



# Parent Handbook

**2022-2023**



*"Where Mind and Spirit Go Hand in Hand"*



Bishop Hamilton  
Montessori School

*Since 1983*

***Parent Handbook***

2022-2023

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PLEASE KEEP FOR FUTURE REFERENCE

This booklet is available at [www.bhms.ca](http://www.bhms.ca)

# W

elcome to  
Bishop Hamilton  
Montessori School

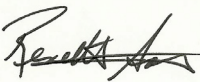
Dear Parents,

Our goal is to keep you informed and allow you to participate in all aspects of your child's education. The BHMS Parent Handbook provides you with an overview of our school, programs including policies and procedures. This is a useful resource that identifies much of the information you require to make you and your child's student experience the best it can be.

I encourage you to participate in the BHMS community. By working together we can build a strong partnership which will ensure a well rounded and rewarding educational experience for each student.

We look forward to sharing an enriched and stimulating year with your family. To this end, I encourage you to read this handbook and do not hesitate to contact me or your child's classroom Director should you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Renette Sasouni  
School Director

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## History

Bishop Hamilton Montessori School is a not-for-profit independent school and was founded in January 1983 with six preschool students. The school fell under the jurisdiction of the Ottawa Anglican School Society. The Society was incorporated on October 7, 1981 by Anglicans concerned about the adequacy of Christian nurturing for students.

The school is named after the first Anglican bishop of Ottawa, the Right Reverend Charles Hamilton. Among his other qualities, Bishop Hamilton is remembered for his happy relationship with children. In several addresses to the synod he stressed the desirability of denominational schools affiliated with the public system, where Christian faith and nurture could be part of a child's daily education.

## Our Mission

To offer a Christian-based Montessori education in a safe community where infants to young adolescents are encouraged to reach their full developmental potential. BHMS is committed to the academic, spiritual, physical and social growth of each child, which is the foundation of our educational approach.

## Our Values

Values shape thoughts and actions; they help students explore what is morally important, socially significant and personally fulfilling. We recognize that strong, clear values are the foundation on which we build success.

The community of BHMS is comprised of students, staff, parents, the Board, alumni and friends of the school. It works together to integrate into daily life the school's values of excellence, respect, learning, faith, commitment and community, and dedication to personal growth. The community is brought together by a commitment to these values for the growth of each student.

## Means

The academic, spiritual, physical and social growth of each student is achieved through two methods: the Christian message of the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd and the Montessori approach as outlined by the Association Montessori Internationale and the Canadian Council of Montessori Administrators (CCMA).

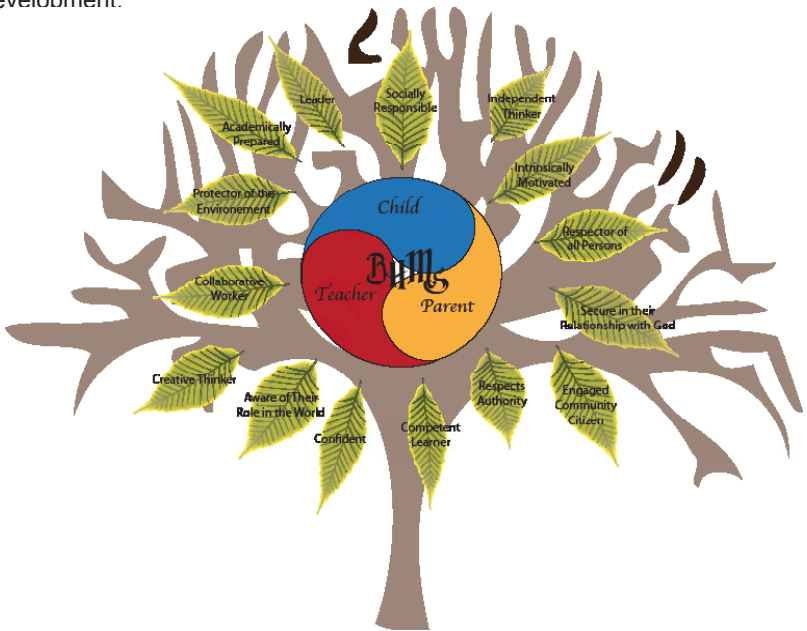
The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd teaches Christian values based on God's unconditional love. In a separate prayerful environment in the school, students use hands-on material to learn about and encounter God in a meaningful way.

In the enriched Montessori environment, students work with sensorial materials at their own pace which leads to the development of critical thinking.

## Portrait of a Graduate

Our goal is for parents and teachers to work collaboratively to foster the development of the child. The outcome of the parent, teacher and child relationship is our Portrait of a Graduate.

Portrait of a Graduate illustrates the skills and attributes BHMS students can develop when parents and teachers work collaboratively to foster the development of their child's academic, social, emotional, and spiritual development.



## Parent / School Partnership Agreement

The Parent / School Partnership is an agreement that accompanies enrolment requiring parent annual review and signature. This agreement serves to clarify expectations; what parents and BHMS expect of each other as we enter a long-term partnership to aid in the development of the students we serve.

The Parent / School Partnership agreement articulates expectations: those that parents can reasonably expect of the school and, in turn, what the school, with its mission of providing a superior Montessori learning environment, will reasonably expect of parents.

By publishing a dialogue based on important questions and answers contained within the Parent / School Partnership agreement, we aim to reduce the misunderstanding and disappointment that can result when unstated expectations go unmet.

## Board of Governors

Bishop Hamilton Montessori School is a not-for profit school that consists of Board members who are interested members of the community and seasoned professionals. One third of the members are typically parents of students in the school. The Board exercises the general oversight of the management of the business and property of the School to provide permanence, credibility and independence of management for the operations of the School.

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### Board of Governors

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Hicham Adra, Chair

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Murray McClure, Vice Chair	Joanne Seymour-Morrison
Becky Judges, Treasurer	Audrey Wojcik

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## School Motto

Where mind and spirit go hand in hand.

## School Song

Who has made the world?  
Who has filled the sea?  
Who has made the rocks?  
And who can make a tree?  
Who has made the flowers  
Sun and moon above?  
God is their creator  
And God is love.

Who can make a boy  
Who is full of fun?  
Who can make a girl  
Who loves to play and run?  
God who gives us Jesus  
To be our King  
God is the creator  
Of everything.

Who had made the day  
With its hours so bright?  
Who has made the clouds?  
And all the stars at night?  
Who can make a rainbow?  
Who can make a dove?  
God is their creator  
And God is love.

Who made BHMS?  
It was God above.  
He has fully blessed us  
With His love.  
Now we praise and thank Him  
On this special day.  
God, guide us in the future  
And in Your way.

## School Prayer

*Almighty God, You have committed to Your holy church the care and nurture of Your children. Grant the staff, children, and community of Bishop Hamilton Montessori School, the grace of gentleness and joy. Enlighten them with Your wisdom, that, rejoicing in Your truth, they may worship You and serve You all the days of their lives. Through Jesus Christ Our Lord. Amen.*

## Code of Conduct

We conduct ourselves professionally and personally in ways that will reflect our respect for each other, our students and our community.

## Non-Discrimination Statement

Bishop Hamilton Montessori School does not discriminate on the basis of race, colour, religion, national or ethnic origin in the administration of employment or admissions programs or policies.

## Privacy Statement

Information about the child and family is gathered under the authority of the Education Act and is intended for use to identify the child, ensure the health and safety of the child and to determine the contact information of the adults responsible for the child. The information will be maintained in your child's school record and kept confidential, to be used by staff as needed.

## Program Statement

BHMS' interpretation of Montessori pedagogy and programming is consistent with the Ministry of Education's Policy Statement as set out in "How Does Learning Happen (HDLH)?" For complete details, visit: <http://www.bhsmontessori.ca/english/about-bhms/about-bhms.html>

## Professional Affiliations / Memberships

- Canadian Council of Montessori Administrators
- Montessori Society of Canada
- North American Montessori Teachers Association (NAMTA)
- The Montessori Foundation
- Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (CGS)

The school is accredited by the Canadian Council of Montessori Administrators (CCMA [ccma.ca](http://www.ccma.ca)), and licensed by the Ministry of Education.

