Childcare/Preschool Program
And
Before/After School Program

Guidelines and Policies
2026-2027

Mission

Empower students to develop individualized skills, love of lifelong learning, embracing differences, and desire to protect and heal our environment.

Vision

We seek to encourage innovative thinkers to help build a sustainable future for generations to come.

Core Values

Student Focused: Keeping students first.

Teamwork: Working together to reach our personal, professional, and organizational goals.

Integrity: We are who we say we are.

Sustainability: Accountability towards human, financial, and natural resources. 2

General Information for all Childcare Programs

Staff

Employees are carefully selected through an evaluation of written applications, personal interviews and reference checks. In addition, staff is cleared through the Department of Human Services Central Registry and ICHAT (Internet Criminal History Assessment Tool).

Volunteers

Volunteers are welcome in the program provided that they are at least 16 years of age, complete the same interview and reference check process as Staff, and are cleared through the Department of Human Services Central Registry and ICHAT systems. Candidates will not be accepted to volunteer in the programs if they have been convicted of either of the following:

(a) Child abuse or child neglect.
(b) A felony involving harm or threatened harm to an individual.

Volunteers will serve under the direct supervision of assigned childcare staff and are never left alone with children. All supervised volunteers shall receive a public sex offender registry (PSOR) clearance before having any contact with a child in care. A copy of this clearance will be kept on in our office.

Positive Behavior Intervention Supports

Muskegon Montessori Academy for Environmental Change [MMAEC] believes that discipline is designed and implemented to help each child learn self-control, choose appropriate alternatives, identify feelings, and, when possible, develop an understanding and respect for the feelings of others. Discipline should not damage the child's self-image or embarrass the child who is being disciplined. When possible, the child being disciplined should contribute to resolving the conflict in which he or she is involved.

The goal of positive methods of discipline is for children to develop the skills necessary for healthy growth toward self-discipline. Staff members will:

- Give positive suggestions and feedback by explaining to children what they can do, rather than what they can't do.
- Redirect unacceptable behavior.
- Encourage children to express their feelings.

At no time will our staff/volunteers:

- Inflict any type of corporal punishment, such as hitting, shaking, biting, pinching, or binding. Children will never be deprived of meals, snacks, rest, or necessary toilet use.
- Staff will not humiliate, shame, or threaten children.
- Children will not be confined in closed areas.
- Non-severe discipline or restraint may be used when reasonably necessary, only to prevent a child from harming themselves or to prevent a child from harming other persons or property. For further details, please consult MMAEC Family & Student Handbook and Code of Student Conduct.

MMAEC's Code of Student Conduct guides behavior management practices for children in our child care programs. After communicating and working with a child and their family to correct misbehavior, the administrator may determine that a child has not adjusted to child care activities and, consequently, will ask the family to find other services for their child. If possible, a two-week advance notice will be given.

Fighting, weapons, drugs or other dangerous activity is forbidden in child care and will result in exclusion from child care. Bullying and intimidation are considered dangerous activities.

If a child's behavior affects the safety of staff or other children, enrollment in the child-care program will be terminated immediately.

Illness:

If your child is not feeling well, please keep them at home. If your child becomes ill while at school, you will be notified using the information you provided on your Child Information Record. Please have a plan so that you or your emergency person can pick your child up promptly if necessary.

Children should not attend when the following conditions are present:

- Temperature above 100 degrees
- Unusual drowsiness, excessive sleep, or the child appears ill
- Complaints of pain
- Vomiting two or more times in a 24-hour period
- Three or more loose or watery bowel movements in a 24-hour period
- Body rash with fever
- Severe cough or difficulty breathing
- Red swollen eyes or pus draining from the eyes
- Open daring areas on the skin
- Ringworm, lice, or pinworm

Accident Reporting:

School and office administrators have a responsibility to document and report incidents which occur on or near school facilities or involve students, employees, and the school community so that they can be addressed in a timely and accurate manner.

At no time will any medicines or chemicals be used to treat injuries.

In the event of a serious accident, these steps will be followed:

- If necessary, 911 will be called. Basic first aid and comfort will be given to the child.
- You will be contacted. If we cannot reach you, the emergency person listed on the Child Information Record will be called.

