

POLKADOTS MONTESSORI ACADEMY

Parent Handbook

2023/2024



Dear Parents,

We would like to extend a warm welcome to families joining our Polkadots community for the first time this year and a welcome back to those returning. Each of you have made a significant choice, in ensuring the best possible outcome to your child's academic journey.

Our 2024-2024 Program is currently delivering enriched Montessori learning experiences to your children from JK to Grade 6. Our small class size, individualized learning plan and amazing indoor playground facility; offers students a safe and unique opportunity to not only flourish academically, but socially and physically as well.

At Polkadots Montessori Academy, we are committed to promoting the individuality of all of our students and aim to be an inclusive school. We endeavour to teach our students to appreciate, respect and value the unique differences they see in one another. We offer equal opportunities for participation and learning for all our students and will ensure that they feel secure in knowing that their contributions to the school are valued. We ensure an environment that allows for a range of different learning styles and where all children have challenging targets that enable them to succeed. Our dedicated teaching staff bring positive, creative energy each day, creating an environment where every child can explore and learn new things. We are honoured you have entrusted Polkadots Montessori Academy with this task and will work each day to surpass your expectations.

Best Regards,

Josette Drummond
B.A. MACTE Montessori
Principal/ Head Teacher

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Our Teaching Philosophies

Polkadots Montessori Academy is rooted in the Montessori practice and is committed to the teachings of Maria Montessori. However, we avail ourselves as Educators, Administration and Therapists to the variety of learning philosophies in the industry and integrate strategies, we feel will best benefit our learners.

We believe in the worth of every child and respect their individuality. We plan for and create positive learning experiences in which each child's learning and development is supported by using the international Montessori curriculum and materials that have been proven through research-based analysis to be effective.

At **Polkadots Montessori Academy**, we take very seriously our responsibility to guide each child through a world of discovery on the path to constructing a secure, confident sense of self, with an active, competent mind. The happy balance between freedom to explore and structured work within a prepared, orderly environment, is the hallmark of our school and Montessori's philosophy. We believe that the function of our school is to augment the development of each child – intellectually, socially, emotionally, spiritually and physically, so that the child may eventually emerge as a well-rounded independent adult.

Montessori is a developmentally based approach to education that naturally develops the Intellectual, Emotional and Neuromuscular needs of the individual

Children display the following Observable outcomes:

- 1. Independence**
- 2. Confidence and Competence**
- 3. Intrinsic Motivation**
- 4. Ability to handle external authority**
- 5. Social responsibility and leadership**
- 6. Academic preparation**
- 7. Global awareness**
- 8. Respect**

Organizational Structure



Josette Drummond, B.A. MACTE Montessori
Owner, Principal / Head Montessori Teacher



Brent Celestine
Owner, C.F.O.

Education Assistants

Specialty Programming – Extended Care staff

- Attianna Campbell- Scott
- Amanda Concha
- Michelle Mohammed (R.E.C.E.)
- Ambreen Hassan MACTE Montessori

Special Education

Catch A Dream – A.B.A. Behavioural Therapy

- Stephanie Watson – Registered Behavioural Therapist (R.B.T)
- Felicia Cotterell- B.C.B.A. (Board Certified Behavioural Analyst)

Speech Pathways – Speech Therapy

- Jordana Steinberg – B.Sc Reg. S-LP CASLPO

Contact Information

School Name	Polkadots Montessori Academy (PMA)	
School Address	305 Royal West Drive Unit P & Q Brampton, ON L6X 5K8	
Main Office phone	905-455-3687	
Mobile	647-927-8239	
Email	Polkadots.montessorischool@gmail.com	
Website	www.Polkadotsplayland.com	
Facebook	Polkadots Montessori Academy	
Instagram	@Polkadots_pmc	

Safe Arrival Policy:

The key to a successful educational journey is consistency. Students are expected to attend school each day.