## Not for Profit / Fundraising

BHMS is a not-for profit independent school and as such, only receives funding as it pertains to our programs licensed as daycare. In our continued efforts to maintain, enhance and broaden the scope of our programs and facilities, we rely on the support and generosity of our community through our fundraising campaigns.

# Academic Programs

Program	School Day	Extended School Day	All Day
<b>Infant:</b> 3 months - 18 months	N/A	8:00 - 4:00	7:30 - 5:30
<b>Toddler:</b> 18 months - 3 years	8:30 – 3:30	8:00 - 4:00	7:30 - 5:30
<b>Casa:</b> 3 years – 6 years	8:30 – 3:30	8:00 - 4:00	7:30 - 5:30
<b>Junior Elementary:</b> 6 years – 9 years	8:30 – 3:30	8:00 - 4:00	8:00 - 5:30
<b>Senior Elementary:</b> 9 years – 12 years	8:30 – 3:30	8:00 - 4:00	8:00 - 5:30
<b>Junior High:</b> 12 years – 14 years	8:30 – 3:30	8:00 - 4:00	8:00 - 5:30

## Infant

The Infant program aims to nurture and stimulate the development of Infants in a way that promotes independence and self-esteem. The Prepared Environment is designed to meet the developmental needs of infants. The environment is prepared to respect, support and respond to the Infant’s sensorial development and learning. Social interaction and a sense of belonging are promoted as infants explore and learn.

## Toddler

The Toddler Prepared Environment is a secure, positive place for developing confidence, self control and independence through special learning activities.

Materials are carefully designed to help Toddlers move purposefully, to communicate, and to adapt to their physical and social environment. Each young learner chooses, practices, and masters individual and group work through real experiences with Toddler-sized furniture and equipment in the daily routine of the community.

## Casa

The Casa environment is organized into the following core areas of curriculum:

- Practical Life – Lessons and exercises promoting independence, care of self and environment and coordination.
- Sensorial - Students develop cognitive skills, learn how to order and classify impressions through use of the senses.
- Language Arts
- Mathematics
- Geography, Biology, Art and Music
- French – daily (4 & 5 year olds)

### **Extended Day:**

Full day Casa Program for 5 year old students encompassing enriched French, Music, Physical Education and Catechesis of the Good Shepherd.

## **Junior Elementary**

Our Junior Elementary program meets and exceeds the Ontario Ministry of Education guidelines. The environment is organized into the following areas of curriculum:

- Geography / History
- Biology / Zoology
- Mathematics / Geometry
- Language
- French – daily
- Christian Studies
- Physical Education
- Music
- Enriched Science - Open Labs with Science Specialist

## **Senior Elementary**

Our Senior Elementary program meets and / or exceeds the Ontario of Ministry of Education guidelines. The environment is organized into the following areas of curriculum:

- Geography / History
- Biology / Zoology
- Mathematics / Geometry
- Language
- French - daily
- Enriched Science
- Christian Studies
- Physical Education
- Music
- Art (3<sup>rd</sup> year students)

The Elementary Science Curriculum, conveyed through visual charts, experiments, vocabulary and definition materials, weaves principles of physics, chemistry, the earth sciences, botany, and zoology together.

## **Junior High**

The integrated program of study for the BHMS Junior High follows Dr. Montessori's Educational Syllabus for the adolescent:

Self Expression: Music, Writing Workshops & Language Arts, Art, Physical Education

Psychic Development: Moral Education, Mathematics, Language

Preparation for Adult Life:

- Study of the Earth & Living Things: Physical Geography, Biology, Anatomy, Astronomy

- Study of Human Progress & the Development of Civilization: Physics, Chemistry, Engineering, Genetics, History of Science & Technology
- Study of History of Humanity: History of Exploration & Settlement, Political Geography, Environmental Studies, Religion, Peace & Conflict Studies, Law & Government, Literature/ Novel Study, National history & Current Events

## **Catechesis of the Good Shepherd**

Montessori collaborator Sofia Cavalletti held that every child has a ‘religious potential’, or a spiritual need. The Catechesis program “serves children’s spiritual needs by nurturing their relationship with the Good Shepherd, Jesus.

Children’s active participation in their own spirituality is fostered through work, prayer and reflection in a special space called the Atrium. The BHMS Atriums contain learning materials that convey Christian concepts and themes. Students of all ages receive the lessons and explorations appropriate to their particular stage of psychological, intellectual and spiritual development.

## **French**

BHMS offers an enriched Core French program. Its aims are to prepare students for real life situations by teaching them real life communication skills, language knowledge such as grammar, vocabulary, and an appreciation of French culture in Canada and beyond.

The BHMS Core French Program is taught as a second language. French is presented in a stimulating and visual manner. Classes are active and energetic creating an environment which allows students to develop this new oral language effortlessly and naturally. Our low student to teacher ratio ensures that we can create situations which allow for this development.

French instruction with a French Specialist begins in the 2nd year of the Casa level. The primary focus is on oral language. Daily lessons are presented naturally, humourously, imaginatively, and without English usage. Stories, rhymes, mime, games, songs, art activities and puzzles are integral to the program. Correct habits for pronunciation are instilled. The daily 40 minute group lessons consist of eight to ten students, which allow for individual attention and oral interaction.

Junior and Senior Elementary students receive French instruction in small groups, 40 minutes daily. In addition to the scheduled daily lessons, including scheduled double and/or triple periods, these levels also benefit by having the French teacher in their classroom for an additional 40 minutes daily, what we call integrated French. Integrated French focuses on giving students an additional opportunity to converse in French with the French teacher serving as the model. Integrated French allows the teacher to target the specific needs and abilities of the student through a chosen work activity.

At the Junior High level, French is integrated within the classroom community through the addition of a 2nd Junior High Director who instructs French. French is introduced as a vibrant living language through integration across all spectrums of the Junior High student experience, including field trips. The program incorporates the four components of second language instruction: oral communication, listening and reading comprehension and written production.

The annual French trip is an integral part of the Junior High French program; research on second language acquisition continues to show that the process of learning a second language needs to be real, natural and meaningful to students.

## Art

Creative expression is an important outlet for students. The Art curriculum aims to inspire students to express feelings, ideas, and issues using a variety of mediums such as: two and three dimensional forms and Multimedia Art. Students learn to apply the critical analysis process to communicate feelings, ideas and understanding of Socio-cultural and Historical Contexts.

## Music

Beginning in the Casa level and beyond, students meet with the Music Specialist where they are introduced gradually to music theory and expression. In grade 4 students begin exploring different musical instruments and, later, are integrated into the school band. At the end of the program, students have:

- Achieved basic instrumental skills on a variety of instruments including soprano recorder, alto recorder, flute, clarinet, trumpet and trombone.
- Learned choral singing skills and the essentials of vocal ensemble performance.
- Achieved intermediate level of solo and ensemble instrumental performance on one wind instrument.
- Learned the fundamentals of mounting a Broadway-style production, including set design, lighting, sound, costumes, drama, singing and dance.
- Learned the Level 1 Rudiments of Music Theory according to the Royal Conservatory of Music standards.

Highlights of the program include: concerts and theatrical productions.

## Physical Education

Our curriculum incorporates Montessori principles and methods into a contemporary physical education program. Physical education is focused on conditioning and improving fitness levels rather than athleticism or achieving arbitrary fitness levels. The students engage in both competitive and non-competitive activities, proceeding from basic skills to game experience.

Our program provides freedom to explore many outlets for physical and mental energies, addressing students' characteristic physical stamina, exploration of right and wrong, focus on group functioning and adventurousness.



The program provides key lessons to help students develop and build character: their ability to deal positively with success, failure and adversity, to support other students, to set personal and collective goals and to interact with students of varied ability and age.

## Resource

Resource is available for students on the recommendation of teaching staff and in cooperation with parents.

