



PARENT HANDBOOK



5001 NE 66th Avenue
Vancouver, Washington 98661
Phone: 360-696-4862 Fax: 360-696-9087
www.skinnermontessori.com

PHILOSOPHICAL STATEMENT

The Skinner Montessori School is based on the belief that each child is capable of achievements both emotionally and intellectually that surpass the norm to which society has traditionally believed. The staff is committed to: touching both the heart and the mind of every student; teaching respect for all living and non-living things; and helping a child understand that he always has a choice and that he is responsible for his actions and the consequences that ensue, whether positive or negative.

The school is committed to offering an academic program comprised of high expectations, yet tempered with love and a respect for the differences in each student's learning ability. It is strongly committed toward using positive reinforcement as a means of modifying impolite behavior. Responsibilities are assigned to students as a means of helping them realize the importance of their role in the environment.

The idea of caring for one another is basic to the school's entire approach. The older students serve as role models for the younger children. The older children are taught to be responsible for the younger ones physically, emotionally, and academically. All students are exposed to the idea, early on in their experience at Skinner, that the talents each of them have are special and should be nurtured, shared, and treated with care.

The academic and social well-being of each student is viewed by the school as a joint commitment between the parents and the school. The child is better served when the staff and parents are directed towards the same goal: consequently, the school encourages an open door policy between the parents and the staff/administration.

Non Discrimination Policy

The school upholds a nondiscriminatory policy regarding services or employment practices based on race, creed, color, national origin, marital status, gender, sexual orientation, class, age, religion, or disability.

ADMINISTRATION

School Hours

Skinner Montessori School is open from 7:00 AM to 6:00 PM.

Primary classes begin at 8:30 AM. Primary students may be dropped off at 8:00 AM without incurring occasional care charges.

Elementary classes begin at 9:00 AM. Elementary students may be dropped off at 8:30 AM without incurring occasional care charges.

Pick-up times:

Half Day (Preschool)	12:30 PM to 1:00 PM
Full Day (Preschool)	3:00 PM to 3:15 PM
Full Day (Elementary)	3:30 PM to 3:45 PM
After School Care	3:16 PM to 6:00 PM

School Programs

Primary:

Half Day	8:30 AM - 1:00 PM
Full Day	8:30 AM - 3:15 PM

Occasional Care:

Before School Care	7:00 AM - 8:00 AM
After School Care	3:15 PM - 6:00 PM
Before & After Care	7:00 AM - 6:00 PM

Elementary:

Full Day	9:00 AM - 3:45 PM
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Occasional Care:

Before School Care	7:00 AM - 8:30 AM
After School Care	3:45 PM - 6:00 PM
Before & After Care	7:00 AM - 6:00 PM

See current Tuition Schedule for rates.

Acceptance

Initial acceptance of a student is for a period of 30 to 90 days. Final acceptance is contingent upon satisfactory performance during this probation period. The school reserves the right to dismiss any student. We now require that new parents bring in their child's birth certificate. We will keep a copy of it in the student's file.

Potential Elementary Student Assessment

All potential students who are not formally enrolled (i.e. those not from Skinner's Primary program or who haven't already reserved a space for their child) but are interested in entering into Skinner Montessori School's Elementary program have the option to be given an academic assessment prior to formally applying. The cost of this elementary assessment is \$25.00/hr. \$50.00 of the assessment fee will apply towards the application fee if you decide to formally enroll your student at Skinner.

Absence

Children need to appreciate, early on, the importance of attending school every day. The school is willing to work with families on absences, short or long term, involving illness, family crisis, and special travel opportunities. However, when attendance is based on convenience or preference, the children are put at a tremendous disadvantage.

The impressions you create in your children, from the time they are born until they are 12, serve them throughout their lives. The part each of us plays is so important in their creation. All facets, like regular attendance, should be taken very seriously. Although it is your children's responsibility to construct themselves, it is your and the school's responsibility to facilitate it in the best possible way. Frequent absences for any other reason than illness, family crisis, or that exceptional travel opportunity impede their chance for success.

Normally, missed school days are not made up at the end of the school year.