- Attendance is taken daily at **9:30 am**, children arriving after this time, will be marked in as late(L). Please have students in for class entrance at 9am.
- Absences are to be reported to the school by email, telephone call or by text message to our mobile line as early as possible.
- Mid-day withdrawals for medical appointments etc. need to be submitted in advance, by phone text or email.

Operational Information

DAILY SCHEDULE		
7:00 – 9:00am	Extended Care (AM)	For registered Students only (Additional Fees Apply)
8:30 - 9:00am	Physical Activity period	PLAY in Indoor Playground PARENT DROP-OFF
9:00am	CLASSES COMMENCE	
9:15am	Hand Washing Routine Morning snack	Healthy Food choices brought from home (NUT FREE products only)
9:30am to 12pm	MORNING WORK CYCLE	Montessori Exploration in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Math • Language • Practical Life • Sensorial • Cultural Studies
12:00pm	Hand Washing Routine Lunch	Healthy Food choices brought from home (NUT FREE products only)
12:15 to 1:15pm	Lunchtime Activity period	PLAY on Indoor Playground
1:15 to 2:30pm	AFTERNOON WORK CYCLE	Specialty Classes in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creative Art • Science
2:30pm	Hand Washing Routine Afternoon Snack	Healthy Food choices brought from home (NUT FREE products only)
2:45 – 3:30pm	End of Day Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Music • Kids Yoga • French
3:30 - 4:00pm	Physical Activity Period	PLAY in Indoor Playground
4:00pm	DISMISSAL	PARENT PICK-UP
4:00 – 6:00pm	Extended Care (PM)	For registered Students Only (Additional Fees apply)

Holidays and Camps

DATE	HOLIDAY	SCHOOL STATUS
Monday, September 4, 2023	Labour Day Holiday	School Closed
Tuesday, September 5, 2023	FIRST DAY OF INSTRUCTION	
Monday, October 9, 2023	Thanksgiving Holiday	School Closed
Monday, November 27, 2023	P.A. Day	School Closed
Monday, December 25, 2023 – Friday, January 5, 2024	Winter Break Holiday	Day Camp offered
Friday, February 16, 2024	P.A. Day	School Closed
Monday, February 19, 2024	Family Day	School Closed
Monday, March 11 - 15, 2024	Spring Break Holiday	Day Camp offered
Friday, March 29, 2024	Good Friday Holiday	School Closed
Monday, April 1, 2024	Easter Monday Holiday	School Closed
Friday, May 17, 2024	P.A. Day	School Closed
Monday, May 20, 2024	Victoria Day Holiday	School Closed
Thursday, June 28, 2024	LAST DAY OF INSTRUCTION	

Day Camps	Dates	# of weeks
Christmas Break	Monday, December 25 – Friday, January 5, 2024	2 weeks
March Break	March 11 – March 15, 2024	1 weeks
Summer	July 1 – August 23, 2024	8 weeks

2024/2024 Tuition – 191 Instructional Days (3 P.A Days, 6 Statutory Holidays)

Pre-K (\$70/day)

Days/week	Full Day/Half Day	Monthly Tuition Rate (\$) CDN	SAVE with a FULL Year Payment
5	Full Day	\$ 1,400.00/month	\$ 13,000.00/ year
3	Full Day	\$ 840.00/month	\$ 7,500.00/ year
2	Full Day	\$ 560.00/month	\$ 5,000.00/ year

JK – Grade 6 (\$60/day)

Days/week	Full Day/Half Day	Monthly Tuition Rate (\$) CDN	SAVE with a FULL Year Payment
5	Full Day	\$ 1,225.00/month	\$ 11,500.00/ year

Specialty Programs

- Creative Arts
- Music – Vocal, instrumental
- Science and Sensory
- Yoga
- French
- Virtues Project (Grace and Courtesy)

Special Education Program

At Polkadots Montessori Academy, we are committed to promoting the individuality of all of our students and aim to be an inclusive school. We endeavour to teach our students to appreciate, respect and value the unique differences they see in one another. Students requiring supports outside of our expertise will be supported through all avenues possible, including welcoming community partners and other professionals into the environment to help build a better understanding of the students' learning needs. We will support both the child and family by meeting with all necessary persons to understand the child's needs and to learn about and implement any individualized plans and accommodations that have been put forth.

