



SPRING VALLEY

MONTESSORI ACADEMY

Parent Handbook 2020-2021

Welcome to Spring Valley Montessori Academy, where children learn, grow, and blossom. At SVMA, we plant the seeds for early learning by providing our families with quality first-school experiences. Our teachers work in small class settings, employing Montessori and creative learning methods to meet the needs of the individual child. SVMA embraces the guiding principles of safety and kindness.

Spring Valley Montessori Academy values the partnership between parents and school. We strive to offer a nurturing atmosphere, an extension of home for your child. After reviewing the Parent Handbook, please complete and return the policy agreement form. Our handbook and parent resources are available on the SVMA website. Parent Portal ID: svma Password: svma20

SPRING VALLEY MONTESSORI ACADEMY
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SPRING VALLEY

MONTESSORI ACADEMY

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SPRING VALLEY MONTESSORI ACADEMY

School Calendar 2020-2021

2020

August 31- September 4	Orientation for New Parents and Children
September 8, 9	Professional Development for Staff
Thursday, September 10	First Day of School
Monday, September 14	Early Birds, Lunch Bunch & Enrichment Begin
Monday, October 12	Columbus Day Holiday
Friday, October 30	Halloween Parade 11:30 *Tentative No Afternoon Lunch Bunch or Enrichment Class
Wednesday, November 4	Ledo Pizza Night *Tentative
Wednesday, November 11	Parent/Teacher Conferences School Closed
November 18, 19, 20	November Open House *Tentative 2:30 to 3:30 School is open.
November 23- 27	Thanksgiving Break
Friday, December 18	No Lunch Bunch or Afternoon Enrichment
December 21 - January 3	Holiday Break Back to school on Monday, January 4th

2021

Monday, January 4	Back to School for 2021
January 13, 14, 15	January Open House *Tentative 2:30 to 3:30 School is open.
Monday, January 18 closed.	Martin Luther King's Birthday Holiday - School is closed.
Thurs. & Fri. January 28 & 29	Parent/Teacher Conferences School is closed.
February 12	Professional Development Day School is closed.
February 15	President's Day Holiday - School is closed.
Friday, March 19	Pajama Day with Teddy Bear Tea Party
April 2 - 11	Spring Break Return on Monday, April 12
Friday, April 23	SVMA Circus Day
Friday, April 30	SVMA Spring Cocktail Party * Tentative
May 5, 6, & 7	Grandparent Visiting Days *Tentative 9:00 to 9:45
Wednesday, May 26	No Lunch Bunch or Afternoon Enrichment
Thursday, May 27	End of the Year Program 10:00 to 11:00 *Tentative 9:00 All Students Arrive 9:45 Doors open for parents/families 11:30 End of Year Gathering at Westmoreland Park

Program and Policies

School Hours

Early Bird		8:15 a.m.
Arrival		8:50 a.m.
Dismissal	1 st	11:50 a.m.
	2 nd	12:45 p.m. (Lunch Bunch with a Bit of Play)
	3 rd	1:50 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. (Lunch Bunch & Enrichment)

*A charge of \$20.00 is applied for late pick up.

Daily Schedule

Our morning routine offers a consistent order to our days. Although the schedule differs from class to class, each includes a balance of child and teacher-initiated activities, proper hygiene, outdoor exercise class and outdoor play periods. Here is a sample schedule.

8:50–9:00 a.m.

- Arrival
- Temperature check and standard questions regarding COVID-19 symptoms in the household
- Child enters school with a teacher
- Hand-washing
- Join teachers and friends in the classroom

9:00–9:15 a.m.

Welcome songs, calendar, numbers, weather, and plans for the day

9:15–9:45 a.m.

Exercise class (outside, weather permitting)

Hand-washing

9:45–10:00 a.m.

Songs, movement, and stories

Visit bathroom and hand-washing

10:00–10:30 a.m.

Outdoor play

10:30–10:45 a.m.

Hand-washing and snack time

10:45–11:45 a.m.