Administering Medication to Students:

Students are not allowed to keep any type of medication in their possession during school hours. All medication should be sent to the school in a container labeled by the pharmacist. A written, signed, and dated directive from the physician must accompany any medication to be administered at school. This includes, but is not limited to, over-the-counter medications such as Tylenol, Ibuprofen, lotions, creams, and aspirin. The school is only authorized to dispense Band-Aids and water without a physician's written directive.

MMAEC encourages parents to arrange for students to take all medications at home, if possible. For your child's safety, the learning environment educator or office staff will dispense ALL medication with written permission from the parent, written physician's instructions, and administered in the presence of another adult.

Individuals who administer medications will receive in-service training on policies and procedures related to this responsibility.

Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting

Program staff members are required by state law to report any and all suspected child abuse or neglect.

Grievance Procedure

We will always do our best to provide you and your child with the highest quality services. If you feel that you need to file a complaint or grievance, we ask that you use the following procedure:

- Make contact with the person(s) you have a complaint against.
- Try to resolve the problem on an informal basis
- Bring as much information as possible to this meeting
- If the matter has not been resolved, contact the Program Director or Administrator

Tobacco/Smoke Free School Zone

In compliance with Michigan Public Act 116, there is no smoking in the building or on the grounds. We also ask that you do not smoke at any off-site function in the presence of the children.

Exclusion or Dismissal of Children Due to Health Concerns

The parent, legal guardian, or other person the parent authorizes shall be notified immediately when a child has any sign or symptom that requires exclusion from the center. For illness not Covid-19 related, the center shall ask the parents to consult with the child's health care provider. The staff shall ask the parents to inform them of the advice received from the health care provider. The advice of the child's health care provider shall be followed by the center.

*Covid-19 Exclusion or Dismissal of Children Due to Health Concerns.

The program shall temporarily exclude a child to a supervised area, or send the child home as soon as possible if one or more of the following conditions exist:

- The illness prevents the child from participating comfortably in activities as determined by the childcare provider.
- The illness results in a greater need for care than the childcare staff can provide without compromising the health and safety of the other children, as determined by the childcare provider.
- The child has ANY of the following conditions:
    - FEVER – the child will not be able to come back to school until 24 hours AFTER the fever is gone with NO fever-reducing medication
    - Symptoms and signs of possible severe illness (until medical professional evaluation finds the child able to be included at the facility). Symptoms and signs of severe illness shall include:
        - Lethargy that is more than expected tiredness
        - Uncontrolled coughing
        - Inexplicable irritability or persistent crying
        - Difficulty breathing or wheezing
        - Other unusual signs for the child
        - Diarrhea – defined by more watery stools, decreased form of stool

that is not associated with changes of diet, and increased

■ frequency of passing stool that is beyond the child's ability to use the toilet

■ Blood in stools – not explained by dietary change, medication or hard stools.

■ Vomiting illness – (two or more episodes of vomiting in the previous 24 hours) until vomiting resolves or until a health care provider determines that the cause of the vomiting is not contagious and the child is not in danger of dehydration

■ Persistent abdominal pain (continues for more than 2 hours) or intermittent pain associated with fever or other signs or symptoms ■ Mouth sores and drooling – unless a healthcare provider or health department official determines that the child is noninfectious

■ Rash with fever – or behavior change, until a physician determines that these symptoms do not indicate a communicable disease ■ Purulent conjunctivitis (defined as pink or red conjunctiva with white or yellow eye discharge) – until after treatment has been initiated. In epidemics of non-purulent pink eye, exclusion shall be required only if the health authority recommends it.

■ Pediculosis (head lice) – from the end of the day until after the first treatment and NO NITS remain

■ Scabies – until after treatment has been completed

o Tuberculosis – until a health care provider or health official states that the child is on appropriate therapy and can attend child care

o Impetigo – until 24 hours after treatment has been initiated o Strep Throat – or other streptococcal infection… until 24 hours after initial antibiotic

o Varicella-Zoster (chicken pox) – until all sores have dried and crusted (usually 6 days)

- o Pertussis –until 5 days of appropriate antibiotic treatment (currently erythromycin, which is given for 14 consecutive days) has been completed
- o Mumps – until 9 days after onset of parotid gland swelling
- o Hepatitis A virus – until 1 week after onset of illness, jaundice, or as directed by the health department when passive immunoprophylaxis (currently, immune serum globulin) has been administered to appropriate children and staff members.
- o Measles – until 4 days after onset of rash
- o Rubella – until 6 days after onset of rash
- o Unspecified respiratory tract illness
- o Shingles (herpes zoster)

Hand Washing

Hands shall be washed with soap under running water. The following are not approved substitutes for soap and running water: hand sanitizers, water basins, and pre-moistened cleansing wipes.