We have partnered with

- Speech Pathways for Speech and Language sessions
 - Jordana Steinberg, MSc S-LP, Reg, CASLPO
- Catch a Dream for Behavioural Therapy and Sport Therapy based O.T. Sessions.
 - Stephanie Watson Reg, RBT
 - Felicia Cotterell, Board Certified Behavioural Analyst (B.C.B.A)

Special Education Tuition (\$98/day)

Days/week	Full Day/Half Day	Monthly Tuition Rate (\$ CDN)	SAVE with a FULL Year Payment
5	Full Day with integrated Spec. ED Therapy (3 hrs of daily 1 to 1 programming for ABA/ SLP/ Montessori Foundations)	\$ 1,960.00/month Scholarship options available	\$ 17,640/ year
3	Full Day with integrated Spec. ED Therapy (3 hrs of daily 1 to 1 programming for ABA/ SLP/ Montessori Foundations)	\$ 1,175/month	\$ 10,575/ year
2	Full Day with integrated Spec. ED Therapy (3 hrs of daily 1 to 1 programming for ABA/ SLP/ Montessori Foundations)	\$ 785.00/month	\$ 7,065/ year
FULL DAY INSTRUCTION – 9am to 4pm Monday-Friday			

Tuition Payment Policy

- Tuition payments are due on or before the first (1st) day of each month.

- Failure to make tuition payments on time may incur late fee charges, \$5.00/day to a maximum of \$50.00.
- Fees can be paid, in the method of Direct Debit, Visa, MC or Amex., cheque, EMT transactions, cash. Failure to make payment will void contractual agreement.
- A charge of \$45.00 will be levied against all N.S.F. cheques or cheques returned for any reason.
- There are no refunds for mid-program withdrawals, holidays, sick days, or days missed for any other reason throughout services with MONTESSORINNOVATIONS INC. O/A Polkadots Playland & Montessori Centre.
- Tuition is paid for education services delivered between 9am and 4pm daily. Children must be picked up on time.
- Extended Care is offered daily from 7am to 9am and 4pm to 6pm, students enrolled in before or after-school extended care, will pay separately for care services.
- A late pick-up charge of \$1.00/minute will be charged for pick up after

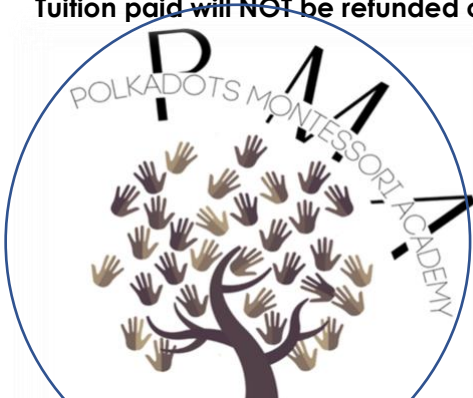
Withdrawal /Expulsion/ Suspension

Polkadots Montessori Academy prides itself on the positive, peaceful environment it cultivates for its students. Each student is expected to abide by or schools code of conduct and will be subjected to our progressive discipline procedures if not. We hold a zero-tolerance policy for:

- injurious acts of deliberate violence
- sexual assault, harassment, abuse in any way, physical, verbal or psychological
- Harassment, bullying, intimidation or coercion in any way

Both students and families in both sides of any issue will be worked with to come to a consensus and feasible solution to any issue arising.

Tuition paid will NOT be refunded or carried over in the event of an expulsion/suspension



2023/ 2024 Scholarship Program

Polkadots Playland & Montessori Centre is a private Montessori Academy serving students from JK to Grade 6. We are proud to offer our 5-Tree Scholarship to students that require the support.