Early Closures / Late Openings

On any **severe weather day**, please listen to your local radio station for late school openings and early closures. Announcements begin as early as 6:00 AM. On those days, Skinner follows the Vancouver School District. The district office emergency recording phone number is 313-1401. If the Vancouver Schools are closing at 1:00 PM, then Skinner will also close at 1:00 PM. If Vancouver schools open one hour late, then Skinner will open at 8:00 AM because Skinner opens its doors at 7:00 am for AM Care.

With early closures, all families will be allowed one hour, from the time schools officially close, to either pick up or make arrangements to have their child picked up. After that, a fee of \$1.00 will be charged for every five minutes.

School Calendar

Please refer to the school calendar for scheduled non-attendance days. Traditionally, the school closes for the following holidays:

Labor Day	Veteran's Day
Thanksgiving	Winter Holiday
President's Day	Martin Luther King Jr. Day
Spring Break	Memorial Day
Independence Day	

Observations

The school would like to encourage parents to take advantage of observation time. Ordinarily, a class requires six to eight weeks in which to settle. For this reason, the school asks that observation requests be postponed until school has been in session for a least six weeks. All observations are scheduled through the office and held preferably during the morning work sessions, Tuesday through Thursday.

Summer School

The school conducts a summer session for both primary and elementary children. During summer school, we open at 7:30 AM for early care and all classes begin at 9:00 AM and go until 3:15 PM with after care until 6:00 PM. Summer school information is released in the spring. As with fall enrollment, Skinner students have first choice. There is a \$200 summer school reservation fee that will be applied toward the summer school tuition. Tuition payments are due on June 1 and July 1.

CLASSROOM

Signing In and Out

All Primary parents are required to sign their children in when they bring them to school and sign them out when they pick them up. The sign in/out clipboard is kept in the entrance hallway in the morning and with the children for the afternoon release. Parents are to sign their full name, not initials, per DSHS requirements.

Elementary students may sign themselves in unless they are in AM Care, which requires an adult signature. A parent or authorized person **MUST SIGN OUT** for elementary students regardless of the program.

Pick-Up Authorization

The people authorized to pick up your child must be listed on your application or update sheet. This list may be changed at any time by notifying the office in writing. Only those people listed will be allowed to take your child off school grounds.

If the staff is unfamiliar with the person picking up your child, he/she will be asked to show a picture identification before your child will be released. Please advise everyone on your child's pick-up list of this school policy. **If they are unknown to the staff and without a picture ID, your child will not be released.**

Update Information

If changes need to be made to your child's records due to new employment, address, or names on your pick-up list, please stop by the office. You will be asked to fill out an Update Sheet.

For those returning students, an Update Sheet will be sent home to fill out and return for your child's file. These forms are extremely important! In case of emergency, we need to be able to contact parents.

Parent Participation

The school encourages parents to participate in a variety of ways. At the beginning of each academic year, an Interest Questionnaire is handed out. The areas listed are a good starting place for becoming involved, but please do not feel confined just to these. If you have a special interest or talent, please write it in. Our goal is parent involvement!

Auction Participation:

Parents are now required to participate in our annual auction by:

Purchasing a minimum of two action tickets at \$50.00 each,

OR making a minimum cash contribution of \$100.00,

AND sharing in the expense of individual classroom projects.

Parent Notice Folders

Each student has a file folder outside the office. These folders make it convenient for the office and your classroom teacher to communicate with you.

SINCE NOTICES FROM THE OFFICE & THE CLASSROOM ARE PUT IN THE FILES, IT IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT THAT YOU CHECK YOUR CHILD'S FILE FOLDER DAILY.

First Days of School

The first days of school are very important to your child. Prepare them by letting them know they will be starting school soon. On your child's first day, please come in the classroom and quietly introduce yourself and your child to the teacher. After the first day, say good-bye OUTSIDE the classroom door and let your child enter alone. Please remember that the longer you linger, the harder it will be to leave. After your child has become accustomed to the new routine, you are welcome to let them show you around the classroom.

Lunch

Lunch time for all students is from 12:00 PM to 12:30 PM. Lunches should be packed and brought from home. If a lunchbox is sent in the morning, make sure it includes a cold pack or thermos to keep cold foods cool and hot foods hot. Guests are welcome for lunch.

Washington State requires that we remind parents to choose foods that meet daily nutritional requirements.

