



Bishop Hamilton Montessori School

Parent Handbook

"Where Mind and Spirit Go Hand in Hand"

Bishop Hamilton
Montessori School

Since 1983

Parent Handbook

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PLEASE KEEP FOR FUTURE REFERENCE

This booklet is available at www.bhms.ca

Welcome 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).

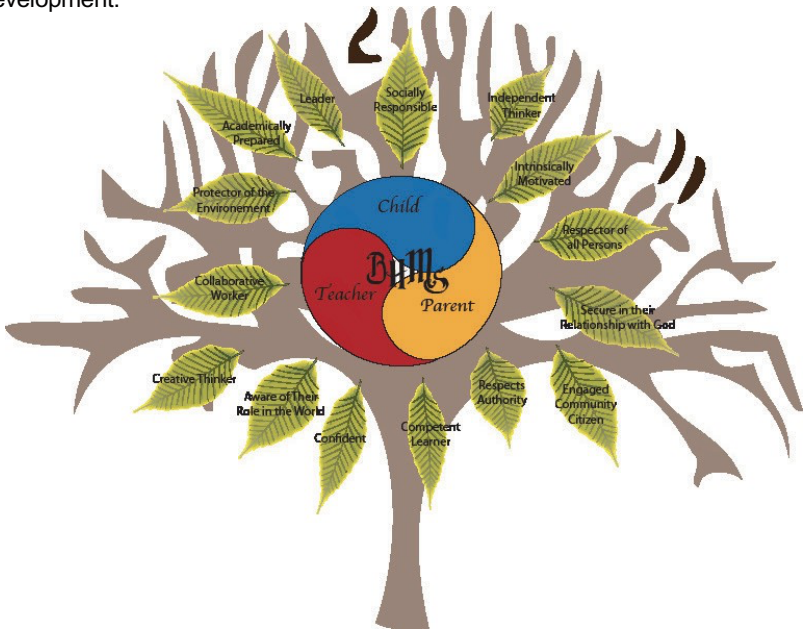
The Catechesis of the Good Shepherd teaches Christian values based on God's unconditional love. In a separate prayerful environment in the school, students use hands-on material to learn about and encounter God in a meaningful way.

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.

Board of Governors

Hicham Adra, Chair	
Joanne Seymour-Morrison, Vice Chair	Andrea Howell, Secretary
Becky Judges, Treasurer	Audrey Wojcik
Okhaide Akhigbe	

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: <https://bhsmontessori.ca/key-documents/>

Professional Affiliations / Memberships

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

The school is accredited by Montessori Canada (CCMA 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

CWELCC – Canada Wide Early Learning & Childcare System

Infant to Casa Programs: BHMS participates in the Canada Wide Early Learning & Child Care system (CWELCC). The school is guided by requirements as set by CWELCC.

Program	
Infant 3 months - 18 months Toddler 18 months - 3 years Casa 3 years – 6 years	7:30 – 5:30 Refer to Financial Handbook for Annual Fees
Junior Elementary 6 years – 9 years Senior Elementary 9 years – 12 years Junior High 12 years – 14 years	School Day 8:30 – 3:30 Before & After School hours until 5:30 are available (Refer to Financial Handbook for further details)

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 and 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:

- **Montessori Curriculum:** Geography / History, Biology / Zoology, Mathematics / Geometry, Language
- **Specialty Subjects:** French – daily, Christian Studies, Physical Education, Music

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:

- **Montessori Curriculum** Geography / History, Biology / Zoology, Mathematics / Geometry, Language
- **Specialty Subjects:** French – daily, Enriched Science, with our Science Specialist, Christian Studies, Physical Education, Music

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, Creative Studies, Physical Education.

Psychic Development: Moral Education, Mathematics, Language.

Experiential Education: Project Groups, Marketplace, Outdoor Education, Enrichment Mini-Courses Program.

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 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, 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 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.

Music

Beginning in the Casa level and beyond, students meet with a Music Specialist where they are introduced gradually to music theory and expression. First year Senior Elementary 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.

After School Enrichment Program

An enrichment program is offered for Junior & Senior Elementary students who are enrolled in the All Day Program Option (8:00 - 5:30).

We continue to enhance and broaden the scope of this program to align it with our school motto, "*Where Mind and Spirit Go Hand in Hand*". To that end, our enrichment program focuses on developing students emotionally, spiritually and physically.

Programs vary per semester and year. A cross section of programs offered include: art, drama, sports, chess and adventures in engineering and science.

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

Parent Teacher Conferences

Parent teacher conferences are held twice a year. The school **requires** parents / guardians to attend. Please refer to the school calendar for specific dates.

Progress Reports

Written Progress Reports are released twice a year. Please refer to the School calendar for specific dates.

