



**Serving Children 2 months - 2 years old**  
4500 Rustic Dr. Madison, WI, 53714  
info@toad-hill.com (608) 658-4377



**Serving Children 2 - 12 years old**  
4560 Rustic Dr. Madison, WI, 53718  
info@bloominggrovemontessori.com (608) 658-9121



**Serving Children 2 - 6 years old**  
4418 Milwaukee St. Madison, WI, 53714  
info@toad-hill.com (608) 217-9533

## **Toad Hill Montessori, Inc. 2025 Policy and Procedure Handbook for Parents**

This handbook contains information about the philosophy and policies of Toad Hill Montessori, Inc. (THM, Inc.), including the schools of Toad Hill Children's House (THCH), Blooming Grove Montessori (BGM), and Toad Hill Toddler House (THTH). Reading it thoroughly will give you a better understanding of your child's experiences with us. Toad Hill Montessori, Inc. does not discriminate in the admission, retention and dismissal of children on the basis of sex, race, color, class, national or ethnic origin, or the marital status, religious beliefs, sexual preference, political persuasion of parents or disabling conditions. All children will be considered for enrollment based on space available and licensing requirements.

### **Educational Philosophy**

The educational philosophy of THM, Inc. is rooted in the teachings of Dr. Maria Montessori. She discovered that children possess an active love of learning and an eagerness to explore their environment. By working with a child's natural inclinations towards discovery, a learning environment can be created which will foster independence, self discipline and motivation. Children attending THM, Inc. schools will have opportunities to develop creative, social, intellectual, cognitive, and large and small motor skills, all within a Montessori environment.

Dr. Montessori believed learning is more an individual than a group activity. In a Montessori classroom each child works without being pushed ahead or held back by the needs of the others in the classroom. Cooperation rather than competition is encouraged. In the classroom children interact continuously, choosing to work on their own or with a friend. The older children help the younger ones. The younger ones observe with fascination the work they will soon be able to do. A child goes through stages of development when certain types of knowledge are more easily acquired. Dr. Montessori referred to these as "sensitive periods", a term finding a new life in the recent research on brain development. This research is another validation of Dr. Montessori's work. Moving freely allows children to learn with all their senses. "Nothing can be in the intellect which is not first in the senses." Sensory-motor activities help build the neural connections in the child's growing brain.

Between infancy and 3.5 years, children are especially responsive to order and routine in their environment. They are also very receptive to language. During the latter part of this period they love to repeat exercises, easily learning to carry out complicated tasks. From 3-6 years, children are very aware of written language and numbers. If they are given proper preparation through a concrete, sensorial approach they are often able to learn to read, write and successfully complete mathematical operations. Time in the 3-6 classroom establishes a strong foundation for more advanced work in mathematics, geometry, reading and writing for the elementary years between the ages of 6-12.

THM, Inc. programs are based on these goals:

Toad Hill Toddler House:

- Children will feel empowered to explore with freedom and independence by being exposed to the prepared environment that is safe and structured specifically to their own natural development.
- Gain internal confidence found through self-accomplishment.
- Have the opportunity to observe and model the independent behavior of others in their mixed age community.
- Discover their natural desire, ability and awareness for care of self.

Toad Hill Children's House and Blooming Grove Montessori:

- Children should discover their inherent love of order
- Experience the profound concentration they are capable of
- Enjoy work firmly grounded in reality
- Expand their independence with the self-confidence found through accomplishment
- Learn to share and appreciate each other
- Listen willingly and experience the strength and support of community
- Find real joy in their work

One aspect of Montessori Education that's recently come to the forefront is Peace Education. The essentials of education for peace are built into the Montessori curriculum at every level. Perhaps having lived in an era buffeted by wars caused Dr. Montessori to become a tireless worker for peace. She was proposed as a candidate for the Nobel Prize in 1949 and 1950, and 1952. Dr. Montessori's curriculum was designed to help develop a respect for our planet and its inhabitants. By learning to respect and care for themselves and the environment of their classroom, the children are learning to take care of the larger world.

The Montessori classroom is designed with respect for children. Furniture and equipment are sized for them. Classroom materials are designed to encourage the children in their drive for discovery. The materials are arranged in such a way that children can follow the logical transition from one activity to another. A Montessori classroom invites children into an environment carefully designed to stimulate sensory perception, foster readiness for reading and writing and help the child gain self-reliance in learning.

The Montessori Method of education has been in practice since 1906 in many parts of the world. Montessori is not a static or closed system of education. It is as much an attitude about education and children as it is a specific method.

### **Areas of the Nido/Toddler Classrooms at THTH**

During the first 3 years of life, children develop more rapidly than at any other time in their life. During this time, they absorb information from the environment through observation and experiences. These are the years that lay the foundation for later learning. The Montessori Nido (Infant) & Toddler program offers a curriculum that emerges from each child's unique skills and interests. Based on daily observations, the teacher introduces new materials and works that pique curiosity and stimulate learning. Learning objectives for your child at this age include developing skills such as language, concentration, problem solving, visual discrimination, and physical coordination.

The routines of everyday living are the foundation of Montessori Nido & Toddler programs. Activities that promote independence, order, coordination, and concentration, as well as support social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development are all included in areas of the classroom.