Thematic circle time and guided lessons

Small group learning

Children explore the classroom, receive individual instruction, work independently or with friends

11:45 a.m.–noon

Hand-washing, closing songs, dismissal

Daily Health Screening and Arrival Details

- The safety and health of your child is our top priority. Cooperation of parents is needed to help prevent the spread of communicable disease. Before leaving your house for school, parents should carefully check your child to be sure there are no symptoms of cold, sore throat, fever, or other communicable illness. Children with the following symptoms will not be permitted to attend school: Fever of 100.4 or higher, chills, cough, sore throat, nasal congestion or runny nose, nausea, vomiting, loss of taste or smell, diarrhea, fatigue, muscle pain, loss of appetite, other symptoms of illness or not feeling well.
- Face coverings are worn by parents/guardians and involved staff at drop off/pick up.
- Temperature checks are performed on children at arrival. Parents take their child's temperature or staff will use a non-contact digital thermometer. After taking the temperature, the child's temperature result is recorded.
- Symptom checks are performed, which include a series of questions regarding any possible COVID-19 symptoms in children and household members.
- Families who walk to school, please maintain social distance. Temperature/symptom checks are conducted outside of the school's main entrance.
- If your child is hesitant to leave you, our staff is prepared to facilitate a positive transition from parent to school. Even if there are tears in carline, children become happy and engaged soon after entering the classroom. Our staff is well trained to meet your child's needs with sensitivity. When time permits, teachers may text/email parents pictures of their child at work and play.

Early Bird

Students participating in the Early Bird program, may enter after temperature check/symptom screening at 8:15 a.m. We also offer "Early Bird Drop In". The fee is \$10.00 per morning.

Enrichment (noon to 2:00 p.m.)

We offer Enrichment by the semester and on a drop-in basis. For drop-in, please submit your request 24 hours in advance. We will do our best to accommodate. Space is limited. Maximum capacity is 15 students. The fee for drop-in is \$40.00. Payment for extended care is required on that day.

Just Lunch Bunch with a Bit of Play (noon to 12:45 p.m.)

We offer Lunch Bunch by the semester and on a drop-in basis. For drop-in, please submit a 24 hour request in advance. The fee for drop-in is \$20.00.

Lunch

Children in the afternoon programs should bring their lunch in a lunch box with a beverage, labeled with their name. Lunches must be nut free. Grapes, carrots, and other foods that are potential choking hazards should be cut into safe, bite-size pieces.

Nut Free Policy

Food containing nuts or peanuts, or traces of nuts or peanuts, are not allowed in school. For allergy purposes, coconut is also considered a tree nut. Please check ingredients on packaged, store bought items to ensure they are nut-free and made in a nut-free environment without exposure to peanut or nut dust. Soy or sunflower butters are good alternatives to peanut butter.

Authorized Pick-up

The school must have on file the names of persons who are authorized to pick up your child. No child will be permitted to leave the premises with any unauthorized person, including the parent or babysitter of another child. Please state in writing any change from the person(s) we have on file that your child is to go home with. This must be done for each instance your child goes to play at another child's home. This policy is in place for the security and safety of your children.

Playground Hours

For the safety of our students, children are not permitted to play on the playground before or after school hours.

Enrollment Forms

The following forms must be completed and returned in order to attend the first day of school.

- Emergency
- Health Inventory
- Immunization Certificate
- Blood Lead Testing
- Medication Administration Authorization Form
- Directory Information
- Photo Release Form

Supplies /Activity Fee

To simplify What to Bring on the First Day, we ask parents to pay a Supplies/Activity Fee of \$100.00. This is a once-a-year, per student fee, which is applied to disinfectant supplies/cleaning, Home Learning Kits, student portraits, guest performers, and more.

Change of Clothing

Please bring two change of clothes in separate zip lock bags with your child's name on it. One for "accidents" and one for the Emergency Preparedness Packages.

Snack

Each family is asked to contribute two boxes of crackers for snack three times a year- in September, December, and March. If your child has allergies, please write a note for us to post on the Teacher's Information Board.