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 encourage parents to observe and 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 students is an additional tool we employ to assess 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 Behavioral 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. The School Director reviews all internal requests for student resource.

Parent cooperation with the process and use of resource services outside school are encouraged and in the best interest of the student. The earlier that special needs are identified and addressed, the sooner students can be given the unique support they require to reach their full potential and well-being.

Psycho-Educational Assessments

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 areas of challenge. 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 behavior.

Admissions

Admission Policy

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

Admissions Process

The admission process at BHMS consists of the following:

Application for Enrolment

Initial inquiries are submitted to the school by completing an Application for Enrolment form, available on our website. Receipt of the application is acknowledged. The Admissions team will review the application and contact families within three business days.

Application Review

The Admissions team will review the Application for Enrolment and will determine next steps make a decision for next steps as summarized below:

- Schedule an Admissions Interview
- Add Application to BHMS Admissions Wait Pool
- Decline Enrolment

The above decisions are based on several factors including availability in programs and mutual alignment. If parents are offered an Admissions Interview, they are also directed to review core documents and information on our website which includes: Parent Handbook, Parent / School Partnership Agreement and Financial Handbook prior to the Admissions meeting.

Offer of Admissions

The Admissions team will extend an Offer of Admissions to successful applicants. Parents are required to complete an Enrolment through the MySchool Parent Portal along with a non-refundable initial payment of \$1,200 which is applied towards fees.

Admissions Confirmation

Upon receipt of the completed Enrolment Form and Initial Payment, the Admissions team will acknowledge receipt and review. An invoice for tuition / fees will be issued for the school year within three business days.

Enrolment Complete

All families in the Infant, Toddler and Casa programs will receive a welcome email with instructions on how to create a profile within the Child Care Registry and Waitlist (CCRAW) as well as their child's start date and an invitation to explore the MySchool portal.

All Elementary and Junior High families will receive a welcome email as well as their child's start date and an invitation to explore the MySchool Portal.

Classroom Placement

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

Acceptance Criteria

Admissions are processed in the following order: current students, siblings of current students, children of current BHMS members of staff, alumni families and new students.

We admit students throughout the year, if class space is available. New Elementary and Junior High students are required to spend one to two days in the classroom where they will be assessed as to their suitability for our programs.

Wait Pool

Parents considering BHMS for their children must complete and remit an Application for Enrolment through our website. Applications are reviewed and if they are successful but there is no availability, they are placed in the wait pool. There is no charge to join the wait pool and there is no obligation to accept an offer of admissions should a space become available.

As spaces become available, the Admissions team will contact families in the wait pool in accordance with its acceptance criteria. Parents are given an invitation to schedule an Admission Interview with the School Director.

Families with children on the City of Ottawa's Childcare Registry and Waitlist (CCRAW) are contacted in order of their priority on the list. These families are required to follow the School's admissions process.

BHMS maintains the privacy and confidentiality of the children listed in the wait pool. The School allows the position of a child in the wait pool to be ascertained by the affected persons or families.

General

After School Contact Number

The School office is open between 8:00-4:00 p.m. In cases of late pick up after 4:00 staff may be reached at 343.576.5781.

Birthdays and Cultural Celebrations

Parents who wish to provide a special treat for their child's birthday, may do so by coordinating with the Classroom Director - No nuts please. Parents are asked to distribute birthday invites via the Classroom Director and childrens' backpacks.

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.

Casual Care

Casual care may be arranged pending staff availability for:

- \$35.00 per hour or part thereof for Infant and Toddler students
- \$30.00 per hour or part thereof for Casa, and Elementary 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: age of the student, ratio of boys to girls in the class and class vacancy. The decision for classroom placement is determined by the School Director in collaboration with faculty

Dress Code

BHMS has a uniform and policy for Casa, Elementary & Junior High students.

All uniform articles are purchased by parents directly from Top Marks, our uniform supplier. Parents can place orders online, by email, fax or mail.

BHMS requires all students to be well groomed. Clothing must be in good condition and appropriate to the physical activity. Uniform shirts should be tucked in at all times and buttons done up. Same standards apply before, during and after school. Hair must be clean, brushed and tidy. Please label all clothing.

Make-up or nail polish are not considered consistent with the school uniform and not permitted. Jewelry is kept at a minimum and may wear watches and small earrings.

SHOES – Casa to Junior High

Students require 3 pairs of non-skid footwear that they can manage independently:

- 1 pair for classroom – plain black or navy dress shoe
- 1 pair for outdoor
- 1 pair for gym class – Casa Extended Day students to Junior High

Open back, platform, or running shoes are not permitted in the classroom.

CASA

FORMAL UNIFORM

May be worn daily but required for special school events such as concerts and field trips.