Since its inception in 2021, close to \$100,000.00 has been allocated to fund our Integrated ASD program, that provides Speech and Behavioural Therapy services to students on the Autism Spectrum as well as to offset tuition costs for families experiencing financial hardship. We hope to expand this program for the upcoming school year, to support all families that apply.

5 Full Day -\$ 1,225.00/month			
BASE TUITION - \$1,083.60			
HST- \$141.40			
Recipients/ Academic Year	Scholarship Level	Monthly Scholarship Coverage	Your Payment
2 Students	30%	\$ 325.50	\$ 899.50
2 Students	60%	\$ 650.16	\$ 574.84
2 Students	100%	\$ 1,083.60	\$ 141.40
2 Special Education students	40%	\$784.00	\$1,176.00

Scholarships amounts are applied to **Base Tuition ONLY**.

- HST
- Uniforms
- Extended Care
- Day Camps
- Activity related expenses.

Are NOT applicable

Illness Policy

COVID – 19 Parameters

MINISTRY OF HEALTH GUIDANCE:

With continued COVID-19 requirements the following precautions and practices will be in place:

- Protective Equipment for ALL staff
 - Masks. (Not mandated but strongly recommended)
 - uniform
 - gloves (when food handling or engaging with students' sanitation)

- All staff and students are expected to practice:
 - Physical distancing when possible
 - Proper cough and sneeze etiquette
 - Frequent hand washing
 - Cleaning and disinfectants of high traffic surfaces
 - Staying at home when ill
 - All staff have received 2 doses of an approved Covid-19 Vaccine

- Reduced numbers and Ratios creating limited groups of 15:
 - 15 students /classroom with 2 Staff (Maximum capacity)
 - School groups rotate through the playground space individually
 - Students may continue to wear masks during play sessions, group activities, and during class time where physical distancing cannot be maintained. This is an individual choice families will make

- Routine hand washing routines before and after meals and play sessions

- Increased cleaning and disinfecting routine: As per Public Health recommendations
 - High traffic areas will be cleaned 2 times daily
 - Classrooms will be cleaned 2 times daily
 - Bathrooms will be cleaned 2 times daily (intermittently as required)
 - Eating areas will be disinfected before and after meals

The link below will take you to the Province of Ontario's mandate for schools, in regards to Covid-19 exclusions and returns

https://health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/COVID-19_school_outbreak_guidance.pdf

Special Events/Activities

Birthdays

We at Polkadots look forward to celebrating your child's special day. We invite every family to send in a nut free dessert (i.e., cakes, cupcakes, etc.) for your child to celebrate with friends at school.

We extend a special offer for discounted party packages if you would like to host your family and friends here at Polkadots Playland for a larger family celebration on a weekend.

Class Teachers will provide class lists for loot bags, and email addresses for party invitations etc. We ask that you refrain from giving out invitation cards, if you do not intend on inviting the entire group.

Field Trips

Every so often we will take the children on planned field trips to further support their in class learning. Permission forms will precede any excursion and specific details will be communicated through email.

Holiday Celebrations

We pride ourselves on being an inclusive school where many cultural celebrations and traditions are acknowledged and celebrated. We do allow families to send nut free treats for any celebrations (i.e., Halloween, Valentine's Day etc.).

Classroom teachers will provide class lists for treat bags.

Annual Events:

- **Halloween Haunt**
 - Tuesday, October 31, 2023 (in school- students may wear costumes)
- **A Polkadots Holiday Party**
 - Friday, December 22, 2023
- **Polkadots Annual Golf Classic & Family BBQ**
 - Sunday, July 14, 2024

In class celebrations for Diwali, Halloween, Eid, Christmas, Valentine's Day, and Easter.

