

# TERRA VIVA MONTESSORI BILINGUAL

**Parent**

**Handbook**



*Update January 2026*

# WELCOME TO TERRA VIVA MONTESSORI!

## Program Statement

TERRA VIVA MONTESSORI welcomes you to a genuine Montessori education for young children! TERRA VIVA MONTESSORI is consistent with the Ministry of Education's policy by operating a program that constitutes high quality child care, early years programming and pedagogy that supports children's learning and development.

TERRA VIVA MONTESSORI is a unique program, committed to educate the children of Niagara Region through an Innovative and Creative way of learning that blends the Montessori Philosophy with an Environmental Outdoor Education.

At TERRA VIVA MONTESSORI we believe that exposing children to a foreign language such as, Spanish, language at an early age, increases children cognitive and linguistic skills. Helps children to be better prepared for the future and allows youngsters to be better capable of making connections with other children of different cultural backgrounds.

Our families are not required to speak the Spanish Language; we believe in the enormous benefit of just immersing the child into the language through spoken commands, songs, music, art, culture and nature!

We believe in the power of creative connections and meaningful multicultural experiences!

Most importantly, we believe that we are all interconnected, like drops of water that belong to a great river, that majestic river we all called LIFE!

## Our mission

Our mission is to provide an environment rich in purpose and experience so as to inspire, motivate and empower children to reach their full learning potential it is achievable through implementing the four foundations of early learning: belonging, well-being, engagement and expression.

**Belonging** refers to a sense of being connected to others and the environment, being valued and forming relationships with all creatures great and small!

**Well-being** addresses the importance of physical /mental health, self-care, and sense of self and self regulation.

**Engagement** occurs when children are involved, focused and able to explore their environment with natural curiosity and exuberance.

**Expression or communication** (to be heard, as well as to listen) may take many different forms. Through their bodies, words and use of materials.

## GOALS

**Goal:** To plan for and create positive learning environments and experiences in which each child's learning and development will be encouraged and supported, and which is inclusive to all children including those with Individualized Plans.

**Approach:** The Montessori environment and classroom is designed to develop a foundation for creative learning and a sense of independence. By using our Montessori materials children will learn independence, inner order and confidence. Teachers will follow children's interests as a primary component to their positive development.

Classroom planning will be reviewed, every month with the Teachers and assistants to make sure it supports interests and joy for learning.

**Goal:** To support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents, guardians, childcare providers, educators and other staff members.

**Approach:** Teachers and staff will be aware of children's cues and will respond appropriately and consistently. Comprehensive and respectful communication ensures positive relationships with all members of the school community. Daily communication through verbal reports, calls, and emails will ensure parents know children's developments and milestones reached at school. Teachers will encourage respectful interactions among students through character development activities such as storytelling, team work building, listening games and collective projects.

**Goal:** To promote the health, safety and well-being of children.

**Approach:** Teachers and staff at Terra Viva will not only implement the policies and procedures related to health, safety and well-being of children, meeting and/or exceeding the requirements of the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Environment, City of St. Catharines and Niagara Region; but will also monitor children daily and will make observations on their daily log to communicate with parents in case of any abnormality related to eating patterns, emotional stability, etc. Supporting children's independence is a key of our program, nevertheless no child will be left unattended or unsupervised at all times.

**Goal:** To encourage the children to interact and communicate in a positive way and support their ability to self-regulate.

**Approach:** The Montessori classroom environment and the playground encourages social interaction for cooperative learning, peer teaching and emotional development. Children become aware of their feelings and the feelings of others. Disrespect and bad talking won't be tolerated. Children are encouraged to spend a little time at the peaceful area where they can learn to self-regulate and to calm themselves when frustration stirs up. Manners and courtesy lessons are part of our weekly curriculum.

**Goal:** To incorporate the Montessori Work Cycle, indoor/ outdoor play, nature play and forest school program, as well as active play, rest and quiet time, into the day, and give consideration to the individual needs of the children receiving child care.

**Approach:** The Program Schedule is designed to allow a sufficient amount of time to meet the physiological and development needs of the children. Academics are important in our program however, interactions with the natural world are equally appreciated. Forest school program will be offered once a week. Information sessions will be offered to parents where the individual needs of all the participants can be addressed.

**Goal:** To involve local community partners and allow partners to support children, their families, childcare providers and educators.

**Approach:** Cooperatively work with community partners who include, but not limited to, Ministry of Education, The Niagara Region social and children services available in our region. Teachers will have in their portfolio's sufficient information about available services for parents and families, they can suggest to. Monthly reviews to these portfolios will be done in our staff meetings.

**Goal:** To support child care providers, educators and other staff who interact with the children at school in relation to professional learning.

**Approach:** Professional education is offered to improve skills and knowledge to directly benefit

Children and peers. Terra Viva Montessori staff will participate in annual conferences, forums, seminars, etc, offered by the Canadian Council of Montessori Administrators,

ACCDC, the world Foundation for Natural Science, Forest school Canada and other organizations that will support staff to gain more knowledge and skills thus be able to better serve the children at our program.

**Goal:** To foster the children's exploration, play and inquiry.

**Approach:** Learning takes place when children explore their social and physical environment. Children's curiosity will be stirred up in the classroom by our Montessori Materials and individual and group lessons. Inquiry and play will be supported through our daily nature play and Forest program, where children will be able to answer their own questions through hands on activities.

**Goal:** To foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with the parents about the program and their children

**Approach:** Encourage members of the school community to speak freely, honestly and with respect regarding their needs and experiences to ensure they feel heard and valued. Parent committee will be implemented to give parents the opportunity to bring up, monitor or improve issues in our program.

**Goal:** To provide child-oriented education.

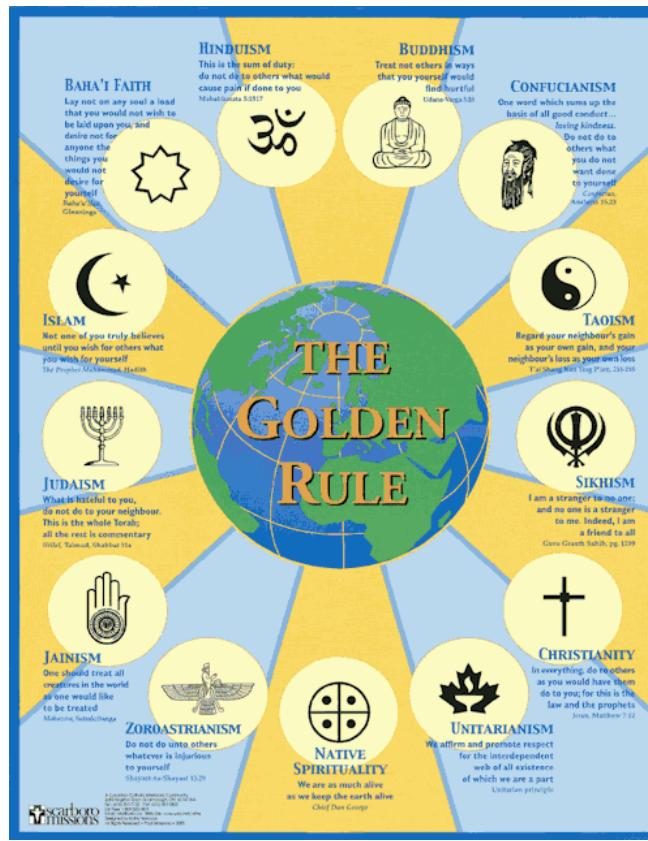
**Approach:** The Montessori environment gives children the opportunity to problem-solve, self-correct, see connections in knowledge and to create new ideas. The child care providers and educators will be educated and trained in the Montessori philosophy and the methodology for the age level they are teaching and will have the ability and dedication to put the key concepts into practice. Our program is especially child oriented we follow the child according to their level and at their pace. There won't be competition promoted among students but a sense of cooperation and working together.

**Goal:** To document and review the impact of the strategies identified in this Program Statement.

**Approach:** Evaluate and address successes and areas of opportunity at least annually based on written documentation, collaboratively with parents, guardians, teachers and assistants.

## OUR PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATION

Mind, body, emotions and spiritual connections.



- ➔ Terra Viva Montessori promotes in our programs mindfulness practices such as breathing, relaxation, movement, visualization, and practices that stimulate imagination and problem-solving.
- ➔ Our school also promotes the Golden Rule as our philosophical foundation. The Golden Rule "Do unto others what you would like them to do unto you" is present in the 13 major religions around the world. And the name of God is mentioned in many lessons of our curriculum.
- ➔ Please note our philosophy promotes peace and harmony among the peoples of Earth, through the Peace curriculum that Maria Montessori designed 100 years ago.
- ➔ We are not a publicly funded school and we design and implement our own curriculum based on Nature Education and the Montessori Principles of Education.