- Tunic for girls / navy pants for boys
- White polo shirt, long or short sleeve
- Navy ankle socks, knee socks, navy tights or BHMS leggings (worn under the tunic)

DAILY WEAR OPTIONS

- Navy pants
- Navy Skort
- Navy Shorts
- Biker short (worn under the tunic)
- Red polo shirt, long or short sleeve
- Full zip cardigan
- Hair accessories must be plain red, navy, white or neutral

Note: A second set of school uniform clothing is provided to the school in case of mishaps.

JUNIOR ELEMENTARY

FORMAL UNIFORM

May be worn daily but required for special school events such as concerts and field trips.

- Tunic or navy dress pants
- White long sleeve - Unisex oxford or blouse
- Navy ankle socks, knee socks, navy tights or BHMS leggings (worn under the tunic)
- Tartan tie (worn with pants and white oxford or blouse)

Note: Tartan tie not worn with tunic

DAILY WEAR OPTIONS

- Full elastic navy pant
- Skort
- Shorts
- Red polo shirt, long or short sleeve
- Biker short (worn under the tunic)
- Full zip cardigan
- Hair accessories must be plain red, navy, white or neutral

GYM UNIFORM

- If changing - BHMS gym short & BHMS gym shirt

SENIOR ELEMENTARY

FORMAL UNIFORM

May be worn daily but required for special school events such as concerts and field trips.

- Navy kilt or dress pants
- White long sleeve - Unisex oxford or blouse
- Navy ankle socks, knee socks, navy tights or leggings (worn under the kilt)
- Tartan tie

DAILY WEAR OPTIONS

- Full elastic navy pant
- Skort
- Shorts
- Biker short (worn under the kilt)
- Red polo shirt, long or short sleeve
- Full zip cardigan
- Hair accessories must be plain red, navy, white or neutral.

GYM UNIFORM

- Mandatory – BHMS gym shirt
- Optional – If changing into shorts, BHMS gym shorts

JUNIOR HIGH

FORMAL UNIFORM

Junior High students are required to wear their Formal Uniform every Monday and for special on site events and field trips.

- Navy kilt or dress pants
- White long sleeve - Unisex oxford or blouse
- Navy ankle socks, knee socks, navy tights or leggings (worn under the kilt)
- Tartan tie

DAILY WEAR OPTIONS

- Full elastic navy pant
- Skort
- Shorts
- Biker short (worn under the kilt)
- Red polo shirt, long or short sleeve
- Full zip cardigan
- Hair accessories must be plain red, navy, white or neutral.

GYM UNIFORM

- Mandatory – BHMS gym shirt
- Optional – If changing into shorts, BHMS gym shorts

Uniform Non-Compliance

The school relies on parents to adhere to its dress code and uniform policy. If a student is non-compliant with the school's uniform policy, parents will be contacted by the Classroom Director. Continued non-compliance will be referred to Administration.

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.

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 Recreation 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, 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

The lost and found box is located at the main school entrance. Misplaced items will be placed in the lost and found box, which will be purged several times throughout the year.

Lunch Program

BHMS participates in CWELCC requiring the provision of meals. CWELCC does not require inclusion of meals for students older than 44 months. Families with children in Casa 2 (4 years old) and Casa 3 (5 years old), can choose to participate in the School's lunch program for an additional non-base fee as contained within the BHMS Financial Handbook.

The lunch program is optional and available for Elementary and Junior High students for an additional cost as contained within the BHMS Financial Handbook.

Under the Ministry of Education Act, students who are under six must sign a Nutritional Regulations form stating the school will supplement a child's lunch or snack if requirements nutritional guidelines have not been met. A charge will apply.

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 Meetings

Individual meetings may be held at either the request of the parent or staff. You may contact your child's Classroom Director by email or phone should you have inquiries, concerns or wish to schedule a meeting.

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 days (PA days) are included for all students. Parents must inform the school that they require care by signing up before our posted deadlines. We cannot guarantee care availability after the posted deadline.

Dress code on PA days:

- Casa - dress down
- Elementary - dress down unless notified otherwise.

Refer to the School Calendar for scheduled PA/PD days.

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 that 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 that 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 included within the 'Expression of Interest' Form that prospective families complete to qualify for the referral incentive.

School Calendar

A school calendar for the upcoming academic school year 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 and is also available through the Administration.

Separation Anxiety

Students are not the only ones who experience separation anxiety. Parents experience this 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.

September Integration of New Students

New and transitioning Elementary students begin on the first day of school. New and transitioning students in the Infant, Toddler and Casa programs 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, Classroom Directors are able to spend individualized time with their new students. Parents are notified of their child's start date by letter.

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 able to use the toilet independently.