## Science

The BHMS Enriched Science Program provides students with a meaningful and interesting learning experience that applies to their every day life through the approach of the Montessori philosophy. Students study every department of science: Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Environmental Science and Engineering. We accomplish our approach through the use of:

- An integrated curriculum
- Cooperative learning
- Limitless scientific studies enhanced through Going Out experiences and participation in science exhibitions and science fairs from school level to national level
- Knowledge, skills and habits of mind required for safe participation in science and technology and hands-on / minds-on activities
- Creative laboratory work followed by comprehensive laboratory report writing
- Scientific language to communicate effectively through oral and written presentations

## Swimming - Junior Elementary (as per program availability)

An extension of our Physical Education program includes swimming for Junior Elementary students. They go swimming once a week at the Pinecrest Centre for a portion of the school year. Please refer to the school calendar for swim start and end dates.

BHMS staff are responsible for students at all times and remain on the poolside to help with supervision. Students who have forgotten their bathing suits sit with a member of staff at the poolside. They are available should pool staff require them. If students are not swimming for whatever reason, a note is required from their parents.

## After School Enrichment Program

An enrichment program is offered for Elementary and Junior High students who are enrolled in the All Day Program Option (8:00 - 5:30). It is our goal to continually enhance and broaden the scope of this program to bring them in line with our school motto, "*Where Mind and Spirit Go Hand in Hand*". To that end, our enrichment program focuses on developing students mentally, spiritually and physically.

Programs vary per semester and year. A cross section of programs offered include: aikido, art, drama, biking, yoga, adventures in engineering and science and French enrichment.

Programs are also open to students who are not registered in the All Day Program option but may be interested in participating, pending availability.

## **Parent Teacher Interviews / Progress Reports**

Parent teacher interviews are held twice a year. The school requires parents to attend. Please refer to the school calendar for specific dates. Written Progress Reports are released twice a year.

## **Classroom Observations**

An integral part of parent involvement at BHMS is observation of your child's Montessori class in action. Half hour morning visits can be booked throughout the year and may be coordinated by your classroom Director. We strongly encourage parents to participate as this enables parents to witness the dynamics of a Montessori classroom.

## **Standardized Testing**

Students at the third year of their elementary level and Junior High students take the Canadian Achievement Tests. The Montessori Method of Education employs a variety of methods of reporting a student's progress and may include: records of presentations, observations, conferences with students and parent meetings. Testing third year Elementary and Grade 8 students is an additional tool we employ to measure a student's progress and allows teachers to use the information in tailoring lessons at the beginning of the school year to meet each student's unique needs.

## **Learning and Behavioural Differences**

We respect that each student has his / her unique personality and learning style. We support the process of self-construction occurring in each individual student. At times, our experienced staff may observe that additional resources may be beneficial. The Montessori Director will approach parents and the School Director with concerns, in order to collaborate in support of the student. Resource Directors and colleagues may be consulted to develop a program tailored to meet the specific needs of the student.

Parent cooperation with the process and use of resource services outside school are in the best interest of the student. The earlier that special needs are identified and addressed, the sooner the student can be given the unique support that is required to reach his / her full potential and well-being.

## **Psycho-Educational Assessment**

In some circumstances, the school or parents will request an assessment with an educational psychologist to obtain a clear picture of a student's strengths and weaknesses. The results provide direction for in-class support and individual resource sessions. We have a list of recommended professionals for parents.

When requested, we will complete and send the forms directly to the psychologist. Directors are not qualified to determine giftedness or other particular diagnoses in students, but can contribute their observations regarding learning style and behaviour.

# BHMS Team

## Administration

### School Director

Renette Sasouni

Financial Administrator  
Communication & Marketing  
Office Administrator  
Admissions / Program Coordinator  
Facility Custodian

Ghisline Jean  
Helen Sousa  
Patricia Wilson  
Leslie McIlhinney  
Jeremy Morton-Lawrence

## Faculty

### INFANT COMMUNITY:

Director  
Assistant  
Assistant

Sally Garvock  
Danielle Campbell  
Marie Rose Mujawimana

### TODDLER COMMUNITY:

#### Azalea

Director  
Assistant  
Assistant

Bandana Rai  
Izumi Nyunoya  
Amanda Sauv 

#### Gardenia

Director  
Assistant

Patti Hunt  
Emily Sanders

### CASA COMMUNITY:

#### Purple Violet

Director  
Assistant  
Assistant  
Assistant

Ishwariya Anand  
Vanessa Mphashyabahizi  
Judy Peasley  
Claudette D'Souza

#### Tulip

Director  
Assistant  
Assistant

Pamela Lawler  
Layla Saggafi  
Sampada Potnis

#### Garden Lily

Director  
Assistant  
Assistant

Ivana Micucci  
Melissa Heikkila  
Jeneiva Cregan

**Casa French Directors**

Julie Chamberland-Nicoll  
Lynn Hachey-Legault

**JUNIOR ELEMENTARY COMMUNITY:**

**Willow**

Director  
Assistant

Sarah Griffin  
Francine Figura

**American Elm**

Director  
Assistant

Lijun Tang  
Sujata Bajpeyi / Stephanie Essig

**SENIOR ELEMENTARY COMMUNITY:**

Director  
Assistant

Eileen Dalpra  
Jeanette MacDonald

**JUNIOR HIGH COMMUNITY:**

Director  
Director

Ann Flindall  
Matthew MacKay

**Christian Studies**

Nancy deKemp  
Claudette D'Souza  
Matthew McKendry

**Elementary French Directors**

Julie Chamberland-Nicoll (Jr Elem.)  
Lynn Hachey-Legault (Jr Elem.)  
Cécile Robard (Sr Elem. & Jr High)

**Music Directors:**

Casa Extended Day and Junior Elementary  
Senior Elementary and Junior High

Wendy Knapp  
Kimberley Cooper

**Physical Education Director**

Laura Pollon

**Resource Director**

Andrea Boone  
Jackie Armand

**Science Director:**

Sr. Elementary and Jr. High

Robert Vesna

**After School Program Coordinator**

Stephanie Essig

**Chef**

Alicia Manfredi

# General

## Admission Policy

Bishop Hamilton Montessori School has a non-discriminatory admission policy.

## Admissions Process

Selecting a school that focuses on your child's academic, social and spiritual growth is one of the most important decisions that you will make. Bishop Hamilton Montessori School looks forward to partnering with you every step of the way. Together we can unlock your child's potential. The admission process at BHMS consists of the following:

### School Tour / Open House

After initial inquiry, both parents attend an open house or schedule a tour of the school. This is an opportunity for parents to visit our school, see our facility, and meet with our staff.

### Parent Information Portfolio

After a school tour our Director of Admissions will provide prospective parents with a Parent Information Package and review its contents. The Information Package contains information about our school and includes: BHMS Program Guide, Parent Handbook, Parent/School Partnership Agreement, Financial Handbook, Application for Enrolment and information about School Uniforms.

### Classroom Observation

An essential part of the admissions process, the classroom observation affords parents the opportunity to see our classroom and teachers in action.

### Meeting with School Director

Classroom Observations are followed by a meeting with the School Director who will address additional parent inquiries. The decision for acceptance of enrolment to BHMS is made by the School Director.

### Enrolment

Parents inform BHMS Director of Admissions their intent to enrol and complete the Application for Enrolment. Director of Admissions forwards Enrolment Contract for parent review and coordinates a meeting with parents to finalize enrolment.

### Classroom Placement

Students are placed in classes bearing the following factors in mind: age of the student, ratio of boys to girls in the class and class vacancy. The decision for classroom placement is made by the admissions team comprising of the School Director and teaching staff.

## Acceptance Criteria

Admissions are processed in the following order: current students, siblings of current students and new students. We admit students throughout the school year if class space is available. New Elementary and Junior High students are required to spend one to two days in the classrooms where they will be informally assessed as to their suitability for our program.

## Wait List Policy

Parents considering BHMS for their children, must complete and remit an application for enrolment to the School. As applications are received they are placed on a wait list. There is no charge to parents / guardians for being on the wait list. There is no obligation to register for a spot should one be offered by the School.

As spaces become available, the School will contact families on the waiting list in accordance with its acceptance criteria. They are given a specified time frame to return the call and express continued interest in the available space. In these instances, families who have accepted the space, will be required to remit a \$1,200. non-refundable deposit within a specified time frame to secure the space. This deposit will be applied towards the tuition.