Diapers

If your child wears diapers, you must provide two packages of diapers and two packages of wipes. Please do provide Pull Ups.

Clothing – What to Wear

Please dress your child in comfortable, weather-appropriate clothing each day. Closed toe shoes are preferred for safety and comfort. No flip-flops are to be worn. We encourage, whenever possible, children dress in clothing that allows them to independently use the toilet.

Labeling Personal Items

Face masks, rain jackets, coats and lunch boxes/water bottles should be clearly labeled with the child's name. Please keep rain boots and umbrellas at home.

Tote Bags

No backpacks please. Information and work will be sent home in your child's new tote bag provided by the school.

Toys from Home

Please discourage your child from bringing toys or beloved treasures. Items from home will be placed in child's tote bag.

Visitors and Parent Involvement

Spring Valley Montessori Academy values the partnership between parents and school. In past years, we welcomed parents and grandparents to share in the life of our community through in-person opportunities such as grandparent visiting days, Halloween parade or guest reader program. Unfortunately, our visitor policy has changed. Due to COVID restrictions, access into the school is limited to SVMA employees.

This year, parents and family are invited to share in the life of the school from a distance. Volunteers can help by organizing service projects such as treats for troops and collections for local homeless shelters. We welcome your contributions to support teacher appreciation, circus day, and teddy bear tea. In addition, activities are planned to extend social connection through physically distanced events at Westmoreland Park and neighborhood restaurants. We welcome everyone to join the fun and support our community!

Parent-Teacher Conferences

There are two opportunities for parent-teacher conferences (fall and spring). The conferences include a discussion of your child's progress and to answer any questions you may have.

Communication

We value your communication. All special communication should be emailed or on written note to your child's teacher or the director.

You are welcome to call our director with your inquiries between 8:15 - 9:00 or in the afternoon. Contact: Christine Loneragan 202-316-2200
e-mail: Loneragan00@aol.com or info@springvalleymontessoriacademy.org

Attendance

We maintain a daily attendance record. If your child is absent, we kindly ask that you send an email. There are no make-up days for absences.

Birthdays

We are happy to celebrate your child's birthday at school. Please provide a special, nut-free snack for the class. We ask that snacks are pre-packaged and unopened. We cannot accept homemade treats, cake, brownies or cupcakes.

Children with food allergies will not receive birthday treats from other children. We ask their parents to bring a package of suitable/ non allergenic treats. We will store them and serve as a substitute.

Health and Safety

Before leaving for school in the morning, parents should take their child's temperature and conduct a Daily Health Check to be sure there are no symptoms of a communicable illness. Children with any of the symptoms below or other symptoms indicating a reportable communicable disease will not be permitted to attend school.

- Fever of 100.4 or higher
- Chills
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Nasal congestion or runny nose
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Loss of taste or smell
- Diarrhea
- Fatigue
- Muscle Pain
- Loss of appetite
- Other symptoms of illness or not feeling well
- Body Rash
- Open sores
- Eye drainage
- Pink Eye
- Continuous irritable crying

We require that parents notify the school if their child has any signs of or has been diagnosed with a contagious illness. Before a child returns to the preschool after having a communicable illness, a doctor's note may be required for re-admittance to assure that returning is safe for the child and others.

During school hours, children exhibiting any symptoms of a communicable illness will not be permitted to remain at school and will be isolated from other students until they can be collected by a parent or authorized caregiver. Children must be without a fever and symptom free for 24 hours before returning to school. Again, a doctor's note may be required for re-admittance to the school.

Medication

Only prescription medication accompanied by a doctor's written permission may be given to children at school. The staff is not permitted to apply diaper cream, lotion or sunscreen on children.

Discipline Policy

There are two guiding principles practiced at Spring Valley Montessori Academy: To be safe and kind – with ourselves and the people and things around us.

Our environment and materials are designed to attract and engage. Children are free to move around the room, work with purpose, socialize or simply enjoy a book. The balance to these freedoms include moving around the room with care and maintaining a volume of voice so as not to be too loud or intrusive.

