff and other adults affiliated with the school. Students will be courteous to adults and students at all times.

Students will respect other students and the property of other students by displaying honesty and integrity while at school, and will refrain from possessing any item which is not theirs unless given permission by the owner.

Any student who defaces, cuts, damages, marks or destroys school property, or the personal property of other students, shall pay for the damages done and may also be subject to suspension or expulsion from one day up to a week, depending on the severity of damages. Other consequences could include an inability to use certain school materials, and exclusion during periods of time when certain property will be utilized.

Students who endanger other students' safety, resort to physical means of problem solving, steal, damage or abuse other persons property or persons are subject to disciplinary actions which could include isolation from classmates, being prohibited from participating in school events and functions or suspension from school.

For **third grade students and up**, physical altercations such as punching with a closed fist will warrant a form of detention or suspension for the rest of the day or the day following. At school, students are taught that it is unacceptable to hit back, whether provoked or not. ***As a policy, any student punching will immediately be subject to strict disciplinary procedures.***

Students will also refrain from bringing in materials such as music or literature that may possess language or pictures that are of an inappropriate or offensive nature. Please be sure to screen materials your child has in their possession or has access to. Materials will be permanently confiscated by the school and will not be returned, no matter what the financial implications.

It is essential that schools be safe and orderly to provide an environment conducive to learning. Students should be made to understand that any of the following offenses on school property, school sponsored transportation, and/or school sponsored activities shall result in suspension and possible expulsion: homicide, sexual battery, armed robbery, aggravated battery, battery on a teacher or other school personnel or student, kidnapping, or abduction, arson, possession, use or sale of any weapon or explosive and possession, use or sale of illegal substances. Local law enforcement agencies will be notified when a student commits any of these offenses.

Students who are found to have engaged in sexual harassment will also be subject to disciplinary action which may include isolation from school activities and/or classmates, suspension or expulsion and may also result in criminal penalties being imposed by the proper authorities.

Students should have high standards of personal cleanliness. As guidelines, students should wear shoes or some type of footwear that is practical and safe for elementary activities, PE and/or other active school functions. All students should wear closed toed sneakers to be eligible to play on the playground. Platforms, high heels and stiff dress shoes are not appropriate school attire. Students choosing not to abide by the shoe dress code may be prohibited from participating in playground, PE and field trips. Clothing showing bare midriffs, hats and bandanas (inside the school), bathing suits, unless specifically warranted, chains and other cumbersome or dangerous jewelry or clothing that promote drugs, violence or lewd and lascivious behavior are not allowed. While students have wide latitude in their choice of attire, the staff does have the authority to act on specific cases which disrupt good order and discipline in the school or that create safety concerns or distractions from daily activities at school. Violations of the dress and grooming guidelines as established by the school may lead to disciplinary actions, including isolation and exclusion from school activities where safety is an issue, or suspension.

Students considered by school personnel to be in violation of these rules will be provided with alternative attire if available or will be sent home to change.

Clothing can inhibit your child from fully participating in the program. Review the dress code (located on the website) for detailed information to ensure that this does not happen.

Free Speech and Student Publications

Students have constitutional rights for freedom of expression. Students have the right to speak or publish and distribute their opinions even if what they say is unpopular or controversial. Students also have the right to wear buttons, armbands and other items associated with freedom of expression but that are not distracting to the normal operation of the day. All of these rights, however, must be practiced within the limitations of the school's rules and procedures. Such reasonable limitations are necessary in order to provide a good learning environment and to prevent disruptive behavior. Students have the responsibility to observe the following whenever they speak or write:

Don't be obscene.

Don't ridicule.

Don't injure or smear a person's reputation.

Don't be the cause of unlawful behavior or serious disruption to normal school operation.

The administration has the right and responsibility to preview materials to see that acceptable legal standards are met.

Students who violate and abuse their freedom of expression may be subject to disciplinary action including loss of freedom, privileges, or suspension.

Illness/Medication

Please report any contagious diseases in your family so that the staff can address the situation accordingly. When a child has a fever, diarrhea or is vomiting, they must be kept home until free from these symptoms for 24 hours. Please call the school to report any prolonged absence or unusual illness which might spread through a class.

