**Joyful Montessori**

 **Parent Handbook**

 **2021 - 2022**

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**WELCOME**

Welcome to Joyful Montessori (JM). This Handbook is designed to answer your questions concerning the school and its programs. You can also download this document on our website.

**PHILOSOPHY**

Joyful Montessori follows the philosophy of Dr. Maria Montessori. As she did, we believe that within each child is the seed of unlimited potential that guides the child into adulthood.  We emphasize individualized education as opposed to strict curricular education.  In addition, you will find us using many types of curricula to meet the needs of each child enrolled.

Each child is educated at his or her own rate of development.  Our focus is to help each child self-construct through an enriched environment with activities that promote experimentation at every developmental level.  We also actively promote the innate desire to be independent through everyday activities in our classrooms.

Defined limits and expectations are set through curriculum standards as well as through student codes of conduct and discipline. Generally stated, each child is offered opportunities to expand within the context of respect for themselves, the environment, and the people with which he/she shares the world.  These concepts are the core of Dr. Montessori's philosophy of education.

To support the personalized education of the child, we emphasize mixed-age groups.  Within our classrooms, the child can be enriched both cognitively and socially at the level that is comfortable for him/her. Classrooms are divided into three communities: Nido (Infant), Toddler, Primary. Each community has its own physical, social, psychological, and cognitive goals.  These goals overlap because human development does not completely follow a sequential pattern, nor does it proceed at the same rate for each child.  Therefore, our curriculum for the different community levels is a guide for that development.  A child may well move into the next foundation level during a school year and the necessary curriculum changes will be met.

**GENERAL ADMISSIONS**

JM is open to all children from 2 through 6 years of age.  JM does not discriminate on the basis of race, ethnicity, color, national origin, and gender, religion, disability or family makeup in the administration of its enrollment and/or educational policies.  Enrollment  priority is given to internal waitlisted students (i.e. current students, siblings of students), staff children, and children with Montessori experience.

 ***Enrollment Orientation:***  This meeting serves to open a direct line of communication between parents and the school. Philosophy, policies, procedures and the Enrollment Contract will be covered.  A signed contract and tuition payment agreement are due within 1 week of this meeting to complete the enrollment process.

***Pre-Transition Meeting:***Before a child transitions into a new class, your child’s lead teacher will invite the new family to a meeting.  This meeting assists the lead teacher in forming a relationship with you and your child and serves to support your child’s early success in becoming part of the classroom community.

***Student Files:***  The following forms are required to ensure a complete student file:

Registration Form

Enrollment Contract

Parent Handbook Acknowledgment

Immunization Record

***Temporarily off from school****.* Should you want to withdraw your child for couple months for some reasons, you must provide JM  with written notice of withdrawal by filling the withdrawal form.  At that time, your spot in JM will not be guaranteed. If your child coming back to school is more than 6 months, you must follow the enrollment procedure as a new student.

***Termination of Enrollment:***​ It is a goal of JM  to make the relationship between the school and each family and their child/children a positive and rewarding experience. We expect parents to uphold JM standards for open, direct and respectful communication between parents and staff members of JM. We will make every effort to provide the best possible care and educational setting for each individual child.  However, we also realize that problems may arise that are not solved satisfactorily for all parties.  JM reserves the right to terminate the enrollmentof any child if necessary.  Reasons for termination may include but are not limited to the following:

➢ Payment of tuition or fees is more than 60 days overdue.

➢ Repeated violations of school policies regarding tardiness and absence.

➢ Improper verbal, written, or physical conduct with child, staff or another parent.

➢ JM is unable to meet the developmental needs of the child after making reasonable accommodations for needs that has been discussed and agreed by both JM and parent.

➢ The child’s behavior is harmful to other students and/or staff.

**SCHOOL HOURS AND LATE PICK UP**

JM is open no earlier than 7:30 a.m. and no later than 04.00 p.m., Monday through Friday.  Parents may not enter the building or attempt to drop off children prior to the clock in administration reading 7:30 am.