These learning activities include:

- *Self-Care*: washing, dressing, toileting, and eating.
- *Care of the Environment*: cleaning, food preparation and plant care.
- *Large-Motor Activities (indoors and out)*: rolling, crawling, scooting, walking, climbing, running, jumping and balancing.
- *Fine-Motor Skills*: reaching, grasping, picking up objects, transferring objects, using tools and utensils.
- *Language*: naming objects, narrating or describing actions and intentions, discussing pictures, conversation, music, and singing.
- *Social Skills*: developing age appropriate social skills through observations and interactions with peers and teachers in their environment.
- *The Outdoor Classroom*: Montessori believed strongly that children should be in touch with the substance of their world. In the Outdoor Classroom, children develop motor skills and learn about the natural world as they climb, garden, do scrubbing work, dig, build in the snow or by simply observing.
- *Peace Education*: The essentials of education for peace are built into the Montessori curriculum at every level. Dr. Montessori's curriculum was designed to help develop a respect for our planet and its inhabitants. By learning to respect and care for themselves and the environment of their classroom, the children are learning to take care of the larger world.

## **Areas of the THCH and BGM Classrooms**

### *Practical Life*

The first experiences your child will have at THCH and BGM will be in the Practical Life area of the classroom. This area is full of activities that your child is already familiar with, such as pouring, sorting, and simple domestic tasks. By offering these activities to new students we are able to ease the transition from home to school, and they begin to take ownership of their house.

### *Sensorial*

Sensorial activities heighten your child's senses of touch, sight, taste, smell and sound, using materials designed according to Dr. Montessori's careful observations of children.

### *Art and Music*

Art supplies are freely available in our classroom. Music sessions include performing, dancing, singing and experimenting while learning about a variety of cultures.

### *Literacy*

Writing often comes before reading in a Montessori classroom with children building up their first words phonetically using letters of the Large Moveable Alphabet. After this, reading is accomplished with great ease.

### *Mathematics*

By handling number rods, counting out beads, counting spindles into boxes and arranging colored counters in patterns, children gain a physical impression of size and quantity long before they begin to manipulate numbers. This provides a solid foundation for the abstract.

### *Library Spaces*

Our library spaces feature new titles and old favorites. In addition to story books, we offer a rotating selection of nonfiction books. These reflect other areas of the classroom, including: science, nature, the arts, cultural subjects and more.

### *Cultural Subjects*

Your child will be introduced to botany, geography, history, science and the many cultures of the world as they handle and examine artifacts from around the world – a Japanese fan, chopsticks, Ecuadorian textiles, or a drum from Cyprus; and learn through hands-on science experiments.

### *Outdoor Classroom*

Montessori believed strongly that children should be in touch with the substance of their world. Activities in the Outdoor Classroom allow children to develop gross motor skills as they climb trees, garden, and scrub during the warmer months, and shovel, climb and build in the snow during winter. The children also learn about the natural world as they observe nature including our orchards, prairies, wooded areas, flower gardens, and visiting birds, insects and small animals.

### **Founder and Head of School**

Rebecca Katzenmeyer has been the Head of School of THM, Inc. since 2005, and opened Blooming Grove Montessori in 2015. Miss Beckie received her Montessori Certification in 2004 from the Montessori Center International of London, a training center founded by Dr. Maria Montessori in 1954. (For information on the Training Center please visit <http://www.montessori.ac.uk>.) This training is in addition to Graduate coursework in Early Childhood Education at the Colorado University of Denver, a BA in Modern Languages, Art History and Museum Studies at Beloit College, Elementary 6-12 Certification through the Center for Guided Montessori Studies, and a Certificate for Birth to Three from the North American Montessori Center. She also has served on the Board of Directors for the Wisconsin Montessori Association, and is the founder and President of the Madison Area Montessori Association.

The Head of School is responsible for overseeing all THM, Inc. Staff, Classroom Assistants, children, classroom operations, communication with parents, and all administrative duties in accordance with all THM, Inc. policies and procedures, the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families, and the City of Madison. The Head of School works closely with these agencies and the Montessori Staff, Classroom Assistants and Volunteers.

### ***MACTE accredited Montessori Staff:***

The Montessori staff guide the children through presentations of materials, answering questions and serving as resources in the classroom. They help children progress from one activity to the next while monitoring their development. The Montessori staff supervise children participating in classroom activities, carefully prepare the environment, and work closely with the Head of School and Classroom Assistants to carry out daily activities. The Montessori staff are trained to assist each child, allowing choices among activities and ability levels. There is freedom with limits in the Montessori classroom. Children are allowed to work freely as long as they do not disturb others.

### ***Montessori Paraprofessional Certified Staff:***

All staff working with children for 10 hours or more per week are expected to hold a Montessori Paraprofessional certificate. Paraprofessionals support the Lead Montessori staff and the Head of School by assisting children with snacks, meals, stories, outdoor play time, rest, Early Arrival and Extended Day programming, and cleaning and classroom maintenance.

### ***Support Staff, Assistants, Emergency Volunteers and Substitutes:***

We have a dedicated team of support staff who fill in as needed and who are interested in Montessori education and philosophy. Parents may also serve as Emergency Volunteers and Substitutes, and are selected on the basis of their awareness of children and the principles of child development. All Support Staff and Emergency Volunteers have completed training and orientation.

### **General Information**

THM, Inc. was opened to serve the East Madison community with a Montessori program dedicated to providing high quality education for children from 12 weeks to 12 years of age. The program is staffed with a qualified Head of School, Montessori Teachers, and Assistants who have been hired for their specific abilities and skills. The center's license, a book of WI regulations, "Your Guide to Licensed Child Care," and any notices of rule violations are posted in the south entry way of BGM, the Nido entryway of THTH, and the main entryway of THCH.