Families with children on the City of Ottawa's Centralized Childcare Waitlist (CCWL), will be contacted by the School in order of their priority on the CCWL. These families are required to follow the School's admissions process as outlined above.

BHMS maintains the privacy and confidentiality of the children listed on the waiting list. The school allows the position of a child on the list to be ascertained by the affected persons or families.

## Casual Care

Casual care may be arranged pending staff availability for:

- \$30.00 per hour or part thereof for Infant and Toddler students
- \$25.00 per hour or part thereof for Casa, Elementary and Junior High students

At least 24 hours notice is required. Payment must be made in advance of care.

## Cellular Telephone / Electronic Devices

Students are permitted to have cellular telephones and electronic devices on campus. Between 8:30 & 3:30 they may not make use of the electronic devices for personal use in and around campus. These devices should not cause interruption to any school function such as classes, afternoon activities, or after school programs. Any improper use or failure to comply with the rules regarding the use of such electronic devices will result in forfeiture of the device for a length of time to be determined by the classroom Director or School Director.

BHMS is not responsible for lost, stolen or damaged electronic devices that students bring with them to school.

## Classroom Placement

Students are placed in classes bearing the following factors in mind: age of the student, ratio of boys to girls in the class and class vacancy. The decision for classroom placement is made by the School Director and teaching staff.

## Dress Code

Bishop Hamilton Montessori School has a uniform policy for Casa, Elementary and Junior High students.

Uniforms are purchased by parents directly from Top Marks (topmarks.ca), our uniform supplier. Parents can place orders:

- By attending spring fitting sessions
- Online through the Top Marks web based ordering system
- Email, fax or mail

Students must be well groomed. Clothing should be in good condition and appropriate to the physical activity. Uniform shirts should always be tucked in and buttons done up. The same standards apply before, during and after school. Hair should be clean, brushed and tidy. A second set of school uniform clothing should be provided to the school for use in case of mishaps. Please label all clothing.

### Formal Uniform

BHMS formal uniform may be worn every day but is required for special school events such as concerts and field trips, unless otherwise advised. **Junior High students are required to wear formal uniform every Monday.**

### Formal Uniform – Casa

**Girls:** tartan tunic, white BHMS polo, navy tights, BHMS leggings or navy **knee** socks (no ankle socks with tunics) and black or navy blue shoes with black rubber soles.

**Boys:** navy blue pants, white BHMS polo, navy socks and black or navy blue shoes with black rubber soles.

### Formal Uniform – Junior Elementary

**Girls:** tartan tunic, white BHMS blouse, navy tights, BHMS leggings or navy **knee** socks (no ankle socks with tunics) and black or navy blue shoes with black rubber soles.

**Boys:** navy blue pants, white BHMS shirt, tartan tie, navy socks and black or navy blue shoes with black rubber soles.

**Gym Uniform – Junior Elementary** If changing, students must wear the BHMS gym shirt and/or shorts.



### **Formal Uniform – Senior Elementary and Junior High**

**Girls:** navy kilt (hemline at the knee), white BHMS blouse, tartan tie, navy **knee** socks, BHMS leggings or tights, black or navy blue dress shoes with black soles and low heels.

**Boys:** navy pants, white BHMS shirt, tartan tie, navy socks, black or navy dress shoes with black soles.

### **Gym Uniform – Senior Elementary and Junior High**

**Mandatory:** Students are required to wear BHMS gym shirt.

**Optional:** If changing into shorts, BHMS gym shorts are required.

### **Non-Formal Uniform**

BHMS polo shirts, BHMS turtlenecks, navy blue pants, BHMS leggings, navy blue shorts with ankle socks, BHMS navy cardigan, BHMS skort, red or navy elastics (bobbles in same color permitted). Ankle or knee socks may be worn with pants.

No jewelry is allowed except watches and small earrings. No makeup or nail polish is allowed.

### **Shoes**

Students require 3 pairs of **non-skid** footwear:

- Classroom - Black or navy blue shoes, which must be polished
- Outdoor footwear
- Gym Class (Casa Extended Day to Junior High) - Running shoes that students can manage on their own

Not permitted: Open back or platform shoes and running shoes in the classrooms.

## **Emergency Closing / Inclement Weather**

In the event of an emergency or inclement weather, classes at BHMS may be cancelled. We will make every effort to inform parents as early as possible through email communication, social media and/or the school answering machine. Please listen to the radio for weather announcements affecting the school's closure.

Late pick up fees are still applicable during inclement weather. Parents are asked to ensure that they have a reliable back-up plan for their child. Fees will be unaffected by any closures due to extreme weather conditions or other circumstances.

*Designated Emergency Place of Shelter: Pinecrest Swimming Pool Complex*

## **Forced School Closing**

In the unfortunate event of a forced school closing, the school will communicate with students and parents concerning any school work that may need to be completed during the closing. In the event that the school needs to remain closed for a significant period, the school may extend the school year up to and including June 30th. Tuition fees are non-refundable in the event of a forced school closing.

## **Hours of Operation**

The school is open from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. The office is open from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

## **Items from School**

Many of the classroom materials consist of small attractive objects that are appealing to students. Should any of these mysterious objects find their way into your home, please return them to the school. They may be part of a puzzle or other set of materials. They are expensive and very difficult to replace.

## **Early Drop-Off / Late Pick-Up Fees**

Costs for early drop off and / or late pick up, or after your contracted pick-up / drop off time, will be incurred at a rate of \$1.00 per minute.

## **Lost and found**

Misplaced items will be placed in the lost and found box, which will be purged a number of times throughout the year. The lost and found box is located between the two doors at the end of the hall on the first floor of the building.

## **Lunch Program**

Lunches are optional. They are provided by the school for students in the Toddler to Junior High programs at a cost to parents. The menu is posted in the school lobby and may be accessed on our website, bhms.ca. Please note, the lunch menu may be subject to change.

Under the Ministry of Education Act, students who are under five and not participating in the lunch program must sign a waiver. Students participating in the lunch program on a field trip day, must bring a bagged lunch, unless otherwise stated.

## **March Break and Summer Camps**

These programs have a separate registration and cost. Contact the office for information.

## **Parent Conferences**

Individual conferences may be held at either the request of the parent or staff. If you have any comments or concerns, please feel free to contact your child's classroom Director first; then, if necessary, the School Director or Administrator.

## PD Days - No Care

BHMS is committed to the Professional Development of staff to support continuous learning and organizational effectiveness through personal and professional development. PD days are designated for our faculty. Classes do not run on these days. Parents are required to make alternate arrangements.

## PA Days - Care Provided

Professional Activity (PA days) are included for all students enrolled in our School Day (8:30 – 3:30), Extended School Day (8:00 – 4:00) and All Day Programs (7:30 – 5:30). Parents must inform the school that they require care by signing up before our posted deadlines.

**Casa students may dress down on PA days. Elementary students will be notified, depending on the outing.**

## Personal Property Insurance

BHMS cannot accept responsibility for loss or damage to a student's personal property, whether at school, on field trips or "Going Outs". This includes items such as: clothing, lunch boxes, musical instruments, bicycles and laptops. Parents should ensure that students' personal belongings are insured while at school.

## Probationary Period

Occasionally a student's admittance to the school is conditional or probationary. This will depend on individual circumstances. BHMS reserves the right to dismiss any student if we feel the student is not benefiting from the environment and program we provide or if the best interests of the school or classroom is being compromised by a student's ongoing enrollment.

## Referral Program

We value your show of support through referrals. As a token of our appreciation, parents who refer a family to the School which results in enrolment of one or more students from that family will receive \$500. There is no limit to the number of referral fees that an individual may receive for families enrolling in the School.

Reference names must be given at the initial open house visit (through the completion of the Open House Information form), to qualify for the referral incentive.

## School Calendar

The new school calendar is published and distributed to parents at the end of the school year. Please keep your calendar handy for reference. The calendar is posted on our website [bhms.ca](http://bhms.ca) and is also available through the administration.