The presence of any communicable disease for which immunization is required by the Department of Health in Florida schools shall permit the county health department director or administrator, or the State Health Officer to declare a communicable disease emergency. Those children identified as not being immunized against the disease for which the emergency has been declared shall be temporarily excluded from the facility by the TVM staff, or the governing body, until such time as is specified by the county health department director or administrator.

Do not bring your child to school when ill. Illness includes any condition that prevents the child from participating comfortably in facility activities, illness that results in greater care than our staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children, or if the child has any of the following conditions: temperature of 100 degrees or greater, unusual lethargy, uncontrolled diarrhea, vomiting, mouth sores, rash with fever, pink eye, scabies, lice/nits or other infestation, tuberculosis, impetigo, strep throat, chicken pox, pertussis, mumps, hepatitis A, measles, rubella, respiratory illness, shingles, etc. More specific information may be obtained from the office on these conditions. In any of these cases, you will be called to pick up your child immediately. Your child must be picked up within 30 minutes of notification. Parents whose children have never been in school before should expect that their children may be ill more than usual during the first two or three months of school.

All medications must be administered in the front office with required paperwork. Under no circumstances should students have any medication in their possession, including, but not limited to, over the counter medications, inhalers, and homeopathic remedies.

Head Lice

The school will call parents if lice are found on their children. Parents are required to be at the school within 30 minutes of the phone call to prevent further spreading of this infestation. Lice are non-discriminatory and have no bias for gender, race, religion or socio-economic status. If we have two or more cases of lice, notices warning and educating parents on the detection and treatment of lice will be sent home. Lice have a 14 day incubation period. Lice prevention is the responsibility of the parents. Students will not be able to return to school until all living nits are removed from the child's head.

Food/Nutrition

It is the responsibility of the parents to prepare lunches that provide approximately one-third of the student's nutritional requirements, as required by state law. Students have several options for lunch. County lunches are available on a daily basis with notification to our main office or the teacher prior to 9am. Coral Shores High School cafeteria provides these lunches.

Families must fill out a form for Free and Reduced Lunch Program in order to determine eligibility. These forms are available as part of the enrollment package and can be further explained by the Office Manager.

Education on good nutritional habits is a part of the school curriculum. Lunch time discussions center on eating protein first. Many of the students are away from home for up to ten hours during the day. It is

extremely important that the food which they consume fosters excellent growth and development. Many recent studies show that sugar, dyes and preservatives may create reactions in students that inhibit the learning process. Various food-related activities take place in the classroom. These activities provide students experience with grace and courtesy, manners, application of measurement, reading directions and team work.

Low Sugar Policy

Food containing sugar as one of the first three ingredients is not permitted at school. Please be aware that sugar may be listed in several different forms. None of the following sweeteners are acceptable; fructose, maltose, sucrose, dextrose, glucose, raw sugar, brown sugar, corn syrup, high fructose, corn sweetener, sorbitol, saccharine, or aspartame (equal or nutri-sweet). Please read labels carefully. Many foods labeled as “natural” snacks are loaded with sugar. Yogurts sweetened with honey (e.g. Continental, Alta Dena or Mountain High brands) are permitted. Fruit juices must be 100% juice with no sugar added. We do not permit “natural” or diet sodas. If you are in doubt, check with us.

We encourage the children to bring their lunches in a labeled, standard size lunch box unless there is an all day field trip. For field trips, lunch should be packed in a labeled disposable lunch bag including a bottled or boxed drink. Any uneaten food will be sent home to help parents determine the appropriate amounts of food needed for their children.

Also, please do not send:

- Foods which require preparation at school (cup-o-noodles can be brought pre-made in a thermos, fruit can be quartered at home and wrapped tightly in plastic wrap, etc.)
- Foods which require refrigeration. We do not have space in the refrigerator for storing cold foods for all the children. Yogurt, cottage cheese, drinks, etc. will remain cool if packed in a small snack thermos designed for this purpose and found in most drug and grocery stores. Yogurt (placed in the freezer the night before) will have thawed to a yogurt texture by lunch time.
- Foods for children before and after school must also be sugar free. Sugared breakfast foods are not acceptable, and breakfast must be in a disposable container or plastic container which can be returned home.
- Microwaves – The children do not have access to a microwave, so it will not be possible to send warm-ups to school.