The following procedures are considered best practice for hand washing:

- Have a clean single service towel available.
- Turn on the water to a comfortable temperature between 60 degrees to 120 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Moisten hands with water and apply soap.
- Rub hands together vigorously until a soapy lather appears and continue for at least 20 seconds.
- Rub areas between fingers, around nail beds, under fingernails, jewelry, and the back of hands.
- Rinse hands under running water until they are free of soap and dirt. Leave the

water running while drying hands.

- Dry hands with a clean, disposable paper or single-use cloth towel. If taps do not shut off automatically, turn taps off with the disposable paper or single-use towel.
- Dispose of the single service towel in a lined trash container.
- Use hand lotion to prevent chapping, if desired.

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Additional Hand Washing Information

- By using a paper towel to turn off the water faucet, staff that have just completed hand washing prevent recontamination of their hands.
- Shared cloth towels can transmit infectious diseases.
- Taps that turn off automatically or those that can be turned off without using hands avoid the recontamination problem.
- To keep soap from becoming a breeding place for microorganisms, thoroughly clean soap dispensers before refilling with fresh soap.
- When hand-washing facilities are not available at a remote work site, use appropriate antiseptic hand cleanser or antiseptic towelettes. As soon as possible, rewash hands with soap and running water.
- Good practice mandates that staff members always wash their hands, upon arrival for the day or when moving from one child care group to another.

Before and after:

- Eating, handling food, or feeding a child
- Giving medication
- Playing in water that is used by more than one person

After:

- Handling bodily fluid (mucus, blood, vomit), from sneezing, wiping and blowing noses, from mouths, or from sores.
- Handling uncooked food, especially raw meat and poultry
- Handling pets and other animals
- Playing in sandboxes
- Cleaning or handling the garbage

Before and After Care Program:

Muskegon Montessori Academy for Environmental Change (MMAEC) offers excellent before and after-school child care at affordable rates! At MMAEC, after-school child care is provided in a safe and caring environment that meets the developmental needs of an active child. Our director is trained in child care and understands children's needs. They provide intellectually stimulating activities that align with school philosophy and respond to individual needs and interests.

Times of Operation:

Before school: 7:30 AM-8:35 AM
After school: 3:30 PM-5:30 PM

Payment Information

Hourly rates, paid weekly.

- Hourly rate for weekly payment plan: $6.00 per hour for one child and $5.00 per hour for two or more children.

In emergency situations, or if you are more than 15 minutes late picking your child up, these rates also apply. The before and after school staff must be notified if a child will be here longer than 5:30 PM. *After 5:30 PM a charge of $1.00 per minute will be applied.

Authorities may be called at 6:00 PM if staff hasn't been notified of a later pick-up and contacts can't be reached.

Payment accepted as cash, check, money order, or credit card.
*There will now be a 3.5% service charge for credit cards

*A $10 late fee will be added for bills not paid prior to the next billing cycle/statement. MMAEC will not accept your child's attendance in before and/or after care if payment in full is not received in a timely manner.

*A $25.00 dollar fee will be charged to your account for checks returned by your bank for any reason, in addition to the regular bill. First occurrence will mandate all payments to be paid by money order, cash, or charge.

Payments:

Parents are required to pay for childcare in advance. Invoices will be sent home bi-weekly. Payment is due on Monday after the invoice is received. Payment by check or money order is preferred. If you pay by cash or money order, you will be issued a receipt for funds paid.

If a single student family accumulates a bill of $25, childcare services will be withheld until the balance has been paid or payment plan has been arranged and approved by the childcare supervisor. If a multi-student family accumulates a bill of $50, childcare services will be withheld until the balance is paid or a payment plan has been arranged by the childcare supervisor.