## September Integration of New Students

New Infant, Toddler and Elementary students begin on the first day of school. New and transitioning students in the Casa program have staggered start dates.

Staggered starts ensure that students experience a smooth transition into their new environment. By limiting the number of new students that begin each day, Casa Directors are able to spend individualized time with their new students. Parents are notified of their child's start date by letter.

## Toys

Toys are NOT permitted, this includes any personal items from home. Fidget / spinners are not permitted. Exception: a soft toy for nap time. If your child brings a soft toy for nap time, please place it in the bag with his or her blanket.

## Volunteer Supervision Policy

BHMS is committed to supporting the safety and well-being of its students. Students enrolled at BHMS must be supervised by an adult at all times in accordance in accordance with the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA). Only employees of BHMS have direct unsupervised access to the children.

The School requires that all volunteers and / or placement students performing their work placement (E.C.E or Montessori Teacher Trainee), obtain a Vulnerable Sector Police Check (VSPC).

- The VSPC will be reviewed by the School Director.
- Any documents relating to the VSPC will be stored in a secure location to maintain confidentiality and control access to the information. They will be destroyed where a volunteer ceases to provide services.
- The VSPC must be presented to BHMS in original form only. Copies of the original may be made and "certified true".

The School will release a communication at the beginning of every School year reminding parents interested in volunteering to provide Administration with a Vulnerable Sector Police Check. The School Director reviews VSPCs and Administration confirms approval.

## Withdrawal of Services

Providing an environment conducive to our mission is one of our primary objectives. The safety of the community is a priority; therefore the provision of our service is conditional on both student behaviour and parent treatment of the school and staff. Bishop Hamilton Montessori School reserves the right to suspend or dismiss or withdraw services for the following reasons:

- Outstanding fees – tuition or other
- Inappropriate behaviour by a parent towards staff, other parents or students, such as: being belligerent, abusive, swearing, or harassing
- Inappropriate behaviour by a student towards staff or other students such as:

- being belligerent, swearing, violent or threatening
- Parent refusal or inability to abide by the policies and procedures as laid out in the parent handbook
- Student demonstrated unsuitability for our program
- If we feel the student is not benefiting from the environment and program we provide, or if the best interests of the school or classroom are being compromised by a student's ongoing enrolment
- If the behaviour of a parent or guardian is not conducive to our school values and mission

### **Student Withdrawal by Family**

If it is necessary to withdraw a student, parents must give the school written notice. Student withdrawals are subject to a \$2,500 penalty. Please refer to the Financial Handbook for more information.

# Health and Safety

## Accidents

It is our practice to document accidents. An accident form is completed by the staff member present and parents are notified as soon as possible. Copies of the form are given to the School Director and parents.

### In case of a minor accident:

- The student will be tended to by a staff member who will administer the appropriate first aid.

### In the case of a serious accident:

- The school will call 911 and parents will be contacted immediately.
- If the student needs to go to the hospital, a staff member will accompany the student.
- Parents are expected to assume responsibility for any expenses incurred.

## Allergies / Medical Conditions

Parents must notify the school of their child's allergies or medical conditions. Two EpiPens are required for students needing them; one which remains in the classroom with the student, and a second in the staff room.

**NUT PRODUCTS ARE NOT PERMITTED.** We ask that no peanut or any other nut products, including nut oil, be brought to school. Each classroom maintains a school-wide list of students with allergies.

If a student has an allergy requiring an EpiPen a form and photograph of the student are displayed in the classroom and the staff room.

Note: EpiPens are returned to parents at the end of the school year.

## Criminal Reference Checks

BHMS requires all staff, parent volunteers and volunteers who are working with students to undergo and submit criminal reference checks.

## Custody and Single Family

In cases of separation or divorce where changes are made regarding either parent's access to the child or the child's student records / performance, we will require the following documents:

- A certified court order which provides detail regarding parent access such as when and where a parent might contact or visit the child at school.
- A court order or other legal document that prohibits access to education records, or removes the parent's right to have knowledge about his or her child's records.
- A letter of agreement signed by both parents in the presence of the School Director.

In the case of single parent families, legal documentation is necessary for our files.

## Emergency Contact Information

It is essential that you provide the school with current contact information. We rely on this information which is our primary point of reference in cases of emergency. All contact change requests should be directed to our Administration office in writing or by email. Contact information cannot be updated by telephone.

## First Aid and CPR

BHMS requires staff to undergo first aid and CPR certification.

## Illness

We are committed to maintaining a healthy environment for all members of the community by following the Ottawa Public Health's standards, which state that students should be kept home for at least 24 hours after the last occurrence of diarrhea or vomiting.

Students who have a communicable disease or condition, such as: diarrhea, impetigo, vomiting, strep throat, conjunctivitis (pink eye), scabies, mouth sores, skin rashes (not diaper), should be kept home for 24 hours after the first dose of antibiotics, or until a physician provides a written statement stating the student may return to school. Please refer to the Ottawa Public Health's website for up-to-date bulletins.

Students who are too ill to participate in daily activities should be kept at home and return when they are able to participate fully in daily classroom activities.

It is school policy to contact parents promptly if we observe that a student is sick or has a fever exceeding 38°C or 100°F. Parents are required to pick up their child right away; this reduces child discomfort and anxiety.

## Immunization

Ontario legislation states that any child attending an education facility must be vaccinated. Parents are required to provide the school with immunization updates as required by the Ministry.

## Medication

Before a staff member is able to administer prescribed medication, the following procedures must be followed:

- Completion of Medication form which may be obtained from the office or classroom Director
- Authorize consent with signature
- Release medication to classroom staff (or person-in-charge)
- Medication must be in the original container and labeled with your child's name

Note: BHMS staff are not allowed to dispense over the counter drugs such as aspirin or cough syrup.

## Nutrition

BHMS cares that students have a full nutritionally balanced lunch. The School offers a Lunch Program to students and ensures that all meals and beverages on the menu meet the recommendations as contained within the Canada Food Guide. The menu for the month is posted on the School's website and distributed to all classrooms for posting on their classroom bulletin boards.

Some parents choose to provide their own lunches and snacks; microwaves are available in all classrooms. Staff are required to inform parents if they observe that the lunch they have packed for their child is lacking in any way. Junk food, candy, chips, and carbonated drinks are not allowed at school. If a lunch is forgotten, parents will be contacted and / or the School will provide a lunch from the Lunch Program and invoice parents.

## Parking Lot Safety and Etiquette

As cars pose considerable danger to students please follow the guidelines below:

- Parking lot speed limit is 10 km/h.
- Reinforce safety guidelines with your child.
- Students must be accompanied by an adult in the parking area.
- Back out with caution.
- Be respectful of handicap and fire route areas.
- Do not leave your child unattended in the car.
- If you have a minor accident in the parking lot, please inform the office.
- Lock your doors and windows and do not leave valuables in your car. The school is not responsible for stolen articles.
- Please note the 2-way STOP sign on the wall by the main entrance, which applies to exiting as well as entering the rear parking lot.
- Cars exiting the parking lot must STOP at Regency Terrace.

## Regulations and Inspection

BHMS is in compliance with building, fire and health codes. Fire drills are held monthly. Protocols and drills such as lockdowns are conducted regularly.

## Release of Students

Should parents wish their child be released to another adult, parents must include names on the [Application for Enrolment](#) that is signed by both parents. If any other adult is to pick up a child the school must be notified. Photo identification may be requested. In case of doubt, a child will not be released.

Older students wishing to leave the premises unaccompanied by an adult (going home for lunch or walking home from school), may do so with written permission from parents.



## **Safety / Security**

### Door Entry System

School doors are kept locked at all times.

Please help us keep our school safe and refrain from holding the door open for someone you do not know. There is a doorbell, which visitors can use; a staff member will answer the door.

### Visitors

All visitors must check in with the office and obtain a visitor's badge. Once school is in session, parents entering the premises must sign in at the office and obtain a visitor's badge. Volunteers are also required to sign in at the office and obtain a volunteer's badge.

## **Scent-free School**

BHMS aims to respect the sensitivities and allergies of those in our community. We aim to be a scent-free school.