Some Montessori Basics

Developed by Italian educator and doctor, **Maria Montessori** after extensive research with special needs children in the early years of the twentieth century, the method contains five basic principles:

Principle 1: Respect for the Child

Respect for the Child is the major principle underlying the entire Montessori method. Respect is shown for children by giving students the freedom to make choices, to do things for themselves, and to learn for themselves. Respect is also shown by not interrupting their concentration. Teachers model desired and expected behaviour like respect, peaceful conflict resolution, emotional regulation and etiquette.

Principle 2: The Absorbent Mind

Montessori education is based on the principle that, simply by living, children are constantly learning from the world around them. Through their senses children constantly absorb information from their world. They then make sense of it because they are thinking beings.

Principle 3: Sensitive Periods

Montessori pedagogy believes there are certain periods during which children are more ready to learn certain skills. These are known as sensitive periods, and last only as long as is necessary for the child to acquire the skills. The order in which sensitive periods occur (e.g. sensitive period for writing) as well as the timing of the period varies for each child. Through observation, Montessori teachers must identify sensitive periods in their students and provide the resources for children to flourish during this time.

Principle 4: The Prepared Environment

The Montessori method suggests that children learn best in an environment that has been prepared to enable them to do things for themselves. Always child-centred, the learning environment promotes freedom for children to explore materials of their choice. Teachers should prepare the learning environment by making materials and experiences available to children in an orderly and independent way.

Principle 5: Auto education

Auto education, or self-education, is the concept that children are capable of

educating themselves. This is one of the most important beliefs in the Montessori method.

Montessori teachers provide the environment, the inspiration, the guidance and the encouragement for children to educate themselves.

The Role of the Teacher

In Montessori education the role of the teacher is to guide children in their learning without becoming an obstacle, and without inserting themselves too much into the natural learning process. **Therefore, the Montessori teacher is a facilitator, not a lecturer. Montessori teachers encourage children to learn by placing the student, rather than the teacher, at the centre of the experience.** They provide learning materials appropriate to each child after close observation in the specially prepared learning environment. Teachers also demonstrate and model learning activities whilst providing freedom for the students to learn in their own way. Montessori teachers manage classroom behaviours by modelling ongoing respect for all children and their work, by observing and using sensitive periods, interests and abilities, to plan activity, and by diverting inappropriate behaviour to meaningful tasks. **The teacher's role is to respect the freedom of each child to forge his or her own unique path of learning and personal growth, energized by his or her natural curiosity.** We are committed to inspire and encourage each child to take in hand a wealth of activities and experiences to ensure successful development. Teachers prepare lesson plans as a guide to ensure that the students are participating in all areas of the class, however, they remain flexible and respectful of the child's need to make choices and decisions in their daily activities.

Multi-age classrooms

One of the more widely known features of a Montessori education is that of the multi-age classroom. Rejecting the notion all children of the same age develop and progress

at the same pace, Montessori schools believe multi-age classrooms enable children to work more productively at their natural pace. Montessori classrooms are typically set up in 3-year age ranges. Advocates believe this enable children to learn better social skills, and to develop academically, in a co-operative, non-competitive learning environment. We encourage the students to communicate and engage in cooperative play/work by supporting their ability to self-regulate and by providing a mix-age group setting where the students remain with the same teachers for three years. This allows for the opportunity to build relationships and to interact with the peers that are younger and older than the student, and with the adults.

The Montessori classroom

Montessori believed that the learning environment (including teachers, experiences and the physical environment) may either positively or negatively impact the self-education of the child. Thus, Montessori classrooms are set up in such a way as to best facilitate and encourage learning. This prepared environment consists of 5 Montessori Areas of study; each offering students a variety of sensory based learning opportunities. The specifically designed Montessori materials allow for exploration and they encourage students to become independent, yet also promote the concept of teamwork. The classroom allows for the freedom of movement and for the development of a positive work cycle, by allowing the students to choose their activities and to explore with them without interruption.

Please reference our ["Guide to the Montessori Teaching Method"](#) for detailed information.