The morning work cycle is vital to the success of each student and supports the necessary continuity for learning.  The work cycle begins at 8:30 a.m. in the classroom. Please help us by avoiding late drop offs and early pickups during this period. **Please have your child to school no later than 8:30 according to your child’s schedule refrain from picking up until at least 12:00 unless you’ve made prior arrangements with your child’s lead teacher. Children who have arrived later than 10:00 am without prior clearance from the office may be refused admittance to JM for the day.**

Please be timely in dropping off and picking up your child as our staffing is figured upon contracted enrollment.  A 10-minute grace period is allotted for the 11.30 p.m. pick up time.  *If this occurs in excess of five times, the enrollment status of the student will be adjusted to add the extended school program for the remainder of the contracted year.*

Please note the following:

➢ JM is not opened before 7:30 am.  No child will be admitted into the school prior to 7:30 a.m.

 It is the parent or guardian’s responsibility to read the Enrollment Contract completely.

***PARENT -- SCHOOL RELATIONS***

**COMMUNICATION**

Most importantly, questions and/or concerns need to be brought to the person or persons who can accurately answer them or serve to resolve the problem.  In most cases, your first line of communication will be your child’s lead teacher.  While we encourage our parents to build relationships with all adults caring for their children, please first go to your child’s lead teacher with all concerns and/or questions through email or by leaving a voicemail.  Our lead teachers will kindly return a response within 24 hours, or you are welcome to make an appointment if your concern is greater than can be communicated via email or voicemail.

If the lead teacher is unable to answer your question or you are not reasonably satisfied with the response, please talk with Principal. Regardless of the situation, please be mindful that open communication is the key to our success.

We are professionals and will act as such, even in the face of conflict.  In no way will children ever be brought into a conflict that may occur concerning our policies, programs or the implementation of such. Our expectation is that all of the adults at JM refrain from using any sort of public forum to resolve an issue.

Please commit to reading school Website, Obserfy and IG – keeping up to date on school notices can alleviate most of your questions and concerns.

Our methods of communication with parents:

***Weekly Report on Obserfy app.:***  Lead teachers will create a weekly or daily newsletter that is written on Obserfy on the weekend and details the events in the classroom, curriculum, parent education, and upcoming events in the classroom. The daily page will include student photographs.

***Conferences & Observations:***  All families are guaranteed two parent teacher conferences per year. At least one of those conferences will be a formal meeting with parents and teachers. Sometimes the conference occurs in the form of an observation, allowing the parents to observe their child working in the Montessori environment. The lead teacher will contact the parents to schedule these conferences and observations. Parents are guaranteed a written report on their child at least twice per year.

***Special Conferences and Support:*** Please call our attention to any area of concern so that we may fully meet your child’s needs.  Please contact your child’s lead teacher with any questions regarding your child’s development and education.  Our lead teachers will gladly meet with you by appointment.

***Parent Class:***  Educational meetings for parents are held throughout the school year.  Topics vary according to input from parents.  Please look for details on dates/times in monthly newsletters. Support groups for parents of transitioning children will also be offered. All of thesemeetings count towards work bond credit for volunteer hours.

***Confidentiality:***In our efforts to uphold confidentiality and maintain a high level of professionalism, all communication in the form of flyers or other handouts must be approved by the Principal.  In addition, our school directory information is for in-house use only and we expect parents to respect the privacy rights of others in our school community.

**WORK BOND/VOLUNTEER HOURS**

JM is a non-profit private school that relies on a commitment from every enrolled family to support its endeavors.  Every JM family is encouraged to volunteer 10 hours per school year. JM collects a work bond deposit of Rp.500.000 (Rp.50.000 per hour) at enrollment that will be parents’ deposit for next year school fee. JM offers families numerous opportunities to volunteer to fulfill the hours.  Hours can be submitted at any point throughout the year to the JM administration staff. Documentation of volunteer hours is the responsibility of the family.

Parent involvement helps us to provide continuity of education.  In addition, involvement sends a clear message to children that their learning is valued and important.  JM has five distinct ways in which parents can be active participants in their child’s education. As a not-for-profit organization, our success is directly related to parents’ participation in our school community.

***Observation:***  You are always welcome to visit throughout the year.  To visit a room, please talk with the lead teacher and make an appointment.

***Parents as Resources:***  Many parents have great talents, interests, or are well traveled.  Sharing these resources in our school expands the child's world and helps us to foster curiosity.