**Montessori Education rooted in nature!**



Terra Viva Montessori and Forest school promotes all things Natural. We embrace the elements of nature with joy and curiosity. We welcome risk play, adventure and exploration in natural settings such as Lake Ontario, the Martindale pond, the Twenty Mile creek, the Niagara escarpment, conservation areas and natural habitats located in our land.

We integrate **ABORIGINAL PERSPECTIVES INTO OUR FOREST SCHOOL PRACTICE** such as:

- ➔ ACKNOWLEDGING THE LAND AND FOCUSING ON COMMUNITY TEACHING THROUGH STORIES AND ANECDOTES
- ➔ OBSERVATIONS OF NATURE AND LEARNING THE LESSON THAT PLANTS, ANIMALS AND NATURAL SYSTEMS CAN TEACH US THROUGH SEASONAL CHANGES
- ➔ LEARNING TO USE WHAT THE LAND PROVIDED FOR OUR SUSTENANCE SUCH AS FORGING, PLANT RECOGNITION, COOKING AND HEALING WITH HERBS, GROWING FOOD AND GARDENING. TO LEARN THE LESSONS THAT PLANTS, ANIMALS AND NATURAL SYSTEMS CAN TEACH US

## LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT TERRA VIVA FOREST SCHOOL

We the children and staff of Terra Viva Forest School, gathered here today to Acknowledge this land as the land of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe Territory. We acknowledge that we stand on grounds of the Six Nations of the Grand River community. We the children give thanks for the fruits, herbs and medicinal plants of the land, for the air and the wind that blows and caresses our skin, for the birds who sing their songs of hope, for the water that runs underneath the ground and feeds the creeks and rivers, lakes and oceans, for the fire that keep us warm in cold nights, for the animals who live here, for the trees that give us oxygen to breath, for our friends human and divine, for the FORCE of love that keep us all together.

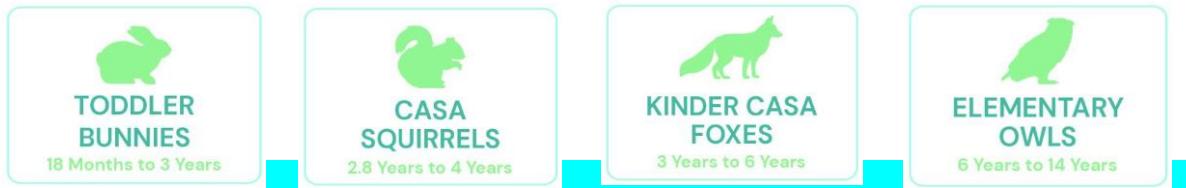
From the bottom of our hearts, we the children say together

THANK YOU!  
MIIGWECH!

GRACIAS!



# PROGRAM OPTIONS AND FEES 2025-2026



<b>Toddler</b>	18 months-3 years (\$22 a day)
<b>Casa</b>	2.8 -3.8years (\$22 a day))
<b>Kinder Casa</b>	4.-6 years (\$22 a day)
<b>Elementary Lower</b>	6-9 years (\$669.50) Includes Before and After School
<b>Elementary Upper</b>	9-12 years (\$950) Includes Before and After School

**Before school (Limited Spots)**

**After school (Limited Spots)**

**Catered lunch**

Please note that the above options are included in the Tuition fee. Before and After care is upon availability. Send us your request to our Office and we will confirm if a spot is open.

## Ages of children Port location

- 15 full-day children ages 18 months to 3 years.
- 48 preschoolers between the ages of 2.8 and 6 years.
- 15 Elementary students
- 30 School age children in the After school and Summer Camps

## Ages of Children Scott location

- 5 full-day toddlers 18-3 years
- 18 full day preschoolers ages 2,8 to 6 years

### **EFFECTIVE FALL 2025**

\*All Casa children must be fully toilet-trained before starting school\*

## What toilet trained looks like in the Casa classroom:

- ✓ Child can independently recognize the need to use the washroom throughout the day without consistent reminders from a teacher.
- ✓ Child is no longer wearing pull-ups/diapers all day, including during nap time.
- ✓ Child is comfortable using a toilet – not only a potty for both pee and bowel movements.

- ✓ Child is able to wait for a reasonable amount of time before using the washroom without having an accident.
- ✓ Child is able to pull pants/underwear up and down independently. Child is able to or starting to wipe independently.
- ✓ Child may still experience infrequent accidents (no more than 1-2 per week) but is able to change themselves if an accident happens.
- ✓ If a child is having consistent accidents and/or BM accidents after the first 2 months in our classroom, they will be asked to temporarily withdraw until toilet training has progressed further.

## Admissions

- ➔ Year enrolment commitment is expected from parents who register in our program.
- ➔ In the event of withdrawing from the program before the academic year ends, Sep/June, parents are expected to pay the Withdrawal fee of \$150. Follow by a one month written notice.
- ➔ Parents understand that our **Casa Montessori Program** is a three-year program.
- ➔ Parents are committing to continue children's education up to SK at Terra Viva Montessori.
- ➔ Children can sign up anytime through the year. We begin with taking a registration form, then a tour of our school then paying the registration fee.

## Tuition refunds/withdrawal fee

- ➔ In case of withdrawal from our program during any given month of the year, parents are expected to send a written notice with 1 month in advance prior to withdrawal. Plooto accounts will be closed and there won't be future charges. A withdrawal fee of \$150 will apply.
- ➔ Withdrawal from Terra Viva 15 days before the first day of class, tuition fees will be refunded less withdrawal fee of \$150
- ➔ Withdrawal from Terra Viva after the first day of class, tuition fees will not be refunded and withdrawal fee of \$150 will apply
- ➔

## Monthly Tuition fees/ authorized debit payments

- ➔ MONTHLY TUITION fees are charged through pre-authorized debit payments. Your account should be set up before classes start
- ➔ Contact our Admin for instructions on how to set up your Plooto account at:

[alex@childcarecpa.ca](mailto:alex@childcarecpa.ca)

## Right to discharge

We always welcome new students into our school. If, however, we feel that a student is not adapting to the school environment, we will speak with the parents and endeavour to work things out. If we find that we are unable to meet the needs of your child, we will ask you to withdraw him/her.

## Waiting list Policy

A wait list will be formed when the program reaches full capacity of enrolment.

- ➔ Children will be accepted into the program on a first come first served basis when spots become available in the required age group. Priority is established by the date of the tour/application, however siblings of children currently enrolled in our program will be given priority status. .
- ➔ In order to have your child added to our waiting list, parent and child must first have a tour of the program to ensure the program is a ‘good fit’ for the family.
- ➔ There is no fee to have your child placed on our waiting list. .
- ➔ When a space becomes available, the family at the top of the waitlist, with a child of the required age, will be contacted and invited to accept a child care spot. If the family accepts the offer we move to the next step. If the family, for any reason, declines the spot then we will offer the spot to the next family on the list. Any family that declines a spot will remain on the list in the same sequence unless they request to be removed from the waiting list. At times, we may call a number of families in one day to offer one spot. In this case, the spot will go to whoever accepts the offer first.
- ➔ When a family accepts an offered spot, we will arrange an ‘hour visit’ for their child. This visit takes place shortly before the child’s start date in order to have parents and child meet the teachers, ask questions, receive necessary forms, learn what supplies they need to bring the first day and to observe the classroom routines.
- ➔ There is no charge for this visit however we will be collecting postdated year tuition cheques and enrolment fee.
- ➔ . Parents are welcome to call the office for an update of their child’s status on the waiting list at any time.
- ➔ . Our waiting List will be done in a manner that maintains the privacy and confidentiality of the children listed on it, but that allows the position of a child on the list to be ascertained by the affected persons or families.

## Re-enrolment

Re-enrolment time begins during the month of January 21. We ask that by the February 7 you submit your re-enrolment form. By handing these forms in on time you allow us to hire our teachers back for the following year as well as to make investments into school infrastructure and other needs in a timely manner.

## Arrivals and Pick-up

### PROGRAM HOURS

#### MONDAY - FRIDAY

#### 7:30 am to 5 pm

Our school day begins at 9:00 am! Regular drop off time is **9 am**. and pick up for full day students is **3:30 pm**.

*We request that you keep to the school hours.* Children need time to socialize and settle in. Late arrival affects a child's ability to settle in and be ready to learn. It affects not only your own child but also the entire class to have a late arrival. For pick up time it is also important to be punctual. Not only do children start to become anxious when their parents aren't consistent with pick up time, it also affects the teachers who need time to prepare their classrooms for the next day's learning.

Our daily pick up is at 3:30 pm. We kindly ask for you to be on time as after school fee will be charged after 3:35 pm. We understand things happen, however repeatedly late pick up is not acceptable and after school fee will be applied.