Toys

Students are not permitted to bring toys to school. This includes any personal items from home. Exception: a soft toy for rest time. Infant, Toddler & Casa: If your child brings a soft toy for rest 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 with the Child Care and Early Years Act, 2014 (CCEYA).

The School requires that all volunteers and / or placement students performing their work placement (E.C.E or Montessori Teacher Trainee), including professionals such as Speech Pathologists, to obtain and remit a Vulnerable Sector Check (VSC) to Administration. The School Director reviews all VSCs and confirms approval. Documents relating to the VSC 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.

Withdrawal of Services by the School

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, 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 adhere to school policy as abide as laid out in the Parent Handbook, Financial Handbook and Parent/School Partnership Agreement
- Student demonstrated unsuitability for our program
- If the School observes the student is not benefiting from the environment and program it provides
- 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 the School's values and mission

Student Withdrawal by Family

Parents / guardians who wish to withdraw their child from the school are required to provide administration with written notice.

Student withdrawals are subject to a \$2,500 penalty. Please refer to the Financial Handbook for more information.

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, BHMS 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.

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

Health

BHMS is committed to providing a healthy environment for all members of our school community and will take every reasonable precaution to prevent the risks of communicable illness or diseases within the school.

Illness

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.

Students should be kept home for at least **48 hours** after the last occurrence of **diarrhea or vomiting**. BHMS follows the guidance and standards provided by Ottawa Public Health.

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. Students with fevers do not attend school until they are fever-free and symptoms improving over a 24 hour period.

Medical Conditions

Parents / guardians must notify the school of any medical condition their child may have.

Allergies

Parents / guardians must notify the school of their child's allergy conditions. Notifications of allergies or food sensitivities must be noted within the Application for Enrolment Form or in writing to administration.

Anaphylactic / Severe Allergies

BHMS has an anaphylactic policy. The School has strategies in place to reduce risk of exposure to anaphylactic causative agents. While BHMS cannot guarantee an allergen-free environment, the School takes reasonable steps to provide an allergy-safe and allergy-aware environment for students with life-threatening allergies.

School Policy for Students Requiring an EpiPen

Parent / Guardian Responsibilities

- Completion of an Anaphylactic Emergency Plan form and remittance to Administration.
- Provision of 2 labelled EpiPens to Administration.

Administration Responsibilities

- Distribute a copy of the completed Anaphylactic Emergency Plan form to the classroom.
- Post a copy of the Anaphylactic Emergency Plan form and store the 2nd EpiPen in a medical box in the staff room.

BHMS staff are trained on how to use an EpiPen and Twinject auto-injector. EpiPens are returned to parents at the end of the school year.

BHMS is a Nut Free School. Peanuts or any other nut products, including nut oil are not permitted.

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.

Parents may refer to the guidelines as a reference for communicable diseases including descriptions, exclusions and incubation periods:

<https://www.ottawapublichealth.ca/en/professionals-and-partners/resources/Documents/Guidelines-for-Schools-and-CCCs-on-IDs-and-Other-Childhood-Health-Issues-EN.pdf>

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.

Microwaves are available in all classrooms for families who choose to provide their own lunches and snacks. Lunch and snacks must be nutritious and balanced. 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 permitted 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.

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 or vaping on school property.

Safety

BHMS thrives to maintain a safe environment for students and staff. The School complies with safety requirements as required by its licensing bodies.

Regulations and Inspection

BHMS is in compliance with building, fire and health codes. Fire drills are held monthly.

Vulnerable Sector Checks

BHMS requires all staff, parent volunteers and volunteers who are working with students to undergo and submit a Vulnerable Sector Check.

First Aid and CPR

BHMS requires staff to undergo First Aid and CPR certification.

Emergency Contact Information

It is essential that parents / guardians 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.

Release of Students - Accompanied

BHMS staff release students to persons authorized by parents / guardians noted within the Application for Enrolment. Parents / Guardians must ensure that the information they provide the school is current and ensure they include names of all persons authorized to pick up their child.

If on occasion, a parent requires an adult not named as an authorized person for pick up, the school must be notified in writing or by email. Photo identification may be requested by staff prior to student release. In case of doubt, a child will not be released.

Release of Students - Unaccompanied

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 through the completion of the Student Release-Unaccompanied form.

Medication

BHMS staff are not permitted to dispense over the counter drugs such as aspirin or cough syrup. Only prescribed medication can be dispensed by BHMS staff. BHMS staff can administer prescribed medication, only upon receipt of the following from parents / guardians:

- Completion of Medication Authorization Form authorizing consent, with signature
- Release of medication to classroom staff (or person-in-charge)
- Medication must be in the original container, with the prescription label which includes the child's name.