### **Programs**

THM, Inc. programs are year round and are divided into the School Year from September through mid June and Summer Program from mid-June through August. The maximum licensed capacity for care between the hours of 7:00 am and 5:15 pm is 28 children at THCH, 12 children in the BGM Pre-Primary (Toddler) classroom, 20 children in the BGM Primary classroom, 22 children in BGM Elementary classroom, and 20 at THTH. Please refer to the Application available at [www.toad-hill.com](http://www.toad-hill.com) and [www.bloominggrovemontessori.com](http://www.bloominggrovemontessori.com) for current tuition rates.

*All THM, Inc. Programs, 8:00am-12:00pm (THCH), 8:00am-3:15pm (All Locations)*

Children must be picked up by 12:15pm if enrolled in the THCH Half-Day program or between 2:50 pm and 3:10 pm at all locations unless enrolled in the After School program.

### *After School Program 3:00-5:00 pm*

Families who need children to stay after 3:00 pm may enroll in the After School Program. Please see application for fees. Children enrolled in After School are picked up between 4:30 pm and 5:00 pm.

### *Nido (Infant)/Toddler, Montessori Daily Activities (12 weeks- 3 years) 8:00 am -3:00 pm*

Children arrive between 7:50am and 8:10am. They will begin their day outside or inside based on their individual needs, interests, and abilities. For children under 12 months, all milk, bottles, and foods needed for the day are provided by the family. Children over the age of 12 months may eat a morning and afternoon (if enrolled in after school programming) snack provided by the family, and additionally may participate in a Montessori curriculum food-prep activity, when planned. All children over the age of 12 months will bring a snack and a cold lunch from home daily. Toad Hill Toddler House will provide cows milk for children over the age of 12 months, unless a milk alternative is provided by the family. Please do not pack candy as a part of your child's snacks/lunch. Families can provide a bulk snack (labeled with the child's name) that can be kept at the school for staff to use for that individual child for their daily snack time.

### *Toddler Program; Montessori Daily Activities Toddlers (15-30 months) 8:00 to 3:00 pm or 5:00 pm*

Toddlers arrive between 7:50-8:10 and begin their day outside. By 8:45 toddlers are ready to move inside and are encouraged to use the toilet before choosing activities on their own, based on their interests, abilities, with guidance from the Montessori Directress. Children over the age of 12 months may eat a morning and afternoon (if enrolled in after school programming) snack provided by the family, and additionally may participate in a Montessori curriculum food-prep activity, when planned. Additional outside time is scheduled as weather permits, and a cold lunch from home is enjoyed between 11:15 and 12:15 followed by rest, then an afternoon snack as mentioned above. Children in the Toddler room are encouraged to pour and drink from a cup, so we ask that bottles be saved for home use. Children must be picked up by 3:10 pm unless enrolled in the After School program. Please do not pack candy as a part of your child's snacks/lunch. Families can provide a bulk snack (labeled with the child's name) that can be kept at the school for staff to use for that individual child for their daily snack time.

### *Primary Program; Montessori Daily Activities for Primary Students (2 1/2 to 6 years) 8:00 am 3:00 pm*

Children arrive between 7:50 and 8:10 am and begin their day outside, weather permitting. Once all children have arrived they are welcome to continue to participate in outdoor activities or may choose to be inside choosing activities on their own, based on their interests, abilities, and lessons previously given by the Montessori Directress. Children bring a morning snack and a cold lunch from home and eat together between 11:00 am and 12 noon, followed by a rest period. In addition to a morning snack from home, children may participate in a Montessori curriculum food-prep activity, when planned. All primary students must be picked up at 3:10 pm unless enrolled in the After School program. Please do not pack candy as a part of your child's snacks/lunch.

### *Elementary Program; Montessori Daily Activities for Primary Students (6 -12 years) 8:00 am - 3:00 pm*

Children arrive between 7:50 and 8:10 am and begin their day outside. Once all children have arrived children are welcome to continue to participate in outdoor activities or may choose to be inside choosing activities on their own, based on their interests, abilities, and lessons previously given by the Montessori Directress. Children bring a morning snack and a cold lunch from home and eat together between 11:45 am and 12:30, followed by outdoor play (weather permitting) and an afternoon work period. In addition to a morning snack from home, children may participate in a Montessori curriculum food-prep activity, when planned. All Elementary students must be picked up by 3:10 pm unless enrolled in the After School program. Please do not pack candy as a part of your child's snacks/lunch.

## **Arrival**

Arrivals should be between 7:50am-8:10 am. Morning attendance will be checked by staff, and a phone call, text or e-mail is required by 8:30am if your child will not be attending for any reason. If a child who is scheduled to arrive does not arrive within 15 minutes of the specified arrival time, and we have not been notified in advance of the child's absence, staff will attempt to contact the parent or guardian to determine the child's whereabouts.

**THTH:** Children should arrive in the Lobby via the glass double doors. Children enrolled in the Nido (Infant) program should enter through the first keypad door on the right of the Lobby. If your child is enrolled in the Nido program, staff will assist in storing their items in the morning while you say your goodbyes at the classroom gate. All items should be labeled with your child's name. Children enrolled in the Toddler program should enter through the second keypad door at the back of the Lobby. If your child is enrolled in the Toddler program, please utilize the cubbies to store your children's outdoor gear and shoes. Any extra items (diapers, creams, etc.) and their lunch can be stored inside the classroom. All items should be labeled with your child's name.