#### After School Late pick up

Repeatedly late pick up (up until 3 times) not only will result in a late fee charge of \$10 per half an hour, but also it will result in the suspension of the service.

## Extended Care

We offer before school care beginning at 7:30 am and after school care running from 3:35-5:00 pm. Children may engage in outdoor or indoor free play, nature-based programming, gardening, arts and crafts, music or baking. This service is upon availability and must be requested prior to the first day of school. Our office will confirm when a spot is available.

Elementary After Care starts at 2:45-5 pm

## Uniform Policy

We believe having children in different colours for safety and organization is great. Each class has its correspondent colour as follows:

Toddler: Blue and Pink

Casa: Blue and Yellow

Kinder Casa: Yellow and Purple

Elementary: Purple and Orange

### Hoodies

We understand some children might not wear the hoodies due to sensitivities or preferences. Purchasing a hoodie will be optional. Please note that our hoodies do not have strings attached

and they are child-approved. We will also check for a different option such as zipper sweaters, etc.

### **T-Shirts**

#### **Classroom**

Your child can wear any clothing as long as the Terra Viva Shirt is on top. Long-sleeved shirts for late fall with the T.V shirt on top are just an idea. The T-shirt should be worn every day in the classroom and outside weather permitting.

#### **Late fall and winter**

As the weather changes and children start using their jackets, we will transition into the safety vests when doing nature play and forest days. Terra Viva T-shirt will only be required indoors on top of whatever clothing you choose.

We understand some days might be more hectic than others, we ask you to send your child with a plain T-shirt in the colour of the class.

#### **Other Required waterproof items**

If you have not already purchased the required items such as waterproof apparel, rain boots, etc here are some useful links:

**THERM KIDS**

**MOUNTAIN WAREHOUSE**

**SNUGGLE BUGZ**

Please note that regardless of the style or brand you choose, these are essential items for outdoor play and must be available for your child to enjoy the outdoor program.

## **Children's Clothing**

**Please write your child's name on the label of their coat, boots, backpack etc.** You would be surprised how often we run into problems with children wearing the wrong coat home, or little ones who are unable to identify their own boots! We request that you send a change of clothing to school with your children. Indoor shoes are mandatory due to fire drill and fire safety.

**PLEASE NOTE THAT IF YOUR CHILD'S BELONGINGS ARE NOT CLEAR LABELED STAFF WILL LABEL WITH A PERMANENT MARKER**

**FOR A BETTER OPTION TO LABEL CHILDREN ITEMS PLEASE SUPPORT OUR FUNDRAISER HERE:**

[\*\*Mabels Labels: Support a fundraiser\*\*](#)

## **Toddler and Casa clothing**

For the young ones please think of their capabilities when you choose their clothing. The children use the washroom by themselves, and they do not want to struggle with belts and buckles that are difficult to open or close.

We go outside to play whenever possible as we want children to not be afraid of the elements! We also go on frequent nature hikes in all kinds of weather. Please come dressed for the weather – rain, sun, wind, snow!

Fall and spring weather: rubber boots, or outdoor shoes, rain jackets and splash pants  
Winter weather: warm boots, snow pants, scarf, mittens and hat.

## Statutory holidays

Our program follows the following statutory holidays:

- ➔ New Year's Day
- ➔ Family Day
- ➔ Good Friday
- ➔ Easter Monday
- ➔ Victoria Day
- ➔ Canada Day
- ➔ Civic Monday
- ➔ Labour Day
- ➔ Thanksgiving
- ➔ Christmas Day
- ➔ Boxing Day

Our school year starts in September and ends in June. **We are open for March break but closed for Easter week.** And two weeks in Christmas. Payment will not vary due to statutory holidays, child's illness or appointments, school breaks and parent vacations.

We offer Summer Camp from July to August.

## Inclement Weather

- ➔ In case of inclement weather during the winter time, please refer to bus cancellations in the DSBN. If buses are cancelled our school will be closed more likely. Please call if you absolutely need care, as we might be able to do special arrangements.
- ➔ Also, on occasion a severe weather warning arises part way through the day. In this circumstance, we may request that you come for an early pick-up. On such days, we are unable to provide after school care and ask that you pick up your child as soon as you are able.
- ➔ It is always our goal to strike the best balance between ensuring the safety of our families and teachers as well as maintaining a consistent learning experience for our students, however weather can be capricious and take us by surprise. Please keep an eye on the weather and road reports, and always make your best judgement call about when to bring your child in and when you need to pick up early.

# Terra Viva responsibilities/Inclement weather

- ➔ Keep children indoors if the temperature falls below -15 degrees C without the windchill or feels like -20 degrees C with the wind chill
- ➔ Keep children indoors when there is Thunder and Lightning or access to the Emergency shelter when outdoors.
- ➔ Keep children indoors when there is excessive rain.
- ➔ Summer time: Keep children in the shade and offer water. Keep children indoors when there are no sources of shade or water nearby.
- ➔ Keep children indoors when there is a wind advisory.

# Contacting the School/Communication Policy

## BY TEXT ONLY!

### REPORTING ABSENCES/DROP-OFF/PICK-UP CHANGES/LATENESS

Please text our school line preferably before 8:30 am to report absences and during the day for any changes on pick- up and drop off, lost items and special requests.

You could text our school lines at

905-341-1401 Port Location  
905-341-2877 Scott Location

## BY EMAIL ONLY!

### COMMUNICATION WITH CLASSROOM STAFF

Please note your teacher's email address will be sent in a separate class email!

For routine matters and classroom information such as:

- ➔ class schedules
- ➔ Toilet training routine
- ➔ Birthdays
- ➔ Sleep Arrangements
- ➔ Indoor/Outdoor Activities
- ➔ Feeding

## BY EMAIL ONLY

### OFFICE SUPERVISOR COMMUNICATION

- ➔ feeding/Menu arrangements
- ➔ To request a phone call/meeting
- ➔ Parents' issues and concerns
- ➔ child care fees
- ➔ hours of operation,
- ➔ staffing
- ➔ waiting lists

Head Office:

Mrs. Andrea Lopez      [terravivamontessori@gmail.com](mailto:terravivamontessori@gmail.com)

Port Location Supervisor

Mrs Dianne      [supervisorterravivamontessori@gmail.com](mailto:supervisorterravivamontessori@gmail.com)

Scott Location Supervisor

## CLASS PICTURES/NEW PARENT'S PORTAL

- Our new WEBSITE and PARENTS PORTAL in live!
- Monthly announcements and class pictures will be shared through this secure portal.
- A password will be sent in a separate class email. Parents will have the chance to look at your child's progress and milestones through a secure file!
- Stay tuned for more information and UPDATES!

## PARENTS ISSUES AND CONCERNS POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Parents/guardians are encouraged to take an active role in our child care centre and regularly discuss what their child(ren) are experiencing with our program. As supported by our program statement, we support positive and responsive interactions among the children, parents/guardians, child care providers and staff, and foster the engagement of and ongoing communication with parents/guardians about the program and their children. Our staff are available to engage parents/guardians in conversations and support a positive experience during every interaction.

- All issues and concerns raised by parents/guardians are taken seriously 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/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 2 business day(s). The person who raised the issue/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, students and volunteers, except when information must be disclosed for legal reasons (e.g. to the Ministry of Education, College of Early Childhood Educators, law enforcement authorities or a Children's Aid Society).

### Conduct

Our centre 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 supervisor and/or licensee.

### Concerns about the 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

Nature of Issue or Concern	Steps for Parent and/or Guardian to Report Issue/Concern:	Steps for Staff and/or Licensee in responding to issue/concern:
<b>Program Room Related</b>  Ex.: schedule, sleep arrangements, toilet training, indoor/outdoor program activities, feeding arrangements, etc.	Raise the issue or concern to - the classroom staff directly or - the supervisor or licensee.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Address the issue/concern at the time it is raised</li> </ul> or <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- arrange for a meeting with the parent/guardian within business days or when is possible for both parties to meet</li> </ul> <p>Document the issues/concerns in detail. Documentation should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the date and time the issue/concern was received;</li> <li>- the name of the person who received the issue/concern;</li> <li>- the name of the person reporting the issue/concern;</li> <li>- the details of the issue/concern; and</li> <li>- any steps taken to resolve the issue/concern and/or information given to the parent/guardian regarding next steps or referral.</li> </ul>
<b>General, Centre- or Operations-Related</b>  Ex.: child care fees, hours of operation, staffing, waiting lists, menus, etc.	Raise the issue or concern to - the supervisor or licensee.	
<b>Staff-, Duty parent-, Supervisor-, and/or Licensee-Related</b>  Raise the issue or concern to - the individual directly or - the supervisor or licensee.  All issues or concerns about the conduct of staff, duty parents, etc. that puts a child's health, safety and well-being at risk should be reported to the supervisor as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.		<p>Provide contact information for the appropriate person if the person being notified is unable to address the matter.</p> <p>Ensure the investigation of the issue/concern is initiated by the appropriate party within [insert number] business days or as soon as reasonably possible thereafter. Document reasons for delays in writing.</p>
<b>Student- / Volunteer-Related</b>  Raise the issue or concern to - the staff responsible for supervising the volunteer or student or - the supervisor and/or licensee.  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 supervisor as soon as parents/guardians become aware of the situation.		Provide a resolution or outcome to the parent(s)/guardian(s) who raised the issue/concern.