Accidents

It is our practice to document accidents that occur. An accident form is completed by the staff member present. Accident Report forms are completed and remitted to parents/guardians at dismissal with a copy to Administration for review by the School Director. Parents are notified by phone on accidents or injuries to the face or head.

Staff document accidents they are aware of. It is important for students to communicate accidents or incidents on duty at the time of the incident.

Minor Accident Protocols:

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

Serious Accident Protocols:

- 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 required to assume responsibility for any expenses incurred.

Head Injury Protocols

The school is required to report bumps to the head or face by contacting parents. "What You Need to Know – Concussions" issued by CHEO, will be provided to parents in addition to completion of an Accident Report form.

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.

Security

Door Entry System

School doors are kept locked. BHMS staff access the premises through assigned FOBS.

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.

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.

The school requires proof of insurance and may request a motor vehicle report.

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.	Greetings, storing outdoor clothing, toilet routine, transition to classroom
	Work period
	Outdoor recess
<i>Lunch</i>	
P.M.	Extended Day students - work period, individual presentations, specialty subjects
	1st & 2nd year students: Rest time followed by snack and toilet routine

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 parents weekly.

Junior Elementary Routine

A.M.	Montessori lessons
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<i>Lunch in the classroom & 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 Christian Studies.

Senior Elementary Routine

A.M.	Montessori lessons
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<i>Lunch in the classroom & supervised recess / outdoor activities</i>	
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P.M.	Specialty subjects
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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, Music, Physical Education, Christian Studies and Enriched Science.

Junior High Routine

A.M.	Specialty Subjects including Math & Physical Education
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<i>Lunch in the classroom & supervised recess / outdoor activities</i>	
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P.M.	Humanities, Literature, Work Period
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The Junior High curriculum exceeds the Ontario Ministry of Education guidelines. The integrated program of study follows Dr. Montessori's educational syllabus for the adolescent. It is an experiential program with many opportunities for educational experiences outside the classroom.

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

Outdoor Routine

Students go outside daily in all weather. Please ensure that your child has appropriate outdoor clothing and hats. We adhere to Public Health advisory guidelines.

Winter

On days of extreme cold or with a severe wind factor of -25C or over, students remain indoors. Elementary students may go outside for a shorter period of time.

Summer

Students go outside daily. In cases of extreme heat we:

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

Sunscreen:

- Broad rimmed hats are preferred over sunglasses. Parents apply sunscreen before arrival to school.
- Casa: Parents provide a labelled sunscreen stick, reapplied by students throughout the day.
- Infant & Toddler: Parents provide labelled sunscreen reapplied by staff throughout the day.

Snacks

Parents supply snacks for the Toddler and Casa classes on a rotation basis. Your Classroom Director will guide 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 and values.

Field Trips

Extended Day Casa, Elementary and Junior High students will participate in 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 on 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 Classroom Director will provide you with further information on this integral part of the Elementary curriculum.

Arrivals and Dismissals

Morning Drop Off Locations

- Infant: Entrance B – front doors.
- Toddler: Exit D – Last set of doors at the rear of the building closest to the Toddler classrooms.
- Casa: Entrance B – front doors.
- Junior & Senior Elementary & Junior High: Drop off and drive system – the roundabout at the front of the building.

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.** proceed 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 enter the building independently and proceed upstairs where they will remove their outdoor wear, organize their locker and report to class. BHMS staff are available to guide students through these routines.

Elementary and Junior High students may be dropped off between 8:00 and 8:30 a.m. using the drop off and drive system.