**BGM:** Children in the Toddler and Primary Program (2 ½ to 6 years) are to be dropped off in the South (Upper Level) parking lot between 7:50am-8:10 am for regular drop off. Toddlers are to be dropped off at the west gate of the South (Upper Level) lot and are expected to arrive between 8:00 and 8:15. Children in the Elementary program (6 to 12 years) are to be dropped off in the North (Lower Level) parking lot between 7:50-8:10 for regular drop off.

**THCH:** Children should arrive in the gated school yard (2 ½ to 6 years) between 7:50am-8:10 am. Parents should pull their car around to the second gate entrance (closest to the exit) for quick drop offs or either park in the parking lot (to allow for more transition time with your child if needed).

### **Dismissal and Lateness**

Dismissal time is between 2:50 -3:10 (12:15-12:30 for THCH Half-Day program), all children are expected to be picked up at 3:10, unless they are enrolled in our After School Program (see Application on our websites for fees). All children who stay past 3:00 must be enrolled in our After School Program and must be signed out and picked up by 5:00 pm.

If for any reason you wish to pick up your child earlier or must pick up later, please call the school so the staff is advised of the unusual circumstances. Children are often distressed by the late pickups. Please make every effort to be prompt. Please let a staff person know that you are leaving with your child.

#### *Late Pickup Fee*

There is a late pick up fee of \$10.00 for every 15 minutes **or portion thereof** that your child is at THM, Inc. programs after their scheduled pickup time.

#### *Authorized Pick Ups*

Parents may authorize others to pick up their children in writing on their enrollment forms and emergency cards, via text or phone call to 608-658-4377 (THTH)/ 608-658-9121 (BGM)/ 608-217-9533 (THTH), or an email to [info@bloominggrovemontessori.com](mailto:info@bloominggrovemontessori.com). You must include the name of the person who will pick up your child, the time the child will be picked up and a number where the person can be reached. They must bring a picture I.D. that will be checked by a staff member.

Law enforcement will be contacted if anyone attempts to pick up a child while appearing to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol, or if a child is not picked up and no emergency contact person can be reached.

### **Necessary Forms**

Upon acceptance into the program you will be given a set of forms that are required by the State of Wisconsin to be kept on file. These forms must be on file on or before your child's first day of attendance. Your child will not be allowed to attend programs until all necessary forms are completed, including:

#### *Health Report and Immunization Record Form*

A signed Health Report is due within 90 days of acceptance to any program. All Health Reports must be current within 6 months for children under 2 years of age and within 2 years for children ages 2 and older. A complete immunization record or waiver is due within 30 days of acceptance to any program, and must be updated as new immunizations are administered.

### *Child Care Enrollment Form*

### *Health History*

### *Intake For Children Under 2 Years*

### *Authorization to Administer Medication*

## **Fees**

All fees and tuition rates are listed on the THM, Inc. Application Form.

### *Deposit and Application Fee*

There is one time, non-refundable, \$100 Application Fee, which is due along with the completed application, along with a \$500.00 deposit that will be applied to your final tuition payment at the time of withdrawal.

### *Material Fees*

Material Fees are due along with first tuition payments of each term, typically September and June. These are annual, and are non-refundable. The School Year material fee is \$300.00 and the Summer Material Fee is \$50.00. These fees are per child and may be prorated based on mid program start dates.

### *School Year Tuition*

Regular School Year tuition is calculated as part of a September to mid June academic year and accounts for all school closings including, In-Service days, Winter Vacation, Spring Break and all Holidays and and School Closings comparable with local area school districts. Payment may be made in full at the beginning of the School Year or paid in 10 monthly payments from September through June, with the June payment of 1/2 the regular monthly rate. School Year Tuition is prepaid and due the last business day of every month. A 3% discount will be offered for School Year tuition paid in full a year in advance. A 10% discount will be offered to the oldest sibling for families with more than one child attending THM, Inc. programs.

### *Summer Tuition*

Summer tuition is calculated based on a 10 week enrollment schedule. Summer Tuition is prepaid and payments are due the last business day of every month. A 3% discount will be offered for Summer tuition paid in advance on or before June 1 of each Summer.

### *Late Payment / Returned Check Fees*

All payments are made on the last business day of each month using our ACH payment system. If the payment can not be processed due to insufficient funds, it will be processed again on the 15th, along with an additional \$35 Late Payment fee. The late fee increases to \$50 if tuition payment can not be processed within 15 days of the expected payment date. Payments more than 30 days in arrears may include withholding of service. Any parent submitting a tuition check returned by the bank for any reason, including insufficient funds (bounced check) shall be charged a fee of \$35 per check that does not clear. No additional late fee shall be applied; assuming proper payment is made promptly within 5 days notice. If your family is having difficulty making a payment by the due date, please contact our office to set up an alternate payment plan. Tuition is not refunded for absences (illness or family vacations) or for unscheduled closings of school (i.e. outbreaks of illnesses, building emergencies, snow days.)

## **Optional Parental Consent to Share Information**

### *Photo Consent*

As part of the Permissions and Liability Waivers section of the THM, Inc. Application, we do ask parents to indicate whether or not they authorize THM, Inc. to use photographs or other images of their child for publication in internal school newsletters or for public relations purposes (i.e. school websites, etc.) connected to our programs and future programs associated with THM, Inc. External communications will not be published with children's names without written consent. Photo consent is optional. Please contact our office if you would like to confirm or change your authorization status.

### *Internal Community Directory*

As part of the Permissions and Liability Waivers section of the THM, Inc. Application, we do ask parents to indicate whether or not they authorize THM, Inc. and the Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) to share the parent(s) name(s) and email(s), as well as their child(ren)'s name and classroom with their classroom community in the THM, Inc. Internal Community Directory. This information could be used to extend an invitation to their children to participate in extracurricular activities. Internal Community Directory consent is optional. Please contact our office if you would like to confirm or change your authorization status.