Before School/After School Adventures

School hours are 8:00 AM to 3:15 PM for VPK-8 students. The building is open from 7:30 AM to 4:30 PM. Morning care is free. After School Adventures is scheduled from 3:30-4:30 PM and is offered to students of the school for a fee of \$100/month. Applications and costs for this program are included in the introduction packet and must be filled out and submitted to the school before your child can be admitted into the program.

After School Adventures is a structured and active program. Programs ranging from art to gardening, science, sports and cooking are provided.

After School Adventures is offered through three different plans:

Plan A - from 3:30PM until 4:30PM. This plan includes snack and the daily scheduled activity.

Plan B is Occasional Care and is designed for unforeseen emergencies. It is available, with permission, at a cost of \$20 per day. This applies any time after 3:30 PM daily or after 12:00 PM on Early Release days.

Students picked up after 4:30 PM will be charged \$15.00 for every 15 minutes the student(s) is at the school after 4:30 PM.

In addition, a variety of after-school programs may be offered to the students of TVM for an additional fee, paid directly to the instructors and vary in availability and type during the year. These programs may include such activities as Guitar, Keyboarding, Art and more. Schedules of the specific programs will be made available during the first month of school.

Parent Information/Volunteer Hours

The school encourages active parent involvement in all aspects of their child's education, including reinforcing Montessori principles at home. Excellence in education requires an extraordinary commitment on the part of the family, school and community. We believe that families are ultimately responsible for their child's growth and development aided by a sound educational system. Parent involvement provides support to the inspiration that inspires a love of learning.

The school requires that parents, grandparents, legal guardians and/or friends of students volunteer 15 hours per family, per year. Projects may include but are not limited to participation in field trips, making materials for the classrooms, volunteering as a reading listener or a room parent, attending parent education nights and/or board meetings, fundraising, and serving on the public relations or other committees. You can also receive credit for attending school sponsored events.

As part of the volunteer program, each person who participates directly with students **must enroll** in VISA (Volunteer in School Activities). This Monroe County School District program is designed for the protection of the students. Registration in Level II is for volunteers who will chaperone, transport students, and engage in student-related activities. Level II requires that the volunteer be finger printed or hand scanned through the county school system. The cost for this program is about \$60.00. An application can be made by logging onto the County's web site at www.KeysSchools.com.

If volunteering during school hours is not possible, there are plenty of opportunities that can be done at home during evening or weekend hours. Re-enrollment into the school will be affected if this requirement cannot be met.

Communication

We recognize the importance of communication as the basis for effective teaching. The Administration and all teachers are available by appointment to address issues, concerns or whatever you may need that is educationally relevant.

If the issue concerns the classroom, we ask that you first communicate directly with the teacher. Please schedule an appointment outside of class time – attempting to discuss issues during class time is not appropriate and affects the classroom routine.

Conferences

Formal Parent/Teacher conferences are held at least once a year. Student progress in our program is discussed at these conferences. Parents are not required to attend conferences.

GOAL OF OUR PROGRAM

The goal of the program is to provide academic excellence that exceeds the minimum grade level requirements expected at the State levels. In addition to a rigorous academic program, it is just as important at the school to develop effective communication skills, coupled with effective life skills. Lastly, exposure to artistic, cultural and scientific matter will lay a foundation for careers, hobbies and passions later in life; also a central focus of the overall goal of the program. Developing well-rounded, productive members of society begins at an early age and the schools' goals help promote this ultimate goal.

Throughout the day there are many different skills being nurtured and developed. These skills are grouped into various areas of development. By following the Montessori curriculum as well as utilizing diverse child centered activities the teacher is able to focus on these skills at an individualized level.

Curriculum areas include, but are not limited to:

Language Arts

Students will develop both receptive and language arts skills. This includes the curriculum areas of reading, writing, vocabulary, spelling and grammar.

Mathematics

Students will develop math concepts in the areas of number sense, measurement, geometry, algebraic thinking, and data analysis.