## **Smoking**

There is no smoking on school property.

## **Transporting Other Students**

When transporting other students in your car for field trips or goings out, please ensure you have adequate insurance (at least \$1,000,000). Please ensure students comply with the law, such as: one child per seat belt, car seats when required. All drivers are to be a minimum of 25 years of age. Car seats must be provided for students weighing less than 80 pounds and / or under 8 years of age.

## Student Life

### Infant Routine

Each Infant in the program is seen as a unique individual. BHMS staff tailor the daily routine of feeding, active time and nap to meet the individual needs of the Infants we serve.

### Toddler Routine

A.M.	Greetings, storing outdoor clothing, toilet routine, transition to classroom
	Work period
	Group snack
	Work period – small groups
	Toilet routine, outdoors or gym time
Work period – small groups – table setting, lunch preparation	
<i>Lunch, clean up, toilet routine</i>	
P.M.	Rest time (nap)
	Waking and toilet routine, bedding away, group snack, indoor or outdoor activity

### Casa Routine

A.M.	Outdoor play (Purple Violet Class goes outdoors before lunch)
	Work period
<i>Lunch / recess and outdoor activities</i>	
P.M.	Extended Day students - work period, individual presentations, specialty subjects
	1st & 2nd Year students: Rest time (nap) followed by snack and toilet routine

### Naps and Rest Time (Toddler & Casa)

After lunch, students are permitted to sleep, rest or engage in quiet activities based on the child's needs. Cots are designated for each student and cleaned weekly. A labeled blanket and cot sheet should be provided and washed by the parents.

## Junior Elementary Routine

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A.M.	Montessori lessons*
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<i>Lunch in the classroom &amp; supervised recess / outdoor activities</i>	
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P.M.	Specialty subjects**
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\*The morning work period consists of Montessori lessons in Geography, Science, Math, History, Geometry, Biology, Community Building, and extended learning to the library or other venues.

\*\*Specialists enrich the Junior Elementary program in French, Music, Physical Education and Religious Studies.

## Senior Elementary Routine

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8:30-10:30	Montessori lessons*
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10:30-11:50	Specialty subjects**
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<i>Lunch in the classroom &amp; supervised recess / outdoor activities</i>	
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12:50-1:30	Specialty subjects**
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1:30-3:30	Montessori lessons*
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\*The Montessori work periods consist of Montessori lessons in Geography, Science, Math, History, Geometry, Biology, Community Building, and extended learning to the library or other venues.

\*\*Specialists enrich the Senior Elementary program in French, Art (3<sup>rd</sup> year students), Music, Physical Education, Religious Studies and Enriched Science.

## Junior High Routine

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A.M.	Specialty Subjects
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<i>Lunch in the classroom &amp; supervised recess / outdoor activities</i>	
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P.M.	Work period
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The Junior High curriculum exceeds the Ontario Ministry of Education guidelines. Students receive a challenging outdoor program which includes a five day bicycle tour. There are many opportunities for educational experiences outside the classroom, a community service program and the spiritual and religious learning in our Catechesis of the Good Shepherd program.

Faculty includes specialists in French, Art, Music, Religious Studies and Enriched Science.

## Daily Outdoor Routine

Students go outside in all weather. Please ensure that your child has appropriate outdoor clothing and hats. We adhere to Public Health advisory guidelines. On days of extreme cold or with a severe wind factor of -25C or over, including wind chill, students remain indoors.

During the summer, students go outdoors. In cases of extreme heat we follow precautions:

- Remain outdoors for shorter periods of time
- Ensure students drink plenty of fluids
- Avoid direct exposure to sun/ and seek shade

Broad rimmed hats are preferred over sunglasses. Parents are required to apply sunscreen before arrival to school. Exception: Infant and toddler staff apply sunscreen for students provided by parents.

## Snacks

Parents supply snacks for the Toddler and Casa classes. Your child's Classroom Director will provide you with more information on this.

## Laundry

Parents of Toddler and Casa students take turns doing the classroom laundry such as: facecloths, dish towels or napkins. Laundry duty coincides with snack duty. Your child's Classroom Director will provide you with more information.

## Community Constitution

In September each Elementary class comprised of students and the classroom Director discuss and agree upon a class constitution. The constitution outlines expectations and behaviour within the community. This is posted in the classroom and revised as necessary.

Junior High students, together with their parents and staff sign a code of behaviour which is discussed and agreed upon each year in September. This code of behaviour is in keeping with the school's overall policies on discipline, values and mission.

## Field Trips

Extended Day Casa, Elementary and Junior High students will go on field trips throughout the year. A notice containing pertinent information will be sent home with your child in advance of the trip. The annual Application for Enrolment form, which parents complete, provides the school with a signed parental consent and authorization for field trips organized by BHMS. **Students who choose not to attend field trips must remain at home and will be marked absent.**

Students participating in the lunch program on a field trip day, must bring a bagged lunch, unless otherwise stated.

## Goings Out

Elementary students will “Go Out” during the course of the year. This Montessori term means that small groups of students will arrange a trip beyond the school in order to further their research in a topic of interest to them. In this way, students learn to be in greater control of their own education and helps students access the outside community. Your child’s Director will provide you with further information on this integral part of the elementary curriculum.

## Arrival to School

### Infant and Toddler

Infant and Toddler students are welcomed by a staff member upon entry to the school.

### Casa

- Students are welcomed by a staff member upon entry to the school.
- Casa students arriving **before 8:00 a.m.** go to the Purple Violet classroom.

### Elementary and Junior High

Parents of Elementary aged children are encouraged to use the drop off and drive system located at the front of the school. Help us to foster your children’s independence by allowing them to go upstairs on their own, remove their outdoor wear, organize their own locker and report to class. BHMS staff are available to guide students through their routines.

- All Junior and Senior Elementary students arriving **before 8:00 a.m.** should go to the Willow classroom.
- Elementary and Junior High students may be dropped off between 8:00 and 8:30 a.m. using the drop off and drive system.
- Elementary students arriving **after 8:00 a.m.** should go to their respective classrooms.

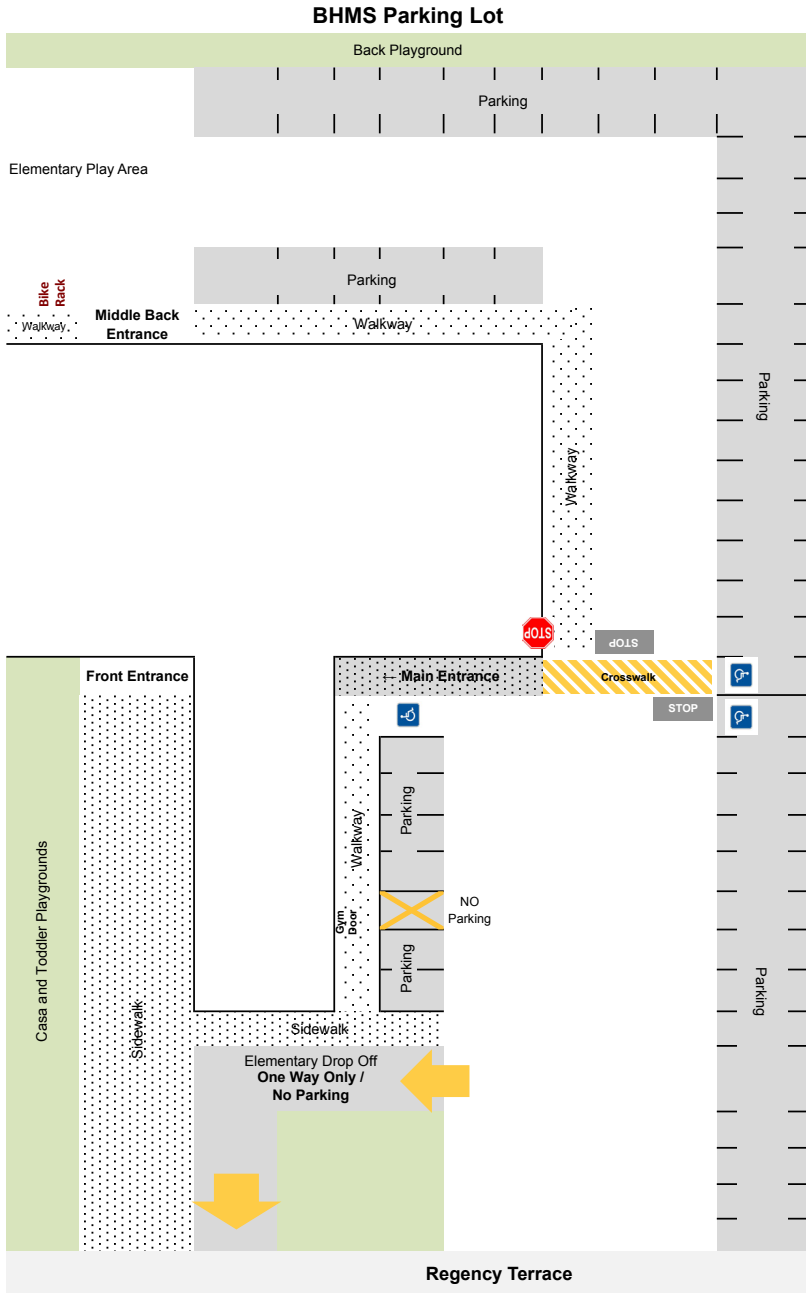
### Late Arrival to School:

Students arriving after 8:30 a.m. must obtain a late slip. Late slips are situated in the front lobby outside the Administration Office.

### Drop off system:

Please refer to the following diagram, which serves as a guide for safe and smooth drop off. The arrows direct the traffic flow for entering, drop off and exiting the parking lot. If you need to park, PLEASE park in designated parking areas, which are clearly marked. Any other parking disrupts the flow of the drop off system. Please respect our signs.

# Drop Off System



## Dismissal

Dismissal is a busy time as students ready themselves for dismissal. Parents are required to wait at their class designated doors for their children at dismissal time. Please call the office and inform them if you have to pick up your child before 3:30. The office will inform staff who will have your child ready for pick up in the office.

### Note:

- Students become the parents' responsibility once the student has been released to the parent.
- Older students wishing to leave the premises unaccompanied by an adult such as going home for lunch or walking home from school, may do so with written permission from parents.
- Students who have permission to leave school unaccompanied at the end of the day must leave the premises when they have signed out.

## Computer Education Usage / Internet Policy

Internet facilities is limited to Senior Elementary and Junior High classrooms where the research benefits are most relevant. Computers are to be used for research and educational purposes only. Inappropriate use of the internet will not be tolerated and will result in exclusion from further use. Students are required to review and sign the School Internet Policy Agreement.

## Student Code of Conduct and Discipline

Students are disciplined in a positive manner at a level appropriate to their actions and their ages. This is done in order to promote self discipline, health and safety, and to instill a sense of respect for people and property. At Bishop Hamilton Montessori School we recognize the worth and dignity of every person in the school. We want students to develop into caring, responsible and respectful people. We believe that in treating students with fairness and respect, they will react in kind.

We do not condone sarcasm, yelling, belittling, humiliation or any other negative response to misbehaviour. We believe in carefully preparing and controlling the environment, and preparing and presenting the student with "Grace and Courtesy" lessons and models of desired behaviour and outcomes.

Redirection is most often used to promote positive behaviour. If a student repeatedly does not respond to discipline used at school, the parent will be contacted and asked to come for a meeting. Parents and school will devise a consistent behaviour plan for use at home and in school. The school may request the family retain professional services.

General steps and guidelines that staff follow in addressing inappropriate behaviour:

- Anticipate and prevent inappropriate behaviour through Grace and Courtesy lessons.
- Clearly explain what behaviour is required in a variety of different circumstances as they arise.
- Channel the student's energy to another area - redirect student.
- Closer supervision as necessary
- Positive reinforcement of desired behaviour, if necessary
- Keep student close to an adult for as long as required if inappropriate behaviour continues
- Natural consequences
- Communication to parents by telephone
- Meeting between staff and parents
- Develop plan with parents
- Engage resource team
- Refer to professional services
- Suspension
- Dismissal

## Prohibited Practices

In addition, the school follows the guidelines set out in the Child Care and Early Years act, 2014, regulation 137/15 with regards to the following prohibited practices:

- Corporal punishment of the child
- Physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a high chair, car seat, stroller or other device for the purposes of discipline or in lieu of supervision, unless the physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing a child from hurting himself, herself or someone else, and is used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent
- Locking the exits of the school premises for the purpose of confining the child, or confining the child in an area or room without adult supervision, unless such confinement occurs during an emergency and is required as part of the school's emergency management policies and procedures
- Use of harsh or degrading measures or threats or use of derogatory language directed at or used in the presence of a child that would humiliate, shame or frighten the child or undermine his or her self-respect, dignity or self-worth
- Depriving the child of basic needs including food, drink, shelter, sleep, toilet use, clothing or bedding
- Inflicting any bodily harm on children including making children eat or drink against their will.



## Attendance

Parents are required to notify the school if a child will be absent from school by leaving a voice mail message to Administration by 9:00 a.m.

Parents must notify the classroom Director in advance if a child will be leaving school during school hours. This will ensure that staff prepares the student for the early departure and have the child report to the office for pick up by parents.

## Punctuality

A sense of order and punctuality is in keeping with Montessori philosophy. We strongly recommend students arrive at school 10 minutes before class begins.

The school day starts at 8:30 a.m. A student is considered late if they are not signed in at the start of the school day. If you know ahead of time that your child will be late, please let the office know. If you know ahead of time that your child will be away, please give a written note to the Director and let the office know. Frequent tardiness may result in a meeting with the Class Director and School Director.

## Birthdays and Cultural Celebrations

Should you wish to provide a special treat for your child's birthday, please coordinate with the classroom Director - No nuts please. Parents are asked to distribute birthday invites in the mailslots situated in the school lobby.

The school follows the liturgical calendar and this forms the basis of our celebrations. Halloween and Valentine's Day are not formally celebrated at the school with costumes, candy or greeting cards.

## Separation Anxiety

Students are not the only ones who suffer from separation anxiety. Parents suffer as well. As the adult, be honest about your feelings and recognize how you feel about leaving your child. Your child picks up cues from you. When leaving your child, be cheerful; wish them a great day, and leave. Watching your child from a distance and dragging out farewells for one more hug is very stressful for your child and heightens their anxiety.

Staff is ready and willing to accept responsibility for your child. Students experiencing distress are given care and attention immediately and usually stop crying as soon as the parent has left. If your child continues to cry for an extended period you will be notified and strategies will be discussed to make the separation process as smooth as possible.

## Toileting Requirements

Boys will be using a urinal in the school and should be shown how to use one prior to the commencement of school. Children need to know how to wash their hands after using the toilet.

Students coming into the Casa Program must be toilet trained.

## The Parent Role

Parents, School, and Students work together to build the BHMS Community. Our common goal is to inspire and empower students to achieve their full potential in their pursuit of excellence.

Parents can support their children and the school by:

1. Attending parent / teacher interviews
2. Attending classroom observations
3. Attending parent education workshops
4. Participating in classroom activities
5. Supporting school activities and events

### 1. Parent / Teacher Interviews

Parent teacher interviews are held twice a year. The school requires parents to attend. Please refer to the school calendar for specific dates. Parents may in addition, request individual meetings with Directors. Please coordinate with the classroom Director.

### 2. Classroom Observations

An integral part of parent involvement is observing in your child's Montessori classroom. Half hour morning visits can be booked throughout the year and may be coordinated by your classroom Director. We encourage parents to observe in their child's classroom to witness the dynamics of a Montessori environment.

### 3. Parent Speaker Series

In our continued efforts to work in collaboration with parents on a journey of growth and learning, the school hosts Parent Education Sessions. The sessions are designed to provide parents with a variety of topics such as Montessori education and child development. Please refer to the school calendar for schedule and timelines.