# Safe Arrival and Dismissal

## Policy and Procedures

**\*\*In the event your child is absent or will be arriving late, it is the parent's responsibility to contact Terra Viva Work phone 905-341-1401 (Port) 905-341-2877 (Scott) by 8:30am\*\***

### Purpose

This policy and the procedures within help support the safe arrival and dismissal of children receiving care.

This policy will provide staff, students and volunteers with a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities for ensuring the safe arrival and dismissal of children receiving care, including what steps are to be taken when a child does not arrive at the childcare Center as expected, as well as steps to follow to ensure the safe dismissal of children.

### Policy

#### General

Terra Viva Montessori will ensure that any child receiving child care at the child care centre is only released to the children's parent/guardian or an individual that the parent/guardian has provided written authorization the child care centre may release the child to.

Terra Viva Montessori will only dismiss children into the care of their parent/guardian or another authorized individual. The center will not release any children from care without supervision.

Where a child does not arrive in care as expected or is not picked up as expected, staff must follow the safe arrival and dismissal procedures set out below.

### Procedures

#### Accepting a child into care

1. When accepting a child into care at the time of drop-off, program staff must:
  - Greet the parent/guardian and child.
  - Ask the parent/guardian how the child's evening/morning has been and if there are any changes to the child's pick-up procedure (i.e., someone other than the parent or guardian picking up). Where the parent/guardian has indicated that someone other than the child's parent/guardian will be picking up, the staff must confirm that the person is listed on the emergency contact cards or where the individual is not listed, ask the parent/guardian to provide authorization for pick-up in writing ( e.g., note or email). Make sure to remind the parents that the individual will bring identification.
  - Document the change in pick-up procedure in the daily journal.
  - Sign the child in on the classroom attendance record.

#### **Where a child has not arrived in care as expected**

1. Where a child does not arrive at the child care centre and the parent/guardian has not communicated a change in drop-off (e.g., left a voice message or advised the closing staff at pick-up), the staff in the classroom must:
  - Inform the supervisor/Head of school and they will commence contacting the child's parent/guardian no later than 9:45am. The parent/guardian will be sent a message on by email at 9:45am, if we hear no response by 10:15am a phone call will be given to the parents and a message left.
  - If the Supervisor or Head of school are unavailable the Assistant supervisor will make the messages and phone calls.
2. Once the child's absence has been confirmed, program staff shall document the child's absence on the attendance record and any additional information about the child's absence in the daily written journal.

### **Releasing a child from care**

1. The staff who is supervising the child at the time of pick-up shall only release the child to the child's parent/guardian or individual that the parent/guardian has provided written authorization that the child care may release the child to. Where the staff does not know the individual picking up the child (i.e., parent/guardian or authorized individual)
  - Confirm with another staff member that the individual picking up is the child's parent/guardian/authorized individual.
  - Where the above is not possible, ask the parent/guardian/authorized individual photo identification and confirm the individual's information against the contact cards.

### **Where a child has not been picked up as expected (before centre closes)**

1. Where the parent/guardian has previously communicated with the staff a specific time or timeframe that their child is to be picked up from care and the child has not been picked up 30 mins from that time frame, the staff/supervisor or Head of school will contact the parent/guardian through email and advise that the child is still in care and has not been picked up.
  - Where the staff is unable to reach the parent/guardian, staff must place a phone call to the parent/guardian and leave a message. Where the individual picking up the child is an authorized individual and their contact information is available, the staff shall proceed with contacting the individual to confirm pick-up as per the parent/guardian's instructions or leave a voice message to contact the centre.
  - Where the staff has not heard back from the parent/guardian or authorized individual who was to pick up the child the staff shall: Contact the supervisor/Head of school, wait until the program closes and refer to procedures under 'where a child has not been picked up and program is closed'

### **Where a child has not been picked up and the centre is closed**

1. Where a parent/guardian or authorized individual who was supposed to pick up a child from care and has not arrived by 5:15pm, staff shall ensure that the child is given a snack and activity, while they await their pick-up.

2. Staff will send a message by email to the parent/guardian to advise that the child is still in care and inquire their pick-up time. In the case where the person picking up the child is an authorized individual the staff shall contact the parent/guardian first and then proceed to contact the authorized individual responsible for pick-up if unable to reach the parent/guardian.
3. If the staff is unable to reach the parent/guardian or authorized individual who was responsible for picking up the child, the staff shall inform the Supervisor/Head of school, and then contact authorized individuals on the child's listed file for pick-ups
4. Where the staff is unable to reach the parent/guardian or any other authorized individual listed on the child's file (e.g., the emergency contacts) by 530pm the staff shall proceed with contacting Family and children services (FACS) 82 Hannover Drive, St Catharines Ontario, L2W 14A, 905-937-7731. Staff shall follow the FACS direction with respect to next steps.

#### **Dismissing a child from care without supervision procedures**

Staff will only release children from care to the parent/guardian or other authorized adult. Under no circumstances will children be released from care to walk home alone.

#### **Calendar**

We will send out an email with our Monthly Calendar of Activities. The Calendar will contain important information regarding themes and celebrations as well Forest school dates and exciting field trips.

#### **Annual Calendar, closures and PD days!**

Terra Viva Montessori School Closure							2025 to 2026													
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S							
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7							
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	8	9	10	11	12	13	14							
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	15	16	17	18	19	20	21							
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	22	23	24	25	26	27	28							
29	30						29	30	31											
Sep 2025							Oct 2025													
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7							
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	8	9	10	11	12	13	14							
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	15	16	17	18	19	20	21							
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	22	23	24	25	26	27	28							
29	30	31					29	30	31											
Nov 2025							Feb 2026													
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7							
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	8	9	10	11	12	13	14							
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	15	16	17	18	19	20	21							
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	22	23	24	25	26	27	28							
29	30	31					29	30	31											
Dec 2025							Mar 2026													
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7							
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	8	9	10	11	12	13	14							
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	15	16	17	18	19	20	21							
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	22	23	24	25	26	27	28							
29	30	31					29	30	31											
Apr 2026							May 2026													
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	1	2	3	4	5	6	7							
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	8	9	10	11	12	13	14							
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	15	16	17	18	19	20	21							
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	22	23	24	25	26	27	28							
29	30	31					29	30	31											
Jun 2026																				
1	2	3	4	5	6	7														
8	9	10	11	12	13	14														
15	16	17	18	19	20	21														
22	23	24	25	26	27	28														
29	30																			
Important dates																				
First and Last Days of School																				
Stat Holidays/School closed																				
Professional Development Days School Closed																				

## Care Of the Classroom

The teachers clean and tidy the classrooms on a daily basis. We include children in the daily tidying up process as we see how beneficial this is to their development and the care they take in their environment. They are proud to help and can do a wonderful job. Please allow them to be involved at home.

## Classroom observations

All parents are welcome to book an observation between October and May to observe the class. This is a great way for you to see how your child's classroom functions and to understand the Montessori method of education a little better. We do request that you arrange this with us in advance to ensure that it is a good time and to avoid double bookings.

## Parent-Teacher Conferences

We hold parent-teacher conferences two times a year: In November and March. This is an opportunity for you to discuss your child's progress. The parent-teacher-student partnership is one of the strongest factors of a child's success in their school years.

## Progress Reports

There will be 2 progress report sent home each year, in December and June. These reports are in comment format and for each subject area consist of a general comment on what has been covered, as well as an area of “strengths/progress” and an area of “to work on”. The area of strengths and progress are areas we feel the child either already has strong capacity or has made strong progress. The areas of “to work on” are areas we feel the child may need extra support to develop towards age, appropriate milestones.

## Toys

We ask that you do not allow your child to bring toys to school. Toys are a disruption to the classroom environment! Thank you.

## Birthdays

We sing the ‘Birthday Song’ to each child on their special day and we have our own lovely and special Montessori way of celebrating birthdays, which you can ask us about if you are interested. If a child wishes to bring a small snack to share with the other children on his or her birthday, please be aware that due to a wide variety of food intolerance and restrictions we are only able to accept fruit or veggies. ***Please note that we are unable to accept birthday cakes!***

If your child is having a birthday party and wishes to invite his or her entire class we can distribute cards or forward a group email.