***Parents Teachers Conference* :**  This meeting will be held regularly every Semester. It serves and guides good education, good communication of both parties. This will direct the school in determining policies, programs that ensure responsibility and the future direction of our school.

 ***GOALS AND OBJECTIVES***

**CURRICULUM OVERVIEW**

JM’s focus in curriculum development is to provide high interest and strong challenge within a dynamic and experiential structure.  Each student is educated using his/her own individual plan as a guide through our curriculum.  Although skills and specific focus vary according to the age and developmental level of each student, this overview will provide a basic structure for understanding.

Our curriculum is divided into five main areas:

***Practical Life:***development of order, concentration, coordination and independence through work such as spooning, lacing, pouring, buttoning, polishing, washing, dusting, sweeping etc. Grace and courtesy in interactions with others.

***Sensorial:***enlarge the field of perception, develop fine motor skills, learn to reason and think critically

***Language:***language development, key lessons in reading and writing, functions of words and word study

***Math:***Teaching similarities, 1-1 correspondence, quantity, cardinal and ordinal numbers,

​counting, place value, decimal system and concrete concepts of all four math

​operations and geometry

​***Cultural:***  political and physical geography, and cultural awareness

**EDUCATIONAL PROCESS**

JM’s educational process is the greatest difference between Montessori and traditional education.  Two specific terms describe this process.

***Educational Continuum*:**Following the individual needs of the child is the hallmark of Montessori education.  Each child is moved through the curriculum according to demonstrated competency within any given skill.  The goal is to enhance a vibrant relationship with learning that fosters individuality in balance with competency of skills.

***Integration:***​Learning is ultimately the act of making connections. Each student is exposed to a myriad of ideas and facts in life and in school.  Our integrated curriculum builds a structure for organizing such information and provides connections that are applicable in real life.  All of the cultural, science, fine arts and social-emotional skills are taught in this manner.  By giving students the structure of organization and guiding them through the concepts of categorization, logical thought and basic skills, we free them to make connections on their own.  The making of these connections spark vitality and joy in learning.  This is the building of life-long education.

**ASSESSMENT**

JM uses a variety of educational assessments.  These assessments are used to develop and communicate individual education plans as well as to assist JM in remaining thorough in our educational practices. Our assessment methods have been chosen based on their alignment with Montessori pedagogy as well as their ability to empower the parents to engage in developmental support of their children. Assessments will be conducted exclusively by lead teachers and administration with specialized training in observations and developmental milestones of young children.

***Observations***

All students are observed for demonstrated competency and understanding of specific cognitive, social, emotional and physical skills.  This type of assessment is recorded via anecdotal notes that keep a running record of the teacher’s observations of the child over time.

***Developmental Evaluations***

This evaluation is used only when more information is required for staff to meet the individual needs of a student.  It is used for identifying any special needs in the areas of physical, language, mathematical, reading, social and emotional development. Tests are not administered without written permission from the parents.  Outside professionals may be required to perform such tests.  Any extra fees for such testing are the responsibility of the parent or guardian. Through partnership with the family, JM will work to refer parents to the best resources in the community for developmental evaluations or support.

**FIELD TRIPS AND COMMUNITY WALKS**

WALKING PROTOCOLS

All classrooms are required to include community walks as a part of their curriculum unless weather permits a walk from happening. Teachers must obtain copies of each child’s Walking Permission Slip from his/her student file in the front office.  No child shall participate in community walks without a signed permission slip.

**Ratios:**

o A minimum of two staff members must be present on all walks.

o Staff must maintain the following ratios on walks:

o Toddler – 1:5

o Primary – 1:9

**Child Safety:**

o All Toddler and Primary children must be holding on to a rope or a teacher’s hand.

o Staff will stop at every intersection to inspect for vehicles prior to crossing the street.

o Staff will act quickly in any situation to ensure the safety of all of the children.

o Staff will notify the administrative office when they are leaving and provide the following information:

o What time they left

o What time they expect to return

o Names of all children and staff participating in the walk

**Equipment:**

o First Aid Kit

o Cell phone from front desk

o Buggy or Rope

o Water (in summer)

o Classroom Emergency Folder

Community walks are an excellent opportunity for the children to get fresh air, learn about their community, develop knowledge of pedestrian safety, and enhance their vocabulary. We encourage all parents to allow their children to participate in the community walks.