Late Arrival to School

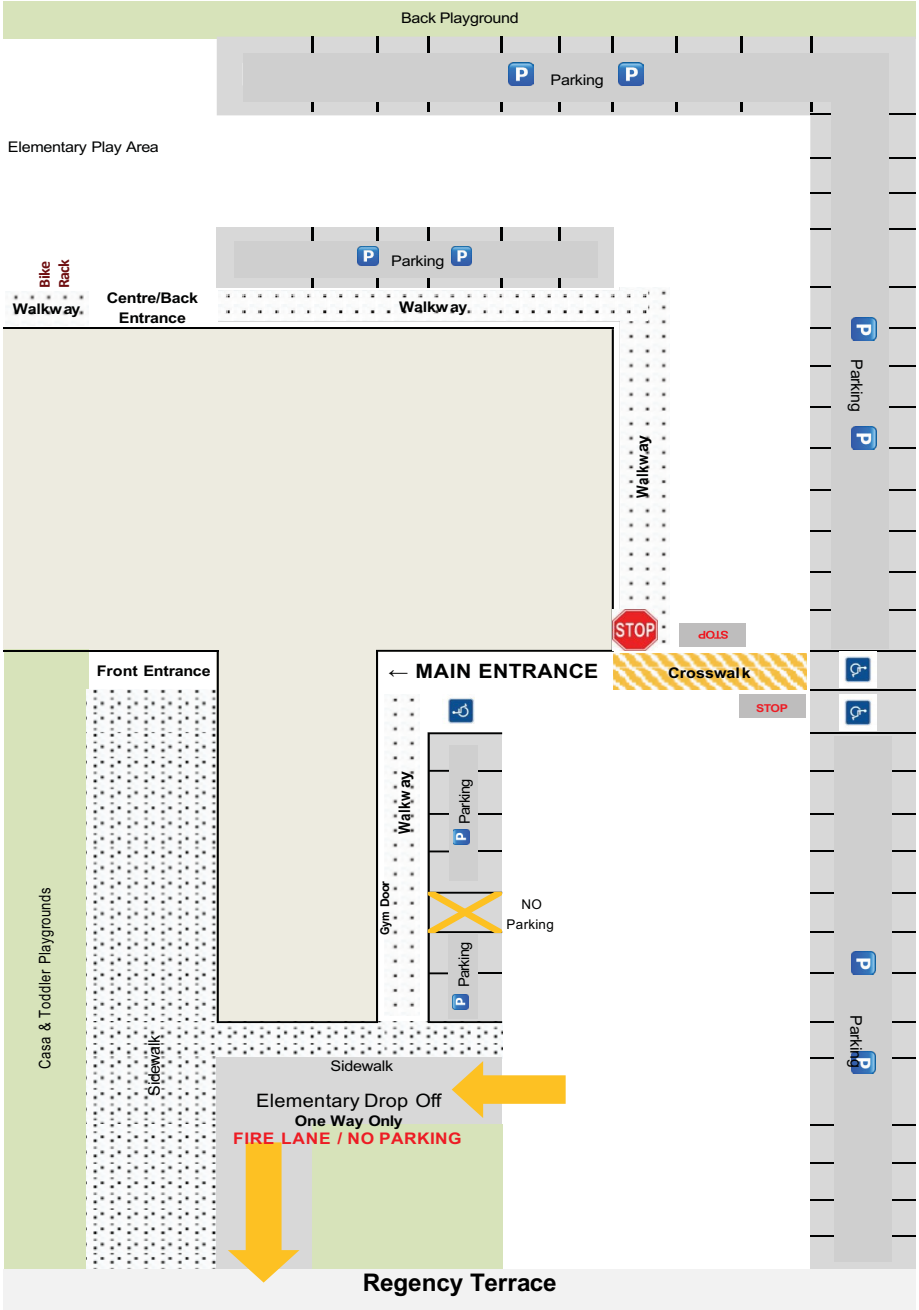
Students arriving after 8:30 a.m. must proceed to the front entrance outside the Administration office and sign in late.

Elementary 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

BHMS Parking Lot



Attendance Policy

Punctuality

A sense of order and punctuality is in keeping with Montessori philosophy. Students should 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 inform the office by phone. If you know ahead of time that your child will be away, please give a written note to the Classroom Director and let the office know. Frequent tardiness may result in a meeting with the Classroom Director and School Director.

Parents are required to provide the reason for early pick up. Students will be marked absent for a portion of the day.

Late Arrivals

Being on time is a life skill important to each student's future, and schools share the responsibility to teach the importance of this skill. Lateness of individual students interrupts the classroom for all students and impacts the lessons received.

Classroom Directors are required to review the attendance of students and to contact parent/guardian when a student has excessive late /absences. They will take appropriate steps, to ensure that students attend school in a timely manner on a regular basis.

5 (five) absences: Parents will be notified of days absent and reminded of the need for regular attendance by email or telephone.

10 lates/absences: A mandatory meeting with parents and principals will be held to develop an intervention plan regarding attendance. The intervention plan will be pro-active and problem solving in nature.

Absences

Parents are required to notify the school if a child will be absent via email info@bhms.ca or by leaving a voice mail message to Administration before 8:00 a.m. It is the parent's responsibility to report each and every absence. Please call or email the school office and provide your child's name and grade level. In order to obtain the best possible education, it is important that students attend school on a daily basis and arrive on time. Regular classroom participation is necessary to achieve the best possible learning for every student. Our goal is to maximize every student's opportunity to learn. Attendance is the responsibility of parents and students.

Excused Absences

- Illness: A doctor's/parent note of reason for absence is required for your student's attendance file.
- Medical appointments or treatments: Will require a doctor's note for the student's attendance file.
- Religious holidays: A parent note is required for the student's attendance file
- Death: A parent note is required for the student's attendance file.
- Personal or family emergency: A parent note is required for the student's attendance file.