Daily Schedule:

Before School Program:

7:30 - 8:25 - Structured activity choice / Academic Support
8:25 - 8:35 - Clean Up / Quiet Reading Time
8:35 - Walk to class / Breakfast

After School Program:

3:30 - 4:30 - Bathroom break / Outside (weather permitting) / Snack

4:30 - 4:50 - Color / Read
4:50 - 5:20 - Structured activity choice / Academic Support
5:20 - 5:30 - Clean Up
5:30 - Closing

Please provide your child with a snack for the after school program as none is provided. Also please provide your child with a pencil box with markers, crayons, scissors, etc that they can use in childcare. There will be no shared supplies available.

Site Information:

Emergency Cards:
Parents will complete an emergency card at the time of enrollment. Your child will ONLY be released to someone authorized on that card. Please keep us up to date if the information on that card should change.

Sign-in and Sign-out Procedures:
Muskegon Montessori Academy for Environmental Change does not assume responsibility for a child until she is signed in (and out) by the parent/guardian or person designated on the emergency card. A child may not sign himself or herself in or out of child-care services. The only person who can sign in a child or pick up a child is the parent or person designated on the emergency card. The person picking up, or dropping off the child must come to the child care room. Calling ahead does not meet the standard for signing in or signing out. Sign-in and sign-out procedures must be followed or services will be terminated.

Release of Children:
Only those people listed on the Emergency Card will be allowed to pick your child up from school. All "Pick-up people", other than parents, must be at least 18 years old and will be asked to show photo ID before your child is released. This policy must be strictly adhered to for your child's safety and compliance with Day Care Licensing Rules. We understand that situations may arise where someone who may not be on the Emergency Card will need to pick your child. We will not be able to release your child to that person unless we have written consent from you. The person picking up will also

need to show identification in order for the child to be released.

For your child's safety, we will not release them to someone not on their Emergency Card, or to anyone on the card who does not appear to be a safe pick up person, due to intoxication or other impairments. The following steps will be taken when a parent or other pick-up person appears to be intoxicated or otherwise impaired.

The Staff will attempt:

- to contact the other parent or another person responsible for the child.
- to keep the child until another authorized person can pick the child up. If the pick-up- person insists on leaving, the staff will tell the pick-up person that they feel it is not safe for the child to ride with him/her and notify the local police as soon as they leave the facility.

Custody Concerns:

We realize that for our families, sometimes custody is an issue. We must have a copy of a custody order on file outlining your child's custody arrangement. Only with this order may we respect any wishes you might have for your child not to be released to the non-custodial parent.

Criteria for Admission/Withdrawal:

ADMISSION

Children from Pre-K to 6th grade are able to attend childcare. An Emergency Card is required before admittance to Childcare as well as filling out child care enrollment paperwork.

WITHDRAWAL

Children may be withdrawn from the program at the discretion of a parent or legal guardian at any time. Please notify the supervisor in writing, on or before the date of withdrawal.

The school may terminate service if any of the following occurs:

- Parent failure to follow sign-in and sign-out procedures.

● Failure to pay child care bills in a reasonable time.
● Repeated failure of child to maintain good behavior.
● Child fighting, bullying, and/or intimidating another student.
● Child showing disrespect or threat to the child-care supervisor.
● Parent failure to pay fines on time.
● Parents' repeated failure to pick up their child at the arranged time.
● Any behavior or action of your child that threatens the well-being of another child or that creates unsafe or threatening conditions for another child.
● Parent(s) disrespectful, threatening, or argumentative actions toward the child-care supervisor or toward another parent or child.

Any student withdrawal/terminated will not receive a refund.

Calendar:

Standard Child care hours of operation are from 7:30-8:35 AM and from 3:30-5:30 PM.

There is no school or child care services on the following dates:

- Friday October 16, 2026
- Friday November 13, 2026
- Wednesday November 25,
- Thursday November 26, 2026
- Friday November 27, 2026
- Friday December 21, 2026-January 1, 2027
- Monday January 18, 2027
- Monday February 15, 2027
- Tuesday February 16, 2027
- Wednesday February 17, 2027
- Friday March 12, 2027
- Friday April 2, 2027-April 9, 2027
- Monday May 31, 2027

Child-care services will follow the Muskegon Montessori Academy for Environmental

Change school calendar. Parents will be given notice if the program will operate on days the Academy is closed for in service days. The program will be CLOSED if the school is closed due to inclement weather or other emergency situations.