## **School Policies**

### *Student Enrollment*

Children may be enrolled in THM, Inc. programs as openings arise. If we are filled to capacity a waiting list will be started. Preference is given to siblings of children who have attended or are attending, full time students, and to children of optimal enrollment age.

### *Student Probation/Termination*

For all children there is a six-week probationary period. We have this policy to ensure we can adequately serve the needs of all the children. During this time we look to identify children who are experiencing problems in the program. In the case of a child whose needs appear to not be met, we seek to make changes. Areas considered: The physical environment, interactions with adults and children, appropriate learning materials to fit the child's perceived needs, schedule of the day and additional resources (information, training or materials) for the staff. As we consider these changes, a parent/staff conference is arranged.

If this process extends beyond, or arises after the original six-week probation period a parent/staff conference will be held. If it is determined the program does not meet the needs of the child, the probation period may be extended or a final day of enrollment will be determined with every effort made to give the parents time (up to 30 days) to find an alternative arrangement. A child may be withdrawn from the school for reasons such as, but not limited to:

### *Staff-Initiated Termination of Student Contract:*

When, in the opinion of the Head of School and staff, the needs of the center dictate that a child be dismissed, THM, Inc. reserves the right of dismissal. Dismissal will occur only after written notice has been provided to the parent.

- The center reserves the right for dismissal for failure to promptly pay tuition.
- The center reserves the right of dismissal for failure to submit required health and enrollment information.
- The center reserves the right of dismissal for failure to follow center policies and inappropriate behavior.
- The center reserves the right of dismissal for chronic lateness, that is defined as; failure to drop-off or pick-up within the designated arrival and departure times and more than three episodes of lateness in any one-month period. This constitutes grounds to ask a family to withdraw from the program.



#### *Parent-Initiated Termination of Student Contract:*

Parents must provide written notice of intent to withdraw a child at least one month in advance of the last date of attendance.

Parents are financially obligated for 30 days from the date written notice is provided, whether or not the child continues to attend.

#### *Mutual Decision Between School and Parent for the Termination of Student Contract:*

The child's enrollment will be terminated when the center and the parents mutually agree that placement is inappropriate. Parents are responsible for any outstanding balance they may have prior to the agreed upon termination. Parents will be responsible for tuition only up to the final day of enrollment. Any disagreement between the school and parents over the termination of a child's enrollment prior to the end of the agreed time can be appealed in writing to the Head of School.

#### *Grievance Procedure*

If a parent has a grievance, the following steps should be taken:

1. Speak to the party involved (another parent or guardian, or staff member.) Resolve the problem if possible.
2. Speak to the Head of School and ask for assistance to solve the problem.
3. If the parent feels the grievance constitutes a violation of licensing rules, then, as a final resort – call the State of Wisconsin, Department of Children and Families.

#### *Abuse/Neglect Policy*

All THM, Inc. Child Care Providers are required by State Law to immediately report suspected or known cases of child abuse or neglect. In accordance with this requirement, any staff person of THM, Inc. with suspicion or knowledge of abuse or neglect of a student shall take responsibility to see that it is reported to law enforcement or Dane County, Child Protective Services. If a parent has a suspicion of abuse or neglect on the part of any staff member, the concern should be brought to the attention of the Head of School; if, following such discussion and investigation, the parent continues to believe this is occurring, then the parent should report the concerns to Dane County Child Protective Services office.

### **Health Policies**

#### *Health Precautions*

A child's hands shall be washed with soap and warm running water before and after snack and lunch, after toileting or diapering, and after wiping bodily secretions with a disposable tissue. All staff shall wash their hands with soap and warm running water before handling food, and after assisting toileting and after wiping bodily secretions from a child with a disposable tissue. Bodily secretions such as runny noses, eye drainage and coughed-up matter shall be wiped with a disposable tissue, used once and placed in a plastic-lined container. Whoever does the wiping shall wash his or her hands immediately.

Bodily secretions on surfaces shall be washed with soap and water and disinfected with a bleach solution of one tablespoon bleach to one quart of water, made fresh daily. Hand shall be washed immediately. Single use disposable gloves shall be worn if there is contact with blood or blood containing body fluids or tissue discharges. Hands shall be washed with soap and water after removal of gloves and the gloves will be discarded in plastic bags.

For spills of vomitus, urine, feces, blood or other body fluids, center staff shall clean and disinfect the floors, walls, bathrooms, tabletops, and equipment.

Wet or soiled clothing and diapers shall be changed promptly from an available supply of clean clothing. Soiled clothing will be kept in a plastic bag, and sent home for laundering.

All staff are required to be in good health when reporting for work, and to have annual health exams.

If your child has special health needs all staff will be provided with any necessary to provide the best care possible.

### *Ill Child Procedure*

Children with a sore throat, inflammation of the eyes, temperature of 100 degrees or greater, lice, ringworm, rash, vomiting, diarrhea or other illness or condition having the potential to affect the health of other persons shall be isolated and the parent called.

The staff will call the parent who must pick up the child within one hour. The emergency contact person will be called if the parent cannot be reached.

The ill child will be provided with a light blanket or asked to sit in a chair isolated from other children.

Children are required to be absent for 24 hours after their last vomiting, diarrhea or fever (without the use of over the counter medications.) Prescription medications must be administered a full 24 hours before the child can return to the center. In the case of head lice, the child must be "nit free" before returning to the center.