Early Release

Parents must notify the Administration or 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.

Parents are requested to schedule appointments after 3:30 p.m. to avoid the need for an early dismissal. If it becomes necessary for a student to be released from school for a doctor/dental appointment or other unavoidable emergencies, the following procedure should be followed:

- Parent / Guardian will need to email or call the school that states the student's first and last name, date and time of release, and the reason for the early dismissal.
- All students must be signed out by a parent / guardian (or someone designated by the parent / guardian) before leaving the building.

Dismissal

Dismissal is a busy time as students ready themselves to go home. Parents are required to wait for their children at their designated pick up location at dismissal time. Please call the office and inform them if you will be late picking up your child.

Note:

- Students become the parents' / guardians' responsibility once they have been released to the parent / guardian.
- Please respect after school dismissal by keeping the Casa & Toddler gates in the parks free of persons and children running in gardens unattended by an adult.
- Students who have permission to leave school unaccompanied at the end of the day must leave the premises when they have signed out.

Safe Arrival and Dismissal

The following procedures help support the safe arrival and dismissal of students and provides staff with a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities for ensuring the safe arrival and dismissal of BHMS students, including what steps are to be taken when a student does not arrive at School as expected, as well as steps to follow to ensure the safe dismissal of students.

The procedures are intended to fulfill the obligations set out under Ontario Regulation 137/15 for policies and procedures regarding the safe arrival and dismissal of children in care.

Upon student arrivals to school staff will:

- Welcome the students upon entry to the school.
- Infant and Toddler students are escorted to their classrooms.
- Casa students arriving before 8:00 a.m. are escorted to the Purple Violet classroom.
- Elementary and Junior High students go to their classrooms at 8:00 a.m.
- All students are signed in by staff.
- Students arriving after 8:30 a.m. must be signed in as late at the office.
- All classrooms submit attendance to Administration by 9:00 a.m.
- Administration reviews and consolidates absences with parent emails and phone calls received.
- Administration contacts families of all students who are absent without a known reason. If there is no response from a primary contact, the School will proceed to call the secondary contact on file.
- Staff document the change in pick-up procedure on the daily attendance form and written record.

When a Student Does Not Arrive As Expected

Where a student does not arrive to school and the parent/guardian has not communicated a change in drop-off, BHMS staff will:

- Indicate student absence and remit attendance to Administration by 9:00 a.m.
- Administration will contact families of all students who are absent without a known reason via ~~If there is no response from a primary contact, Administration will proceed to call the secondary contact on file. In all cases, a voice mail an~~ **automated email** message requesting the reason for student absence and either a **phone call** ~~back~~ or email to the School.
- Administration will inquire about symptoms in cases where students are absent due to illness.
- **REMOVE??** Administration will consolidate student absences including reason for absence by classroom and email BHMS staff no later than ~~10:30 a.m.~~ **9:30 a.m.**
- Once a student's absence has been confirmed, staff must document the student's absence on the attendance record and any additional information about the absence in the daily written record.

Student Dismissals

- Students must be released to their parent/guardian or persons who are noted as authorized to pick up the child by written authorization per signed Application for Enrolment on file.
- In instances where staff does not know the individual picking up the student, staff are required to verify authorized persons for pick up and/or confirm with another staff member and/or request photo identification prior to student release.
- In instances where a parent/guardian provides written notification that someone not on the authorized student pick up will be picking up their child, staff will request photo identification for verification prior to student release.

Late Student Pick Up

- Where a parent/guardian has previously communicated with the staff a specific time or timeframe that their child is to be picked up and the child has not been picked up staff will contact the parent/guardian following a 15-minute grace period and advise that the student is still in care awaiting pick up. Staff will inquire when anticipated time of parent/guardian arrival for pick up will be.
- Where the staff is unable to reach the parent/guardian, staff will leave a message and then initiate contact with all persons noted on file and authorized for student pick up including emergency contacts if unable to reach authorized persons for pick up to arrange for pick up and/or inquire about parent/guardian status. Voice messages must be left for all persons staff attempt to contact

Late Student Pick Ups After 5:30

- Where a parent/guardian or authorized individual who was supposed to pick up a child has not arrived by 5:30 p.m., shall continue to supervise and provide care up to and including engaging the student in an activity while they await pick-up.
- Staff will contact the parent/guardian and/or authorized individual responsible for pick up at 5:35 to advise that the student is still in care and inquire their pick-up time.
- If the staff is unable to reach the parent/guardian or authorized individual who was responsible for picking up the child, the staff shall leave voice mail messages and proceed to phone emergency contact persons noted on file.
- Where the staff is unable to reach the parent/guardian or any other authorized individual listed on the child's file by 6:00 p.m., the staff shall contact the School's Infant to Casa Program Coordinator and/or School Director to determine next steps that may include contact with the local Children's Aid Society (CAS) 613.747.7800. Staff shall follow the CAS's direction with respect to next steps.