## **4. Classroom Activities**

Support your child's classroom by getting involved in various classroom activities that take place throughout the school year. Please see your classroom Director for more details.

## **5. School Activities and Events**

Enrich your child's experience at BHMS by attending and supporting school wide activities and events. School activities and events serve to enrich our community and complement our program by helping our students to reach their full potential as independent persons with a global perspective for bettering our school and its community.

## Parent Volunteers

An open invitation is extended to all our parents to volunteer during the school year. As a not for profit independent Christian school, committed to enriching the lives of our student body, we rely on volunteers.

Please contact your classroom Director or the BHMS office to get involved as an invaluable volunteer. Opportunities may include:

- Fundraising and event planning
- Field trips / Elementary Going Outs
- Sewing / painting for school concerts
- Board of Governors
- Board Committees
- Cultural presentations
- Scholastic Books
- Yearbook

**Volunteers who will have interaction with students are required to provide the school with a valid police check.**

## Fundraising and Promotion

As a not for profit independent school, BHMS relies on monies raised through fundraising to enhance our programming and facilities. Annual fundraising goals are shared with the school community. We rely on parents and staff to be involved in our fundraising efforts.

## Communication

General communications about school events, policies and procedures, and special notices about student growth and progress are an important part of the relationship between the school and our parent community. Here are some of the ways we stay in touch:

### Electronic Mailings and Notices:

In our continued efforts to ensure that all of our parent community is kept abreast of school announcements, notices and events, our main communication platform is via email. This means of communication is an efficient and effective platform.

### Social Media

The school hosts the following social media pages:



<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Bishop-Hamilton-Montessori-School/542443689209122?ref=hl>



[https://twitter.com/BHS\\_Montessori](https://twitter.com/BHS_Montessori)



<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCEQCjzugA0wxrciP66kBLdw/feed>



<https://www.instagram.com/bhsmontessori/>

### School Calendar:

- Distributed at the end of the school year
- Posted on BHMS website: [bhms.ca](http://bhms.ca)

### School Blog:

The School Blog is our way of keeping parents abreast of the latest happenings at the school and articles of interest, special events, field trips and school life in general.

Visit the School blog at [bhms.ca](http://bhms.ca)

### Announcements and Highlights:

Announcements and highlights of upcoming events are posted in the main lobby and our website, [bhms.ca](http://bhms.ca).

## **Parent Communication Guidelines**

In our continued efforts to maintain an efficient and strong school / parent relationship, we have developed a chart which serves to summarize your first point of contact for various matters. Our objective is to ensure that your inquiries and concerns are directed to the right person(s). *Please refer to chart on next page.*

INQUIRY	1ST POINT OF CONTACT	2ND POINT OF CONTACT
Academics	Classroom Director	School Director
Admissions	Administration	School Director
After School Program	After School Program Coordinator	Administration
Classroom Activities	Classroom Director	
Classroom Observations	Classroom Director	Administration
Classroom Placement	School Director	Administration
Curriculum	Classroom Director	School Director
Custodial	Administration	
Extended Care	Administration	
Field Trips	Classroom Director	
Finance / Accounting	Financial Administrator	Administration
Fundraising	Marketing & Communication	Administration
Health & Safety	Classroom Director	Administration
Newsletter	Marketing & Communication	Administration
Parent Speaker Series	Classroom Director	Administration
Parent Concerns	Classroom Director	Administration / School Director
School Events	Marketing & Communication	Classroom Director
Student Performance	Classroom Director	School Director
Student Records	Administration	
School Policy	Classroom Director	Administration
School Publications	Marketing & Communication	Administration
Student Progress	Classroom Director	School Director
Uniforms / Dress Code	Classroom Director	Administration
Volunteering in Class	Classroom Director	Administration
Volunteering for School Events	Marketing & Communication	

## Parent Concerns

### **Purpose**

BHMS aims to provide a transparent process for parents or guardians to bring forward issues or concerns.

### **Policy**

Parents or guardians are encouraged to take an active role in the School and to discuss what their child(ren) are experiencing within our program. As supported by the School's Program Statement, BHMS supports positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents / guardians, and staff, to foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents / guardians about the program and their children. BHMS staff are available to engage parents / guardians in conversations that support a positive experience during every interaction.

All issues and concerns raised by parents / guardians are taken seriously by the School and will be addressed. Every effort will be made to address and resolve issues and concerns to the satisfaction of all parties and as quickly as possible. Issues or concerns may be brought forward verbally or in writing. Responses and outcomes will be provided verbally, or in writing upon request. The level of detail provided to the parent / guardian will respect and maintain the confidentiality of all parties involved.

An initial response to an issue or concern will be provided to parents / guardians within two (2) business day(s). The person who raised the issue or concern will be kept informed throughout the resolution process. Investigations of issues and concerns will be fair, impartial and respectful to parties involved.

### **Confidentiality**

Every issue and concern will be treated confidentially and every effort will be made to protect the privacy of parents / guardians, children, staff and volunteers, except when information must be disclosed for legal reasons.

### **Conduct**

BHMS maintains high standards for positive interaction, communication and role-modeling for children. Harassment and discrimination will therefore, not be tolerated from any party.

If at any point a parent / guardian, provider or staff feels uncomfortable, threatened, abused or belittled, they may immediately end the conversation and report the situation to the School Director.

### **Concerns about Suspected Abuse or Neglect of a Child**

Everyone, including members of the public and professionals who work closely with children, is required by law to report suspected cases of child abuse or neglect.

If a parent / guardian expresses concerns that a child is being abused or neglected, the parent will be advised to contact the local Children’s Aid Society (CAS) directly.

Persons who become aware of such concerns are also responsible for reporting this information to CAS as per the “Duty to Report” requirement under the Child and Family Services Act. For more information, visit <http://www.children.gov.on.ca/htdocs/English/childrensaid/reportingabuse/index.aspx>

**Procedures**

<b>Inquiry / Concern</b>	<b>Point of Contact</b>	<b>Steps BHMS Staff Take When Addressing Issues / Concerns</b>
<p><b>Program Related</b></p> <p>Classroom routines, pedagogy, student progress, scheduling, lunch, sleep, outdoor routines.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Classroom Director or staff directly</li> <li>School Director</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Address the issue / concern at the time it is raised</li> <li>Arrange for a mutually convenient time to meet</li> <li>Document the issues / concerns</li> </ul> <p>Documents should include:</p>
<p><b>General Inquiries</b></p> <p>School Fees, Hours of Operation, Staffing, School Events, Menus</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Administration</li> <li>School Director</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Date and time the issue / concern was received;</li> <li>Name of the person reporting the issue / concern;</li> <li>Details of the issue / concern; and any steps taken to resolve the matter and / or information given to parent / guardian regarding next steps or referral.</li> </ul>
<p><b>BHMS Staff</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Administration</li> <li>School Director</li> </ul> <p>All issues or concerns regarding the conduct of staff or parents or students that puts a child’s health, safety and well-being at risk, should be reported to the School Director as soon as parents / guardians become aware of the situation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In cases where the person being notified is unable to address the matter, provide contact information for the appropriate person</li> </ul>
<p><b>Student Volunteer Related</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The staff responsible for supervising the volunteer or student or</li> <li>School Director</li> </ul> <p>All issues or concerns about the conduct of students and / or volunteers that puts a child’s health, safety and well-being at risk, should be reported to the School Director as soon as parents / guardians become aware of the situation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure the investigation of the issue / concern is initiated by the appropriate party within as soon as reasonably possible thereafter</li> <li>Provide the parent/ guardian who raised the issue / concern with a resolution or outcome</li> </ul>



## **Escalation of Issues or Concerns**

Where parents / guardians are not satisfied with the response or outcome of an issue or concern, they may escalate the issue or concern verbally or in writing to the School Director.

Issues or concerns related to compliance with requirements as set out in the Child Care and Early Years Act., 2014 and Ontario Regulation 137/15 should be reported to the Ministry of Education's Child Care Quality Assurance and Licensing Branch. Issues or concerns may also be reported to other relevant regulatory bodies where appropriate.







**Bishop Hamilton  
Montessori School**

*Since 1983*