Child-care will be closed on the days that the Academy is closed for holidays in the school calendar.

School Closures:

Please consult the school schedule for planned school closures. If the school district your child's program is in deems it necessary to close due to weather conditions then childcare will not be in session. Listen to local TV stations or radio stations for closings. We will make every effort to notify you if school will be canceled for any other reason. If a storm or other emergency should be so severe that school needs to be closed during the school day, reasonable efforts will be made to contact parents or designated persons. The Academy stresses the need for parents to have an alternate person to pick the child up at school in case of emergency closings.

Information for Preschool:

Drop Off/Pick Up Procedure:
The safety of your child is our primary concern. For that reason we ask that students be signed in at the office. Staff will then walk them to their classroom. The building doors open at 8:35 a.m. and children are permitted to enter at that time. Students are not allowed to enter the building prior to that time.

School dismisses at 3:30 p.m. Your child will be ready for pick-up. The preschool teacher will assist with gathering personal belongings and seeing that your child is ready for departure. Our class will be waiting by the back fence for pickup. Students

WILL NOT be released to ANYONE that has not been previously indicated as able to do so on the child's information card. Please make sure all persons with the authority to pick up your child are listed on this card.

Criteria for Admission/Withdrawal:

ADMISSION

In order to enroll in the program each child must be at least 4 but not yet 5 years old on September 1.

WITHDRAWAL

Children may be withdrawn from the program at the discretion of a parent or legal guardian at any time. Please notify the school and/or classroom teacher, in writing, on or before the date of withdrawal.

Our Curriculum:

Montessori is a philosophy of education developed by Dr. Maria Montessori at the turn of the twentieth century. Dr. Montessori said of her philosophy, "Our aim is not merely to make the child understand, and still less to force him to memorize, but so to touch his imagination as to enthuse him to his inmost core."

The Montessori philosophy differs from a traditional school. One philosophical principle involves the child's development of abstract understanding from sequenced concrete experiences. The child gains knowledge through understanding of introduced concepts. The program focuses on having an individualized program for each child. In the Montessori classroom, children are honored for who they are, and for where they are in their personal development. Each child's strengths are recognized and built upon.

The Montessori approach to education is grounded in the belief that children have a dynamic inner desire to explore and learn about their environment. All children carry within themselves the person they will become. Developing the physical, intellectual,

and spiritual potential to the fullest requires freedom – freedom achieved through order and self-discipline. A prepared and stimulating environment allows children to learn at their own pace, according to their own capabilities in a non-competitive

atmosphere.

Teachers regularly observe and record children's behavior, experiences and interests. Based on these careful observations, teachers are able to plan activities that will promote children's growth and development. They also use these notes in parent meetings and conferences to help parents better understand their children's development.

Days and Hours of Operation:
The Preschool Program is in session Monday-Friday from 8:45 a.m. until 3:30 p.m. Please refer to the regular school calendar for vacation and holidays in which the program will be closed.

Fee Policy:
The preschool program is a tuition-based program. Tuition for the entire school year is $5,000.00 and can be made in monthly installments of $500.00 on or before the first of the month that payment is due. If payment is made in full, the family will receive a discount savings of $500 for one time payment of $4500. See addendum on the last page for payment options.

Daily Schedule: (subject to change)

8:35-9:00 Arrival / Breakfast 9:00-9:45 Circle Time / Calendar 9:45-10:00 Wash hands / Snack 10:00-10:45 Work Time
10:45-11:00 Cleanup
11:00-11:30 Lunch
11:30-12:00 Recess
12:00-12:30 Rest time
12:30-12:45 Snack
12:45-1:15 Circle Time
1:15-2:45 Work Time
2:45 Clean up
3:00 Recess
3:30 Dismissal

Nutrition and Food Service Program:
The Academy offers a school breakfast and lunch program that meets the standards set by the United States Department of Agriculture. Students may bring lunch from home.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to pack lunches that do not require warming in a microwave oven. Food is to be eaten only during lunch and snack times. The program does not provide snacks.

Health Related Resources:
(List local hospitals, poison control, health clinics, etc.)

Trinity Health
1500 E Sherman Blvd
Muskegon, MI 49444
(231) 672-2000
https://www.trinityhealthmichigan.org
Poison Control Center
1-800-222-1222