FIELD TRIP PROTOCOLS \*

**Preparation**

• Lead teacher must submit a field trip request via email at least 4 weeks in advance. This request must include:

o Location

o Date

o Time

o Anticipated Number of Children

• Administration will review the request and notify the teacher of approval

• Lead teacher will determine the cost of the trip and check the classroom budget to ensure there are funds available to cover all students and staff attending

• Lead teacher will define the parameters of the field trip

o Location

o Departure/Return Times

o Designated route for all drivers to and from the event

o Lunch/Nap

o A designated meeting spot upon arrival at the site

o A designated meeting spot for groups that become split up from the class

• Determine how many adults are required

o Staff members can be in charge of 2 children each

o Parents can be in charge of 2 children each

o 1 staff member must not be assigned any children and be available to help where needed

• Announce the field trip to parents in the classroom and request chaperones

o E-mail

o Sign on clip board or near classroom

o Include a reminder that it counts for work bond hours

• Distribute permission slips

o These should be turned in to the office

o Lead teacher will check in on permission slips at least 3 business days prior to trip

▪ Send reminder to parents missing a slip

o No child without a permission slip signed by parents/guardians shall be permitted to attend the field trip.

**Drivers/Chaperones**

• All drivers must provide the following information to the front office at least 3 days prior to trip

o Driver’s License

o Vehicle Registration

o Insurance Information

o All of these items must be up to date and provided for EACH field trip

• All vehicles used in the transportation of children must meet the following requirements:

o Fully enclosed

o Regular vehicle maintenance

o Full tank of gas

o Properly maintained tires

o No cracked/broken windows

o Functional locks, seat belts, windows, and brakes

• Every parent and staff member attending the field trip must have a fully charged, functioning cell phone on his/her person for the duration of the excursion.

• All drivers will adhere to State law regarding speed limits and other safety measures set forth.

• No JM staff shall transport children in a vehicle during a field trip.

• Every child must have a car seat or booster seat that is appropriately sized for them and meets all State and Federal requirements for safety.

o No child shall ride in the front seat of a vehicle.

o No child shall ride in a car seat that has not been properly installed.

• Each student will be assigned a designated car and will ride in that vehicle both to and from the excursion. No changing of seat assignments is permitted.

o Any parent not attending the trip will be notified of what adult is in charge of their child and what vehicle said child will be riding in as well as contact information for the chaperone/driver.

• Drivers will follow the designated route to and from the event as dictated by the lead teacher.

o No stops are permitted unless an emergency warrants it.

**Safety Measures**

• Attendance will be taken and documented at the following intervals throughout the day:

o Prior to leaving the building

o Upon arrival at the designated site

o At lunch time

o Prior to students departing with their assigned drivers

o Upon arrival back at the school

• Each student will be assigned to a specific adult with the duty of monitoring that child.

• Teachers will provide the drivers and chaperones with a map of the driving route, detailed descriptions of meeting places and times, and any other information pertinent to student safety.

• One staff member will be designated as the “Safety Staff”. This person will handle:

o First Aid Kit

o Attendance

o Emergency Cards

o Medications

o Discipline Issues

• Each child must be labeled with contact information for the school and be easily identifiable as a member of the JM group.

• Upon arrival back at the school, each adult must escort the children in his/her charge back to the classroom and check in with the teacher prior to departing.

*Children who are late to JM and their class is out of the building on a walk or a field trip, may be placed in the administration area, or with another age appropriate class.*

**TELEVISION VIEWING/COMPUTERS**

JM does not utilize television, videos or computers as a part of its curriculum for infants and toddlers. JM may, on occasion, show Primary children a video associated with a scientific or cultural theme being studied by the class.

***STUDENT EXPECTATIONS***

**ATTENDANCE**

Attendance is taken in each classroom multiple times each day.  Please see your lead teacher about ensuring your child is singed in each day.

***Arrival Time:***JM school day begins at 8:30 am each morning. It is vital that children arrive on time and be ready for school each day.  Tardiness disrupts a student's flow throughout the day as well as the classroom’s work cycle. If you know in advance that your child will be tardy (e.g., due to a doctor’s appointment), please let your child’s lead teacher know in advance.