## Sunscreen Policy

Please inform us if your child has a sensitive skin and easily burnt under the sun, especially when we do our field trips to the beach, water front, walkabouts and splash pads. We ask parents to apply a thick layer of sunscreen lotion at home before coming to school. Our staff will always apply sunblock before going outside.

Sun hat and sunblock must be kept at your children’s cubbies and must be accessible to your child.

## Discipline

It is important to note that discipline is different than punishment. The goal of discipline is the developmental growth of the child. Children must always understand that although their actions may be in question, their value as a person is not.

Children will be disciplined in a positive manner as soon as possible after contentious behaviour, and at a level appropriate to their actions and their age in order to promote self discipline, ensure health and safety, respect the rights of others, and maintain the learning materials. If a difficult situation or repeated incidents of a certain nature arise, this will be discussed with a parent.

## Prohibited Practices at TVM

Staff members will review this policy with the supervisor on an ongoing basis and prior to start first day of work. The supervisor will make sure staff understand and have read this policy by having them signed and agreed to the policy. A training session should be scheduled during the first month of work to ensure new staff understand expectations and consequences.

TERRA VIVA MONTESSORI PROGRAM will NOT permit:

- Corporal punishment of the child which may include but is not limited to, hitting, spanking, slapping and pinching;
- Physical restraint of the child, such as confining the child to a high chair, car seat, stroller or other device for the purposes of discipline or in lieu of supervision, unless the physical restraint is for the purpose of preventing a child from hurting himself, herself or someone else, and is used only as a last resort and only until the risk of injury is no longer imminent;
- Locking the exits of the child care centre premises for the purposes 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 licensee'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

## Reporting Serious Occurrences

### **Serious Occurrence Reporting Procedures:**

1. All serious occurrences must be reported to the ministry through CCLS within 24 hours of the licensee or supervisor becoming aware of the occurrence.
2. Licensees are required to complete and post a summary of each serious occurrence in a place that is visible and accessible to parents within 24 hours of becoming aware of the occurrence for a minimum of 10 business days, including any allegation of abuse or neglect. The summary must not include any identifying information and shall be updated as new information is obtained. Serious occurrence notification forms are kept for at least three years.
3. The Serious Occurrence is updated as the designated Supervisor is required to provide additional information and/or takes additional actions and/or investigations are completed.
4. The designated Supervisor will make record of the serious occurrence in the Serious Occurrences Report Log.
5. The school will retain the Serious Occurrence Notification Form for at least 3 years from the date of the occurrence and make the forms available for current and prospective parent/guardians, licensing and municipal children's services staff upon request (consistent with the current requirements for the availability of licensing documentation).

## Annual Summary and Analysis Report

- TERRA VIVA MONTESSORI is required to conduct an annual analysis of all serious occurrences that occurred in the previous year.
- The annual analysis is to be used as a method of identifying issues, trends and actions taken.
- The analysis and record of actions taken in response to the analysis must be kept on file at the child care centre.
- In addition to ongoing reviews and follow-up to serious occurrences, licensing ministry staff will review the serious occurrence annual analysis during license renewal inspections.

## Food

**Nut policy** – We do recognize that peanuts and nut-containing products constitute a life-threatening allergy for some children. We are a nut free school! And kindly ask that you bring only nut-free products to school to protect the safety of the children with Life-threatening allergies.

## Communication with parents with children with a potentially life-threatening allergy

TERRA VIVA MONTESSORI requires that parents of children with a potentially life-threatening allergy (anaphylaxis) are responsible for adhering to the procedures below as part of the Anaphylaxis Emergency Plan:

- Upon registration, indicate child's medical condition on the registration form.
- Attend a meeting with administrators and staff to review child's history, symptoms and pertinent information relating to the individual child
- Parent SHOULD provide training to staff, students & volunteers with emergency plan to be followed should their child have an allergic reaction.
- Complete & sign the form entitled: ANAPHYLAXIS EMERGENCY PLAN FORM. The form includes: child's name, photo, allergy, type of auto-injector and dosage, expiry date of autoinjector, emergency contact information. (See PDF file)
- Provide TERRA VIVA Montessori staff with medication / EpiPen or Twinject on or before child's first day of school.

## Catering/Lunches from Home Safety Guidelines

As an on-going preventative strategy, we will make efforts to ensure that food purchased for and served as part of the Snack Program is “peanut free” and we will continue to read the ingredient list on the packaging of all food products purchased. We will purchase products with the “No peanuts” label. Our Center will avoid purchasing or serving food products that include such wording as “may contain”, “processed in a facility”; or “made in a facility” in the manufacturer’s list of ingredients. When the product claims to be peanut

free (and traces aren't mentioned) and nuts are not listed in the ingredients our Center will purchase and serve them accordingly.

Lunches and snacks provided by Terra Viva Montessori catering company are nut free.

Staff, Parents and their Children share responsibility in that all parties strive for a "Nut free" environment and are asked to prepare, Label containers, water bottles and send to school "Nut free"; lunches and snacks in a labeled bag.

If an item (example: latex balloons, food containing peanuts...) that would put an Anaphylactic child at risk is brought into the Centre (by a child, parent or staff) said item will be confiscated and held in the office until end of day for retrieval.

## Lunch from home request

Lunch from home option should be discussed prior to the first day of school. Our school provides food accommodations upon request. An email should be sent out to our office with this request and the reason why you are opting out of our catering program.

## Meal Plan

Our School provides lunch and snacks for the children enrolled at not additional cost - we ensure that each child one year old or older who receives child care in our child care centre is given food and beverages in accordance with the following rules:

1. Where the child is present at meal time, a meal must be supplied and provided by Terra Viva Montessori
2. Where a child receives child care for six hours or more, TVM shall ensure that the total food offered to the child includes, in addition to any meals provided, two snacks.

Our catering company the Lunch Lady, is happy to accommodate any dietary restrictions and accommodations due to allergies.

## Sample of Menu

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Morning Snack	Bagels/cream cheese/fruit	Ceral/milk/fruit	Melba Toast/soy butter/fruit	Trail mix/milk/fruit	Multigrain toast/cheese/fruit
Lunch	Squash and Sweet potato soup + Ham & Cheese Sandwich	Rosemary Roasted chicken + Potato Wedges + Seasonal Vegetables	Vegetarian lasagna, garlic toast/fruit	Honey Garlic beef and broccoli stir fry with steamed brown rice	Mini tortilla pizza with salad
After/Snack	Rice pudding/Sessional fruit	Seasonal Fruit, yogurt	Fruit Salad, Mini muffin	Fruit Salad, crackers	Veggies + Dip crackers

Morning Snack	Cereal/yogurt/fruit	Cereal/milk/fruit	B a g l e s / c r e a m cheese/fruit	Granola/milk/fruit	Cinnamon toast/butter/fruit
Lunch	BLT, GF Chicken noodle soup	Mini Quiche + Salad	Spaghetti Squash and meatballs	Chili + Toast/veggies	GF Chicken teriyaki with vegetable fried brown rice
After/snack	fruit, banana muffins	Veggies+Dip, Melba toast	Mini Muffin, Veggies and dip	Mini cupcake, Veggies+Dip	Seasonal fruit, pudding
Morning snack	Oatmeal/fruit	Parfait Yogurt/fruit	Cereal/milk/fruit	Trail mix/fruit/milk	Cinnamon toast/cheese/fruit
Lunch	Grilled chicken on a bun, Creamy tomato soup	Chicken Quesadilla with salsa, Salad	Creamy pesto penne, bruschetta salad	Sweet chili chicken stir fry + Steamed brown rice	Baked chicken fingers, sweet potato oven fries
Afternoon snack	Seasonal fruit, muffin	Fruit Salad, brown rice crispy square/fruit	Seasonal fruit, wafers	Fruit Salad, mini muffin/fruit	Veggies+Dip, Cookie
Morning Snack	Muffin/fruit	Cheese/toast/fruit	Bagels/fruit	Cereal/milk/fruit	Yogurt/fruit
Lunch	Chicken wrap, Cream of mushroom soup	Grilled Cheese, Seasonal vegetables	Baked Mac &Cheese, Salad	Breakfast for lunch! Pancakes, bacon, scrambled eggs	Mini burgers, oven fries
After/snack	Snacks - Seasonal fruit, cookie	Snacks - Fruit Salad, Cookie	Snacks - Mini muffin, Seasonal fruit	Snacks - Seasonal fruit, Brown rice crispy Square	Snacks - Veggies and dip, cookie

## Illness

If your child has a simple cold or cough that is not slowing them down, we do not expect you to keep them at home. Please do remind them to wash their hands frequently and teach younger child to blow their nose independently. If your child is feeling lethargic and is obviously unwell, they will recuperate best at home. If your child begins to feel ill at school, we will call you and ask you to pick them up. We will try to let you know if there is an outbreak of chicken pox or other communicable diseases so that you may watch for signs of the illness.