A child who demonstrates behavioral problems will be redirected to an activity that better suits his/her interests. Often misbehavior is simply a sign of boredom. Therefore, we will not use time-outs and will engage the child in a productive and interesting activity.

Safety Procedures

If a child sustains an injury while at school, parents will be notified. Parents are asked to inform the staff of accidents that occur when their child is away from school so we may be sensitive to their condition and assist in maintaining their overall safety.

Emergency Contingency Plan

If there is an unexpected situation that requires us to evacuate the building, we have a contingency plan to relocate teachers/students to Westmoreland Church, 1 Westmoreland Circle. Parents will be contacted by email or phone.

Snow/ Emergency School Closing Policy

SVMA follows Montgomery County Public Schools' closing policy:

- If MCPS is closed, we're closed.
- If MCPS has a delayed opening, we open at 10:00.
- If MCPS closes early, we close early with no Enrichment Class.
- If MCPS is operating remotely, closings will be a decision made at the discretion of SVMA.
- When school is delayed or closed, families will be contacted via email.
- There are no make-up days.

School Closure due to Pandemic

If there is an extended closure, Spring Valley Montessori Academy will operate remotely and offer a quality educational program.

SVMA will provide:

- Remote learning sessions
- Daily virtual circle time
- Teacher-made video recordings of books, songs, crafts, and exercise activities
- Age-appropriate learning activities
- Learning kits for the home which complement lessons
- Connection with teachers using 1:1 check-ins
- Connection through written cards and letter

Tuition Payments

There is a \$100.00 service charge applied to accounts where tuition payments are late.

Refunds

All fees and tuition payments are non-refundable.

COVID-19 Health & Safety- Community Responsibility

The health and safety of our students, teachers, and families is our top priority. Each of us must remain vigilant in engaging in practices to reduce the risk of COVID-19. While SVMA implements safety measures during the school day, it is important that our families, caregivers, and staff understand their obligation to ensure the same when the school day ends. Outside of the school, we ask our entire community to practice daily health and safety screenings, social distancing, wearing masks, frequent handwashing, and following MDH travel advisory, the CDC, state, and local guidelines.

Please carefully read the Spring Valley Montessori Academy COVID-19 Health & Safety Guidelines on pages 11-13. The pandemic is a challenging and fluid situation. Federal, state, and local orders and guidance may change frequently, therefore our policies and procedures are subject to change accordingly.

SPRING VALLEY MONTESSORI ACADEMY COVID-19 HEALTH & SAFETY GUIDELINES

Spring Valley Montessori Academy places the health and safety of our children and staff as our first priority. We provide a quality and safe environment during the COVID-19 pandemic. As more information becomes available, we adapt and make changes to our safety measures and protocols. We follow the guidance from the CDC and Maryland State Department of Education. In line with safety measures, we implement the following protocols to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

COVID-19 Safety Protocol Measures

Daily Health Check

All staff, families, children, and their household members must conduct a daily health screening before coming to Spring Valley Montessori Academy. This includes a daily temperature check. Individuals exhibiting any of the following symptoms must stay home and will not be permitted to enter the school building.

- Fever of 100.4 or higher
- Chills
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Nasal congestion or runny nose
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Loss of taste or smell
- Diarrhea
- Fatigue
- Muscle Pain
- Loss of appetite
- Other symptoms of illness or not feeling well

If your child or member of your household has one or more of the following symptoms, please contact the school for further guidance. SVMA follows the "Decision Aid: Exclusion and Return for Laboratory Confirmed COVID-19 Cases and Persons with COVID-19 like Illness in School, Child Care Programs, and Youth Camps."

Drop Off/Pick Up

- Parents/guardians are limited from entering the facility. Contact between parents/guardians, staff, and other children is minimized at pick up/drop off.
- Face coverings are worn by parents/guardians and involved staff at drop off/pick up.
- Temperature checks are performed on children at arrival. A child's temperature can be taken by the parent or staff. Staff will use a non-contact digital thermometer to measure your child's temperature.