If the child complains of feeling ill, the staff will watch for other symptoms. The child may continue for the day unless he/she is unable to participate in the daily routine and/or a condition listed in above develops.

The center reserves the right of exclusion when, in the opinion of the Director or staff, the child appears to be ill.

Please notify the school by phone by 8:30 am when a child will be absent. Staff are required, by law, to reach a parent or other contact person if a child who is expected to attend does not arrive. There are no refunds for school days missed due to illness or otherwise.

### *Communicable Disease*

Parents are informed when a child in the center is found to have a specific communicable disease by a notice posted by the entrance to the school and via a newsletter/email. Parents are to inform the center as soon as possible when their child has a communicable disease so that others may be notified. The identity of the infected child will remain confidential. Certain diseases, however, must be reported to the Health Department.

A child may be readmitted without a statement from a doctor after having had a communicable disease only if the child has been absent for a period as specified by the Health Department.

### *Medications*

THM, Inc. encourages parents to administer medications before or after our programs. However upon special requests, medications may be given if a Wisconsin DCF Authorization to Administer Medication form is filled out and signed by the parent listing specific dates and times during which it is to be given. Medication must be in the original container and labeled with the child's name, dosage and directions for administration.

All medications are stored on the top shelf of a cupboard in a locked container and are inaccessible to the children. Medications that require refrigeration will be placed in a locked container clearly labeled with the word MEDICINE.

### *Accidents and Injuries*

Minor injuries will be washed with soap and water and covered with a bandage or treated with ice. Injuries will be recorded in the injury log book. Parents will be verbally informed of minor injuries at pick-up time or via text messaging.

In case of a serious injury parents will be consulted, if parents can not be contacted staff will contact the emergency contact person listed in our records. Should an ambulance be needed, parents will be responsible for any costs.

In the event of an extreme, life-threatening occurrence, with no time to consult parents or files, 911 will be called and the child would be taken to the nearest emergency room. An adult on the list of Emergency Volunteers will be contacted to assist the staff in emergency situations. All Emergency Volunteers must be available within 5 minutes.

## **Emergencies and Closures**

### *Emergency Planning*

In the event of fire, children will be evacuated through the nearest safe exit. The attendance form and list of phone numbers for parents and emergency contacts will be taken out to assure that all children are accounted for and all families notified. Children will be assembled at each school's designated fire emergency area outside. The fire department will be called by the staff. In case of tornado warning, the children will be taken to the basements for quiet time, games and reading. Blankets, a portable radio and flashlight with extra batteries for both are kept in the basement at all times. The attendance form and emergency contact information will be brought along.

If we are unable to return to the building after an evacuation, all parents or emergency contacts will be notified and children must be picked up within an hour.

In the event of a lost child, all areas of the property will be checked. If the child cannot be found, the child's parents and/or emergency contact and the police will be immediately notified.

### *Building Emergencies*

If there is a threat to the building or occupants, such as a possible shooter; requiring a lockdown; shades would be drawn, all doors locked; and parents would be notified of the situation as soon as it is safe to do so. If THM, Inc. schools lose services, including but not limited to: no heat, no air conditioning, no water, no electricity, plumbing problems, no telephone or other occurrences that may interfere with a child's safety, parents will be contacted immediately, and made aware of the situation, and how and when the issues will be resolved. In accordance with the State of Wisconsin Child Care License, THM, Inc. schools may not be less than 67 degrees Fahrenheit, and if inside temperatures exceed 80 degrees Fahrenheit, proper air circulation will be provided.

### *Weather-Related School Closures*

THM, Inc. follows the Madison Metropolitan School District (MMSD) closings, including unscheduled closures due to inclement weather (i.e. ice and/or extreme cold, snow days, extreme heat, etc.). After notice is received from MMSD of a weather-related school closure, THM, Inc. will promptly send notice to all THM, Inc. families via email newsletter detailing the reason and timeframe of the closure.

## **Discipline**

### *Child Guidance and Discipline*

Children who may be crying, fussing, or distraught will be held and comforted by rocking or lightly rubbing the child's back. Staff will attempt to redirect the child and speak calmly and soothingly to help the child work through the situation. If a child continues to cry, fuss or be distraught for more than 30 minutes, and every effort has been made by staff to comfort the child, parents will be notified and may be asked to pick up the child within 30 minutes.

The development of inner discipline in a child is always the goal with Montessori education. Self-discipline is fostered in many ways. The classroom environment is organized in an orderly, logical manner. Children, typically, choose work that they are capable of doing and are free to use it for as long as they wish without interference from others. This approach alleviates many problems of discipline that might be present in another kind of environment. In addition, the mixed age group allows the younger children to emulate the older children's more mature behavior.

It is our belief that discipline handled in a way that respects the dignity and the will of the child and fosters a positive self-concept, has a good chance of becoming internalized by the child. This philosophy suggests that cooperation is preferable to blind obedience because the child has input and the child participates. The child does something because it makes sense, because it is clearly needed and not simply because the Directress has made a request. We feel that boundaries are an important factor in producing an environment in which the child will feel secure. An environment in which there are no boundaries is frightening for the child. In accordance with Wisconsin licensing rules, punishment that is humiliating or frightening, such as spanking, verbal or physical abuse, withholding or forcing of food, punishment for lapses in toilet training, or other forms of physical punishment will never be used, even at a parent's request.

#### *Preferred Discipline Techniques*

Redirection – substituting another material or suggesting another activity

Positive reinforcement and encouragement – such as using specific praise or other intrinsic rewards. Food will never be used as a reward or punishment.