Practical Life

Students will develop the skills necessary to participate in social activities in both the home and the community. Students incorporate life skills lessons into their routine in order to establish a sense of ownership and responsibility at home and in the classroom. Students begin to understand their role in the community and take a more active part.

Sensorial

Students will begin to understand the world around them as well as ways to live comfortably surrounded by a variety of environmental stimuli.

History

Students will develop the skills necessary to understand the concepts of past, present, and future. The events of the past have a direct impact on our lives today. Students will be able to determine how their decisions today can impact their future.

Geography

Students will gain an understanding of the world around them as well as different cultures and customs.

Science

Students will build a basis for the study of science through discovery and explanation. Science also includes the areas of botany and zoology.

Cultural Programs

Cultural subjects include Art, Spanish, Crossfit, Yoga and Music.

Grace, Courtesy, and Health

Students will learn how to lead healthy lives and help develop lifelong habits of appropriate social norms. Students will develop appropriate use of manners throughout the classroom as well as the extending community by fostering a responsibility for their own work and behavior.

Physical Education

Students in grades VPK-3 complete 120 minutes of Physical Education per week as mandated by legislation. For these students PE takes place in the courtyard/field and occasionally at various community parks in coordination with field trips. Students in grades VPK -3 focus on sports such as volleyball, baseball, soccer, field hockey, etc. PE is taught by a certified PE instructor for this age group.

Students in grades 4-8 complete 120 minutes of Physical Education per week as mandated by legislation. PE classes take place once weekly at Founders Park. Students are taught a variety of sports, teambuilding and communication skills. . Students that are not able to participate in PE and cannot provide a doctor's note must write an essay in order to excuse the absence.

Progression Plan

The school program for pupil progression has been developed in response to the Educational Accountability Act of 1976. It has been updated to reflect current statutes and school policy. Student progression shall be based upon an evaluation of each student's performance, including how well he/she masters the performance

standards set by the State Board of Education. The student progression plans for Monroe County can be found on the website, www.keysschools.com.

Additional Criteria for Promotion K-8

There are pertinent factors to be considered by the teacher before determining that a student will progress from one grade to another which must be prescribed by TVM. To this end, the following criteria for being promoted from grades K-8 are established:

Teacher Judgment and Other Factors

Student promotion is based upon an evaluation of each student's achievement in terms of appropriate instructional goals. The basis for making the determination should reflect teacher judgment based on consideration of the following; student progress reports, classroom assignments, daily observations, standardized tests, student portfolios, attendance, AIP(Academic Improvement Plan) or IEP(Individualized Education Plan, county approved) where appropriate, and other objective data as appropriate or required. The primary responsibility for determining each pupil's level of performance and ability to function academically, socially, and emotionally at the next grade level is that of the classroom teacher and/or a promotion and retention committee which may include a review by the Principal and Assistant Principal.

VPK - 8 Progress

Students who do not satisfactorily achieve established objectives for the grade to which they are assigned, may be assigned to the same grade for the next school year or given an alternative assignment. A student's level of proficiency in the areas of reading, writing, and mathematics must be reviewed and the student's progression must be based, in part, upon this proficiency. Students not meeting desired levels of proficiency as determined by the school and/or as evidenced by the results of state mandated tests are to be provided remedial instruction designed to foster their progress toward mastery of essential concepts and required standards.

The school is committed to a continuous progressive program and utilizes additional instructional mediums to improve student achievement, including extended instructional time, at-home summer school coursework, parent tutorial programs, contracted academic services, exceptional student services, specialized curriculum efforts and use of computer- assisted instructional labs.

Retention of students must be considered if the student has been provided remedial instruction and upon reassessment, falls below determined proficiency levels on a district measure of assessment or on the state assessments, in reading, writing, and mathematics given at the 2nd grade level. Students who after remediation do not attain proficiency in reading at the end of 3rd grade must be retained.

The school does not recommend that a student be retained more than one time during the elementary years; however, on occasion and when in the best interest of a child, he/she may be retained up to two years. Students must not be retained without documentation that remediation was provided in a timely and comprehensive manner, and it is documented by the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP). Student's may also be retained at the discretion of the classroom teacher, provided that teacher can show proof that the student is not and cannot reach grade level requirements, regardless of whether that child achieves grade level scores on the state assessment tests.