Children who have fever, diarrhea or vomiting need to stay at home until they are completely symptom free, **48 hours medication free**. Please note, also, that if you have given your child a painkiller or a fever suppressant, the symptoms may be masked. We understand the challenge for working parents, but it is important for all that we limit the spread of viruses and illness.

## Administering Medication Policy

If at all possible, we prefer the parent/guardian to administer any medication to their child prior to arriving at or following the pick-up of their child from our program. TERRA VIVA MONTESSORI does not administer any over-the-counter medications. We will administer only prescription medication(s) to your child under the following circumstances:

- Ø Only medication prescribed by a physician can be administered.
- Ø Children must be on antibiotics for 24 hours, before returning to school. To look for reactions that the child may have.

- Ø Medication must be in the original container bearing the pharmacy label, the child's name, the name of the drug, the date of purchase and the dosage prescribed. Where medication does not have a purchase date on it, the operator will require a receipt of the purchased medication that might be stapled to the administration for medication form.
- Ø Parent must complete the MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION FORM giving the staff member permission to administer medication to the child. This form is available from staff members.
- Ø Any unused medication will be returned to the parent in the original container.
- Ø Expired drugs of any type must not be administered under any circumstances.
- Ø Vitamins are considered drugs and therefore require a schedule of administration and recording on the MEDICATION ADMINISTRATION FORM. They also require a doctor's prescription.

## Requirements for Administering Non-Prescription Topical Ointments Health & Safety:

Before a staff can administer any non-prescription topical ointments (e.g., diaper cream or sunscreen) to a child, TERRA VIVA MONTESSORI requires written authorization signed by the parent/guardian. The parent/guardian should provide:

- ✓ a completed Authorization for Administration of Medication form specifying the dosage and the time(s) the ointment should be administered
- ✓ the ointment, labeled with the child's full name

Note: If the topical ointment (including sunscreen and insect repellent) is not designated for use for children on the label, a doctor's signature is required and the ointment is to be logged on the ministration of Medication Log.

- ✓ Ointments designated for use for children on the label do not need to be logged;
- ✓ When applying any type of ointment to a child with open, oozing sores and when applying oral ointments, this should be done using gloves and proper hand washing.
- ✓ Duration of administration cannot exceed 90 days for all non-prescription topical ointments with the exception of diaper creams (see below), sunscreens, and insect repellants. Duration of administration cannot exceed one year for sunscreen and insect repellants. Note: All staff may apply non-prescription topical ointments to children

### *Diaper Cream*

Before a staff can administer any diaper cream ointment to a child, TERRA VIVA MONTESSORI requires written authorization signed by the parent/guardian. The parent/guardian should provide:

- ✓ A diaper cream ointment designated for use as a diaper cream on the label; Otherwise a physician's note is required after three consecutive days of use.
- ✓ a completed Authorization for Administration of Medication form specifying the dosage

- ✓ and the time(s) the ointment should be child's full name
- ✓ When applying any type of ointment to a child with open, oozing sores, this should be done using gloves and proper hand washing.
- ✓ Diaper cream may be applied to a child as a protective measure after diapering to prevent diaper rash and to a child who has a mild diaper rash. If a child has diaper rash that persists and/or has a rash that is red, irritated and has open, oozing areas, that child should be seen by a
- ✓ Note: Each application of diaper cream should be logged using the Administration of Medication Log.
- ✓ Duration of administration cannot exceed one year for diaper cream

## Record-Keeping:

- Records of medication administration will be completed using the Records of Medication Administration, every time drugs or medications are administered. Completed records will be kept in the child's file. Where a child's medication administration form includes a schedule setting out specific times to administer the medication and the child is absent on a day medication would have been administered, the child's absence will be documented on the medication administration record to account for all days during the treatment period (excluding weekends, holidays and planned closures).
- If a dose is missed or given late, reasons will be documented on the record of medication administration and a parent will be notified as soon as possible as it may impact the treatment schedule or the child's health.
- Where a drug or medication is administered 'as needed' to treat specific symptoms outlined in a child's medication administration form or individualized plan and emergency procedures for an anaphylactic allergy (e.g. asthma, fever, allergic reaction), the administration and the reason for administering will be documented in the appropriate staff communication book (e.g. daily written record) and in the child's symptoms of illness record. A parent of the child will be notified.

## Supervision for Volunteers and Placement Students

### TERRA VIVA MONTESSORI ENSURES THAT:

- All volunteers and students must be supervised by an employee at all times
- All volunteers and students are not permitted to be left alone with any child
- This policy is reviewed by all employees before the start of their employment with the school, and annually thereafter.

## Vulnerable Sector Checks (VSCs)

TERRA VIVA MONTESSORI BILINGUAL will obtain a VSC from the following individuals in accordance with the timelines indicated below.

### Individual

Employees, volunteers and students who interact with children

### Timeline

Before beginning employment or otherwise interacting with children; The individual can present the proof of application to the Police and start working; references will be checked and additional monitoring to children's interactions will be put in place.

On or before the 5th anniversary after the date the most recent VSC;

After any break in the relationship with the licensee that has lasted 6 or more months, before the relationship resumes; and

After any break in the relationship with the licensee that has lasted less than 6 months, only if a VSC would have been required during the break, before the relationship resumes.

All VSCs will be reviewed by the Supervisor to ensure that they are:

- conducted by a police service from the city or town in which the person lives, where applicable;
- prepared no earlier than six months before the day it was obtained by the child care centre, for employees (see exception below for students and volunteers); the original documents (i.e. not a photocopy, see exception below for students and volunteers); not altered; clear and legible; provided in English (otherwise a certified translated copy into English must be provided); complete (i.e. no information missing or cut off); inclusive of all information required about Criminal Code (Canada) convictions as set out in section 9 of the CCEYA.

The following exceptions will apply to volunteers and students only:

- VSCs for volunteers and students that are performed more than six months before the day they are provided to the child care centre will be accepted as long as the VSC is less than 5 years old from the date it was performed to the child care centre. In these cases, the volunteer/student will also be required to provide the child care centre with an offence declaration addressing the period since the day the VSC was performed.
- The child care centre will accept a photocopy of a VSC from a volunteer or student as long as it is less than 5 years old from the date was performed.

A criminal record check (CRC) will only be accepted in the place of a VSC where:

- any statute of Ontario or Canada prohibits the disclosure of information contained in a VSC in respect of a person (e.g. information about persons under 18 years of age, pardoned offences, etc.); a police service will only issue a CRC, not a VSC, for an individual; and/or
- a licensee is a corporation and the director or officer does not interact with children at the child care centre.

A Criminal Record and Judicial Matters Check will be accepted in place of a CRC but will not be accepted in place of a VSC.

Any person who turns 18 while in a position where they interact with children at the child care centre will be asked by [insert position] to provide a statement disclosing every previous finding of guilt under the Youth Criminal Justice Act (YCJA) if they received an adult sentence. Where the individual confirms that there are no such findings, [insert position] will document the request and the individual's confirmation in their file.

Any person who turns 19 while in a position where they interact with children at the child care centre will be asked by [insert position] to apply for a VSC within one month after their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday. That person must provide the child care centre with evidence that they have submitted a VSC application.

All VSCs provided to the child care program must be intended for the position that the individual will hold (i.e.employee and volunteer positions). Where the VSC has not been provided for the correct position, it will not be accepted.

There will be no exceptions made for individuals to obtain a police record check (e.g. for medical reasons).

## Sleep Supervision Policy

**All children will be provided with the opportunity to sleep or engage in quiet activities based on their needs.**

Children 18 months or older but younger than 30 months, who receive child care for six hours or more, will be provided time to sleep for a period of no more than two hours each day, and will be assigned to a cot.

Children 30 months or older but younger than six years old, who receive child care for six hours or more, will be provided with a cot unless otherwise approved by a director.

Children 24 months or older but younger than five years old and in a licensed family age group, who receive child care for six hours or more, will be provided with a cot unless otherwise approved by a director.

Where children are sleeping in a separate sleep room or area, their names will be listed on the sleep Journal log so that staff can immediately identify which children are present in the room/area.

## Placement of Children for Sleep

Children over 18 months of age who sleep will be placed on individual cots for sleep.

## Consultation with Parents

All parents of children who regularly sleep at the child care centre will be advised of the centre's policies and procedures regarding sleep at the time of their child's enrolment and/or any time the policies and procedures are revised, as applicable. This information will be available to parents in the policy binder at the office.

Supervisor will consult with parents about their child's sleeping arrangements at the time of enrolment and at any other appropriate time (e.g. when a child transitions to a new program or room, or at the parent's request). Written documentation will be kept in each child's file to reflect the sleep patterns identified by their parent, and updates to the documentation will be made whenever changes are communicated to the child care centre. All sleep arrangements will be communicated to program staff by the Supervisor after meeting with the parent/guardian.