Dismissing a Student Without Supervision

Infant, Toddler and Casa Students

Staff will only release students to a parent/guardian or other authorized adults. Under no circumstance will students be released from school to walk home alone.

Elementary Students

Staff will only release Elementary students to a parent/guardian or other authorized adults.

Exception: Where a parent/guardian has provided written authorization through completion of a “Student Release – Unaccompanied” form, for their child to be dismissed from school without supervision. In this instance, staff responsible for dismissing the student will document the time of departure from school with their initials on the attendance record.

Glossary

Authorized Student Pick-Up: Person(s) the parent/guardian has named in the signed Application for Enrolment that is provided to all classrooms.

Parent/Guardian: Person(s) having lawful custody of a child or a person who has demonstrated a settled intention to treat a child as a child of his or her family.

Student Life

Technology & Internet Resources

Technology resources are limited to Senior Elementary and Junior High classrooms, where the research benefits are most relevant.

With our schools’ ever-growing technology resources, it is important that we communicate clear expectations of students. BHMS provides students with an opportunity to access computers and computer networks, including the Internet. Our goal in providing these resources is to promote educational excellence. Access to this technology is a privilege, not a right.

Inappropriate use of these resources will not be tolerated and will result in exclusion from further use. Students are required to review and sign the school’s Technology & Internet Usage Agreement form that outlines student expectations.

Student Code of Conduct and Discipline

At BHMS the discipline method offers students as much freedom and autonomy as possible, but within healthy limits and in accordance with a child's abilities and maturity level.

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, as required.
- 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 highchair, 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.

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 conferences
2. Attending classroom observations
3. Attending parent workshops organized by the school
4. Participating in classroom activities and school events
5. Supporting school activities and events

Parent / Teacher Conferences

Parent teacher conferences 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 by contacting them directly via email or telephone.

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.

Parent Speaker Series

In the school's continued efforts to work in collaboration with parents on a journey of growth and learning, BHMS hosts Parent Speaker Series. The Series consists of workshops led by professionals on topics such as Child Development and Montessori Education. Please refer to the school calendar for schedule and timelines.

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
- Sewing / painting for school concerts
- Board of Governors
- Board Committees
- Cultural presentations
- Yearbook

Volunteers who will have interaction with students are required to provide the school with a valid Vulnerable Sector 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 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:

Follow us! 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://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

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

Announcements and Highlights:

Announcements and highlights of upcoming events are posted at the school entrances, via email communications and on our website, bhms.ca.

Parent Communication Guidelines

In our continued efforts to maintain an efficient and strong school / parent relationship, we have developed a chart that summarizes 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	Administration
Classroom Observations	Classroom Director	Administration
Classroom Placement	School Director	Administration
Curriculum	Classroom Director	School Director
Custodial	Administration	
Extended Care	Administration	
Field Trips	Classroom Director	Administration
Finance / Accounting	Financial Administrator	Administration
Fundraising	Administration	Administration
Health & Safety	Classroom Director	Administration
Parent Speaker Series	Classroom Director	Administration
Parent Concerns	Classroom Director	Administration / School Director
School Events	Administration	Classroom Director
Student Performance	Classroom Director	School Director
Student Records	Administration	School Director
School Policy	Classroom Director	Administration
School Publications	Administration	Administration
Student Progress	Classroom Director	School Director
Uniforms / Dress Code	Classroom Director	Administration
Volunteering in Class	Classroom Director	Administration
Volunteering for School Events	Administration	Administration

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

Inquiry / Concern	Point of Contact	Steps BHMS Staff Take When Addressing Issues / Concerns
<p>Program Related</p> <p>Classroom routines, pedagogy, student progress, scheduling, lunch, sleep, outdoor routines.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom Director or staff directly • School Director 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Address the issue / concern at the time it is raised • Arrange for a mutually convenient time to meet • Document the issues / concerns <p>Documents should include:</p>
<p>General Inquiries</p> <p>School Fees, Hours of Operation, Staffing, School Events, Menus</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administration • School Director 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Date and time the issue / concern was received; • Name of the person reporting the issue / concern; • 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.
<p>BHMS Staff</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administration or • School Director <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"> • In cases where the person being notified is unable to address the matter, provide contact information for the appropriate person
<p>Student Volunteer Related</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The staff responsible for supervising the volunteer or student or • School Director <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"> • Ensure the investigation of the issue / concern is initiated by the appropriate party within as soon as reasonably possible thereafter • Provide the parent/ guardian who raised the issue / concern with a resolution or outcome

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