Students must be evaluated using locally determined assessments by the end of each grade in the area of reading, math and writing. Students are identified as substantially deficient in reading or math by one or more of the following: Standardized tests (below 50th percentile), student progress reports, student portfolios and referral by teacher recommendation. They then must receive diagnostic assessment and intensive instruction until the deficiency is addressed. It should be noted that no one measure taken alone should be used to assess a student's level of proficiency. Multiple criteria will be used when considering placement into remedial programs or other remedial alternatives.

A student identified at the end of 3rd grade as non-proficient in reading based upon school proficiency performance criteria on the statewide assessment, must be provided remediation. **If at the end of grade 3, after remediation, the student does not meet the State's performance criteria on the statewide assessment (above the 25%); he/she must be retained and receive intensive remediation.** This intensive instructional remediation program must be different than the previous year and one that considers the student's learning styles. The retention committee will make a recommendation to the Principal regarding promotion to the next grade or retention.

All students in grades 6-8 must maintain a grade of D or higher, or must fulfill required county assignments to help bridge the academic gap. Students with a grade below a D must complete credit projects by subject area during cultural studies. Students that must complete these subject area projects will be identified after every quarterly progress report.

VPK-8 Reporting Student Progress

Quarterly Progress Reports are given out. These reports provide a snapshot of student progress. A more comprehensive report is given at the end of the year. The parents will be notified in writing if it is apparent that the student may need to be retained or is doing unsatisfactory work. Parents will sign and return notification and request a conference with the teacher to set goals and plans for the student's academic progress.

Field Trips

During the academic year regular field trips are held for academic enrichment and an occasional recreational outing. In order for your child to participate in these events, the school must have a completed Field Trip Permission form and Consent for Medical Treatment in the event of an emergency. Students must wear a school uniform when attending a field trip. If an admission charge is involved, a field trip fee may be required and will be collected in advance. When parental assistance/drivers are needed, the teacher will post a sign-up sheet in the classroom. Seat belts (booster and/or car seats) are required, and field trip drivers must provide a valid driver's license, proof of insurance and VISA Level 2 clearance.

Parent Pick Up and Drop Off at the School

A traffic pattern has been designed to protect the safety of the children. If parents or guardians are picking up or dropping off children at the school, the driver must follow the designated route.

- Enter in the North parking lot, stop at the gate to drop off your student/s and drive around the back of the school.
- Option 2: Park in the parking lot across the old road and walk your child into the school.
- All students arriving late or dismissing early must be signed out in the front office.
- When exiting the parking lot, **turn right** onto the Old Road.

Note: Parking on or near the driveway is a safety hazard and damage to personal property will be the responsibility of the owner.

In an effort to provide a high quality education for all students, please make arrangements to pick up at 3:15. It is important that students stay for the entire day. Arrangements for early dismissal will not be able to be accommodated if not made prior to 2:45.

Emergency Care Procedures

The school is committed to ensuring that each student and employee has a safe and healthy work environment. All staff members have been trained and are certified in First Aid and CPR. All staff members are fingerprinted and receive clearance, through county, state and federal agencies, to work at the school, and are monitored for infractions.

Fire Drills

Fire drills are conducted on a monthly basis in compliance with the Department of Children and Families and other safety conscious organizations. These drills are mandatory and are conducted without notice. Fire drill routes for students are posted next to the exit nearest the fire extinguishers. All equipment including the fire extinguishers, alarm systems and exits are checked on an annual basis by the Fire Department and Alarm Company. Proof of these inspections can be found on the actual equipment.

Fire Emergency

- All fires are reported immediately. Fire emergency numbers will be called and the location of fire given.
- All employees know the location of the fire extinguishers.
- Tampering with fire extinguishers is forbidden.
- Fire extinguishers, fire alarms, fire exits or risers are not blocked by supplies at any time.
- Open flames are prohibited in any area where flammable materials are used or stored.
- The school building is designated a "No Smoking" area. People, who smoke, must smoke outside at least 500 ft. away from school property, as per Florida state law.