We will not be offering a Hot Lunch program this year (2007-08), but Milk will be available for pre-order purchase (\$0.35 each).

Primary School Daily Activities

The morning work session begins at 8:30 AM. During this time, children may choose equipment they have been presented from the different areas: Practical Life; Sensorial; Language; Mathematics; Music; Political Geography; Physical Geography; and Biology. Children may choose to work by themselves or with other children. Regardless of what they choose, they know they are responsible for packing the equipment away and returning it to the shelf.

Children in the Primary class may choose to have snack whenever the snack table is free. The morning work session goes until about 11:00 AM, when the children are asked to pack away their work and join the teacher at circle. Circle time can be a story time, singing songs, etc. Students start setting up for lunch at about 11:30 AM. Lunch begins approximately at 12:00 PM with recess following until 1:00 PM.

All children wash up after recess activities before they lie down for their afternoon nap or begin the afternoon work session. Again, there is the freedom to choose individual work, to join others in their work, or to have a lesson with the teacher or assistant. The choices they had in the morning are the same choices they have in the afternoon. About 2:20 PM, children are asked to pack away or to get up from nap and prepare for afternoon release.

Sharing

Each teacher designates a time for sharing. The children may tell about something that has happened or may bring items from home to share with the group. These items should be educational in nature. Toys, toy guns or weapons, comic books, etc. should not be brought for sharing.

Snack

Primary Snack

Primary students have a morning snack each day. The classroom teacher or assistant will notify parents when it is their week to bring snack and make suggestions. Parents are asked to bring nutritious and healthy foods. The school will provide the juice and milk.

After School Snack

Parents of children staying later than 3:15 PM must provide an afternoon snack according to DSHS regulations. If your child is in After School Care, please pack a specially designated snack. For example, wrap the snack in aluminum foil each day and let your child know the item in the foil is to be saved for after school. The school will provide the juice.

Naps

According to DSHS regulations, we must offer a rest period to children who are under the age of five and in our care for more than six hours. The regulations also state that we can offer quiet activities for the student who does not need rest.

The school will provide mats for napping. Children who nap must have a lightweight RECEIVING blanket for nap time. It is very important that parents do not send quilts, sleeping bags, afghans or large heavyweight blankets for nap or rest time. This is due to the importance of reducing the risk of communicable disease whenever possible. Also due to the lack of suitable storage space. Each Friday, blankets must be taken home, laundered, and returned on the following school day.

Parties

Birthday/Moving/You-Name-It! Parties are welcome at school. DSHS requires all food items to be purchased from the store. No homemade goodies! However, please give prior notice to your child's teacher if planning a celebration, in order not to conflict with other activities. Children may bring simple, easy to serve party foods (such as cupcakes or cookies). If your child does not have a birthday during the school year, they may celebrate an un-birthday! The staff does not mind taking pictures for you; just bring an easy to operate camera. Unless you are inviting the entire class, please refrain from handing out birthday invitations at school or putting them in the student take home files. This is to prevent hurt feelings. Refer to your student roster for names and address for mailing invitations.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Twice a year the staff sets time aside to discuss with you the social, academic, and emotional well-being of your child. Please take advantage of these opportunities.

The first parent-teacher conference is held in late October or early November. These are fifteen minute oral conferences. The second conference includes a written assessment of your child's achievements during the school year. These are 30 minutes long and are held in June. School will be closed for two days to accommodate parent-teacher conferences in June. However, if a teacher feels the need, she will ask for a parent conference whenever necessary.

Behavior Management and Discipline Policy

All students are encouraged to use their words to resolve situations; however, if something more is needed, children are encouraged to ask the teacher or assistant for help. If the unwanted behavior continues after the staff has tried to reason with the child exhibiting the unwanted behavior, there are several options open to the staff:

- Ask the child exhibiting the unwanted behavior to move his work to where the teacher or assistant is working
- Instruct the child to stay away from the child that is experiencing this disruption in his work
- Ask the child to pack away and take time out, which in our classrooms means sitting on the circle or line
- Remove the child to the office or to another classroom where he can finish his discipline.