Parents will be advised by the supervising staff of any significant changes in their child's behaviours during sleep and/or sleeping patterns.

Staff will document their observations of changes in a child's sleep behaviours in the daily written record and sleep log comments section.

· Any changes in sleep behaviours will result in adjustments being made to the child's supervision during sleep time, where appropriate, based on consultation with the child's parent.

## Direct Visual Checks

Direct visual checks of **each** sleeping child (i.e. every child placed for sleep on a cot) will be conducted to look for indicators of distress or unusual behaviours. Direct visual checks will be documented by staff by using the sleep log.

Direct visual checks are not required for children engaging in quiet activities, but these children will be supervised at all times.

The frequency of direct visual checks and the steps to complete them will depend on the typical sleep patterns of each child and their age, as identified in the sleep supervision procedures provided in this policy.

- Staff will ensure that all sleep areas have adequate lighting available to conduct the direct visual checks of sleeping children.

### Procedures

Age Group	Frequency of Direct Visual Checks*
Toddler	Every half an hour for a period of 2 hours
Preschool and/or Kindergarten (where applicable)	N/A

## This is the minimum frequency of direct visual checks.

Should a

child have symptoms of illness (e.g. a cold) or if there are other issues or concerns related to the child's health, safety and well-being during sleep, the frequency of direct visual checks must be increased. The individual needs of each child during sleep as identified by the parent and/or the child's physician must be followed at all times.

## Procedures for Completing Direct Visual Checks

Staff must:

be physically present beside the child; check each child's general well-being by looking for signs of distress or discomfort including, at a minimum:

laboured breathing; changes in skin temperature; changes in lip and/or skin colour; whimpering or crying; and lack of response to touch or voice.

Where signs of distress or discomfort are observed, the staff who conducted the direct visual check must attempt to wake the child up. Where no signs of distress or discomfort are observed, proceed to step 3.

### Where the child wakes up, staff must:

- attend to the child's needs;

separate the child from other children if the child appears to be ill; document the incident in the Daily journal and incident report form and in the child's symptoms of ill health record, where applicable.

### Where the child does not wake up, staff must immediately:

- perform appropriate first aid and CPR, if required;

inform other staff, students and volunteers in the room of the situation; contact emergency services or, where possible, direct another individual to contact emergency services; separate the child from other children or vice versa if the child appears to be ill; inform the supervisor/designate of the situation; and contact the child's parent;

**Where the child must be taken home or to the hospital, the supervisor or designate must immediately:**

iii. contact the child's parent to inform them of the situation and next steps.

**Where the child's condition has stabilized, and/or after the child has been taken home and/or to the hospital,** the staff who conducted the direct visual check and any staff who assisted with responding to the incident must:

iv. follow the serious occurrence policies and procedures, where applicable; document the incident in the daily written record; and document the child's symptoms of illness in the child's records.

Staff must:

v. adjust blankets as needed; ensure the child's head is not covered; ensure there are no other risks of suffocation present; document the date, time and initial each direct visual check on the room's sleep journal; and verbally inform other staff in the room that the check has been completed, where applicable and possible.

## **Photography & Privacy Policy – Parent Handbook**

To protect the privacy, safety, and dignity of all children in our program, photography and video recording on our premises is strictly limited.

**Parents and visitors may not:**

Photograph or video any child other than their own.

Record inside classrooms, hallways, or the playground if other children are present.

Capture staff or families without consent.

Use photos or videos to make accusations, complaints, or reports about other children.

Share images of children on social media, online platforms, or group chats.

If filming your own child:

Other children must not appear in the recording (even in the background).

Staff may ask you to stop recording if privacy is compromised.

**Centre policy:**

Staff document children's learning with parental consent.

Images are never shared publicly without written permission.

Unauthorized recordings submitted to the centre will not be used as evidence involving other children.

**Enforcement:**

Violations will be documented and may result in restricted access to the premises or, in serious cases, termination of childcare services.

# Terra Viva Forest school and Outdoor Education Program

On certain days we spend a more extended period of time in our diverse natural environments, participating in outdoor learning. Students in Casa go on a nature walks on a weekly basis. Forest school is run once a month. All of our students are outside in all kinds of weather and in order for it to be an enjoyable experience for the children it is very important that they are appropriately dressed to stay warm and dry.

There are huge benefits to allowing the students to explore and enjoy these semi-wild lands. Exposure to a natural landscape over a long period of time greatly improves both fine and gross motor skills. The important skills of self-regulation and risk assessment are developed. Cognitive skills (exploration, application of lessons, cause and effect, mindfulness...) are used, improved, and take back into the classroom. Also, this type of experience allows the students to develop socially in their interpersonal skills.

The students at TERRA VIVA MONTESSORI are allowed to explore and play in the semi-wild areas during recess and designated physical activity times. Our curriculum also takes the children into these areas for extended learning times on a weekly basis. Here are some of the activities in which the students may participate:

- climbing
- running on uneven ground
- building and playing with natural materials (rocks, sticks, logs, branches, grass,)
- tracking
- exploring flora and fauna
- rope and knot work with direct adult supervision, building fires with direct adult supervision
- using tools with direct adult supervision (loppers, pruning shears, hand saw, hand drill, knives)

The use of such tools is adjusted to the student's age and ability.

The TERRA VIVA MONTESSORI staff are mindful of the risks associated with a natural environment, and aim to balance play and exploration with safety. Students are taught to recognize, experience, and deal with risk in order to educate them in risk management and personal safety.

Some of the risks inherent to play and education in a natural, outdoor setting may include but are not limited to:

- injuries from physical activities (possibly twisted ankle, slips, falls, slivers, scraps, bruises)
- rash or scratches from plants (stinging nettles, thistles, tree branches.)
- presence of wild animals (stings/bites)
- unsafe handling of natural materials or tools
- Inclement weather – Students go outside every day in all types of weather.

The most common injuries experienced in these semi-wild areas are bumps, bruises, and scratches.

- Another potential risk that has more recently come to our attention is the possibility of ticks.
- Ticks have always been a part of the fauna throughout North America. Black-legged ticks, which might carry Lyme disease, are not an established population in the Peel Region but they can be found in other areas of Ontario.

- Ticks are most often found in areas of long grass, bushy areas, or areas with leaf litter; but ticks can be found anywhere because they can be carried by songbirds, animals, and pets. We haven't had any indication of ticks on the school property yet.

What we do at TERRA VIVA MONTESSORI:

- We do a quick tick check, and are prepared for any needed tick removal, after the children have been playing outside.
- We inform the children about ticks and teach them how to prevent and deal with ticks
- We sit for snack and/or meetings in areas of less vegetation

We recommend that your child:

- wear long-sleeved shirts that fit tightly at the wrist
- wear long-sleeved pants that tuck into socks or boots
- wear closed toe shoes or boots
- apply a tick repellent to clothing (we will help apply it if you provide this)
- We recommend that you check your child for ticks at pickup.

## Safety Vests

A simple yet effective way to enhance visibility and safety for kids in various situations. Here are some key points why we use safety vests in our outdoor nature program:

Safety vests increase visibility for children walking around the neighbourhood, exploring nature in a nature site, while doing \*Outdoor play\* such as in parks or while playing sports.

Terra Viva's safety vests:

\* Are made of recyclable and comfortable materials and are \*Adjustable\* This to ensure the vest fits your child comfortably.

\*Have visibility features\*: such as reflective strips, fluorescent colors, or LEDs.

## Bumps and bruises

Unfortunately, bumps, scrapes and bruises are part of growing up. We wish that we could guarantee that your little ones would never bump into walls, trees or other children, but that is simply not reality. We feel strongly that children must be allowed to run while on the playground. The gross motor skills that they need to develop while young do not come without the odd fall. Growing up involves falling (and failing) but that's alright! Please understand that problems of all sorts can teach your child that he can overcome roadblocks and still survive.

## School Field Trips/Forest Days/Walks around the neighbourhood

We take several school trips each year. Dates and activities are posted in the monthly Calendar and reminders are sent through email and through our website.

## Parent Involvement

Aside from school trip supervision, we enjoy having our parents help out in diverse ways throughout the school year. If you have a special talent or skill you wish to bring to the class, we would love to hear about it. We do need parents who are willing to listen to our beginning readers. We also have numerous special events throughout the year for which we love to have parent involvement. Examples include: September orientation and potluck, Terry Fox Run, Literary Tea, Celebration of Light, International Day, Children's Demonstration Evening, Spring Soiree, Track and Field Day, Science Fair and Graduation. See the section on Special Days for further details. Finally, you may wish to consider joining our parent committee. The mandate of this group is to engage in special projects that are of support to the school.