Evacuation Procedures

- Initiate drill procedure
- Follow escape routes to emergency exits
- Staff will escort students out the back or side of school and off school property
- Head count of staff and children once outside (match against attendance record)
- Call 911 at closest phone and give operator name and address
- Staff should remain in contact with police dispatch until officers arrive.

Weather Related School Closures

When a storm warning or watch is announced in our area, please listen to SUN 103.1 for announcements pertaining to school closures for Monroe County.

Storm Watches or Warnings during the School Day

If a storm warning or watch is announced in the middle of a school day, call the school office for the recommendation on whether to pick up your child from school. It is important that you have a backup plan in case of such an emergency and to notify the school of such plan.

In An Emergency

Parents are welcome to sign out students from school. We ask that you call in advance so that administration can notify and prepare the teacher and child with minimum disruption to the class. The school asks for your cooperation in any emergency situation.

Report to the office and check in with administration.

Sign your child out, in the appropriate book.

Allow the staff to bring your child to you in the office to minimize disruption of the class.

Note: If you pick up your child due to an emergency, it is important that you remember to sign your child out; attendance at school is done on a sign-in, not a sign-out basis.

Release From School

The school will not release a child to anyone whose name does not appear on the Release Form. Please send a written and signed note with special instructions if information on the release of your child changes or if your

child is to be picked up on a single occasion by another person. The school requires appropriate picture I.D. including license, passport or other official picture I.D. before releasing any child.

The main entrance to the school is through the front office. Parents and students must enter and exit through the main door (for sign-in and sign-out purposes). Students will not be allowed to leave the building without supervision from an approved adult.

Birthday Celebrations/Holidays

Birthdays are a very special occasion for children. The staff enjoys acknowledging this day for our students. In an effort to provide minimal disruptions to the classroom, birthdays are celebrated on a monthly basis, with all celebrations taking place on the last Friday of the month. *We do not allow any type of food or treat containing sugar at school for a child's birthday.* We celebrate with an alternative ceremony held by each class honoring the birthday of a child. Each teacher has a preferred method for birthday celebrations and may include time lines of the child's life, donation of a book or other material or a special presentation on their life. Talk to your child's teacher approximately two weeks before your child's birthday celebration to make the necessary arrangements.

Donations

For art projects, collages, and other classroom applications, the school may be able to use a variety of items, many of which you might discard. Please ask at the office or speak to the teachers. Particularly useful are buttons, fabric scraps, yarn, small wood scraps, rolls of paper or stickers, nature objects with educational merit, etc.

We accept donations in the form of money, equipment, or services. The school is a non-profit, 501C3 entity and the administration can furnish you with the required receipts documenting your donation for tax purposes. Throughout the year, cash or cash equivalent contributions can be made to a classroom to help the teacher enhance the environment, purchase special items directly related to instruction, off-set miscellaneous expenses incurred by the teacher and a host of other projects.

Solicitations

Treasure Village Montessori has a no solicitation policy. Requests to post or advertise are at the sole discretion of the Principal who must preview all materials in advance. Students are prohibited from soliciting parents, staff and teachers at any time on school property, during school hours. If a student is selling an item(s), he/she may submit a copy of the appropriate order form to the main office where it will be displayed in a visible location, available to anyone interested in purchasing such items.

Religion

The school is a non-denominational school and does not affiliate itself with any religious organization. Religion is personal to each family and best learned in the home. In the classrooms, teachers stress cultural diversity and encourage the children to share with their classmates that cultural, language, religious and ethnic differences make each of us so special. Though the school does not promote or preach any particular religious doctrine, the school "celebrates" all cultures and encourages tolerance and understanding by recognizing the cultural occasions of the various children represented in each class. Parents who may wish to help us explain the festive occasions of their cultures or religions to the class are always welcome.

The school realizes that because of different religious beliefs, this policy might interfere with a particular parent's religious philosophy. Please let us know if there are certain activities in which you would prefer your child not to participate in, or are uncomfortable with. In various years, parents have shared the festivities of Chinese New Year's, Persian New Years, Santa Lucia Day (Danish), Chanukah, as well as special festivals of Mexico, India, and Japan. Students can also express interests in researching or studying other religions as a part of their natural curiosity and interests, which is encouraged, but monitored. Religious awareness, tolerance and understanding go hand-in-hand with cultural awareness and understanding is a cornerstone to the Montessori philosophy.