Under *Minimum Licensing Requirements for Child Care Centers, Chapter 295*, our staff is allowed to use limited physical restraint to restrain a child:

(6) A staff person may use limited physical restraint when (a) protecting a person on the premises from serious injury; (b) obtaining possession of a weapon or other dangerous objects; or (c) protecting property from serious damage.

(7) Staff who uses limited restraint must complete an incident report. A copy of the incident report must be (a) placed in the child's individual record; and (b) given to the parent.

If it is necessary for a staff member to physically restrain your child, you will be notified with an Incident Report in your Parent Notice Folder.

School Uniform Policy

The uniform identifies the children as students of Skinner Montessori School. It is something of which they should be proud. Students need to keep up the standard of appearance while wearing the school uniform as the community will associate them with the school.

ALL PARTS OF THE UNIFORM MUST BE PURCHASED FROM DENNIS. This includes socks, tights, hair accessories, and pullover or cardigan sweaters (sweaters must have the Skinner logo). Shoes and outdoor wear may be of your own choice.

- * The uniform must be clean upon arriving at school.
- * Rips or tears in the uniform should be repaired before coming to school.
- * The uniform must fit the student properly: extra baggy pants and shirts are not acceptable. Pants that are too long will need to be hemmed.
- Uniform shirts should be worn tucked in while at school.

Adherence to the school uniform policy is mandatory for all students. *Out of Uniform Notice* will be sent home if your child is out of uniform. If three (3) *Out of Uniform Notices* are received, you may expect a call from the office.

Free Dress Days

Free dress is available:

- On the last Friday of each month that school is in session
- On any other occasions designated by the school
- During summer school session
- If a child needs to be in another uniform (Boy/Girl Scouts, etc...) on a particular day

Identification

Since the children are all in uniform, all items of clothing (especially cardigans, sweaters, and jackets) must be marked clearly with your child's first and last name. All items brought to school, such as lunch boxes and sharing items, also, should be labeled.

Change of Clothing

Please provide a change of clothing for children who may have an accident. This does not need to be a uniform. The school has extra clothing available in case of an emergency.

FINANCIAL

Enrollment and Admission Requirements

An *Application for Admission* must be filled out and submitted to the office with a \$50.00 non-refundable application fee. The office will then notify parents if space is available or if their child will be put on the waiting list. If space is available, a \$200.00 reservation fee is required to hold that spot until the student starts school. The \$200.00 reservation fee is non-refundable but will be credited toward the first month's tuition.

Reservation Fees for Returning Students

Each spring, a reservation fee is needed to secure your child's place for summer school or the academic year. This is non-refundable, but will be deducted from your tuition payment. This fee will *not* be refunded in the case of a withdrawal or "no show". Openings are offered to our existing students first and then opened to the public.

Tuition

Tuition for the school year may be paid on an annual, semester, or in ten installments. Each is due in *advance* of the school year, semester, or month. The installment option may be prepaid over ten months; the first payment is due August 1st, then subsequent payments are due on or before the 1st. The last payment is due on May 1st. Any tuition received after the first school day of the month will be assessed a \$2.00 per day late charge. A student will be unable to attend class if tuition has not been paid by the 10th of the month. Tuition remains the same regardless of family vacations, illnesses, or holidays.

If you plan to withdraw your child from school, the office would appreciate a two week notice as a courtesy to those families on the waiting list.

Change in program times (i.e. Half Day to Full Day, or vice versa) during the school year will result in a pro-rated tuition and change in monthly or annual tuition charge.

Enrolling your child after the first day of school will result in a pro-rated tuition and a change in monthly or annual tuition charge. Please refer to the PRIMARY or ELEMENTARY TUITION SCHEDULE for current pricing and fees.

School supplies, textbooks, workbooks, field trips, class projects and activities are additional charges. This includes the Fall and Spring Picnic charges, which are billing to all parents, regardless of attendance.
PRICES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

Tuition Discount

Sibling discounts are applied towards Tuition, AM, PM, and Occasional Care. A ten percent discount applies to the second child and a fifteen percent discount applies to the third child.

Annual tuition received by July 1st will be given a two and half percent discount.

Withdrawal and Dismissal

Each student is accepted for a period of 30 to 90 days. Final acceptance is contingent upon satisfactory performance during this period. The school reserves the right to dismiss any student.