Modifying the environment to meet the needs of the child Explaining consistent, clear rules to the children.

Maintaining realistic, developmentally appropriate expectations of acting as a role model for acceptable and appropriate actions

Offering choices when possible and being willing to accept the choice the child makes.

Offering a breather: inviting a child to sit apart from the classroom, either with a Directress or alone to calm the child.

#### **Additional Information**

##### *Parent Involvement*

By actively showing your child that you care about the school, a stronger sense of community and trust is developed. Parents may be involved by contributing to the classroom needs, building and grounds maintenance, fundraising, or social events. Because your input is important to us as educational partners, we ask parents for their opinions and input by inviting parents to attend Parent Action Committee Meetings. These are typically led by a parent who has been a member of the THM, Inc. environment for a minimum of 2 years.

In choosing our programs, you have already affirmed your support for the Montessori educational philosophy. We feel we can do the best job fulfilling your expectations if we have opportunities for sharing what goes on in the classrooms and why. One way of doing this is for parents to try to attend as many of our parent meetings as possible. Regularly scheduled Parent Action Committee Meetings occur quarterly. We make an effort to vary these presentations each year while still providing the information parents often request about the programs. Parents who attend regularly have commented that they always discover something new!

Another valued parent contribution to the class would be to volunteer to share a special interest or talent; we always enjoy learning about your own family's customs or special foods, having parents demonstrate science experiments, help with a baking project or crafts, offer to help with some classroom maintenance work, etc. You may be surprised at your own gifts!

##### *Insurance*

The premises of THM, Inc. schools are insured by Greater Insurance.

##### *Pets*

THM, Inc. has fish at THTH and BGM and chickens in the outdoor classrooms at BGM. Parents of currently enrolled children will be notified if other pets become part of the curriculum.

### *Classroom Observation*

Parents and legal guardians are welcome at their child's school at any time. It is especially useful to both parents and staff if you've had a chance to spend some time in the class before fall and spring conferences. When your child is initially adjusting to a new classroom, it is usually less confusing for your child if you wait until he or she is feeling independently comfortable, generally several weeks after the school year begins, before observing. Here are some general guidelines we give any visitors to our program:

You'll get the most useful information from your visit if you spend time quietly observing from the front entryway.

If a situation arises during your visit in which you are unsure of the appropriate response, please ask a staff person for assistance.

Only staff are allowed, by our licensing regulations and our policy, to discipline children.

### *Communications/Conferences*

We are constantly working on ways to ensure that we maintain processes for communication between parents and staff, which is crucially important to our partnership. We have the following processes in place to facilitate communication:

Conferences with the Parents, staff, and Head of School can be arranged anytime, as mutually convenient, by request.

Please send a text message to 608-658-4377 (THTH)/ 608-658-9121 (BGM)/ 608-217-9533 (THTH) or use the communication log notebooks (THTH) to communicate changes or special notes about your child's day, such as a different pick-up time or person, or notes about general well-being. "Did not sleep well last night, so s/he may be tired or grumpy."

Communication booklets for each student are used in the Nido classrooms with daily written notes to parents regarding feeding times and amounts, nap times, diaper changes, and any additional information or questions for the parents.

In order that they may give their full attention to the children, the staff will not be available, except for messages of great urgency or by special arrangement, to take phone calls or conduct personal conferences, during program hours. Appointments may be arranged only outside of program times. If you wish, you may leave a voicemail or text message and your call will be returned at the earliest possible opportunity.

We really value your concerns and in-depth understanding of your child. It is particularly helpful for us to know about changes in your child's life, or your family's, that may affect how she or he is responding at school, such as inability to sleep, changes in toileting or eating habits, the birth of a sibling, a death, separation or divorce, moving or any other stressful or exciting situation occurring in the home or at school.

### *Confidentiality*

Any information that you share with any member of the staff will be held confidential.

### **Items Parents Need to Provide**

#### **THTH - Items to Bring That Will Stay at THTH**

**Pack of Disposable Diapers/Pullups or Cloth Diapers:** Each child, if not working on toileting in underwear, will need about 5-6 diapers per day. Children who are in training underwear will need around 3 diapers/pull ups each day.

**Pack of Wipes & Diaper Cream:** Families in our Nido Toddler space are asked to contribute a pack of 64(+) count baby wipes at the beginning of each month. Please also supply any necessary diaper ointment for your child as well.

**Extra Clothes/Underwear:** Your child will need 2-3 changes of clothes each day. For our youngest friends, their work is truly their body. We prefer they aren't in any clothing that will inhibit movement. As for our Toddler friends, clothing will need to be something they can easily pull on and off, once they begin the self care work of dressing/undressing themselves.

**Rest Items (younger than 12 months):** All children under the age of 12 months will be placed on their back, in a crib, for all rest times. You may bring a sleep sack for your child, but their arms must remain free and the child may not be swaddled. If your child prefers to use a pacifier for rest time you are welcome to provide one as well. The pacifier may not be attached to anything such as a clip or stuffed animal (e.g. WubbaNub). A sleep sack, worn on the child's body, and single pacifier are the only items that may be in the crib, besides a firm crib mattress and tight fitted crib sheet.

**Rest Items (older than 12 months):** Children who are 12 months and older will rest on a floor bed while at THTH. Please bring a blanket from home for rest time. You may also provide a small stuffed animal for your child if preferred.

**Container of Formula (if using):** If your child will be consuming formula while at THTH and you would like our staff to prepare their bottles of formula throughout the day, please bring a container of their specific formula that will stay at THTH. Please clearly label this item with your child's first and last name.