Final Note

The purpose of this handbook is to keep you informed and involved in the policies and procedures necessary for the education, safety and well-being of your children. As parents of the children who attend the school, you are key to the school's success. With your continuing support, our possibilities as a Montessori school are limitless. If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to address them to the Principal. We welcome your ideas and suggestions to help us on our path of achieving excellence.



Appendix A

Rules and Routines

Treasure Village Montessori
86731 Overseas Highway Islamorada, FL 33036
(305) 852-3482 Fax: (305) 852-2432
Treasurevillagemontessori.com

Welcome!

Welcome to Treasure Village Montessori Charter School. Let the adventure begin! Our staff has been working hard to prepare lessons that will capture your interest, inspire your learning, and satisfy your curiosity. In order to provide you with a quality hands-on education, we do need to create an orderly learning atmosphere and enlist your cooperation. Please read on...

What are the school rules?

TVM has several common-sense classroom rules, these rules are similar to the rules used whenever groups of people are assembled. The rules are the same in each classroom and are as follows:

- 1 Respect the personal space and property of others.** The space surrounding another student is his/her personal space; this includes his/her desk and his/her property. If you put your feet on another student's desk you are invading their personal space, likewise if you borrow another student's pencil without asking you have disrespected the property rule.
- 2 Calling all artists.** Everyone likes to doodle and drawing can be fun but it can also be considered disrespectful if done during class. Therefore, please refrain from drawing, doodling or sketching when you're supposed to be learning, listening or working in class. Also, be sure not to doodle, draw or mark on school property unless you like cleaning, erasing and sanding on your weekends.
- 3. If you make a mess, clean it up.** When eighteen or twenty-two students gather in the same classroom, there is bound to be a mess from time-to-time - especially if those people are involved in projects and activities. Sometimes it may be unclear as to which portion of the mess came from you. In any event the mess needs to be cleaned up so please pitch-in, pick-up, help-out, and the mess will disappear.
- 4. Dress for success.** Out of all the rules, the school dress code is the one that has to be redefined over time to adapt to various trends and fads. Who could predict gel bracelets, dog collars, and black lipstick? We have devoted a special section just for the school dress code included later. In short, dress conservatively, wear sensible shoes, and you won't have to worry about this rule.
- 5. Use appropriate language in all situations.** Appropriate language is language that does not offend, provoke, irritate, annoy, stereotype, or hurt the feelings of, another person. You may have heard the phrase "Sticks and stones may break my bones but words can never hurt me." Well... this would be true if the word "physically" were added to the end. Let's face it - words can hurt, and in some instances are carefully crafted to be purposefully hurtful. Here's another old phrase: "If you can't say anything nice, don't say anything at all." This is a great position to take. We take verbally abusive comments very seriously, especially when they are used intentionally. There is a very fine line between verbal teasing and verbal abuse, please report any excessive teasing to the administration before it escalates. We are very effective at putting a stop to this type of behavior.
- 6. Practical Jokes can be funny but...** Practical jokes often hurt other peoples' feelings and result in unintended, unpredictable and unnecessary results. These "tricks" and "jokes" often escalate to consume your time and our time. So practical jokesters please find another creative outlet!
- 7. Horses play rough, students don't!** Horseplay is a common term that is loosely defined as unnecessarily rowdy or rough play. Horseplay usually starts as touching, poking, pulling, fighting, running, yanking, bopping, pushing, kicking, shoving, you get the picture! In almost all cases of horseplay school setting the result is often as follows: broken items, bruises, rips, fights, mark, hurt feelings and tears. Please exercise the self-control necessary to avoid horseplay and involve a staff member before entering into a situation that will result in an office referral. Please note that horseplay resulting in physical injury or damage to property will be immediate grounds for a suspension. Leave the horseplay to the horses!

8. **Do not retaliate!!** The staff and administration are skilled in handling school disputes quite well. If you take matters into your own hands by retaliation, you may find yourself in a situation where the tables are turned and you are perceived as the aggressor. Physical retaliation (punching, kicking, biting, etc.) can get you suspended from school. Always involve a TVM staff member before matters escalate to this point.