Before and After School Care

The school provides early morning and late afternoon care. Before School (AM) Care for the Primary is from 7:00 AM to 8:00 AM, and for the Elementary, 7:00 AM to 8:30 AM. Primary After School (PM) Care is from 3:15 PM to 6:00 PM. Elementary PM Care is from 3:45 PM to 6:00 PM. Please contact the office if you need this service.

AM and PM Care are flat fees that are included in your monthly billing. AM and PM Care, like tuition, remains the same per month, regardless of vacations, holidays, illnesses, or other absences.

Occasional Care

The school also offers occasional care before and after school. Students will automatically be added to and billed for occasional care if not picked up at their scheduled pick-up time. Occasional care is billed at an hourly rate of \$7.50 with a minimum of 1/2 hour or \$3.50. Occasional care charges are billed the month after they are incurred.

The Department of Social and Health Services requires that all parents sign their children in and out of school. It is the parents' responsibility, and that of any individual authorized to pick up your child, to sign in and out with the time. Due to difficulties we have had in the past, we are now charging a \$10.00 fee per missing signature and a \$5.00 fee per missing time. In addition, if you have a missing time when your child was present after his or her pick-up time (noted by the staff), you will be charged for the Occasional Care, per child, until the next program ends.

Pick-Up Times and Late Charge

Pick-up after these listed times will automatically be classified as Occasional Care and charged accordingly: \$7.00 an hour with a minimum charge of \$3.50.

Pick-Up Times:

Half Day (Preschool)	12:45 PM - 1:00 PM
Full Day (Preschool)	3:00 PM - 3:30 PM
Full Day (Elementary)	3:30 PM - 3:45 PM
After School Care (Preschool)	3:16 PM - 6:00 PM*
After School Care (Elementary)	3:46 PM - 6:00 PM*

*Late pick-up charge after 6:00 PM is \$1.00 for every minute past 6:00 PM. These charges are passed on to the assistants who have been inconvenienced.

Returned Checks

All checks returned to the school will be charged \$20.00.

Refund Policy

Tuition

After attending the first school day of any month, parents are financially responsible for tuition through the end of this month. Tuition will be pro-rated from the first day of school, or first day of attendance (whichever applies), through the end of the month in which your child last attended.

Due to the difficulty in replacing students at the end of the school year, no tuition will be refunded for students withdrawing on or after April 1st. If withdrawing on or after April 1st, parents will be responsible for payment through the end of the school year. If a credit balance remains after one full billing cycle, a refund check will be issued.

The refund policy applies to voluntary withdrawals, dismissals, monthly tuition payment plans, and annual tuition payment plans.

Annual Tuition

No part of a month's tuition is refundable after the first day of the month. Annual tuition refunds will be pro-rated from the first day of the following month after the last day of attendance and after all school charges have been paid.

HEALTH & SAFETY

Illness

If your child has any of the illness described below, you will be notified to make arrangements to pick him/her up. Please keep your child home until symptoms have completely cleared up, at least 24 hours.

1. Diarrhea (three or more watery stools or one or more bloody stool within twenty-four hours.)
2. Vomiting (two or more times within twenty-four hours.)
3. Open or oozing sores, unless properly covered with cloths or bandages.
4. For suspected communicable skin infection such as impetigo, pinkeye and scabies: The child may return twenty-four hours after starting antibiotic treatment.
5. Lice or nits.
6. Fever of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or higher and who also have one or more of the following:
 - Earache
 - Headache
 - Sore throat
 - Rash
 - Fatigue that prevents participation in regular activities.

All children coming to school must go out for recess, weather permitting. If your child is too ill to participate in recess, then he is too ill to be in school.

Communicable Diseases

Children and staff who have a reportable disease may not be in attendance at school unless approved by the local health authority. We will notify parents in writing when their children have been exposed to infections diseases or parasites. The notification may consist of either a letter to parents or posting a notification for parents in a visible location.

Dispensing of Medications

The Skinner staff is unable to dispense any medication, unless the illness or injury falls under the *American Disabilities Act*. If you feel your child may fall into this category, please see the office. Medication may only be dispensed by the staff if an ***Individual Plan of Care*** form has been completed by the parents and filed with the office. Parents are also responsible for providing these medications to the school in a well marked Zip-Lock bag with the child's name clearly marked on the outside, with clear instructions and dosage amounts to be taken written inside.