To report a same day tardy arrival or a contagious illness please call the school and leave a message.

**CONDUCT, DISCIPLINE AND POSITIVE REDIRECTION**

JM’s behavioral guidelines center on respect.  In searching for ways to help build each child's self-esteem and ability to respect others, we strive for a calm and satisfying environment.  Children learn behavior from observing other children and through adult guidance.  It rests upon us as adults to help foster healthy and happy interactions. When persistent, challenging behaviors occur with a student in the Toddler or Primary environment, the following steps will be taken by JM in order to ensure that the child’s behavior is addressed in a respectful and supportive manner:

• The Lead Teacher will evaluate the child. The Lead Teacher will have observation notes and log any incidences that occur.

• After the third occurrence the Lead Teacher will set up a meeting with Administration to discuss the child’s behavior.

• After meeting with Administration the Lead Teacher will formulate a plan to meet with the parents if necessary.

o During this time the Lead Teacher will continue to log and observe the child when the challenging behavior occurs.

• If the behavior continues the Lead Teacher will set up a meeting with the parents to discuss behavior and an action plan.

• The Lead Teacher will continue to collaborate with parents, teacher, administration, and any other professionals if necessary.

o The team will work together to implement a support plan that is strengths-based and aimed at ensuring the child’s inclusion whenever possible.

• If deemed necessary, JM will request that the parent/guardian seek an outside evaluation to

determine if special services may be necessary in order to address the challenging behavior and meet the needs of the child.

**STUDENT RECOMMENDATION LETTERS**

• Please give your child’s lead teacher adequate time and notice to complete letters of recommendation for your child to move on to another school. We also ask that you are respectful of the teacher’s time and limit the amount of letters your request from the teacher accordingly. Teachers may not be able to honor last minute requests for letters or other evaluations of your child.

***GENERAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES***

**SECURITY, ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE**

Please note the following procedures for ensuring the safety of your child at JM:

**Sign-in and out sheets:**

o Upon arrival and departure, all students must be signed in and out by a parent or guardian. You must sign with a full signature and write the time.

o These sheets are vital in case of building emergencies.

**Authorized pick-up:**

o All persons, other than parents, that arrive to pick up a child will be able to bring the child home after school the parents give confirmation about this matter.

**Student Transportation:**

o BLM does not transport children in vehicles at any point during the day.

 **ILLNESS AND EMERGENCIES**

Our goal is to do everything possible to contribute to a school promoting healthy and joyful development.  Basic to this is physical health.  Because many childhood illnesses are contagious, we ask that parents work in concert with the school to support the maintenance of a healthy environment.  In doing this we require the following as well as your signature on our Health Policy Agreement:

1. If your child is sick please do not bring him/her to school. If a sick child is dropped off; we will call you to pick him/her up immediately. Please see the school’s student health policy for the definition of “sick”.

2. If an illness or emergency arises at school, we will contact you immediately and the following procedures will occur:

**a.**Your child will be taken to the front office where he/she will remain until picked up. Toddler will remain, separate, but in their environment until they are picked

**b.**Parents must pick up the sick child within **45 minutes** after being informed of illness.

**c.**Children sent home after 10:00 am will not be permitted to return the next day unless accompanied by a note from a physician or nurse.

3. Please inform your child’s lead teacher if your child has taken medication for teething or pain prior to school arrival.

We do not have facilities to care for sick children.  Because of this we ask that while the following illnesses or conditions may not be contagious, it is best that the child stay home until either well or determined that child is not contagious.

• Severe Earache

• Wheezing from severe asthma attack

• Draining, infected sore

• Sore throat

**MEDICATION POLICY**

• No medication of any kind will be dispensed without doctor's permission**.** \*This includes lip medication, lip balm or Chap Stick. Please check with your child’s health care provider to see if a dosage schedule can be arranged outside of school hours.

• Parents are responsible for providing all medications and supplies to the school.