9. **Leave your gum at home.** Gum is destructive. It sticks to everything and stays stuck. It destroys carpets, sidewalks, furniture, and clothing. It gets stuck in hair. Gum is not sold in theme parks like Disney World, Universal Studios, and Bush Gardens for these reasons. The bottom line: do not bring gum to school, do not bring gum to school events, and do not bring gum on school trips. Do not bring gum here nor there, do not bring gum anywhere!

10. **Do your homework and turn it in on-time.** Students who do their homework and turn it in on-time earn maximum credit and typically earn higher grades. The best way to stay ahead of the curve in school is to be organized. We will provide you with a schedule so that you can plan your week. Your planner is a fantastic place to write down the due dates for assignments so that you may budget your time.

11. **Make-up your work if you are absent.** Quite a bit happens at TVM in any given day. If you miss a day of school or even a class you will need to make-up your missing work. Missing work is to be made up by meeting with the teacher and receiving assignments. It is your responsibility to seek out missing assignments.

12. **Be Proactive: Respond to low grades.** Grades can be accessed at any time on OnCourse. Low progress report grades indicate missing work, low test scores, or incomplete projects. Any student who receives a grade of "D" or "F" on his/her progress report is REQUIRED to meet with the corresponding teacher for assistance. If your child is in grades K-3 and you are questioning their progress please schedule a meeting with the teacher.

13. **When you arrive to school, report to your class or check into morning care.** Remember this is not time for you to wander around the school; this is time to prepare for your day.

14. **If you are late, sign-in and get a tardy pass.** Teachers are instructed to disallow late students from walking into their class without a pass. If you arrive late please report immediately to the office and sign-in. Once you have signed-in, you will receive a tardy pass. Repeated tardiness (3) will result in an unexcused absence.

15. **Field trips are fun ...** but schoolwork comes first! Please understand that a field trip is a class with learning objectives, written work and tests. Therefore, if you have a "D" or an "F" in any class, if you are missing excessive work, or if you have excessive absences your field trip day can be forfeited and you will remain at school for the entire day accomplishing your make-up work. Any time a field trip day is missed you must complete the required alternative assignment. TVM Polo shirts must be worn on all field trips (on or off campus).

16. **Don't forget your Uniform on PE Day!** The TVM school uniform gives you a sense of identity as part of the team. Whenever groups of people come together for a common goal one of the most important expressions of their team spirit is common dress. The Yankees don't wear those pinstripes for nothing! Dressing the same on PE day also helps our teachers keep the group together and focused. For these reasons you are required to bring and wear your TVM uniform on your designated PE day. Uniforms must be worn as the outermost layer of clothing and must not be modified in any way. Points will be deducted for each time a student is not prepared for PE.

17. **Can you hear me now?? -- Good.** Cell phones have certainly become part of our society. Perhaps you've seen the video entitled "Inconsiderate Cell Phone Man" while waiting for a movie to begin. Students are not required to bring cell phones to school. Teachers are authorized to confiscate cell phones that become "visible" due to their use during class, ringing, buzzing, or use as a gaming device at inopportune times. Confiscated cell phones will be held in a secure location until picked up by the parent.

18. **"You Gotta' Eat!"** A proper sack lunch should include a non-carbonated drink along with an element of protein, a fresh fruit or vegetable, and a snack. We have a LOW SUGAR POLICY. Do not trade or sell your lunch. Do not touch another person's lunch. All lunches should include an ice pack to keep your lunch safe from bacterial invasion.

Treasure Village Montessori

2021-2022 Parent Handbook

Parent Acknowledgment

I am acknowledging that I have received a copy of the Handbook and it is my responsibility to read and abide by its contents. If I have questions or concerns with regards to its contents, I will discuss them with the Principal. In the event I am not satisfied with the answers, I will put my questions or concerns in writing and address them to the Board of Directors for a response.

I further agree to return a signed copy of this acknowledgment to the school within ten (10) days of receipt.

Student Name

Student Signature

Student Name

Student Signature

Student Name

Student Signature

Parent Name (print)

Parent Signature

Parent Name (print)

Parent Signature

Date

Date