Child Abuse Reporting Requirements

The staff at Skinner is committed to protecting each and every child, and understands that any abuse, neglect, or exploitation of any child is to be reported. The staff, if they suspect that a child is being physically, mentally, or emotionally abused, knows they must report this to the authorities. And if, for any reason, the staff feels a child is in immediate danger, a report will be made to the local law enforcement.

Health Emergencies

The entire staff is trained in First-Aid and CPR: however, should an accident occur that requires more than first aid, every attempt will be made to contact you and your family physician.

In case of an emergency, the school will call in this order:

1. Mother at home/work - leave message if not available
2. Father at home/work - leave message if not available
3. Persons in the order they are listed on the application under "Case of Emergency."

A *Medical Authorization for Treatment of a Minor* form must be signed by *both* parents. This form allows the child to be treated by a doctor in case the parents are not present. Due to liability reasons, the school staff will not transport a child to the hospital. In these situations, the school will call an ambulance.

Disaster Situation

Should an emergency or disaster situation ever arise in our area while school is in session, we want you to be aware that the school has made preparations to respond effectively to such situations. Should we experience a major earthquake or disaster during school hours, your children will be cared for at the school until they are picked up.

Your cooperation and assistance is necessary in the following ways during any emergency.

1. Do not telephone the school. Telephone lines may be needed for emergency communication.
2. In the event of a serious earthquake or disaster, your child will be kept at the school until picked up by a responsible adult identified from the Authorized Pick-up List. Students will be released ONLY to persons identified on the authorized list.

Please be sure you consider the following criteria when you authorize another person on the Pick-up List:

- They are 18 years of age or older
- They are usually home during the day
- They could walk to school if necessary
- They are known to your child
- They are both aware and able to assume the responsibility

3. If students are to be kept at school, radio and television stations will be notified. All efforts will be made to contact parents, as well; however please keep in mind the enormity of attempting to contact all parents/guardians.
4. Impress upon your child the need for him/her to follow the directions of any school personnel in times of an emergency.

Please read and discuss the above plan with your family. Planning ahead will help alleviate concerns during a natural or man-made disaster.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I have received and reviewed a copy of the Skinner Montessori School PARENT HANDBOOK with the office manager and/or administrator and understand the policies and procedures that have been explained to me.

I have, also, read and understand the DISASTER PLAN.

Parent or Guardian

Student's Name

Date _____

Disaster Plan Review

A copy of Skinner Elementary Montessori School's Disaster Plan is available for review in the office. Any questions should be addressed with the Office Manager or Administrator. I understand that any changes made to the plan will be given to me for review.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Pesticide Review

A copy of Skinner Elementary Montessori School's Pesticides Policy is available for review in the office. Skinner prefers not to use pesticides on a regular bases, however, when pesticides are used, signs are posted stating when and what pesticides are being used. Any questions should be addressed with the Office Manager or Administrator.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT/RELEASE

PHOTO RELEASE

It is our practice when preparing work for external publications or on the Internet to seek parent permission before including your child's photo. Placement of the photos taken could be used in a variety of external publications and include examples such as brochures, advertising, or our web site to name a few. In order to include your child's photo in any publication, we must have your signed permission. Names of students or personal information will not be used. You should also be aware of that Skinner reserves the right to crop or treat the photograph at its discretion.

I grant consent to Skinner to use any photography of my child in any school-sponsored material, publication, video tape, or web site. This consent is valid for the entire length that my child is enrolled at Skinner Elementary Montessori. I may revoke this consent at any time by notifying the office staff.

I DECLINE consent to Skinner to use any photography of my child, in any school-sponsored material, publication, video tape, or web site. This lack of consent is valid for the entire length that my child is enrolled at Skinner Elementary Montessori. I may invoke consent at any time by notifying the office staff.

STUDENT ROSTER POST

May we publish your home address and/or phone number in the Skinner student roster? Please select one to publish if parents/guardians have separate addresses:

- | | | |
|---|-------------|----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mother's Address | Home Phone: | yes / no |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Father's Address | Home Phone: | yes / no |