• Any medication dispensed to your child at school must be prescribed in writing by a doctor. All medication must remain in the original container bearing the original label that shows:

o Child’s name

o Physician’s name, telephone number and signature

o Date authorized

o Name of medication and dosage

o Time of day medications is to be given

o Route of medication

o Length of time the medication is to be given

o Reason for medication

o Side effects or reaction to watch for

o Special instructions

* If your child is injured at JM your lead teacher will notify parents. If the injures is serious the Lead teacher will contact parents via phone.

**SAFETY AND RECESS**

Student safety is of utmost concern to all JM staff.  In an effort to further support this, JM has specific toys and activities permitted during the recess period.  Therefore, no personal toys will be permitted on the school grounds. Not only are some toys a safety concern, but also their presence is distracting to our classroom environments.  Please do not bring toys of any kind to school.

**CHILDREN’S CLOTHING**

1. JM makes every attempt to help children manage their personal belongings.  It is helpful to label clothes, underwear, bedding, that your child brings to school.  Please do not send any objects with your child that could be considered a choking hazard (this includes coins).

2. Clothing for school should be comfortable and promote independence

​for your child.

**PARTIES**

***Holidays:***JM is fortunate to have students of diverse racial/ethnic, religious, and cultural backgrounds.  We consider this a special opportunity to provide valuable learning experiences.  Parents are welcome to arrange a seasonal celebration with their child's lead teacher but we cannot permit holiday celebrations to disrupt the regular structure and flow of the school day.

***Birthdays:***  We at JM love to recognize and celebrate life's milestones with each student, but we need to ensure that such celebrations do not disturb the regular structure and flow of the school day.

o The family may choose to donate one Montessori appropriate board or fabric book or a plant to the  classroom in honor of the child.

▪ If the family chooses to donate a book, the parent is welcome to read the book to any interested children at drop-off time.

▪ If the family chooses to donate a plant, the child may choose where to put the plant in the classroom.

o The classroom will sing to the child during lunch time or group time.

o The classroom may choose to do a baking activity with the child, if the child is interested in doing so. The child may serve the baked treats to his/her classmates during the lunch time.

o The classroom will hold a ceremonial group time for the child honoring each year of his/her life and celebrating the year to come.

We respectfully request that parents refrain from bringing treats, balloons, or gifts for the child to the school. We also request that parents understand that the classroom celebrations are for staff and students only. We would love to hear about your family celebration after it occurs.

**BACKPACKS**

Please provide your child with a bag or backpack that is appropriately sized for his/her needs. Children should be able to independently transport their backpack on their own. Backpacks should be able to fit completely inside your child’s cubby or easily on your child’s hook. Backpacks with frames and wheels are prohibited.

**ITEMS FROM HOME**

Please do not allow your child to bring unnecessary items from home.  This includes jewelry, money, candy, and toys.  Their presence is distracting to our classroom environments as well as a choking hazard. We ask that you respect our learning environment and teach your child to do the same.

**SCHOOL DONATIONS**

We have many generous parents at our school who are considerate of the needs of our staff, children and community.  As a tax-exempt charity, we record all gifts received, provide documentation and assure appropriateness for the services we provide.  Therefore, we ask that anyone donating either money or property to the school work directly through administration.  We assure you that we take donor intent very seriously and gifts will go to the purpose you designated.

**LOSS OR DAMAGE OF SCHOOL MATERIALS**

Students are expected to accept responsibility for books and other instructional materials.  If such items are lost or damaged, the student will be charged the current replacement price, or if possible, be asked to repair the item.

**BREAKFAST -- LUNCH -- SNACKS**

We are dedicated to quality nutrition at JM.  In keeping with this, we do not offer sugary snacks and promote healthful eating at our school. The JM staff is more than happy to heat up leftovers that you provide for your child’s main dish.

• **Food:** Your children are welcome to bring breakfast or lunch. Please ensure that this food is completely nut-free. We respectfully request that you refrain from feeding your child foods high in sugar (such as doughnuts, cinnamon rolls, and sweetened cereals) at the start of the day. Parents are required to provide a main dish that is rich in protein and whole grains. Please refrain from packing large or complex lunches for your child.

* **Parents are welcome to provide snack / fruit for the classroom** . Please inform the Lead teacher what you are going to provide.

It is important that any food allergies or food restrictions are written down on your child’s emergency card as well as communicated to the classroom staff. JM is happy to accommodate any student or family need regarding food.