## Emergency Management and Procedures Statement

Our school has an Emergency Management Policy and procedures that every staff at Terra Viva Montessori is familiar with. This Policy provides direction to follow to deal with emergency situations such as: Lock down, Hold and Secure, Bomb Threat

Disasters such as: Evacuation including Fire, Flood, Power Outage, Internal Environment Threat including No Potable Water/Water Interruption and Sewage Backup, Natural disaster Major Earthquake and life threats such as Pandemic outbreaks.

### PORT DALHOUSIE LOCATION

In the event of an emergency evacuation, the designated area upon evacuating the school is **Star of the Sea, 34 Elgin Street, St Catharines On, L2N 5G5(For Main Street Location)**

If the designated Supervisor deems that it is not safe to remain there, staff members will be instructed to evacuate to

**Star of the Sea, 34 Elgin Street, St Catharines On, L2N 5G5(For Main Street Location)**

### SCOTT STREET LOCATION

In the event of an emergency evacuation, the designated area upon evacuating the school is **Radiant Care Tabor Manor 1 Tabor Dr, St. Catharines, ON L2N**

If the designated Supervisor deems that it is not safe to remain there, staff members will be instructed to evacuate to

**Radiant Care Tabor Manor 1 Tabor Dr, St. Catharines, ON L2N**

All directions given by emergency services personnel will be followed under all circumstances, including directions to evacuate to locations different than those listed above.

## Communication with parents and guardians in case of an emergency

- 1) As soon as possible, the designated Supervisor will notify parents/guardians of the status of the emergency situation.
- 2) Where disasters have occurred that did not require evacuation of the school, the designated Supervisor must provide a notice of the incident to parents/guardians within 24 hours.
- 3) If normal operations do not resume the same day that an emergency situation has taken place, the designated Supervisor will provide parents/guardians with information as to when and how normal operations will resume as soon as this is determined.

## Disruption of Service

In the event there is a disruption of service due to any of the emergency situations listed above, we will notify parents and community of the status and the length of the disruption of service via email.

School fees already paid or expected to be paid for the period of closure will not be reimbursed unless school closes for more than (14) work days.

## HELPFUL TIPS TO PREPARE CHILDREN TO SCHOOL

- ✓ Encourage them to speak clearly and thoughtfully while making eye contact.
- ✓ Help them to listen when spoken to – use clear and concise language when giving directions.
- ✓ Encourage them to carry out simple instructions and to respect authority.
- ✓ Allow enough time for them to learn to put on and take off their own outer clothing themselves.
- ✓ Remember that independence is important to them.
- ✓ Try to provide them with opportunities to play with other children of their own age.
- ✓ Listen to and enjoy their school experiences, but don't 'grill' them for information. They tend to withhold more when this happens.
- ✓ ABOVE ALL: Help them to achieve a sense of individual accomplishment and a positive image of themselves as people.

### See That Your Child's Clothing Is:

- ✓ Simple (free from hard buttons, buckles, etc), comfortable, and washable.
- ✓ Labelled with his/her name or initials.
- ✓ Easily hung on a hook (i.e. coats with hoods or loops in them tend to be easiest).
- ✓ Large enough for them to put on and take off easily. Especially boots. Tights and

- leotards are not advised, as they are too difficult for toileting.
- ✓ Appropriate for the season.\*\*Running shoes are the best choice for outdoor play\*\*
- ✓ Safe: Scarves, necklaces and dangling drawstrings can be dangerous.

### Provide Good Experiences By:

- ✓ Frequently reading stories aloud.
- ✓ Taking family trips; airport, library, grocery store. Giving them a chance to express themselves without jumping in to finish their sentence.
- ✓ Answering their many questions.

### When You Bring Your Children to School:

- Bring them to the door or playground door, say goodbye and leave as you normally would. Please do not linger, do not offer him/her to go to the bathroom as this makes it confusing for the child and they can become upset when you prolong drop off time. They will be greeted by one of the teachers and directed to their tasks for the day.
- Discourage them from bringing favourite objects with them (i.e., toys and blankets are not allowed at school except at nap time).
- If your child is bringing extra snacks, remind your child that school snacks should be eaten first.
- FOR NEW PARENTS: Come with a positive and happy attitude. A relaxed and calm parent makes for a peaceful child! If you seem worried, they think there is something to worry about! This experience will be wonderful for them!

### Generally Speaking:

- Protect your child from interruptions when they are working and focused.
- Teach your child with real equipment and materials rather than toys.
- Plan each step of a new activity when showing how to do something and slow down your movements.
- Do not do for your child what they can do for themselves. Ever! Once you see them do it-you have to allow them to continue on their own.
- Arrange your home in such a way that your child can manage easily.
- Give sufficient time for your child to perform a task. Allow for some age-appropriate choices

## Helpful Hints – Toddler Class

- ➔ Prepare your child for what he/she will experience at school. Explain to them daily what will happen.
- ➔ Please verbally guide your child to take off any outer wear and hang up their belongings on their hook instead of doing it for them. Say good-bye to your child and let them know you will be back; it is best to leave immediately. This will help to make your child's transition smoother and easier for everyone. A teacher will be available to assist you.
- ➔ Please remember to check children's cubbies front entrance of the classroom, and your

child's basket regularly for important information.

- ➔ A school bag pack for shoes, extra clothes, is required. Please send to school daily.

## WINTER TIME

- ➔ Winter can be a challenge for the children and teachers unless the following guidelines are observed:
  - ➔ Put your child's name on all outerwear and loose clothing.
  - ➔ Take the time to teach your child how to get in and out of his/her outer clothing.
  - ➔ Let him/her do as much as possible on their own with ample time for the task. It may take a little longer, but it is worth it to both you and your child.
  - ➔ Attach mittens to coat with clips or short strings.
  - ➔ The toddlers in our care **do not use bottles**, so we would ask that you do not send one with your child.
  - ➔ We ask that if your child requires a soother while napping, it is placed in their basket upon arrival and it will be given to your child as they go to their cot for nap time.

## Toddler Class Toilet Training Routine at home and at school

### STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

1. \*Establish a schedule\*: staff will take children to the potty at consistent times (e.g., after drop off time, before and after meals, before and after naps, before going outside and after leaving home).
2. Toilet times will be done every 30 minutes.
3. Please refrain from bringing your child to the school bathroom at drop off time. This interferes with the routine. Staff will bring them to the bathroom after drop off.
4. Drop off time should be consistent and being late will disrupt the routine.
5. Staff will teach children to pull up/down pants in the bathroom by themselves.
5. Staff will encourage at all times children to change by themselves if they have an accident.
6. If children use a pull-up for nap time, children will be taught to put it on or take off independently.

### PARENTS RESPONSIBILITIES

1. \*Gradually phase out diapers\*: Start dressing your child in underwear, making it easier to recognize the sensation of being wet.
2. \*Praise and reward progress\*: Encourage your child with positive reinforcement, stickers, or small treats.

3. Encourage your child to pull up or down pants by themselves.
4. Provide our staff with lots of extra clothes and replace items on a regular basis. Please note it is not the Staff responsibility to remind parents of providing extra items. Parents should check on a weekly basis children's cubbies especially children prompted to have accidents.
5. Clothes should be comfortable and easy for potty training.

### Overcoming Common Challenges

1. \*Accidents will happen\*: Stay calm, patient, and reassuring. It's a normal part of the learning process.
2. \*Resisting the potty\*: Try different approaches, like reading books or singing songs together while on the potty.
3. \*Nighttime training\*: This may take longer to master. Be patient and encourage your child to communicate their needs.

### Additional Tips

1. \*Make it fun\*: Incorporate games, like "I Spy" or "Potty Training Songs," to create a positive atmosphere.
2. \*Involve your child\*: Let them choose big-kid underwear or pick out a special potty seat.
3. \*Stay consistent\*: Stick to your routine, even on weekends or during outings.

## Helpful Hints Casa/Casa-kinder/Elementary Class

- ➔ Please verbally guide your child (ren) to take off/put on any outerwear and hang up their belongings on their hook (outdoor/indoor drop off) instead of doing this for them.
- ➔ Say goodbye to your child at the door. Once your child is ready to enter the classroom/playground, please wait until a staff /teacher is available to greet them.
- ➔ Winter can be a challenge for the children and teachers unless the following guidelines are observed:
- ➔ Put your child's name on all outerwear and loose clothing.
- ➔ Attach mittens to coat with strings or clips.
- ➔ Take the time to teach your child how to get in and out of his/her outer clothing. Let them do as much as possible with ample time for the task. It may take a little longer but it's worth it to both you and your child.

This Parent Handbook is available to any parent considering whether to enter into an agreement with TERRA VIVA MONTESSORI for the provision of child care; and a parent of every child who receives child care at TERRA VIVA MONTESSORI at the time the child starts receiving such care and at any time when the parent handbook is modified.