- After taking the temperature, the child's temperature result is recorded.
- Symptom checks are performed, which include a series of questions regarding any possible COVID-19 symptoms in children and household members.
- Following temperature and symptom check, the child is escorted into the school.
- Families who walk to school, must maintain social distance. Temperature/symptom checks are conducted outside of the school's main entrance.

Social Distancing

- SVMA practices social distancing the best way possible, within the school setting and on the playground.
- Groups are reduced in size and there is limited mixing in common areas.
- Outdoor activities include extended exercise class, outdoor recess, snack and circle time - weather permitting
- Open air from windows.
- Children are educated about social distancing and given verbal reminders.

Other Infection Control Measures

- Staff are self-monitoring their temperature and any COVID-19 symptoms in themselves and household members and report temperature to the facility director/administrator upon arrival.
- Hand washing/hand hygiene occurs for all children and staff upon arrival and frequently throughout the day.
- Staff wear cloth face coverings while in the facility- when this can be accomplished safely and consistently.
- If children, two-years and older, can safely and appropriately wear, remove, and handle a face covering, it is recommended, but not required, that they wear a cloth face covering while inside the facility.
- Routine cleaning and disinfecting occur multiple times per day - with emphasis on cleaning and disinfecting bathrooms, frequently touched objects, and surfaces inside/ outside.
- Toys that cannot be cleaned and sanitized are not being used. SVMA is cleaning and sanitizing toys multiple times per day or after each use when appropriate.
- Students will be provided with personal art boxes with their own crayons, glue sticks, and other materials.
- Non-essential visitors, including parents and caregivers will not be permitted in the building during school hours. Furthermore, large group activities have been canceled until further notice.
- Daily deep cleaning and disinfection will be completed at the end of each day.

Cloth Face Coverings for Children

1. Face coverings are recommended, but children are not required to wear a cloth face covering if they are not comfortable/able to do so safely.
2. A cloth face covering should:
 - Be labeled with child's name
 - Be worn to cover the nose and mouth
 - Be removed if a child is not able to maintain the face covering on their face or wear it safely
 - Be removed by the child for snacks and outdoor play
 - Be removed and replaced if it becomes wet or soiled
 - Be removed if the child experiences difficulty breathing

If a child or staff member is confirmed to have COVID-19

If a staff member or child attending SVMA is a confirmed case of COVID-19, we follow CDC and MDH/MSDE guidance:

- Contact the licensing specialist and local health department immediately,
- Close for 2–5 days while determining long-term course, which may include closure for 14 days or more,
- Communicate with staff and parents regarding the confirmed case and exposure,
- Clean and disinfect the childcare facility as recommended by the CDC, and
- Determine duration of program closure based on guidance from the local health department. The licensing specialist should be involved in the closure decision and process.
- Everyone potentially exposed to the person who tested positive for COVID-19 should monitor carefully for symptoms. Individuals who had close, prolonged contact with the person who tested positive should quarantine at home for 14 days after the last day of exposure.

If a child has a household contact who is a positive case or probable case of COVID-19

Children, who have a household contact who is a positive case or probable case of COVID-19, may return to SVMA 14 days after the household contact is released from isolation according to CDC guidance. The child must undergo this additional 14-day quarantine because the child could have been infected on the final day of the household member's isolation. The parent should provide evidence (e.g., a note from a health care provider) that the household contact has been released from isolation at the time the child returns to childcare.



SPRING VALLEY
MONTESSORI ACADEMY

Spring Valley Montessori Academy, L.L.C.
Policy Agreement Form

Parents,

Please sign this agreement page and return it to SVMA. Your signature confirms receipt of this Parent Handbook and your understanding of the policies and procedures of Spring Valley Montessori Academy.

Thank you for your cooperation,

Christine Lonergan

Christine Lonergan, Director

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I have read Spring Valley Montessori Academy Policy and Information, including the COVID-19 Health & Safety Guidelines, and do hereby agree to the conditions set forth in the 2020-2021 Spring Valley Montessori Academy Parent Handbook.

Student: _____

Parent(s) Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____
(Parent/Guardian)

Signature: _____ Date: _____
(Parent/Guardian)