### **THTH - Items to Bring Daily**

**Cold packed lunch (12 months & Up):** Please send a cold packed lunch for your child daily, preferably in one container that is easy for your child to open or for them to work on opening themselves. Please make sure to include an ice pack with your child's lunch as we do not refrigerate lunches. Please do not pack candy as a part of your child's snacks/lunch. Families can provide a bulk snack (labeled with the child's name) that can be kept at the school for staff to use for that individual child for their daily snack time.

**Milk:** THTH will offer whole organic cows milk to children 12 months of age and older and organic 2% cows milk to children over 2 years of age, at meal times. If you would like to provide your child with a specific milk or milk alternative, you are welcome to bring this item labeled from home.

**Breast Milk:** If your child is consuming breast milk you must bring enough milk to last them the entire day. Breast milk must arrive portioned out into bottles or in pumping bags each day. If you bring breast milk in pumping bags, you must also provide enough clean bottles for each feeding that day. Every day each bottle and or pumped bag of milk must arrive labeled with your child's first and last name and that day's date. All bottles and unused milk will be sent home daily. If you would like to store any frozen breast milk at THTH, you may do so for up to 6 months, from the time it was pumped, in the THTH freezer.

**Formula:** Children consuming formula may choose from 2 different options when supplying THTH with the necessary amount.

Option 1) Bring all bottles of formula already mixed and ready to be stored in the refrigerator for that day's consumption.

Option 2) Provide a large container of powder formula, to be kept at THTH, so staff may prepare bottles for your child throughout the day. If this option is chosen, you must provide enough clean labeled bottles daily for the anticipated amount of feedings for that day.

**Solids:** If your child is under the age of 12 months and has begun to eat any solid food at home with you, you are welcome to send these items in labeled containers each day. *\*Any food for children, being sent to THTH for them to consume, must have been tried at home first. THTH staff will not give children any food for the first time while in care.\** Please do not pack candy as a part of your child's snacks/lunch.

**Laundry Bag (wet/dry bag):** Please bring a laundry bag daily for your child. We will use this item to send home any soiled clothing your child might have. You will also use this bag to send any replacement clothing needed for your child. If your child comes home with 2 or more sets of soiled clothing, please send replacement items for the next day.

Our goal is for children to be able to participate comfortably in any available activity of their choice. This is easier if their clothes are comfortable and easily laundered. Children who are working on dressing and toileting learning are greatly helped in this process by wearing clothes that are easy for them to manage independently.

### **Items Parents Need to Provide**

*THCH and BGM*

*Children need to bring a snack and a cold lunch daily from home.*

Nutrition guidance is available to all parents and classroom teachers will advise parents and guardians if a child is requiring more substantial lunches. Classroom teachers will also notify parents of any food allergies which may limit food choices that can be sent to school. For children ages two and up, snacks should be provided by the family.

Children ages two and up may participate in a Montessori curriculum food-prep activity, when planned. Please do not pack candy as a part of your child's snacks/lunch.

#### *Children Who Are Toilet Training*

Please provide diapers and/or pull ups, wipes, 3 sets of clothing including 3 pairs of thick padded underwear (no characters please!), shirts, shorts/pants, socks and slippers to be kept on site all labeled with your child's name. These items should be easy for your child to put on and take off. No onsies, buckles, snaps, zippers, or buttons please. Clothing should be comfortable with an elastic waist. Clothing items will be replaced continually as they are used. Please label all items your child brings to school.

#### *Children Who Are Toilet Trained*

Please provide 2 sets of clothing including 2 pairs of underwear (no characters please!), shirts, shorts/pants, socks and slippers to be kept on site all labeled with your child's name. These items should be easy for your child to put on and take off. These items will be replaced continually as they are used. Please label items your child brings to school.

No shoes are to be worn in the Toddler classrooms. Bare feet or socks are acceptable. In the primary and elementary classrooms we require soft, silent slippers for your child to wear. This not only sets a quiet tone to the classroom, but also adds to your child's comfort. Please avoid bulky character slippers. We also ask that your child wear slip on or Velcro shoes that s/he can put on and take off with little or no assistance.

Our goal is for children to be able to participate comfortably in any available activity of their choice. This is easier if their clothes are comfortable and easily laundered. Long pants are recommended for outdoor play. Children who are still working on dressing and toileting skills are greatly helped in this process by wearing clothes that are easy for them to manage independently.

We seriously discourage the wearing of costumes/superhero clothing (even t-shirts) at school. Children often take on the more aggressive persona of the character. And if their character is the "good guy", then some unwilling child is cast in the opposing role. Even costumes of a non-aggressive nature cause the children to focus on the image of their friend's outfit, rather than their classmate, him/herself. We find that our classrooms are much more peaceful if the child's true self can shine through. During cold/snowy weather, children will need snow pants, hats, boots (insulated) and mittens.

Please be sure to label ALL your child's clothing and personal items. This makes the inevitable process of tracking down lost items so much less frustrating

#### *Sharing Items from Home in Class*

Items brought from home can often cause conflicts between children, or become such a focus of your own child's attention that he or she has difficulty choosing work or interacting with others. When negative emotions such as jealousy and envy occur, feelings are hurt.

Therefore we ask that all toys and trinkets be left at home.

An item or items that inadvertently found their way to school- in spite of your best efforts!- are kept by staff for safekeeping and can be reclaimed there at the end of the day.

If you have special items that can enhance discussions being held in the classroom, such as items from nature or cultural artifacts, please notify the staff before bringing the items to school. Children should leave items in a place designated by the staff until time to show.